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Gender and ethnicity in politics: An intersectional approach to New Zealand and
French media coverage

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Flora Galy-Badenas

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Abstract

Media play an important role in reinforcing dominant ideologies and in shaping people's opinions. Previous studies of media representations of women politicians, many conducted in the US, have illustrated how biased coverage may convey a negative image of these women politicians to an audience. This project contributes to the literature by examining discriminatory media discourses, with a special focus on the representations of minority women politicians outside of the North American context. It investigates the role media discourses play in reproducing and perpetuating hegemonic ideologies that sustain the oppression of and discrimination against some groups in the specific contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France. To this effect, this project analyses media representation of five high-profile women politicians: Jacinda Ardern, Rachida Dati, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, Metiria Turei, and Paula Bennett.

Grounded in social constructionism, this project draws on concepts of neoliberal-feminism, Othering, anti-Māori themes, and intersectionality. Methods used include reflexive thematic analysis, feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA), and intersectionality to analyse data from mainstream news media in Aotearoa New Zealand and France. This project includes three empirical studies. The first one explores the reproduction of, and to some extent the challenging of, dominant ideologies about gender roles in pregnancy, parenthood, and work/family balance through coverage of Ardern's pregnancy in both New Zealand and international media. The following two articles extend Article I by integrating the concept of intersectionality into the analysis to consider how the combination of various social identities contribute to the construction of varying discriminatory discourses in culturally diverse environments. Article II examines the Othering of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem in French newspapers *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, arguing that the immigrant background of both ministers is frequently mentioned in their coverage, especially in reference to their missteps, which effectively render them illegitimate in their ministerial roles. The intersection of other social identities furthers the Othering process present in the coverage of these two minority women politicians. Finally, Article III explores the construction of Turei and Bennett in terms of anti-Māori themes in New Zealand media, demonstrating that both ministers are denigrated both as individuals and in their political roles, but on different grounds: Bennett's alignment to the Establishment is reflected in the more gendered coverage she received;

whereas Turei, who represents the anti-Establishment, is marginalised for her Māoriness along with her gender.

Results of all three studies illuminate the complexity of discourses, especially when they involve various intersecting social identities, and the importance of taking into account the societal, political, and historical context in which media discourses are constructed. This research project contributes to the gendered and racialised mediation literature, and furthers the discussion on intersectionality.

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List of Original Articles

- i. Galy-Badenas, F. & Sommier, M. (2021). “A baby bump for women’s rights”: Analysing local and international media coverage of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy. *Feminist Media Studies* (online first)
- ii. Galy-Badenas, F. & Gray, F. E. (2020). Media Coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem: An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of Minority Women in the French Political Context. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 43(2), 181-201
- iii. Galy-Badenas, F., Gray, F. E., & Cassidy, F. (2021). An intersectional approach to media coverage of politics in New Zealand: The case of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett. *Media International Australia* (online first)

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Glossary

French

Beurette: Maghrebian young woman.

Diversité: generally refers to plurality. In the French context, however, *diversité* refers to diversity of origins, and more specifically to people who are not white and who are immigrants, or of immigrant background, from a non-European country.

Maghrébin: refers to inhabitants of the Maghreb region, located in North Africa. Many countries from the Maghreb region were former French colonies.

Ministère Régalien: refers to five ministries that are considered as foundational of the nation. Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior (the equivalence to Home Secretary in the UK or Secretary of Homeland Security in the US), Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Māori

Aotearoa: the Māori name for New Zealand. Aotearoa also means “long white cloud”.

Hapū: subtribe

Iwi: tribe

Kauae: jaw, chin

Marae: refers to the open area in front of the *wharenui* (carved meeting house), where formal greetings and discussions take place. *Marae* is also commonly used to refer to the whole complex.

Moko: Māori tattooing designs on the face or body done under traditional protocols

Tāne: men

Tangata Whenua: local people, indigenous people

Te Reo: Māori language

Te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi

Tikanga: custom, protocol - the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the Māori social context

Wāhine: women

Chapter 1 Introduction

“Hello, Myriam El Khomri. 37-year-old. The youngest member of the government. You said, ‘I am Moroccan from my father’s side’. What character traits does that give you? [...] You decided to pursue your career under your maiden name, while you could have introduced yourself under your marital name. Your husband is a Bordelais pur sucre¹. Why? Is it important to show that, in France, one can be as successful whether called El Khomri or Marceline Dupont?”² (RTL, 3.11.2015)

The extract above is the beginning of a radio interview of Myriam El Khomri, a French woman politician of Moroccan descent, newly appointed Minister of Labour at the time of the interview. Instead of starting off the interview asking El Khomri about the ideas she planned to develop and implement as Labour Minister, Olivier Mazerolle, a 73-year-old French white man journalist, interrogated Myriam El Khomri about her Moroccan origins, and the meaning behind her choice to keep her foreign-sounding maiden name, despite being married to a “pure” – meaning “white” and of French descent - French man. Besides being infuriating at a personal level, the clear intersection of sexist, misogynist, and racist elements in this interview sparked questions about the role of media as mirror of and creator of dominant discourses and societal values. In twenty-first century France, how is it acceptable to ask discriminatory questions so blatantly and in a public forum? What does this suggest about French society? How does such questioning in broadcast media reflect the French norms and values? What kind of message does such questioning convey to the audience? What does that tell the audience about the authority and legitimacy of women, and more particularly minority women, as political figures? This interview prompted my interest in examining discriminatory media discourses, with a special focus on the representations of

¹ It is underlined that the husband is a white French man, whose family has been “white” and living in Bordeaux for many generations.

² Translated from French by the author: “Bonjour Myriam El Khomri. 37 ans. La benjamine du gouvernement. Vous dites ‘Je suis Marocaine par mon père.’ Ça donne quel trait de caractère ? [...] Vous avez décidé de faire carrière sous votre nom de jeune fille alors que vous auriez pu vous présenter avec votre nom de femme mariée. Votre mari est un Bordelais pur sucre. Pourquoi? Parce que c'est important de montrer qu'en France, quand on s'appelle El Khomri, on peut réussir tout aussi bien que, je ne sais pas moi, Marceline Dupont?”

minority women politicians. What was intriguing to me was the obvious focus on El Khomri's gender and ethnicity, and how these two identities were intertwined to be discriminatory, both on their own and together. This line of interest brought me to the concept of intersectionality, which has been an essential component of this research.

