

Leadership in Her Own Image: Valuing Women’s Different Lives

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I. INTRODUCTION

After a presidential election in which women played such a prominent role, both as candidates and as voters, and yet women once again came up short, we are left to contemplate our successes and failures. Female political leaders have had more success abroad, albeit still limited, than in the U.S. What does that say about the United States, the standard bearer of Western Democracy? What does this say about the highly educated women who are given these opportunities and seek leadership roles in the United States? Finally, what does it say about the legal academy, which has had the opportunity to educate so many of these would be female leaders? This paper will attempt to shed some light on these questions by considering them through the lens of gender theory. In particular, I will consider the success of women leaders in the context of my belief that gender differences should be recognized and supported by the law, the policy makers, the voters, the academy and all those in positions in power, when such differences provide valuable contributions to society.

Female leaders find themselves either aspiring to or simply becoming functionally men.¹ Male leadership is the model we have since, historically, men have been the leaders. And thus, women leaders believe that to lead they must be like the successful models of leaders that have preceded them – men. This focus on leading like men is

¹ See Nancy E. Shurtz, *Lighting the Lantern: Vision of an All – Women Law School*, 16 *Hastings’ Women’s L. J.* 63, 63 (2004); Laura R. Hammargren, *Comment, Servant Leadership and Women in the Law: A Nexus of Women, Leadership and the Legal Profession*, 4 *University of St. Thomas L. J.* 624 (2007).

buttressed by the U.S. emphasis on gender neutrality -- constitutionally, legislatively and socio-culturally.² Since according to gender neutrality, equality is achieved through equivalent treatment of men and women, it follows that women aspiring to be leaders would attempt to act in a manner equivalent to men and then hope to achieve the same success as men have in those roles.

However, attempting to be like men in order to lead has proved challenging for women. There have been some notable exceptions – for instance, Golda Meir, who Ben Gurion called the only man in his cabinet and Margaret Thatcher often referred to as the “iron lady.” However, in general, women have been unconvincing when trying to fit into a male mold of leadership. Rather, in order to achieve our full potential as leaders, women must go beyond the male model of leadership, women must move beyond trying to be just like men. Instead, female leaders should be proud of their different lives, experiences and contexts that have also helped develop society in positive directions and should therefore be highly valued by society. We must instill in our female law students who may become future leaders the comfort to embrace such differences, which will help to create new forms of leadership that grow organically from their own experiences as women. Only then will women truly realize their full potential as leaders.

II. DEFINING DIFFERENCE

² See e.g., Ruth Bader Ginsburg, *Gender and the Constitution*, 44 *Cin. L. Rev.* 1 (1975); Catherine Mackinnon, *Difference and Dominance*, in *FEMINISM UNMODIFIED: DISCOURSES IN LIFE AND LAW* 32-40 (1987); Marjorie Shultz, *Contractual Ordering of Marriage: A New Model for State Policy*, 70 *Cal. L. Rev.* 204; Vicki Shultz, *Life's Work*, 100 *Colum. L. Rev.* 1881 (2000).

When discussing gender theory and gender difference care must be taken to define difference explicitly or else it can be abused and used to suppress women instead of empowering them.³

1) Substance, Not Form

When stressing the importance of valuing difference in women's lives, I am referring to substance, not form, I am not referring to contentions that women innately have different leadership styles. A plethora of scholars and researchers have made such arguments.⁴ This literature tends to praise women for their strengths in collaboration, listening and empathizing as opposed to the more hard edged hierarchal tactics men use in leadership.⁵ I will not address the accuracy, benefits or drawbacks of collaborative versus authoritarian leadership. The question I am addressing is not the form of leadership, but the substance of how women in leadership should present their qualifications to lead, which issues they focus upon when rallying their followers or constituents, and what they set out to accomplish as leaders.

2) Experiential Difference, Not Innate

In fact, I am not talking about "natural" differences at all in the context of women's leadership – although I do believe that there are some⁶ – I am talking about experiential differences in women's lives as opposed to men's lives. Some have

³ See e.g., Mackinnon, *supra* note 2 at 32-33 (arguing that difference that is developed within hierarchy may perpetuate subordination); Pamela Laufer-Ukeles, *Selective Recognition of Gender Difference in the Law: Revaluing the Caretaker Role*, 31 Harv. J. L. & Gender 1, 26, 42-45 (2008) (discussing different kinds of gender difference and the nuanced approach that must be used in determining whether difference should be recognized and supported or ignored); Christine Littleton, *Restructuring Sexual Equality*, 75 Cal. L. Rev. 1279, 1327 (1987).

