Review Article

Patricia Lee Sykes: * **Women's Executive Leadership**

Michael Genovese and Janie Steckenrider (eds), *Women as Political Leaders: Studies in Gender and Governing* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

Torid Skard, *Women of Power: Half a Century of Female Presidents and Prime Ministers Worldwide* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2014; first published in Norwegian in 2012).

Gretchen Bauer and Manon Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

Farida Jalalzai, *Shattered, Cracked, or Firmly Intact? Women and the Executive Glass Ceiling Worldwide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Hillary Clinton's candidacy for the United States presidency makes 2016 an appropriate time to take stock of the scholarship on women as national executive leaders. In different ways, the books reviewed in this article all identify and explore the gender-specific environment of women as executives worldwide. Collectively, they contribute substantial empirical data and establish a firm foundation for the study of gender and executive leadership. Much of this research treats female leaders as representatives, one aspect of leadership, perhaps, but a role that might be better suited to legislators than executives. Research on female executives would benefit from shifting the emphasis to leadership more broadly construed and focusing on executive authority. In addition, substantial room remains for conceptual development, better use of gender as an analytic lens, and the construction of a reasonable basis for comparison in cross-national analysis. Appropriately applied to similar systems, a gender lens can expose gender politics where it has often been

* Patricia Lee Sykes is Associate Professor of Government in the School of Public Affairs at American University, Washington DC. Contact email: *psykes@american.edu*.

obscured or hidden – deeply embedded in the institutions, ideologies and development of nations. This article reviews the above books with particular emphasis on their approaches and perspectives; it identifies some of their similarities and differences and suggests how political scientists might build on their empirical groundwork.

REVIEW OF BOOKS

Case Studies and Biographies of Leaders

Michael Genovese and Janie Steckenrider (2013) and Torild Skard (2014) have compiled biographies of women executive leaders. Skard provides a comprehensive collection of all female leaders after the Second World War until 2010, whereas Genovese and Steckenrider have selected 11 nations. Genovese and Steckenrider add gender to a familiar list of factors that generally affect leaders, while Skard keeps the focus on gender as she describes aspects of each woman's background and career.

Genovese and Steckenrider's *Women as Political Leaders: Studies in Gender and Governing* was first published in 1993 under the title *Women as National Leaders*, which Genovese edited alone (Genovese 1993). The first edition constitutes one of the earliest attempts to explore the experience of women leaders and might well have sparked many of the studies that follow. In the second edition (2013) the editors maintain the original framework of factors: context, biographical background, path to power, style, performance and gender. They reprint the original seven case studies and add four new chapters: one includes a leader left out of the original collection, two describe leaders since 1993, and another considers the absence of a female executive in the US.

Several new chapters generally improve the original text. Sarah Henderson contributes a useful chapter on the premiership of Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway, a significant female leader who should have been included in the first edition. Farida Jalalzai's insightful chapter on Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's presidency of Liberia deftly demonstrates how the case of Sirleaf 'complicates traditional notions of women executive's leadership styles' as she blends and adapts her approach to suit changing circumstances. Yet Jalalzai chooses to emphasize Sirleaf's success at 'descriptive, substantive, and

symbolic representation' rather than keep the focus on leadership, repeating the theme of her book discussed below. Richard Fox and Zoe Oxley's chapter on gender and presidential politics in the US provides astute observations on some of the factors that make the US presidency unusual, including the highly 'masculine' character of the institution, with its emphasis on commander-in-chief, aspects of the electoral system and campaigns, and the absence of quotas. The comparative contrasts fade when the authors discuss the media's treatment of women since they fail to provide a reason why the US media would be worse than the press in other nations – for example, the British tabloids. Also, the question in the chapter's title: 'Why No Madame President?' implies that the US is flawed to an even greater extent than it is. Seven of the 10 nations included in this book have elected only one female national executive – one more than none for the US – a reminder of the need to maintain a cross-national, comparative perspective.

Finally, Angela Merkel's effectiveness and longevity as German chancellor warrant serious scholarly attention, but the chapter on her leadership could have taken her success more seriously. The author attributes too much to 'serendipity' as an explanatory factor. (In her book, Skard (2014) also often credits women's success to 'chance'.) Social psychology has repeatedly revealed the sex-based bias inherent in the tendency to depict women as lucky, men as skilled (for example, see Foschi 2000; Greenhaus and Parasuraman 1993: 273, 276, 290). Perhaps more significant, the author repeatedly identifies Merkel as 'head of state', seemingly unaware that the chancellor is 'head of government', and the president 'head of state' in Germany, an institutional difference that matters. When the malleable Merkel has been exposed as Machiavellian or faltered and fallen in popularity, she has managed to recover as a political head of government, but the same damage to a national, unifying figure as head of state would be more difficult to overcome. Confusing the head of government and head of state roles points to one of the shortcomings of the text as a whole: the absence of institutional analysis.

Just as important, the single-factor approach adds gender as a separate variable, whereas gender pervades all the relevant factors. If the chapters were more consistently crafted to demonstrate how gender matters, they might have proven more useful as 'case studies' of women's executive leadership rather than descriptive,

biographical essays. Viewed through a gender lens, the experience of 10 national leaders might have generated hypotheses that could be tested by the experience of others – men as well as women. To be fair, Genovese's stated objective is modest: early in the text he promises only that the cases can form the basis of discussion on how gender impacts leadership (Genovese and Steckenrider 2013: 12).