Two years later, on the other side of the world, on August 2, 2017, 49-year-old New Zealand broadcaster Mark Richardson, a white man, questioned the freshly elected Leader to the Labour Party, Jacinda Ardern, about her motherhood plans during a potential term as Prime Minister. Elected Prime Minister in September 2017, Ardern would subsequently announce her pregnancy early in 2018. Unlike El Khomri who answered the questions, Ardern told Richardson off by retorting that it was unacceptable to still be asking women this line of questions. Subsequently, the sexist and misogynistic interview was relayed on Twitter, which resulted in heated debates. These two situations prompted the overall research focus for this thesis: the role media discourses play in reproducing and perpetuating hegemonic ideologies that sustain the oppression of and discrimination against some groups in the specific contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France. At the time of writing, as *Stuff*, a New Zealand mainstream online media outlet, reflects on its own 163 years of racist portrayal of Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, this thesis has a particular resonance and topicality. After months of internal investigation, the November 30, 2020 front page of *Stuff* was dedicated to an apology to Māori, for over a century of racist and marginalising coverage. Alongside the apology, *Stuff* introduced a new company charter with Te Tiriti o Waitangi at its core. *Stuff* chief executive and owner Sinead Boucher explained this change as an act of coherence in power accountability:

If you think the job of the news media, in our company and others, is to hold the powerful to account, well, we are the powerful. [...] We really have had an enormous impact in shaping public thought in New Zealand and societal norms, not just reflecting them, and I think it is only fitting that a progressive company can pause and have a look at itself. (Williams, 2020)

Scholars have abundantly illustrated the important role media hold in reinforcing dominant ideologies and in shaping people's opinions (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Deckert, 2020; Gray, 2019; Rankine et al., 2014; Ross, 2010, 2017; Trimble, 2014; Wood, 2003 to cite a few). However, an instance when a prominent mainstream news media organisation recognises,

self-reflects on that power and acts on it is rather uncommon, and an important first step towards significant and substantial changes.

Before addressing more specifically the scope and aims of this thesis, I would like to briefly explain my positionality. As a researcher who engages with topics related to minority groups, it is important to be transparent about my identities and the undeniable position of privilege that I speak from, which assuredly inform the lens through which I am approaching and discussing this research topic (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Mohanty, 2003). My identities, opinions, and life experiences give me a unique and specific approach, understanding, and interpretation of the topic that it is useful for a reader to be aware of. I am a white French woman, who has been living outside of France for the past 10 years (in Finland, Romania, and New Zealand presently). As far as I can remember (and have been told), I have always been animated by injustices and inequalities, and more particularly gender inequalities. This concern for injustice likely informs my dislike for the capitalist/neoliberal (and patriarchal) system(s) that exploits the many to the (monetary) benefit of a few. Although I always considered myself an outspoken feminist, my doctoral journey has taught me that I align with a more intersectional branch of feminism. While my activist/feminist mind drew me to this topic, my various travels and experiences of living abroad, and a master’s degree in intercultural communication, have certainly informed the cultural approach taken in this thesis. Therefore, I write from the position of a white French anti-capitalist/anti-neoliberal intersectional feminist in New Zealand.

News media’s alleged objectivity constructs it as a reliable, legitimate, and trusted source of information. This perceived reliability, in turn, provides news media with the tools and opportunity to influence society through discourses, and to sustain and normalise a certain societal order. To understand the mechanisms that enable media to perpetuate hegemonic ideologies may ultimately provide tools to change news media discourses to fairer and more inclusive and respectful ones. This thesis aims to contribute to and expand on the current scholarship on biased media discourses by focusing on media coverage of women politicians in two culturally different countries: Aotearoa New Zealand and France. The differences in terms of gender equality (three women head of states versus none), colonial history (colonised versus coloniser), minority groups (indigenous people versus immigrants), and view of integration (biculturalism versus universalism) provide an interesting ground to observe how these differences are reflected in/influence media discourses. Therefore, to advance understanding of the perpetuation of hegemonic dominant discourses in the media,

this project analyses media representation of high-profile women politicians during specific personal and/or political events. To that aim, three separate studies were conducted. Article I, which focuses on the pregnancy of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in Aotearoa New Zealand, provides insights into the reproduction of dominant ideologies about gender roles in pregnancy, parenthood, and work/family balance. However, the study also illustrates how some discourses challenge the norms of parenthood, thereby challenging the dominant social order and ideology. Articles II and III expand on Article I by integrating the concept of intersectionality into the analysis to consider how the combination of various social identities construct varying discriminatory discourses in culturally diverse environments. In that regard, Article II focuses on two French women politicians of Maghrebian origins: Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, first woman ever appointed Minister of national education, higher education, and research; and Rachida Dati, one of first three minority women appointed Minister and pregnant as a single woman. Finally, Article III focuses on two Māori women politicians in Aotearoa New Zealand: Metiria Turei, who admitted to having committed benefit fraud as a young solo mother, and Paula Bennett, who underwent gastric bypass surgery and lost weight.