⁴ See e.g., Alice H. Eagly et al., SOCIAL ROLE THEORY OF SEX DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES: A CURRENT APPRAISAL, IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF GENDER 123 (THOMAS ECKES & HANNS M. TRAUTNER EDS., 2000); Catalyst Inc., *Women "Take Care," Men "Take Charge." Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed* (2005); Holly English, *Gender on Trial: Sexual Stereotypes and Work/Life Balance in the Legal Workplace* 124-125 (2004).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 3 at 40.

purported to find natural difference in women's modes of communication, comprehension, values and goals,⁷ and others have made suggestions about women's innate inability to excel as scientists and mathematicians.⁸ I believe theories about women's innate differences should be confined to the eminently clear and obvious, i.e., gestation, breastfeeding, body parts, body size and sexuality.⁹ Attributing other differences to innate abilities is too susceptible to perversion and to use as a tool of discrimination.¹⁰

Rather, in this context, I am referring only to differences in women's experiences or socio-cultural differences,¹¹ differences in the lives that women live. These differences may have initially derived from sex, but are not sex specific and can be readily adopted by men¹² – like the child caretaker role.¹³ Yet, despite men's ability to adopt this role, caretaking still has a gendered quality because it is a traditional female role, and its marginalization derives from its femininity. Moreover, simply put, mothers still do a lot more caretaking of their children than the men who fathered those children.¹⁴

⁷ See e.g., Carol Gilligan, *IN A DIFFERENT VOICE: PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT* (1993); Robin West, *The Difference in Women's Hedonic Lives: A Phenomenological Critique of Feminist Legal Theory*, 3 *Wis. Women's L. J.* 81, 87 (1987).

⁸ Marcella Bombardieri, *Summers' Remarks on Women Draw Fire*, *Boston Globe*, Jan. 17, 2005 at A1.

⁹ See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 3 at 40.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.* at 40-41.

¹² *Id.* at 40-41.

¹³ *Id.* at 40.

¹⁴ See e.g., The November 2004 U.S. Bureau of Statistic Report entitled "American Families and Living Arrangements" indicates that approximately 30% of mothers stay out of the workforce full-time to care for children compared to 5% of fathers. See <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html> (last visited January 11, 2007); Ira Mark Ellman, *Divorce Rates, Marriage Rates, and The Problematic Persistence of Traditional Marital Roles*, 34 *Fam. L. Q.* 1, 19-31 (2000) (indicating that when a husband's income is above \$75,000 the vast majority of married mothers do not work full-time); Donald R. Williams, *Women's Part-Time Employment: A Gross Flows Analysis*, *Monthly Labor Rev.* 36 (Apr. 1995) (most married mothers still work primarily part-time); Joan Williams, *It's Snowing Down South: How to Help Mothers and Avoid Recycling the Sameness/Difference Debate*, 102 *Colum. L. Rev.* 812, 828-30 (2002) ("Today, two out of three mothers are employed less than forty hours a week during the key years of career advancement – and eighty-five percent of women become mothers."); Arlie Hochschild & Anne Machung, *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home* (1989) (documenting the phenomena of

Women's lives are affected by this caretaking. Positively, they are much more involved in the every day needs and experiences of the children and arguably are more attuned with the rhythms, problems and core of family life. Negatively, their market work is compromised and mothers spend considerably less hours working outside of the home than fathers. These differences matter. Not because they are inherent, but because they are differences that provide women with different perspectives, insights and experiences.

III. BEYOND GENDER NEUTRALITY – VALUING WOMEN'S DIFFERENT LIVES

Most studies of the struggles of women in the workplace, as lawyers, in the academy and as leaders focus on discrimination, the problems of stereotyping and assuring equal access to women.¹⁵ Scholars, researchers, judges and legislators have focused on: (1) the need to ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work;¹⁶ (2) the need to prevent male leaders from demanding that women act like their visions of how women should act;¹⁷ (3) the need to transform workplaces to prevent intimidation and hostile environments that inhibit women's success;¹⁸ and (4) the need to reconceive the workplace to allow caregiving parents to both thrive at work and fulfill family responsibilities at home.¹⁹ It is well settled among feminists, at least, that such reforms

the second-shift wherein working mothers retain significantly more domestic responsibility than their husbands).