By contrast, in *Women of Power: Half a Century of Female Presidents and Prime Ministers Worldwide*, Skard (2014) articulates an extraordinarily ambitious goal. At the start, she states her intention to study how 'women presidents and prime ministers were influenced not only by their families, local community and national context, but also by conditions and events at international levels: political, economic, social and cultural', thereby producing 'a world history seen from the perspective of women's political leadership' since the Second World War (Skard 2014: 3). To do so, Skard renders an account of 73 women in 53 nation states. Most of the book is organized by geographic region preceded by three chapters: an introduction, Chapter 1 on the first five women executives, and Chapter 2 on 'background, approaches, and research', which primarily defines terms for non-academic readers. At the conclusion of the book, Chapter 11 summarizes the cases, and Chapter 12 searches for variations and trends. Chapters at the start and conclusion include typologies on subjects such as 'paths to power' and 'leadership styles', but the author neglects the categories in the main body of the text, where they might have provided useful analytic tools to organize the vast amount of information.

Written by a former politician and current academic, this book provides a mix of popular politics and political science. Skard writes with an easy, accessible style for a broad, general readership, but she also speaks to scholars – for example, by mapping out her methodology, which she describes as 'both quantitative and qualitative, but mainly qualitative'. As it turns out, quantitative methods entail counting numbers and calculating percentages, and qualitative methods mean heavy reliance on secondary sources and some 'direct contact'. Skard (2014: 4) informs readers that she 'personally interviewed or received replies to written questions from 14 women top leaders from five regions' but neglects to list them.

In both her reliance on secondary sources and the conduct of her own interviews (in person or written), the author would have benefitted from adopting a more sceptical, critical perspective.

Early in the book Skard considers the 'leadership' of Elisabeth Domitien in the Central African Republic (CAR), whom she describes as 'friend' of the Republic's dictator, Jean-Bedel Bokassa. (Bokassa actually chose her from among his wives to be prime minister.) Skard allows Domitien's niece to translate and interpret but never questions the niece's accuracy or veracity. Given that Domitien (via translation) lies about the duration of her term and remains vague about how she tried to empower women, the author had sufficient reason to doubt the prime minister's credibility overall. Instead, Skard (2014: 42–7) credits her with being representative of women and acting on behalf of their interests by strengthening the income and position of women, without providing any evidence to support these assertions. Writing about another part of the world and relying on a BBC news report, Skard uses Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard as an example of women's reluctance to pursue leadership yet willingness to sacrifice and serve when needed. Gillard waged a coup to unseat first-term incumbent Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. It might have been an 'unexpected change' (the section's subtitle) for Rudd, but it was hardly unanticipated by Gillard, who, with skill not luck, manoeuvred to gain the top spot. Interviews provide one of the most fruitful ways to investigate elite behaviour, but interviewers need to maintain a critical stance when it comes to taking politicians at their word – male or female.

A book of this size and scope inevitably includes errors and misunderstandings. For example, Canada has provinces, not states (Skard 2014: 388–90). US parties historically have been strong, not weak, at the local level – and it is unclear how 'Republican rule' weakened parties (Skard 2014: 455). (In fact, in a system of separate powers often with divided party control, what constitutes 'Republican rule'?) Contrary to Skard's account, media depictions of New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark as 'masculine' fail to account for her loss in 2008 (Skard 2014: 403). If the press had that impact, Clark would never have become prime minister in 1999 as the media always mocked her 'masculinity'. In the Republic of Ireland, the constitution prohibits the president from explicitly addressing partisan/political issues, so Mary Robinson's ability to 'give voice to the voiceless' was largely limited to symbolic gestures (which carries some significance but not the political clout the author suggests) (Skard 2014: 403). In general, Skard flatters some leaders – Clark and Robinson – and vilifies others, notably British

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (whose treatment in this book is marred by mistakes and misinterpretation).

As a result, at times the author's ideological bias leads her to advance an agenda more political than political science. Skard deserves credit for keeping the focus on leadership, but to make the case that women leaders (other than Thatcher) matter because they adopt a distinctly 'feminine' approach, Skard tends to skew the nature of their leadership and exaggerate the impact of their efforts. For example, according to Skard, when Prime Minister Clark refused to commit New Zealand troops to join the US invasion of Iraq, she showed that women are more likely to promote peace. An even closer ally of the US, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien did the same. At the conclusion Skard outlines a radical agenda for change and levels a scathing assault on the status quo, especially the liberal free market. She might have used her critique, especially of marketplace economics, to investigate why and how liberal ideology can restrict women and limit the leadership of female executives. Perhaps unwittingly, Skard's political agenda yields the scholarly suggestion that the gendered nature of liberal (or neoliberal) ideology merits closer examination.