1.1 Aotearoa New Zealand

1.1.1 Women and / in Politics

The first country to grant women the right to vote in 1893, Aotearoa New Zealand cultivates the image of a progressive country: it has had three women Prime Ministers to date, one of whom became only the second pregnant head of state to have a baby while in office worldwide, and is the first country to have all of its highest political positions held simultaneously by women (McCrickard, 2017). However, despite gaining early suffrage, women were to wait until 1919 to win the right to stand for parliament; with the first Pākehā woman elected in 1933 and the first Māori woman in 1949 (Curtin, 2019). The results of the latest General Elections (17 October 2020) reinforce Aotearoa New Zealand's progressiveness. The new parliament reports 48% women, its highest number of women members of parliament (MPs) to date, 20% Māori MPs, 10% Pasifika MPs, 10% LGBTQ+ MPs, and finally the first African, Latin American, and Sri Lankan MPs; making it the most inclusive ever and most representative Parliament of the New Zealand population. Furthermore, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern again made worldwide headlines for her

“incredibly diverse” Cabinet (Andelane & Kronast, 2020): of a twenty-person Cabinet, she selected eight women, five Māori, three Pasifika, and three LGBTQ+ individuals. Ardern’s new Cabinet also contains several “firsts”: Grant Robertson, the first gay man deputy prime minister; and Nanaia Mahuta, a Māori *wāhine* with a *moko kauae*, first woman foreign minister in Aotearoa New Zealand’s history. This reshuffle in Cabinet members is “a bold political statement that places women, Māori and other minority groups” in the country’s top decision-making positions (Andelane & Kronast, 2020). However, despite the progressiveness and positive aspect of the Cabinet’s diversity, Ardern missed out on her self-set target of parity in cabinet (Curtin, 2020).

1.1.2 Colonised Land / Biculturalism

Although the first European explorers arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1642, colonization started in the early nineteenth century. At that time, a partnership agreement between representatives of Māori *iwi* and *hapū* and the British Crown led to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (*te Tiriti o Waitangi* in *te reo* Māori) on 6 February 1840 (Curtin, 2019). The British colonization process dismissed a somewhat more gender equalitarian Māori belief system in favour of Western patriarchal ideologies (Higgins & Meredith, 2017; Hokowhitu, 2008; Mikaere, 2003; Simmonds, 2011). For instance, Māori women who used to be involved in the affairs of the tribe were disregarded by British settlers. British settlers’ struggle with Māori women leadership was reflected in *te Tiriti o Waitangi*, which counts thirteen Māori women signatures amongst some overall 512 signatures (Curtin, 2019; Higgins & Meredith, 2017). Initially designed to create unity, the Treaty of Waitangi was supposed to be the founding document of New Zealand that would see equally cohabiting Māori and British settlers. Initially drafted in English, the *te reo* Māori translation did not have the exact same meaning, which, resulted in breaches of the Treaty and, ultimately, caused conflict (Orange, 2012). In response to indigenous rights movements, the creation of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 enabled inquiries over breaches of Treaty by the Crown and created a structure for settlements to be negotiated (Terruhn, 2019). Starting in the mid-1980s, references to the Treaty of Waitangi in Parliamentary Acts served to acknowledge and propel the Treaty into New Zealand everyday life (Orange, 2012).

Biculturalism, in the Aotearoa New Zealand context, can be defined as “encompass[ing] various facets: based on various Treaty principles, biculturalism largely focuses on reconciliation for past injustices, cultural recognition, as well as efforts to address persistent

socioeconomic inequalities between Māori and Pākehā which are arguably the effect of settler colonialism” (Terruhn, 2019, p. 3). As Spoonley’s (1993) definition of Māori (*tangata whenua* – the indigenous people of the land of Aotearoa New Zealand) and Pākehā (“New Zealanders of a European background, whose cultural values and behaviour have been primarily formed from the experiences of being a member of the dominant group of New Zealand” (57)) suggests, the Māori and Pākehā relationship is deeply embedded in and shaped by colonial power dynamics (Terruhn, 2019). Since 1975, successive governments of different political sides have consistently worked on biculturalism through three key areas: i. To create the Waitangi Tribunal to investigate breaches and negotiate appropriate settlements; ii. To culturally recognise and revitalise te reo Māori, which became an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand in 1987; and iii. To introduce social policies to bridge the inequalities between Māori and Pākehā (Terruhn, 2019). However, it is important to emphasise that racial inequalities are still alive, and biculturalism still a work in progress in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1.2 France

1.2.1 Women and / in Politics

Regarding women and politics, France has been more conservative than Aotearoa New Zealand. Among the last countries to grant women the right to vote in 1945, France has yet to elect its first woman President of the Republic. With only one woman Prime Minister – Edith Cresson (albeit briefly between 1991 and 1992) – to date, the highest levels of the French political system remain mostly a men’s affair. The Nicolas Sarkozy presidency (2007-2012) marked a change in the French political landscape with a substantial increase of women ministers, and more significantly, the appointment of ethnically diverse women politicians to ministerial portfolios. However, the number of women ministers decreased along with Sarkozy’s mandate. François Hollande, successor to Sarkozy, appointed the first ever gender-equal government in 2012, although power was still unbalanced as most of the important portfolios (also called *ministers régaliens* or executive ministries) were held by men (Murray, 2012; 2013). The Hollande presidency (2012-2017) saw a number of women ministers of *diversité*, some of whom were appointed to central / *régaliens* ministries.

One of the 2017 Presidential election campaign promises of the current President, Emmanuel Macron, was to put gender equality at the forefront of his five-year term, and to create a

legitimate Ministry for Women's Rights in its own right. In January 2020, United Nation Women reported French women politicians making up 52.9% of the government (nine out of 17 ministers); however, this number has dropped to 50% with the latest government reshuffle (July 6, 2020). At the time of writing the government is constituted as follow: 22 women, of whom eight are ministers, nine are delegated ministers, and five are state secretaries; 22 men plus the Prime Minister, of whom eight are ministers, five are delegated ministers, and eight state secretaries (Gouvernement, n.d.). While Macron has ensured a continuous parity government, he remains short of keeping the full extent of his promise to date. Despite an equal number of women in government, the *ministers régaliens* remain overwhelmingly held by men, with only one - Ministry of Defense - headed by a woman. Furthermore, unlike his two predecessors, (women of) *diversité* are barely represented in Macron's government. Finally, Macron initially created a Secretary of State in charge of Equality between Women and Men and of the Fight Against Discriminations³, which, after the reshuffle, became the Delegated Ministry in charge of Equality between Women and Men, of Diversité and of Equality of Chances⁴. Unlike in various countries where a state secretary is a senior level position in government, in France, it is a junior minister that is attached to a Ministry and supervised by a Minister. Similarly, a delegated ministry is attached to and supervised by a Minister. The allocation of a Minister, Minister Delegate, or State Secretary to an issue, tends to indicate the importance given to such issue. Historically, few French Presidents of the Fifth Republic have formed a (full) Ministry for Women / Gender Equality (i.e. François Hollande had a Ministry for Equality between Women and Men throughout his term), which suggests the importance given to women (and gender equality) in France, to date.