¹⁵ See e.g., Naomi Cahn and Michael Selmi, *The Glass Ceiling*, 65 Md. L. Rev. 435, 435-436 (2006).

¹⁶ American Bar Association & NALP Foundation for Law Career Research and Education, *After the JD: First Results of a National Study of Legal Careers* (2004); Hope Viner Samborn, *10 Years and Counting: Gender Disparities in Salary and Advancement Continue in the Legal Workplace*, 14 PERSPECTIVES 12 (2005).

¹⁷ See *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins*, 490 U.S. 228, 262 (1989) (sex discrimination found where comments demonstrated that women passed over for partnership was overlooked because of her many attributes).

¹⁸ See e.g., Tristin K. Green, *Work Culture and Discrimination*, 93 Cal. L. Rev. 623 (2005).

¹⁹ Cahn & Selmi, *supra* note 15 at 436-437; Joan Williams, *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It* 99-100 (2002).

are integral to the process of increasing women's freedom, growth and integration in the workplace.²⁰

Essentially, with the exception of certain sexual harassment scenarios,²¹ the quest to improve the plight of women in the workplace by providing equal access for women through eliminating stereotypes and workplace discrimination is a quest for gender neutrality. A quest for both sexes to be treated the same in the workplace environment and to allow both sexes to thrive in that scenario under potentially transformative, but still equivalent rules.²² The focus on gender neutrality, which emphasizes parallel treatment of men and women, is the dominant prescription in the U.S. for achieving equality.²³

Yet, this emphasis on gender neutrality has hobbled female leadership in this country and we must aim for even more. Gender neutrality has been translated in the context of leadership as an assumption that equality means sameness and therefore the key to female success is being the way that men have always been. However, the vast majority of women live different lives, have different social contexts, associations and perspectives and thus are always strained in trying to live and lead by male rules. Women should use these differences to inspire others; such differences must be turned from either irrelevant or an embarrassment to a source of pride and power. In other words, for women to live up to their full leadership potential, women must not only have

²⁰ See *id.* See also, Herma Hill Kay, *Equality and Difference: A Perspective on No-Fault Divorce and Its Aftermath*, 56 U. Cin. L. Rev. 1, 78 (1987); Mackinnon, *supra* note 14 at 39-45.

²¹ In certain sexual harassment scenarios, the law attempts to understand that women may experience a hostile work environment differently than men. See *e.g.*, *Cardin v. Via Tropical Fruits, Inc.*, No. 88-14201, 1993 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 16302, at *24-25 & n.4 (S.D. Fla. July 9, 1993); .

²² See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 3 at 30-32.

²³ See *e.g.*, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, *Gender and the Constitution*, 44 Cin. L. Rev. 1 (1975); Joseph Tussman & Jacobus tenBroek, *The Equal Protection of the Laws*, 37 Cal. L. Rev. 341, 344 (1945); Mackinnon, *supra* note 2 at 32-40. Littleton, *supra* note 3 at 1304-1308.

equal access as men, they must have equal access as women. Their experiences as women, whether the same or different than men's experiences, must be given equal credence and value when such experiences benefit society as a whole.

What do I mean by "benefit society as a whole"? Although gender neutrality does injustice to women's different lives by expecting women to succeed by acting the same as men, gender differences should not always be recognized because they could have developed under discriminatory and hierarchal circumstances.²⁴ Moreover, always valuing female difference is divisive, replicating the approach of male dominated society where all male norms and experiences were valued.²⁵ Rather, only those differences that have **secondary justifications by providing value to society beyond just being women's attributes and experiences should be promoted.** Those gender differences must be revalued and affirmatively recognized to ensure that women's work is fairly reflected in society.

For instance, because caretaking provides value to society, supporting dependents and helping to raise valuable co-inhabitants and citizens,²⁶ this difference should be recognized and supported in a manner that gives proper respect for the critical work done by caregivers. It is not something that women or men should try to overcome or do away with. Most women purport to enjoy their caretaking functions and the impact such caretaking has on their lives.²⁷ Domesticity in the context of caretaking is not so much a

²⁴ See Mackinnon, *supra* note 2 at 32-33

²⁵ See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 2 at 26.