Methodological Pluralism and the Study of Executives as Representatives

Traditional political science perspectives and methods inform the analysis in the two remaining books: Gretchen Bauer and Manon Tremblay's edited volume *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (2011) and Farida Jalalzai's *Shattered, Cracked, or Firmly Intact? Women and the Executive Glass Ceiling Worldwide* (2013). Both books adopt a mix of methods, although most of the chapters in Bauer and Tremblay employ more qualitative than quantitative techniques, and Jalalzai's quantitative analysis generally outshines her descriptive discussion. These two excellent books complement each other and easily could be read (or taught) together.

Bauer and Tremblay ask their authors to focus on four aspects of women's executive leadership. First, they consider the context with particular emphasis on representation in the legislature and the history of women's participation. Second, they choose two or three countries as case studies and compare them. Third, they identify the factors that affect access to the executive. Finally, they assess

executive leadership according to standards of 'substantive repre-sentation' – whether female executives act for other women. All the chapters follow the editors' roadmap and, as a result, consistently concentrate on gender and female executives. Moreover, by sticking to the framework, the chapters invite and facilitate cross-national comparisons – between chapters on regions and within chapters across the case studies.

This edited volume exhibits several strengths. Most significant, the editors define the executive in a way that includes cabinet as well as presidents and prime ministers. That definition allows the authors to consider a substantially larger number of women and, even more important, encourages them to analyse the executive as an institution. Considering cabinet is especially useful for understanding parliamentary systems, though the authors might have considered more closely the relative integrity and importance of cabinet within the executive and government as a whole. Moreover, the editors observe the 'maleness' of executive leadership at the start of the book (Bauer and Tremblay 2011: 1), and most of the authors identify gender in institutional arrangements. At the same time, many of them detect the gender-specific nature of ideology, especially when they consider the nature and impact of the neo-liberal revolution in the late twentieth century. Finally, although some chapters prove easier to read than others (perhaps the result of translation), all the authors demonstrate expertise on their region of the world, which explains their consistent accuracy, superior analysis and valuable insights.

Several authors point to the importance of political parties and move beyond the familiar contrast between left and right and the conventional wisdom that the left/centre-left parties always prove amenable to women's advancement. In one of the most analytical chapters, Jennifer Curtin and Marian Sawer (2011) use the cases of Australia and New Zealand to indicate when, why and how parties prove responsive to movements. In Australia, the feminist movement broke through intra-party barriers (formal factions, machine politics and the clout of the Catholic Church) to convince the Labor Party to adopt quotas for parliament in 1994. In the absence of those intra-party obstacles, feminists in New Zealand were more easily able to influence the Labour Party without the need for quotas. In another insightful chapter, Fiona Buckley and Yvonne Galligan (2011) explain how gender equity law in Spain produced party

quotas and help explain the contrast between Spain and the UK where women remain underrepresented. In the UK, after an industrial tribunal struck down the Labour Party's women-only shortlists, parliament passed legislation that enables parties to adopt quotas. Where quotas are permitted rather than mandated, parties and their leaders need to be willing to promote women (contrast the commitment of Labour leader John Smith to the reluctance of Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair). Furthermore, party rules and selection methods have to ensure women's presence in the cabinet and the shadow cabinet. These important chapters indicate the need for more research on the nature of parties and party leaders as facilitating factors – how responsive they are to women's movements and how willing to advance women to positions of executive leadership, not just legislative representation.

When considering access to the executive, several chapters add other factors to the political ones. For example, Vania Carvalho Pinto (2011) shows how class status affects women in Morocco, while tribe restricts them in the United Arab Emirates. Andrea Fleschenberg (2011) contrasts Pakistan and Burma: both the use of quotas and the dominance of political dynasties advance women in Pakistan, but a combination of military rule and religion restricts them in Burma. On Sub-Saharan Africa, Bauer (2011) chooses the two exceptions to the rule of limited access for women in politics: Rwanda ranks first among nations worldwide in the representation of women, and Liberia has produced the only female national executive in Africa, President Sirleaf. Although other factors might matter (class/education in Rwanda, for example), in Bauer's astute analysis, political variables continue to dominate – the use of quotas in Rwanda and political instability in both nations, which mobilized the women's movements and placed them in the peace process.

Sirleaf stands alone as national leader in Africa, but other regions permit comparisons of national executives. Tiffany Barnes and Mark Jones (2011) contrast Argentina's President Christina Fernandez de Kirchner to Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, who achieved gender parity in her cabinets. In the chapter on Western Europe, Buckley and Galligan (2011) also draw sharp contrasts between Thatcher, who appointed only one woman to a minor cabinet post, and Merkel, who has consistently appointed five or six female ministers to her governments (one short of Gerhard Schröder's level). If the focus is placed on substantive representation, then female

leaders appointing women to cabinet becomes a significant measure of success.

Most of the authors note the gender-specific character of the portfolios female ministers hold, predominantly presiding over domestic programmes deemed 'feminine', though several suggest that might be starting to change. In their chapter on North America, Jalalzai and Tremblay (2011) point out that the US has had three female secretaries of state, significant given US global pre-eminence. On the other hand, as diplomacy often plays a secondary role in US foreign policy, a female secretary of defense will provide a much better indicator of progress. Just as important, institutional evolution has elevated the White House and diminished the cabinet so that the national security advisor often usurps the role of secretary of state. Jalalzai and Tremblay might have considered politicization and whether it applies to Canada: When has Sussex House supplanted cabinet? (10 Downing Street often dominated in the Thatcher and Blair years.) Furthermore, the authors observe that the US has the highest level of female representation in the cabinet – without mentioning that the president's cabinet (by design) is less significant than cabinet in most parliamentary systems, most of the time. Yet the presence of women matters. Both the chapter on North America and the one on Oceania provide evidence that women have made a difference with their socio-cultural portfolios, and as Curtin and Sawer (2011) document, holding pink-collar portfolios (social services, education, etc.) has not prevented women from becoming prime minister in New Zealand and Australia.