1.2.2 Colonising Nation / Assimilationist and Universalist Perspectives

Starting in the 14th century and running through until the mid-20th century, France has a long history of colonization. Although many of France's colonies have (re)gained their independence (e.g. Algeria, Tunisia, Laos...), current overseas territories of France are remaining vestiges of the French colonial empire (e.g. Guadeloupe, French Guiana, New Caledonia...). France has a challenging history with some of its former colonies, especially Algeria, which still resonates to this day. The missionary-like approach to colonization (Hussey, 2014) can be seen as setting the premises for France's assimilationist view on

³ Secrétaire d'état chargée de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et de la lutte contre les discriminations.

⁴ Ministre déléguée chargée de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, de la diversité et de l'égalité des chances.

integration. France does not recognise any differences among French citizens, only between French citizens and foreigners. This is stipulated in the first article of the French Constitution, which enshrines “the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race, or religion⁵” (French Constitution, 1958). In that regard, France’s universalist view requires immigrants to fully assimilate to the French culture. One of the implications of that universalism translates, for instance, into the prohibition against collecting or recording an individual’s ethnicity and race in France. In 2018, the Assembly started a constitution revision process (which, at the time of writing this thesis is on standby) by unanimously voting to remove the word “race” to replace it by “gender”. The revised constitution would then state that France “shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of *gender*, origin, or religion”. The French colour-blind ideal falls short, and universalism only serves to turn a blind eye on the deeply rooted racial and ethnic discriminations that permeate the France society. The 2005 French riots (Fassin & Fassin, 2009), and more recently the resonance of the US Black Lives Matter movement in France serve as a reminder that race and ethnicity issues are alive in France and need to be addressed (Onishi, 2020).

⁵ La Constitution française « assure l’égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction d’origine, de race ou de religion ».

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Literature has showed the important role news media play in reflecting, reproducing, and perpetuating gender inequalities and discriminations, and normalising hegemonic ideologies inherent to the social system in Western societies (Wood, 2003). While the initial uni-dimensional gender approach of feminist analysis pointed to simple and clear power and privilege inequalities between men and women, the intersectional lens revealed a more complex system of power dynamics (at work within media representations) that affect men and women differently depending on their social identities.

Research has taken different angles to understand the process of perpetuating discrimination in news media: (i) news production, (ii) news content, and (iii) news reception and interpretation. First, scholarship on news production has shed light on the overpowering masculine construction of the newsroom in most Western societies (Bachmann, 2020; Ross & Carter, 2011). Similarly, scholars have illustrated the overwhelming representation of the dominant group and lack of diversity in the newsroom (Matheson, 2007; Hokowhitu & Devadas, 2013). The prominence of white (heterosexual) male journalists influences the news content, which reflects a white, heterosexual man's view of the important and relevant topics in society. In other words, Western journalism is defined by (white, heterosexual) men, for (white, heterosexual) men (Allen, 2016; Allen & Bruce, 2017; Ross & Carter, 2011). Second, studies on news content have illustrated the way media propagate hegemonic ideologies and maintain unequal power relations through constructing women and other minority groups in such ways that normalise their space and roles in society, and Otherize them from the dominant group (Al'Ghabra, 2018; Orgad, 2017; Phelan, 2009). Finally, literature on news reception suggests a gender divide in news media interests, suggesting, for instance, that men are more interested in political news than women (Bachmann, 2020; Blekesaune, Elvestad & Aalberg, 2012; Cohen, 2013). Overall, the scholarship illuminates the holistic process, operating in and via the media, that fabricates and sends message about the role, place, and behaviour expected of men and women in society (Bachmann, 2020).

This thesis focuses on the media content process by analysing the discursive reproduction of hegemonic ideologies (patriarchy, whiteness) through media coverage of white and minority women politicians in two Western countries: Aotearoa New Zealand and France. First, an overview of the literature on media coverage and representation of women and minority

women politicians is provided. The following chapter addresses the theoretical framework applied in this thesis. The epistemological positioning of the study is addressed first. Then, media discourse, which is the primary analytical focus of this thesis, is discussed in connection to theories and concepts that have been used in the three articles that constitute this thesis. Then, the concept of intersectionality, which informs the overall theoretical framework of this thesis, is discussed. Chapter four provides an overview of the methods employed in this thesis. Finally, Chapter five introduces the three articles that constitute this thesis, and Chapter six provides a summary of the main discussion points.

2.1 Media coverage of women politicians

There is no shortage of examples of bias in media coverage of women politicians. A large body of literature (Bligh, Schlehofer, Casad, & Gaffney, 2012; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Trimble, Raphael, Sampert, Wagner, & Gerrits, 2015) has illustrated myriad ways women politicians are differently, less frequently, and often negatively covered compared to their male counterparts. The media coverage of (white) women politicians has been a primary focus of research to date, especially with respect to female candidates in various elections in North America. Initial studies of women, politics, and the media paid attention to the amount of coverage received by women politicians. Tuchman (1978) has illustrated how mass media symbolically annihilate women. The trivialisation, omission, and condemnation observed in coverage of women politicians effectively estrange them from the political realm and their male peers. As women politicians became more visible in the media, scholars have changed focus from quantity of coverage to the type of coverage received. Illustrative of that new phase in gender theory, the concept of gendered mediation refers to the process of biased media coverage of women politicians. Referred to as “the more subtle, but arguably more insidious, form of bias” (Gidengil & Everitt, 1999, p. 49), gendered mediation represents the coverage of political news “through ‘a male-oriented agenda’ that privileges male politicians, whilst delineating politics as ‘an essentially male pursuit’” (Ross & Sreberny 2002 in Williams, 2017 p.552).