²⁶ See Anne Laquer Estin, *Maintenance, Alimony and Rehabilitation of Family Care*, 71 N.C. L. Rev. 721, 787-802 (1992-93); 787-802; Laura T. Kessler, *The Attachment Gap: Employment Discrimination Law, Women's Cultural Caregiving and the Limits of Economic and Liberal Theory*, 34 U. Mich. J. L. Reform 371 (2001); Mary Becker, *infra* note 27 at 61.

²⁷ See Daphne Spain & Suzanne M. Biachi, *Balancing Act: Motherhood, Marriage and Employment Among American Women* 171-173 (1996) (social scientists have repeatedly found "that although dual-earner wives do two or three times the amount of domestic work their husbands do, less than one-third of

“problem” that must be overcome,²⁸ as it is often referred to in legal scholarship, but a way of life that is both necessary and valuable and therefore must be revalued by society. Women and men should be proud of the work that they do raising their children and make such caretaking an explicit part of their narratives as leaders. Such caretaking is marginalized only when women are marginalized because discrimination against women leads to devaluing their traditional contributions to society regardless of the value of such contributions.²⁹

As I have argued elsewhere, at divorce caretaking should be valued by instituting the primary caretaker presumption in custody disputes and caretaker support payments as a justification for alimony.³⁰ Women’s gendered caretaking role should be valued in the context of leadership by becoming an explicit part of the story for those female and male leaders who nurture; both with regard to proving their credentials and with regard to the focus of their leadership efforts.

On the other hand, when important societal values are not at stake – and these judgment calls need to be made – such as keeping women in the home and out of the workforce for their own protection – such different experiences should not be recognized and valued.³¹

III. ACCEPTING, NOT FIGHTING, THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

wives report the division of the daily family work as unfair.”); Alan J. Hawkins, Christina M. Marshall & Sarah M. Allen, *the Orientation Toward Domestic Labor Questionnaire: Exploring Dual-Earner Wives’ Sense of Fairness About Family Work*, 12 J. Fam. Psychol. 244 (1998); Mary Becker, *Care and Feminists*, 17 Wis. Women’s L. J. 57, 70-71 (2002).

²⁸ Williams, *supra* note 19 at 3.

²⁹ See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 3 at 40-41; Catherine Mackinnon, *On Exceptionality: Women as Women in Law, in Feminism Unmodified: Discourses in Life* 73 (1987).

³⁰ See Laufer-Ukeles, *supra* note 3 at 47-65.

³¹ See *id.* at 42-47.

To become great leaders women should not have to lead traditional male lives, or have traditional male experiences. To the contrary, paths to leadership can be complex and varied and women should take advantage of their own unique perspectives and abilities when leading others, as long as those experiences are valuable and better society as a whole.

For instance, despite women's presence in graduating classes in law schools being on par with or even superseding their male peers, women are still way behind in terms of equity partnerships in law firms.³² Some of this gap is likely discrimination, which needs to be overcome. However, much of this gap has to do with different work/ family balances that people choose.³³ Many women are experiencing careers in law, but not at the same rate, for as many hours per week or perhaps as financially profitably as men. Countless women relate their struggles at law firms competing with the billable hours of men who simply do not make the same work/family choices that they do.³⁴ Many successful female lawyers are instead found in companies, public interest organizations, government, academia and small firms that potentially allow a work/family balance that they are more comfortable with.³⁵ Other women take time off to raise children. They work part-time, flex-time or they work at less prestigious jobs. They earn less but care

³² See Angela M. Bradstreet, *Breaking the Glass Ceiling*, 35 Fall Brief 63, 64 (2005) ("...despite such a strong pipeline, a huge gender disparity remains at the top levels of our profession. Only 16 percent of the partners at law firms nationwide are women. The figures for managing partners are even more alarming, with barely 5 percent being women. Similarly, merely 13.7 percent of general counsel of Fortune 500 companies are females."); Shurtz, *supra* note 1 at 63.

³³ See Elizabeth S. Foster, *The Glass Ceiling in the Legal Profession: Why Do Law Firms Still Have So Few Female Partners?*, 42 UCLA L. Rev. 1631, 1650-51 n.88-91 (1995).

³⁴ See e.g., Williams, *supra* note 19 at 64-81. Employed women spend double the amount of time on family care as employed men. See Deborah L. Rhode, *Speaking of Sex: The Denial of Gender Equality* 149-153 (1997).