In their concluding chapter, the editors tentatively tease out seven general lessons from the particular cases. First, they advise that the 'contagion effect' – that progress in one country will spread to others in the region – should be used with caution, given substantial variation within regions and subregions. Second, although women have recently gained in the executive, the relationship between women in the executive and women's participation or legislative representation remains mixed and ambiguous. Third, culture provides a useful but insufficient explanatory factor. Fourth, no link exists between economic development and the number of women executives. Fifth, no particular institutional traits help or hinder female participation in the executive (a conclusion they might revise if they compare countries with similar systems). Sixth, many contextual factors determine the access of women to the executive.

Finally, the editors conclude, it is too early to tell whether women executives enhance the substantive representation of women. That issue, the editors declare, provides a significant 'piece in the puzzle of women's political representation', a conclusion they reach without reference to leadership (Bauer and Tremblay 2011: 189).

In her own solely authored book, Jalalzai frames her analysis entirely around representation with an emphasis on whether 'descriptive representation' (based on resemblance, in this case sex) yields substantive results. As suggested by the subtitle *Women and the Executive Glass Ceiling Worldwide*, the author focuses on electoral opportunities and obstacles, though she also considers how the character of institutions might determine whether women rise to the top. Jalalzai completed this work as a doctoral dissertation in 2005, and to a great extent it maintains the structure of a dissertation, with lengthy description added to make it a book. Chapter 1 is an introduction, Chapter 2 supplies a literature review, Chapter 3 provides an overview of 'positions, selections, systems, and powers', Chapter 4 describes in greater detail executive positions and paths, Chapter 5 explores the background of women leaders and Chapter 6 focuses on specific pathways to power by looking at the role of families and/or activism in Asia and Latin America. In these first six, largely descriptive, chapters, the author identifies institutional, social, historical and global factors, and tries to tie the dominance of the office to the degree of 'masculinity' inherent in it. Readers reach the core of the book's research in Chapter 7, which renders a statistical analysis of 'women's rule', followed by Chapter 8 on female presidential candidacies, which examines party systems, and Chapter 9 on the historic but failed candidacies of Hillary Clinton (2008) and Ségolène Royal. True to the structure of most dissertations, the conclusion identifies directions for future research, including the need to consider the significance of formalistic representation and a call for more research on symbolic representation.

Jalalzai's (2013: 175, 181) central findings focus on the areas where she can put to good use her quantitative data: elections and paths to power rather than the experience of women in office. She repeatedly shows that women enter the executive in low, not high, status positions. In one of the most skilful and significant aspects of her analysis, she weights institutional positions according to their authority, so for example, an executive who exercises a veto and chairs cabinet earns points. Jalalzai finds that women are more likely

to gain access to the executive where power is shared, and as a result there are more women prime ministers than presidents. She also confirms the significance of global status – the usual explanation for the presence of women executives in New Zealand and Scandinavia but their absence in the US. As status increases, the threshold for women rises. Secondarily, she finds that women's backgrounds differ little from those of men in age, education, and only slightly in political experience – except in Latin America and Asia, where family dynasties determine women's prospects. In addition, when she examines elections, she identifies the advantages of multiparty systems over party duopolies, while she also demonstrates convincingly that women's lack of ambition fails to account for their underrepresentation. Even when they run, they usually fail – a result from her quantitative analysis that she explores more fully with case studies on the candidacies of Clinton and Royal in what proves to be the most insightful qualitative chapter.

Jalalzai's book constitutes the first and only one in political science that genuinely compares women's attempts to become national executives. Admittedly, her findings generally confirm conventional wisdom on the subject – which she herself has helped to formulate. (The book provides little that is new because the author had already published her findings in journal articles.) Nevertheless, it is useful to have conventional wisdom on women candidates for executive office confirmed and collected in a single volume.

The author is at her best when she creatively and skilfully assesses executive authority, but she does so only to determine how it affects women's access and might have put her institutional analysis to better use. For example, Jalalzai (2013: 178) identifies 'electoral systems' and 'parties and party systems' as institutional conditions but fails to look at the institutional aspect of parties – namely, their internal structure and dynamics, which can determine a prime minister's authority or even survival in office. Her analysis takes into account party systems, not parties. More important, if she had explored what happens to women once they become executives, she might have managed to move beyond textbook definitions and dichotomous contrasts between presidential and parliamentary systems. Jalalzai (2013: 47) writes, for example, 'Obviously greater power variations exist among presidents than among prime ministers' – a statement that is far from obvious and fails to fully grasp the fluctuations within and among parliamentary systems.