In a meta-analysis of 90 studies, Van der Pas and Aaldering (2020) provide an interesting insight of the current state of the research on media coverage of women and men politicians. The authors conclude that while media do cover women and men politicians differently, the difference of coverage is more nuanced than suggested by previous studies. Van der Pas and

Aaldering's (2020) analysis support previous literature that men receive more coverage in terms of their political viability, whereas coverage of women include more mention of their gender, physical appearance and family, and their combative behaviours are exaggerated (Trimble, 2014; Williams, 2017). Conversely, the authors find little support to gender biased coverage in terms of general tone and amount of coverage. Interestingly, Van der Pas and Aaldering (2020) argue that the instances where women candidates receive less coverage than their male counterparts (Kahn, 1994) seem to be in proportional electoral systems as opposed to any other electoral systems. Regardless of the type and degree of gender biases occurring, these differences of coverage contribute to damaging women politicians' image, to producing unfavourable evaluations of women politicians by the audience, which ultimately influences the audience's vote (Aaldering & Van der Pas, 2020; Bligh et al., 2012; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009).

Women politicians are often presented in media coverage in opposition to their male counterparts, thereby positioning women politicians as the "others" and as "outsiders" to the political sphere (Verge & Pastor, 2018). This is illustrated in the way women politicians are subject to greater attention to their sartorial style (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012; Verge & Pastor, 2018), personality traits (Williams, 2017), physical appearances (Trimble et al., 2015; Verge & Pastor, 2018), powers of seduction (Krogstad & Storvik, 2012), and motherhood (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012). Such focus on politicians' appearances and family life serves to distance women from the political realm (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012), and to show women politicians as "deviant from the male norm" (Verge & Pastor, 2018, p. 42). Furthermore, the difference of focus results in a negative influence on how the audience view women politicians, whereas it appears to hold no effect on the perception of men politicians (Bystrom & Hennings, 2013). In other words, the focus on appearances and family discredits and undermines the authority of women politicians in the public's mind.

Media play an important role in reinforcing and propagating certain discourses, especially about the 'correct' roles of men and women in the domestic and professional spheres. The traditional idea that children are women's responsibility is still largely embodied through the greater attention given to women politicians' marital status and children (Bystrom, Robertson, & Banwart, 2001; Trimble, 2007). Furthermore, the discourse of 'bad mother' is often encountered when women politicians are considered to neglect their children and to favour their work (Johansson & Bergström, 2015). This was the case of Rachida Dati, a

prominent French politician who was criticised for providing a dangerous model of motherhood as she returned to work less than five days after giving birth (Mügge, 2013).

2.1.1 Minority women politicians in the media

Starting in the 2000s, North American research on media coverage of minority women politicians compared minority women politicians to other politicians (white women/men and minority men). Gershon's pioneering study (2012) examined the frequency and tone of the media coverage U.S. minority congresswomen received compared to that of other congressional representatives. This research showed that not all women experience similar media treatment, and that a "double barrier" exists for politicians who are both women and minorities. As such, minority women politicians need to crack a "stained glass ceiling" as they not only face a "gendered barrier", but also a "racial barrier" (Tolley, 2016, p. 123). Other studies demonstrate that unfavourable news coverage of minority women politicians persists over time, affecting even well-established politicians (Besco, Gerrits, & Matthews, 2016), and also extends to other parts of the world, such as the United Kingdom (Ward, 2017).

Although Gershon's (2012) study solely approached minority women as a homogenous group, it prompted further research on differences of coverage among women politicians representing different minority groups. In a subsequent study, Gershon (2013) established that a hierarchy of discrimination seems to affect minority women politicians: minority women politicians are not only covered differently from their minority men and white peers, they are also treated differently among themselves, depending on their different ethnic and racial backgrounds. For instance, in the United States, Latina congresswomen receive distinctive and more negative coverage than their African American peers (Gershon, 2013). Gershon's important study illuminates that "minority women" is not a homogenous group and prompts new studies with focus on minority women politicians of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. In a recent historical study, Tracy Lucht and Chelsea Davis (2021) illustrate the way the intersection of race and ethnicity with place serves to marginalize women in different ways. Dividing the US into five areas, the authors analyse media coverage of women politicians who were first to achieve a political milestone in the decades that followed the right for women to vote. Lucht and Davis' (2021) findings illuminate how regional traditions and mythologies shape media discourses that construct these women in

marginalizing and illegitimate terms that differ depending on their ethnic and racial background.

The existing literature further suggests that mainstream media differ from ethnic media in news framing of the same minority woman politician. For instance, the diversity embodied by US Supreme Court justice Sonia Sotomayor (Latina) was framed in a conflictual way by the *New York Times*, while *El Diario* (Latina/o-oriented newspaper) highlighted the benefits of diversity (Nielsen, 2013). Nielsen's study illustrates the power that words and phrasing hold in conveying different meanings about the same minority woman politician. In this regard, the editorial line plays an important role in the tone of coverage. This is further illustrated by the difference between self-representation and media portrayal of a minority woman politician (Ward, 2017). In one of the few European studies, Fiig (2010) demonstrates how a Danish ethnic minority congresswoman, Özlem Cekic, represents herself as a "left-wing politician with a background in the health sector", but is portrayed as a "Muslim woman politician" by mainstream media (Fiig, 2010, p. 48). The difference of emphasis is illustrative of the way media reflect particular social norms, values and interests. The process of emphasising certain traits in politicians while silencing others serves to produce and perpetuate societal norms and values, and to propagate power imbalance (Tolley, 2016). The implicit hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity and racism in media discourses about politicians reinforces and perpetuate the idea of the white, heterosexual man as standard political figure (Trimble et al., 2015). Consequently, politicians are compared to this implicitly ideal political leader body.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Epistemology