³⁵ Rhode, *supra* note 32 at 320; Susan Estrich, *Sex and Power* (2000). Cf. Robert Stevens, *Law Schools and Law Students*, 59 Va. L. Rev. 551, 611-16 (1973) (female law students are more interested in using law to change society than in adversarial role prevalent in law firms); See Rebecca Korzec, *Working On The "Mommy-Track": Motherhood and Women Lawyers*, 8 Hastings Women's L.J. 117, 117-18 (1997)

more. Instead of regretting these differences and looking to overcome them, we should accept them. Those choices and balances are valuable and worth preserving, whether they are made by men or women, both for the sake of their children and for their own sakes.³⁶ Such balancing provides great insight and inspiration. A balanced life also provides worthy experiences from which to launch into leadership roles. A person should be just as proud of a resume that demonstrates balance and perspective with regard to children as does one that shows ambition and advancement. Both lives are valuable to society and both sets of experience may foster great leaders.

Moreover, women should not hesitate to lead on “women’s” issues – or issues about which they have unique perspectives. Women, who have struggled to balance work and family for ages have a bird’s eye view of such struggles that men are only just beginning to recognize. It is particularly in issues such as health care, education, family leave and other social services legislation that showcases women’s different perspectives. Moreover, they are no less important to U.S. success than military might. Yet, women fear that leading on such issues and talking about gender openly threatens to marginalize them. Women need to make sure that this does not happen. The only way to succeed is to get comfort with different perspectives, be willing to lead on such issues and force society to accept and acknowledge such leadership. If women shrink from areas of their own expertise for fear of marginalization, we handicap ourselves without ever giving society a chance to properly value us.

In terms of education, we should bring these lessons into our classrooms. Some have suggested as a metaphor that women may only come into their own without

³⁶ See *infra* note 27 to 30 and accompanying text.

modeling themselves on men in an all women's law school.³⁷ Barring that possibility, law professors, especially female law professors, must convey to students that life is more complex than just a job and that there are many different paths to success and models of leadership. For this to happen, we must bring issues of gender and family choices into our law school classes to raise consciousness. We have to move beyond equal protection and gender neutrality in our classrooms. We must demonstrate how laws provide a particular vision of equality embodied in gender neutrality and provide an alternative to the sole focus on gender neutrality that our students can feel comfortable with.³⁸ Talking about gender and female differences from mainstream male perspectives in courses ranging from criminal law to family law to employment discrimination and constitutional law, as well as introducing gender theory classes, can help make women feel comfortable with difference, and enable them to feel that relating to difference in their lives is legitimate instead of irrelevant or even shameful.

For example, I remember raising the issue of gender difference in the context of the fighting words doctrine in constitutional law.³⁹ I simply did not think that the examples we explored in the cases would lead most women to fight. A hush fell over the 150 person Harvard Law School class that I will never forget for just mentioning that women might be different than men. After class, some peers explained that I was being sexist for saying that women were different than men. I was baffled. How can it be

³⁷ See Shurtz, *supra* note 1 at 63 (“I therefore believe that an all women’s law school may be a vital wellspring from which young women may claim their true identities, speak with their natural voices, and see the world with a fresh unfiltered light.”)

³⁸ Bernice R. Sandler, *The Classroom Climate: Still a Chilly One for Women*, in *Educating Men and Women Together: Coeducation in a Changing World* 113 (1987) (describing how devaluing women’s experiences and differences hampers their success in law school). Ann E. Freedman, *Feminist Legal Method in Action: Challenging Racism, Sexism and Homophobia in Law School*, 24 Ga. L. Rev. 849 (1990).

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sexist to raise gender difference? Why should women be embarrassed by their differences? Particularly when such differences provide social value? Legitimizing such discussion must start with professors who can instill comfort with and respect for different female lives and perspectives that can carry beyond law school and into leadership roles.

In sum, women's equality is not just about being able to do the same things as men, although this is certainly part of it – it is going farther and changing the very meaning of what it means to be successful and thus be worthy of leadership roles. Great leaders are able to inspire by tapping into their own insights and doing things first and successfully motivating others to do the same. Women should be encouraged to tap into whatever insights they have gained whether from doing market work or care work. Difference for women can be channeled into power, because different experiences lead to different perspectives and understandings. Women need to be encouraged and taught to use this power.

IV. LEADING THROUGH COMFORT WITH DIFFERENCE – STRONG *WOMEN* LEADERS

What does this argument for an acceptance and support of gender difference, when such difference provides value to society as a whole, mean with regard to the break through election year of 2008, where women were more present as leaders than ever. Where one woman just nearly clinched the democratic nomination and another was the first Republican vice presidential nominee? When one woman claimed “18 million cracks” in the ultimate glass ceiling and another encouraged her supporters to just “shatter the ceiling once and for all,” and they both fell short?