In that respect, Jalalzai's analysis has a great deal in common with the others reviewed here, including Bauer and Tremblay. They conclude that the gendered nature of ministerial portfolios changes 'at times' (Bauer and Tremblay 2011: 178), but they neglect to notice that so do the nature of cabinet as an institution and its place in the political system as a whole. All the books reviewed in this article might benefit from taking a closer look at stages in political development – variations in ideology and institutions across time as well as across nations and regions.

Like Bauer and Tremblay, Jalalzai concludes with a call for more research on the representative nature of female executives, and her book provides clues to understanding why they focus on representation rather than leadership. In the chapter that contains a literature review, Jalalzai explains that because so few women have become national executives, she looks at legislators instead. If she had appreciated the significance of institutions, she might not have shifted from executive to legislative so quickly and without reservation. Alternatively, she might have considered literature on other executives – cabinet or governors/premiers – and she could have considered the literature on leadership that has been based on the experience of men.

Instead, Jalalzai – like Bauer and Tremblay – keep the conceptual framework limited to representation rather than look at leadership. This might explain why Bauer and Tremblay with Jalalzai also struggle to articulate a sufficient rationale for studying women executives and state simply that it 'fills a void' in the literature (Bauer and Tremblay 2011: 2) which has thus far focused on female legislators, or 'provides a more complete picture' (Jalalzai 2013: 4). If Bauer and Tremblay and Jalalzai had considered leadership (and the literature on it) rather than representation, they might have detected greater significance in the subject of their study.

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF FEMALE EXECUTIVE STUDIES

From Representation to Leadership

Perhaps unknowingly, the authors who employ Hannah Pitkin's (1967) typology of representation depart from the intent or analysis of her original work published almost 50 years ago. To reveal the

complexity of concept, Pitkin designed a typology that includes formalistic, descriptive and symbolic representation as ways of 'standing for' others. Pitkin never used the term 'substantive representation', although she did distinguish her types of 'standing for' from those who are 'acting for' others, an activity that might or might not be compatible with representation. As Pitkin clearly understood, a representative can stand for others, but acting for them is considerably more complex and problematic. In the case of women, whose interests are represented and how are they defined? Feminists or non-feminists? And if feminists, which ones – liberal, Marxist, radical? (Tong 1998). When someone in a formal capacity exercises discretion and determines an answer, that person ceases to stand for women as a group. Most of the authors here understand that 'acting for' women is complex and difficult to judge, but Pitkin's own work highlights the dilemmas inherent in the concept they so frequently and casually use.

Notwithstanding the difficulties associated with representation, the concept might be more appropriately used to study legislators than executives. Even Pitkin (1967: 41) observed its common usage to denote 'ones who are elected to a legislature', though she inserted as a parenthetical 'perhaps also an elected executive', one of the only references to the executive in her book. Including representatives of marginalized groups can enrich deliberation, and historically neglected interests warrant consideration in legislative assemblies (Mansbridge 1999), but the benefits of descriptive representation for executive leadership are less apparent. Admittedly, the development of political parties and changing selection mechanisms have moved pluralism into the modern executive and added representation to executive functions, especially cabinet. Yet the position of prime ministers and presidents remains the primary place for leadership. The executive might benefit from deliberation, but usually and by necessity it takes place in secret and therefore fails to enrich democracy. This applies to the 'collective responsibility' of cabinet as well as the independent actions in foreign affairs taken by a commander-in-chief or even the 'first among equals'. Representation might constitute a component of the modern executive, but it is by no means the largest or most significant part of leadership.

If the study of female executives focuses on representation rather than leadership, paradoxically it subjects women to both higher and lower standards than apply to most men. Women executives

shoulder a different, heavier burden if they must represent women as a group in addition to their executive tasks and responsibilities. (Executives who are members of racial and ethnic minorities also carry the additional weight of their 'constituent' group.) In a role related to representation, they are also expected to act as 'role models' for their group, whereas white, male presidents and prime ministers rarely need to meet that expectation. Women leaders have a different and higher threshold to meet in order to satisfy their representative responsibilities.

At the same time, treating women executives as representatives, not leaders, also lowers expectations of their aspirations and accomplishments. Leadership and representation are not mutually exclusive, but the scope of leadership opportunities is far more expansive than the realm of representation. By the twenty-first century, executive leadership has assumed a central role in the politics and policymaking of most post-industrial countries. National 'chief executives' have acquired a capacity to set the agenda that usually supersedes that of other political actors in cabinet, the parties and the legislature. Moreover, executive leaders loom large in the public imagination and consciousness of citizens, who tend to look especially to the president or prime minister for solutions to the nation's fundamental problems. Leaving women out of leadership leads scholars to neglect a female executive's creativity, initiative, inspiration and even mobilization. Classic studies and recent edited collections document the vast array of leadership qualities and approaches as well as how to study them (Burns 1978; Masciulli et al. 2009; Rhodes and 't Hart 2014). These might inform the study of women's executive leadership, and at the same time, the study of women might enrich and possibly revise the literature on leadership that has been based entirely on the experience of men.