This thesis is based on a social constructionist epistemology, which understands knowledge or meanings as produced *by* and *within* a specific social context. Social constructionism considers that there is not one single universal truth, as there is no objective fact, but rather multiple and various perspectives of the world, depending on positionality (Burr, 2015). Social constructionists refute the idea that social identities – such as gender, race, sexual orientation and so on - are “natural” (Haslanger, 1995). Influenced by diverse disciplines (sociology, philosophy, psychology, and communication) and intellectual traditions, social constructionism does not represent one single position, but rather an ongoing discussion with key assumptions that are shared to various degrees (Gergen, 2015; Stam, 2001). First, social constructionism requires the critique of hegemonic knowledge, for instance, to challenge the taken-for-granted understanding of social identities (e.g. gender, race, sexual orientation, social class...), or to question the focus on some social identities and not others (Allen, 2005). Second, knowledge is specific to a historical and cultural context. “Not only are they specific to particular cultures and periods of history, they are products of that culture and history, dependent upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that culture at that time” (Burr, 2015, p. 4; see also Allen, 2005). The belief that one’s own knowledge is better and the “truth” led to the permeation of Western ideologies into colonised cultures (Burr, 2015). Third, people construct knowledge through daily interactions. In this regard, language and discourse play a crucial role in social processes of sustaining knowledge (Allen, 2005; Burr, 2015). Finally, knowledge leads to social actions. The work of social constructionists, as understood and enacted in this research, is to uncover and challenge the consequences of social constructions (e.g. inequalities of class, gender, race) (Allen, 2005). Social constructionism encourages the researcher to analyse discourses as constructed and conveyed in a specific sociocultural context, which enables her to observe and understand the construction (and perpetuation) of power relations and control, with the intent to challenge those edifices.

3.2 Media discourse

Fairclough (1992) proposes three ways to apprehend 'discourse'. First, discourse is utilised in a linguistic way, to identify patterns and understand choices of vocabulary, syntaxes and so on. Second, discourse may be viewed as an interaction, that is, the message or meaning that is communicated through discourse. This aspect of discourse brings in the context of a text or speech. Finally, discourse may be understood as part of the social construction of reality. To Foucault, discourses are "strongly implicated in the exercise of power, [...] privilege[ing] those versions of social reality that legitimate existing power relations and social structures" (Willig, 2017, p. 113). Discourses serve to (re)produce and/or (re)secure dominant power relations (Foucault, 1982, 1988). Moreover, Foucault sees a mutually constitutive connection between discourses and institutional practices of regulating social life: "while discourses legitimate and reinforce existing social and institutional structures, these structures in turn also support and validate the discourses" (Willig, 2017, p.113). Regarding media as an institution, Denzin (1996) argues that "those who control the media control a society's discourses about itself" (p. 319). This understanding of discourse, and more particularly of media discourse, is consistent with the one subscribed to in this thesis: media discourse as socially constructed and as actively constructing realities by [in most cases] reproducing dominant power relations, "and slowly transform[ing] the taken-for-granted ways that we make sense of the world and those who live within it" (Allen & Bruce, 2017, p.226; see also Hall, 1984).

Tightly connected to the concept of discourse as socially constructing reality is the concept of ideology, which Fairclough defines as "meaning in the service of power" (1995, p. 14). Culturalists view ideology as a set of values and beliefs that a group of people develop to make sense of the way society works (Hall, 1980). An ideology is thus "a system of meaning that helps define and explain the world and that makes value judgements about that world" (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014, p. 152). Ideologies implicitly "contribute to producing or reproducing unequal relations of power, relations of domination" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 14). As a widely held belief system, ideology enables those in power to justify certain actions (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014). However, while ideologies do not reflect realities, they may provide a distorted version, an image of how a society operates (at a certain period in time, and in a specific context), and to a further extent offer a vision of how the society should be. Socially constructed, ideologies evolve over time. Dominant ideologies are reproduced, maintained, and normalised by social institutions, such as media. Mass media promote "the

worldview of powerful [in the form of] the ‘dominant ideology’” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014, p. 154). This thesis works on the premise that media representations (consciously or not) work as conveyers for dominant ideologies that reinforce privileged group(s) (heterosexual white men) as the norm.

Finally, we cannot discuss ideology without considering the concept of hegemony. To Hall (1983), ideologies are “common sense”, or hegemonic. He argues that “[o]ne of the ways in which ideologies function is to naturalise themselves. They disguise the fact that they are historic and symbolic constructions by appearing to be part of what nature is” (p. 267).

Hegemony refers to the idea that established things are not felt as imposed upon us, but rather as natural and just the way it is. As such, hegemony operates in such subtle ways that individuals take some ideologies (e.g. unequal power relations and domination) for granted and simply as the way it is. Through adopting common sense assumptions, people “also accept a certain set of beliefs, or ideology, about social relations” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014, p. 159). However, it is important to keep in mind that similarly to discourses, hegemony is socially constructed (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014), and never reaches a permanent hegemonic state (Hall, 2011). To remain hegemonic, an ideology needs “constantly to be ‘worked on’, maintained, renewed and revised” to avoid being replaced by an alternative system that would then become the new hegemony (Hall, 2011, p.727).

This section introduces concepts used in the three articles to observe the reproduction of hegemonic ideologies in media discourses. To avoid redundancy, this section aims to complement the literature reviews present in the three articles by expanding on and providing context to the concepts discussed: (i) neoliberal, popular and post- feminism, (ii) the process of Othering, (iii) anti-Māori themes.

3.2.1 Neoliberal / post- feminism

As the term neoliberalism appears frequently in this thesis, it is important to briefly explain how the concept is understood. Neoliberalism is not used in its economic/monetised sense, but rather as a hegemonic dominant political rationality that permeates every dimension of human life and sees human beings as human capital (Brown, 2015; 2016; Feher, 2009; Hall, 2011; Rottenberg, 2019). In Phelan’s (2021) words, neoliberalism “performs a necessary political and universalising function in unifying heterogeneous features of an *oppressive social order* under a single categorical heading” (p. 1, online, [emphasis added]). As a hegemonic ideology, neoliberalism is reproduced and perpetuated in some gendered media

discourses. Drawing from Sarah Banet-Weiser, Rosalind Gill, and Catherine Rottenberg's (2020) joint conversation, the following discussion centres on how a certain image of the ideal woman and femininity is shaped by dominant discursive formations of neoliberal- and post-feminism. Coming from different perspectives, the authors shed light on how these feminist models intertwine with and inform hegemonic media discourses that further oppress women, and that ultimately benefit and perpetuate a white Western neoliberal patriarchal ideology.