First, there was concrete progress for women leaders being comfortable as women. Sarah Palin proudly announced that before entering politics by joining the city council in her home town, she was just “an average hockey mom in Alaska” and mother. She did not proceed on a typical male track to leadership. While many wondered whether she had enough foreign policy experience to be President, as they did with regard to Barack Obama, arguably it was her failure to convey competence with the issues as opposed to her being a “hockey mom” that will be remembered as her shortcoming. In fact, many rallied around her forthrightness with regard to her atypical background and cheered the grit and commitment evident in her unusual rise to leadership. I too happen to be a proud hockey mom and I was gratified to have her declare that part of her background so proudly instead of ignoring it – as most women and men generally do to the “domestic” part of their lives.

Second, we learned a lot from Hillary Clinton’s campaign. While early on there was concern about Hillary Clinton’s ability to appear “strong enough” to be commander in chief,⁴⁰ in reality, as the campaign progressed, her qualifications in that regard were not seriously challenged and polls indicated comfort with her in that role. On the other hand, her attempts to emphasize her military readiness caused embarrassment. Her statement that she arrived in Bosnia under fire as evidence of her military mettle was both unnecessary and untrue.⁴¹ Perhaps, what went wrong was that she was trying to relate an experience on someone else’s terms -- to reference herself as someone who faced gunfire. Hillary Clinton has faced many fires, has proven to work well under pressure and as an effective manager; she did not have to stretch her experience to include experience in

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Bill Nichols, *Can Hillary be Elected Commander in Chief*, USA Today (July 18, 2005).

⁴¹ Patrick Healy and Katherine Q. Seelye, *Clinton Says She Misspoke About Dodging Sniper Fire*, N.Y. Times (March 25, 2008)

combat, which has traditionally been the province of men, in order to seem prepared to be commander in chief. There have been quite a few successful Presidents that were not military heroes, including FDR and Woodrow Wilson. Hillary Clinton and women generally can lead even in the realm of the military through their understanding of foreign affairs, the need to strategize, plan and organize, as well as exercise judgment and consult with military leaders – just as men can. It is expected that men will be able to handle health care policy that effects women, so to the vast majority of women who do not have combat experience can handle the job of President.

[Instead of merely contending that she had thirty-five years of experience preparing her for the job of president without being more specific, opening herself up to attacks that she was “merely” the first-lady during much of that period, she should have explicitly demanded respect for all that she did experience and accomplish as first-lady. Although the position of first-lady only comes with the right marriage, such experience still counts. Hillary used her role as first-lady in ground-breaking and effective ways, a challenging and inspirational feat. The manner in which being a woman, wife and mother affected her experience should have been front and center instead of implicit. It would have presented a more compelling story and it did not have to be angry or negative. As a woman, she could have been President for both men and women while still having lived the gendered life of a woman. That is the way men lead – comfortable in their own contexts and life experiences – and, in order to increase their success, that is how women should lead.]

It’s OK to have on your resume, “hockey mom” or “hockey dad” for that matter; Palin demonstrated you can even use it as a strength. Its OK that Hillary shed a tear in

describing how difficult the campaign was, because this demonstrated genuine raw emotion and her commitment to service, such a show of emotion should not be something to be looked down if displayed by men either. Women should change the face of political leadership not just make reasonable but imperfect attempts to be like men. Women will be at their most powerful and inspirational if they find comfort with gender role differences and use them to learn and lead in society.

V. CONCLUSION

In sum, women are hobbled as leaders if they are not valued for all their experiences as women. They are hobbled if they are forced to appear to be the same as male leaders, since men have done all the leading in the past. To reach their full potential women must get more comfort with their own, different paths to leadership and use these perspectives and experiences as strengths. The United States' focus on gender neutrality and the legal systems focus on equal access has gone too far, constraining instead of enabling women's leadership. Of course women need equal access, but they need more – they need to be respected for who they are and the experiences and perspectives they bring to the table, not only despite their not being male, but because they are female. We must bring these lessons into the classroom to teach a new generation of women to be proud of who they are and what life choices they make and not teach them that, to succeed, they need to live life like the male leaders that came before them. Women must not only engage as leaders they must pioneer their own leadership roles.