A couple of examples might serve to illustrate the difference between viewing a woman as a representative or as a leader. All the authors discussed in this article agree that British Prime Minister Thatcher failed as a representative of women's interests, but they tend to neglect her effectiveness or accomplishments as an executive leader, one who altered state–society relations and the course of political development in the UK. By contrast, the authors included in this article applaud Liberian President Sirleaf for her success at the substantive representation of women, but the same scholars might also consider how much leadership Sirleaf has shown by asking whether she has fulfilled her pledge to halt

corruption, or for that matter, managed to maintain the support of the women's movement that put her in power. Gender and women's studies might consider these aspects of leadership and also bring greater democratic sensibilities to the study of leadership by raising questions about the ramifications of leadership for democratic principles and constitutional context, a critical perspective often overlooked in the traditional study of leaders.

Gender studies might enhance research on leadership in yet another way. Regardless of the scholarly perspective or method, most students of leadership agree that leadership is contextual. Looking at the experience of female executives through a gender lens can expose the ways gender permeates the leadership environment. Men also operate in gender-specific environments, but that largely goes unnoticed in the study of men alone. The experience of women highlights how gender matters, and the use of a gender lens can expose the masculinities that define opportunities and constraints for all leaders.

Masculinities through a Gender Lens

All the studies reviewed in this article view leadership with a gender-specific perspective to some extent. At the start of her book, Jalalzai (2013: 8) identifies her methodology as 'a gender and politics approach', which she distinguishes from a 'woman and politics' perspective, though her book primarily provides an empirical, largely quantitative, study of women. In the conclusion, Jalalzai (2013: 177) asserts that her 'women and gender in politics approach' has demonstrated the degree to which 'gendered ideologies and stereotypes are linked to powers and paths', and she does identify the most apparent cases such as Marianismo in Latin America or the stereotypical portrayals of women in the popular press. Yet Jalalzai and the other authors might also have searched for more subtle signs that gender affects leadership and its context. More consistent, nuanced analysis of gender can detect how it shapes the state and society just below the surface.

A gender lens can also expose a more complex, wider array of masculinities at work than implied by the frequently drawn contrast between 'masculine' and 'feminine', which all the authors use (as I have in the past). The idea that multiple masculinities permeate place and shift over time has garnered a great deal of attention in recent decades, and for several reasons the notion of masculinities better

captures the gendered nature of political experience than the tradi-
tional dichotomy between masculinity and femininity (Connell 2005).
Those terms present polar opposites that fail to reflect the range of
gender variation, and they run the risk of reinforcing stereotypes based
on sex difference. Furthermore, the 'feminine' has been associated with
leadership tasks that require compromise, conciliation and consensus
building, but when the concept is operationalized, it turns out to be
just another distinctive type of masculinity – a contrast to aggressive,
confrontational masculinity, perhaps, but masculine nonetheless.
Finally, continued use of 'feminine' to describe conciliatory, consensus
leadership implies that the context will prove easier for women, but that
does not necessarily prove to be the case and can underestimate the
challenges women will face. Which masculinities matter to executive
leadership depends on the character of the political systems.

For this reason, grouping similar systems together might be better
than adopting a regional approach for comparative analysis of
executive leadership. A regional approach facilitates the organization
of a complex project with a sweeping scope such as Skard's book or
Bauer and Tremblay's edited text, but it can also obscure some
significant similarities. Scholars might also resist cutting across
regions for political reasons: the Republic of Ireland would rather be
compared with countries on mainland Europe than with the UK, and
most countries want to avoid being compared with the US. But in
this case putting politics aside might enhance political science. As
Buckley and Galligan (2011: 144) frankly admit, within Western
Europe, for example, the political systems of Spain and the UK differ
too much to make comparative analysis fruitful. Members of 'the
family' of Anglo-American nations, however, do have enough in
common to provide a reasonable basis for comparison (Castles 1993).
Anglo countries share institutional and ideological foundations, and
they are generally linked in political development. Most significant to
the study of female executives, although some variation exists within
the set of nations – usually due to the nature of parties and/or the
electoral system – they exhibit the same dominant masculinities.

Female Executive Leadership in Anglo-American Systems

Individualist masculinity proves to be the most dominant type
in the adversarial institutional arrangements that characterize

Anglo-American systems. To facilitate programmatic change, adversarial systems concentrate power in the executive, and to ensure accountability, they rely on combat between two major parties (or parties configured along the lines of government and opposition). The more adversarial the system, the more aggressive and combative its norms and expectations of executive leadership tend to be. Most of the time, an adversarial system requires and rewards highly individualistic, even heroic, masculinity in its leaders. Individualist masculine attributes include independence and autonomy, rationality and competition/conflict – often manifested as conviction. Arguably, the most effective female prime minister in the Anglo world, Thatcher managed to practise precisely that type of masculine leadership.

Highly individualist masculinity also pervades Anglo ideology dominated by liberalism and rooted in social contract theory. Classic liberal theory depicts a universal, disembodied individual who, motivated by self-interest, chooses to form civil society where reason rules and competition ensues. In this – the most obvious, fundamental – way, liberalism is based on and promotes individualist masculinity (DiStefano 1991). In nations where liberalism dominates, feminist leaders who become executives are likely to be liberal feminists, and so the liberal ideological framework limits the degree of change they seek to engender even in the best of times. In the late twentieth century, neoliberalism exacerbated and intensified the individualist masculinity of liberal ideology and frustrated female leaders who tried to advance policies that might benefit women as a group (see Bashevkin 1998; Sawer 2007). To succeed at that stage in development, a female leader needed to embrace neoliberal convictions – like Thatcher – and, later with fewer opportunities, self-described 'neoliberal feminist' New Zealand Prime Minister Jenny Shipley.