Catherine Rottenberg (2017, 2018, 2019) argues that the movement for gender equality has become intertwined with neoliberalism. She suggests that a new form of feminism, which she calls neoliberal feminism, is moving away from social ideals (such as equality, justice) to subscribe to more individualised goals, that are identified based on a "cost-benefit – namely, a market – calculus" (2019, p. 1075). While neoliberal feminism acknowledges gender inequalities (e.g. the gender pay gap), it is blind to socioeconomical and cultural structures of society (Kim, 2019; Rottenberg, 2018). In other words, neoliberal feminism (re)assigns systemic inequalities to personal responsibility, under the motive of liberating women through their "empowerment" (Kim, 2019; Miller & Plencner, 2018; Rottenberg, 2019). Drawing from the abovementioned view of neoliberalism, Rottenberg (2017; 2018; 2019; Banet-Weiser, Gill & Rottenberg, 2020) argues that capitalist society sees women as capital, and as such as active agents of the economy. Women have, however, always been expected to be primarily in charge of child-rearing and the domestic sphere. In order to make this new "capital-enhancing agent" role compatible with motherhood duties, a neoliberal feminist discourse of balance and "having it all" has been constructed as progressive womanhood (Adamson, 2017; Orgad, 2017; Rottenberg, 2017; Banet-Weiser, Gill & Rottenberg, 2020, p. 8). In the past decade, multiple outlets - varying from "feminist manifestos" (e.g. Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In*, 2013; Ivanka Trump's *Women who work*, 2017) to tv series (e.g. *The Good Wife*, *Supergirl*) and pop music videos - have served as a vehicle for wide scale promotion of this neoliberal view of womanhood into society (hook, 2013; Kim, 2019; Miller & Plencner, 2018; Orgad, 2017; Rottenberg, 2019). Targeting middle-class and upper-class women, this discourse normalises work-family life balance as the "ultimate ideal" for women to achieve. Women are therefore encouraged to pursue a professional career, while either postponing motherhood to a later time or heavily relying on nannies or babysitters. This is where Catherine Rottenberg (2017) argues the "economization of reproduction" as a response to the biological limitations of late reproduction:

Once certain women are able to freeze their eggs successfully, rent a womb, and hire various caregivers, new and intensified forms of racialized and classed gender exploitation will occur. Indeed, this trajectory of powerful women is bound to produce new populations of dispensable service providers, the vast majority of whom will be women. (p.343)

Neoliberal feminism is exclusionary and Otherizing per nature, in the sense that it targets privileged middle/upper class career-driven white women; called aspirational women. In order to work, neoliberal feminism requires the outsourcing of domestic chores and childcare and/or reproduction. However, outsourcing does not solve inequalities, it merely transfers them from a gender issue to a woman one. Unequal division of labour, therefore, becomes a race, ethnicity and class issue. The exploitation of the Others ('disposable' and 'unbankable' women) is normalised and legitimised, while aspirational women are glamorised (Orgad, 2017; Rottenberg, 2019).

Neoliberal feminism... is also an unabashedly exclusionary one, encompassing as it does only so-called aspirational women in its address. It thus reifies white and class privilege and heteronormativity, lending itself to neo-conservative and xenophobic agendas." (Banet-Weiser, Gill & Rottenberg, 2020, p. 17)

Far from challenging the dominant power relations, neoliberal feminism reinforces the white patriarchal system by maintaining the feminine nature of reproduction and care work as normal (Adamson, 2017; Kim, 2019; Orgad, 2017; Rottenberg, 2019).

Postfeminism, drawing from the basis that feminism has done its work and is no longer needed, is critiqued by Rosalind Gill. Gill (2016) argues that while women may no longer be kept out of the political and professional spheres, patriarchal power has been transferred to "the intensification and extensification of forms of surveillance, monitoring, and disciplining of women's bodies" (p. 613) in an attempt to reach "the perfect" (McRobbie, 2015). The intense control over women's bodies is particularly visible during and post-pregnancy, where women are exposed to the double bind of having to grow a healthy baby while remaining slim and sexual (McRobbie, 2013; 2015). This control over women's bodies is embedded in and promulgated by media discourses. To Gill, postfeminism is interwoven with neoliberalism. She exposes the role the media play in integrating the neoliberal idea of individual responsibility in the construction of sexism and misogyny as "an individual rather than structural or systemic issue, let alone as connected to other inequalities or located in the

broader context of neoliberal capitalism” (Gill, 2016, pp. 615-616). Gill concurs with Rottenberg in the argument that feminism works hand-in-hand with neoliberalism in perpetuating oppressive power relations and in reinforcing white, Western, heteronormative ideologies. In other words, Gill and Rottenberg argue that discourses are constructed to avoid critiques of dominant societal structures that benefit from oppressing minority groups, in order to keep that oppressive system going (Adamson, 2017; Banet-Weiser, Gill & Rottenberg, 2020; Gill, 2016; Kim, 2019; Orgad, 2017; Rottenberg, 2017; 2018; 2019). Gill (2016) critiques a version of (white) (post)feminism that is highly visible, especially in the media, and that advocates for a “one-size-fits-all solutions to gender injustice” (p. 617). Such solutions work in favour of the perpetuation of white patriarchal ideologies, while excluding and continuing to oppress minority groups.

3.2.2 Decolonial feminism

Although decolonial feminism is not explicitly drawn upon in any of the articles included in this thesis, it is nonetheless important to briefly address it because feminism and decolonialism share some similarities in their work towards exposing and dismantling systems of oppression and discrimination that have, in some contexts, worked hand in hand.