In Anglo two-party dominated systems, executive leaders also need to negotiate with the various factions or tendencies within their party, and that requires fraternal masculinity. Party duopolies in pluralistic societies make each party a 'broad church'. In Westminster systems, the executive leader must strive to build a consensus within cabinet, while in the US the executive needs to conciliate and mediate with members of a separate legislature. The fraternal leadership requirements remain similar. Fraternal masculinity calls for collective engagement and community-wide perspective, emotion and

consensus – often expressed as moderation. At the same time, the original social contract theory also shows some signs of fraternity: at the formation of civil society, individuals come together and create public space (leaving women out in the private sphere). The subsequent brotherhood constitutes a community with emotional ties, operating collectively and reaching consensus for the 'common good' (Pateman 1988). Indeed, aspects of fraternal masculinity can seem 'feminine', but meeting fraternal expectations proves far from easy for women.

Anglo institutions and ideology contain both individualist and fraternal masculinities, and the gendered nature of governance shifts at different junctures in development. As a result, time itself becomes gendered. Individualist and fraternal masculinities appear in the two types of time that influence the prospects and performance of executive leaders: linear historical and cyclical political.

Linear historical time in institutional development has generally shifted from favouring fraternal to fuelling individualist masculinity. Increased concentration of power in the executive now permits various degrees of 'presidentialization' in parliamentary systems (Poguntke and Webb 2005) and the politicization of presidential ones (Moe 1985). The more presidential the prime minister's role becomes, the more individualist (and heroic) the norms and expectations of leadership prove to be. Of course, the institutional integrity of cabinet varies across Anglo systems, and strong cabinet can impede presidentialization. When and where executive authority rests with the collective decision-making of cabinet, fraternal masculinity characterizes prime ministerial leadership, but when and where such authority lands in the hands of a prime minister, individualist masculinity (fortified by presidentialization) proves prevalent.

Australia recently rendered an example of what can happen when these two institutional aspects collide and masculinities mix. The nation remains a place where cabinet maintains a high degree of institutional integrity, especially with a Labor government. Indeed, the game of musical chairs between Rudd and Gillard could be attributed to the mix of masculinities. The caucus replaced Rudd with Gillard because the party considered him too individualist – and preferred Gillard, whom they considered more consultative or fraternal. The switch between Rudd and Gillard and back to Rudd also indicates that the public and the party are out of sync in terms of institutional development and gendered leadership expectations. After the party replaced

Rudd with Gillard, the public considered the move illegitimate. Voters wanted Rudd back because they believed they had elected him. Perhaps the Australian public has started to vote as if choosing a president, while the Labor Party adheres to the norms of cabinet government. Ultimately, in this conflict between individualist versus fraternal masculinities, the female prime minister failed to fit either.

Time also operates in a second dimension as cyclical and 'political' (Skowronek 2006). The several stages in a regime sequence – construction, maintenance and degeneration – define leadership opportunities and alter the gendered nature of leadership challenges. During periods of regime construction, political time usually demands individualist masculinity in leaders – independent and autonomous action (arguably the most presidential), which helps explain why Thatcher was well situated to advance her convictions. Later, the maintenance of the political order favours fraternal masculinity – more cooperative and consensual leadership to preserve the status quo. The final stage of degeneration proves ambiguous and the most restrictive, the place where female executives who have been handed the 'poisoned chalice' can often be found – like Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell.

Whichever masculinity dominates – individualist or fraternal – women more often than men get caught in a double bind. When practised by women, fraternal leadership can convey ulterior motives, hidden agendas, and inconsistency, stereotypically 'feminine' faults. (Again, consider the dismal fate of Campbell, who served only a few months before losing a general election.) Individualist leadership leaves women open to charges that they are too aggressive, strident and stubborn. (Think of British Prime Minister Thatcher.) And sometimes women suffer simultaneously from seemingly contradictory criticisms. (Ask Australian Prime Minister Gillard, attacked as both 'witch' – dishonest and deceptive – and 'bitch' – bold and blunt.) In general, women simply get less room to manoeuvre than men. It often seems female executive leaders must choose whether to appear one of a kind or one of the boys.

CONCLUSION

Individualist and fraternal constitute only two types of the many masculinities embedded in the institutional, ideological and

developmental contexts of executive leadership. The gender-specific patterns identified above affect national executives and reappear in the context of cabinet ministers and subnational executives such as premiers and governors. The dominance of these and other masculinities raises the question: Where is the feminine? The answer depends on how 'femininity' is defined.

In the most negative sense, a leader's accommodation or adaptation to masculinities, especially the individualist type, can render others 'feminine' in the stereotypical sense of weakness and vulnerability. Arguably, Thatcher reduced her cabinet ministers to feminine status if she suppressed their views or subordinated their positions. Her language is revealing as she derided her opponents as effete or 'wet'. At times, her disparaging remarks about the corporatist welfare state reduced even the public at large to feminine. By contrast to the rugged individualism of free market economics, in her view, a public dependent on the welfare state is weak, and she ridiculed those who wished to maintain social programmes as 'whimpering and whining' for help. In Thatcher's narrative, as the heroine, she swoops in to rescue the damsels in distress. The experience of Thatcher serves as a reminder that gender-specific aspects of a leadership environment are fluid and that a woman can manipulate masculinities in a way that makes others, including men, feminine (see Warner 1985: esp. ch. 3; Webster 1990).

Fortunately, femininity – or 'femininities' – might have more positive connotations and consequences. For example, femininities could include national unity, greater inclusivity, nurturing citizenship. Within the Anglo sphere, those virtues are rarely found inside adversarial assemblies or party politics, but they might be exhibited by ceremonial executives such as presidents in the Republic of Ireland (or other modern republics) and governors general in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. (At least one study has suggested that the US suffers a lack of female leadership because it developed without a queen (McDonagh 2009), though monarchs have not historically cultivated citizenship or inclusivity.) If femininities do flourish in any form of leadership in Anglo countries, then they are likely to be found outside the institutions of political power – more likely in the largely symbolic significance of ceremonial leadership.

Finally, students of women's executive leadership might consider a gendered political alternative suggested by some female leaders, though not generated by Anglo systems. Call it 'sororal': women who

work with and for the (complex) interests of other women. Ironically, a female prime minister persistently mocked as masculine in the popular press successfully navigated fluctuating institutional and ideological masculinities but also managed to be sororal. New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark transitioned incrementally from neoliberalism to more women-friendly policies, and she surrounded herself with women, creating a somewhat sororal setting in the Beehive, the executive wing of parliament. (Clark had other advantages, including a reformed electoral environment that marked a departure from the Westminster model.) Hillary Clinton shows signs of adopting a similar strategy – in a much more challenging gendered environment. Anglo systems do not generate sororal leadership, but they might someday come to accommodate it. Until then, women's executive leadership is likely to remain mired in masculinities, presenting gendered challenges to female leaders and those who study them.

REFERENCES

Barnes, T.D. and Jones, M.P. (2011), 'Latin America', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 105–21.

Bashevkin, S. (1998), *Women on the Defensive: Living through Conservative Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Bauer, G. (2011), 'Sub-Saharan Africa', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 85–104.

——— and Tremblay, M. (2011) (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge).

Buckley, F. and Galligan, Y. (2011), 'Western Europe', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 141–56.

Burns, J.M. (1978), *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row).

Castles, F.G. (1993), *Families of Nations: Patterns of Public Policy in Western Democracies* (Aldershot: Dartmouth).

Connell, R.W. (2005), *Masculinities*, 2nd edn (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Curtin, J. and Sawer, M. (2011), 'Oceania', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 45–64.

DiStefano, C. (1991), *Configurations of Masculinity: A Feminist Perspective on Modern Political Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).

Fleschenberg, A. (2011), 'South and Southeast Asia', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 23–44.

Foschi, M. (2000), 'Double Standards for Competence: Theory and Research', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26: 21–42.

Genovese, M. (1993) (ed.), *Women as National Leaders* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage).

—— and Steckenrider, J. (eds) (2013), *Women as Political Leaders: Studies in Gender and Governing* (New York: Routledge).

Greenhaus, J.H. and Parasuraman, C. (1993), 'Job Performance Attributions and Career Advancement Prospects: An Examination of Gender and Race Effects', *Oranizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 55: 273–97.

Jalalzai, F. (2013), *Shattered, Cracked, or Firmly Intact? Women and the Executive Glass Ceiling Worldwide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

—— and Tremblay, M. (2011), 'North America', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 122–40.

McDonagh, E. (2009), *The Motherless State: Women's Political Leadership and American Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Mansbridge, J. (1999), 'Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent "Yes"', *Journal of Politics*, 61: 628–57.

Masciulli, J., Molchanov, M. and Knight, W.A. (2009) (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Political Leadership* (Farnham: Ashgate).

Moe, T. (1985), 'The Politicized Presidency', in J.E. Chubb and P.E. Peterson (eds), *New Direction in American Politics* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution): 235–70.

Pateman, C. (1988), *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press).

Pinto, V.C. (2011), 'Arab States', in G. Bauer and M. Tremblay (eds), *Women in Executive Power: A Global Overview* (New York: Routledge): 10–22.

Pitkin, H.F. (1967), *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Poguntke, T. and Webb, P. (2005) (eds), *The Presidentialization of Politics: A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Rhodes, R.A.W. and 't Hart, P. (2014) (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Sawer, M. (2007), 'Australia: The Fall of the Femocrat', in J. Kantola and J. Outshoorn (eds), *Changing State Feminism* (New York: Palgrave): 20–40.

Skard, T. (2014), *Women of Power: Half a Century of Female Presidents and Prime Ministers Worldwide* (Bristol: Policy Press).

Skowronek, S. (2006), 'Presidential Leadership in Political Time', in M. Nelson (ed.), *The Presidency and the Political System*, 8th edn (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press): 111–56.

Tong, R.P. (1998), *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press).

Warner, M. (1985), *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Picador).

Webster, W. (1990), *Not a Man to Match Her: The Marketing of a Prime Minister* (London: Women's Press).