It is first useful to differentiate decolonialism from postcolonialism. Criticised by some, the term “postcolonialism” envisions colonialism as a past occurrence, and seeks to understand and deconstruct the systems in colonial societies (Verschuur & Destremau, 2012). Although interested in the legacy of colonialism, the term post-colonialism suggests a rupture to colonialism, which can be interpreted as a dismissal of consequences of colonialism in current societies. Anibal Quijano, a Peruvian sociologist, prefers the term “coloniality of power” to emphasise the historical continuity between colonialism and what is called postcolonialism, and more particularly the hegemonic Western production of knowledge in modern times (Moraña, Dussel & Jáuregui, 2008). Linda Tuhiwai Smith discusses the imperialist gaze on local matters by explaining that “the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism” (2012, p. 30), and advocates for bringing the Others’ perspective into research. Originating from Latin America, the term “decolonialism” foregrounds an insider perspective, or the perspective of the Other.

Coined by María Lugones, an Argentinian feminist philosopher, decolonial feminism draws from intersectionality and “coloniality of power”. Lugones proposes to reobserve the relations between coloniser and colonised in terms of gender, race, and sexuality in a way

that addresses the modern capitalist colonial system of power (2010; Valez, 2019). Also called Indigenous (or Aboriginal) feminism, or Indigenous women's feminism, the intent is to analyse the impact of colonisation and the structures that reproduce colonising practices (Green, 2007; Pihama, 2021, Stewart-Harawira, 2007). Decolonial feminism builds on intersectionality to centre a woman's Indigenous perspective and experience of the multi-layered oppressions Indigenous women experience in their colonised existence. Colonialism brought "complete disorder to colonised peoples, disconnecting them from their histories, their landscapes, their languages, their social relations and their own ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting with the world" (Smith, 2012, p. 28), and decolonial feminism provides a framework for Indigenous women to regain control of their own narratives. Ani Mikaere (2003) illustrates how colonialism destroyed the balanced power relations between Māori *wāhine* (women) and *tāne* (men) in Aotearoa New Zealand, and stresses the need to restore that gender balance prior to engaging in recovery from colonialism. In that regard, *mana wāhine* represents a theory grounded in and informed by Māori culture, used by Māori women, to challenge colonialism (Pihama, 2021). A range of other studies by Indigenous women illuminate how colonial patriarchal values and norms disrupted gender balanced societies, at the expense of women, in various parts of the world such as the Cherokee in the US (Henning, 2007), or again, the Sami in the Arctic (Eikjok, 2007; Kuokkanen, 2007).

3.2.3 Othering

Binary thinking results in understanding human differences as inherently opposed (Hill Collins, 2000), which creates the "Us" versus "Them" or "Others" dichotomy. The "Us" / "Other" contrast presumes that "Us" is the norm, and therefore "Others" diverge from the "socio-cultural and normative standards" (Bendixsen, 2013, p. 110). This projection of societal values onto another group results in seeing the "Others" as different, abnormal, problematic, and inferior. Edward Said (1978) illustrated this paradigm through the concept of Orientalism, which he defined as:

The corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for domination, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (p. 3)

In other words, Orientalism in Said's formulation is a Western narrative of Middle-Eastern and Asian cultures: the production of a Western "Us" versus the Middle-Eastern and Asian

“Others”. The history of colonisation is an essential element of understanding the relational dynamics underpinning Orientalism. The “Us” versus “Other”, in this case mapping to West versus Orient, is first and foremost based on a relation of power and domination. The dominant position held by the West enabled the distorted and stereotyped discourse about the Orient (Said, 1978). The stories told about the Others become accepted as universal truth, which dismisses the Others’ side of a same story (Smith, 2012). Broadly speaking, the Other is being talked “for”, and thereby silenced. Unlike direct domination that results from political actions, cultural hegemony went a long way in steadily and durably establishing Western cultures, ideas, and ideologies as superior to Oriental “backward” ones (Said, 1978). Once used to justify colonial empires, Orientalism has evolved to serve neoliberal Western states’ economic, military, and political ambitions (Chagnon, 2020).

As illustrated in the concept of Orientalism, the process of Othering is intrinsically connected to privileges and oppressions. The Otherization process serves to normalise the dominant group – and their characteristics - by opposition to an abnormal and inferior minority or marginalised Other (Allen & Bruce, 2017). In other words, Othering benefits and normalises whiteness and Western ideologies (Al’Ghabra, 2018; McIntosh, Moon & Nakayama, 2018). Feminist scholarship has illustrated how an Orientalist feminism may be used to justify neoliberal Western states’ actions against Oriental countries by constructing these actions as progressive and even feminist (Chagnon, 2020). As such, media discourse about the oppression of women (particularly those in Islamist culture) constructs violence against women as a cultural issue in Islamic (Orient) countries, thereby creating the divide between “progressive” West and “backward” Orient, and ultimately justifying actions to free these women (for example, the US invasion in Afghanistan) (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Chagnon, 2020). Those discourses about the oppression of women in Oriental cultures, however, come from a Western gaze, which reflects a particular Western culture, social system, and does not take into account the local context and perspective (Smith, 2012). The Western superiority embodied in Orientalism can also translate in the relationship between white Western women, and minority women. As minority women are Otherized from their white Western counterparts, white Western women are put into a paternalistic and patronising position to “liberate their less fortunate sisters, especially those in the Third World” (hooks, 2000, p. 45). Intersectional scholars have illustrated how minority women are stereotyped and constructed in ways that control and define their roles and behaviours based on white Western standards (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Hill Collins, 2000). Whether in terms of controlling images of Black

women (Hill Collins, 2000) or archetypes of Muslim women (Al’Ghabra, 2018), these portrayals ultimately reinforce oppressive white Western and patriarchal ideologies. Al’Ghabra (2018) argues that whiteness and patriarchy are not only reproduced in mainstream discourses (Othering in discourse) but may also be reproduced in and through minority women. In this regard, while we usually associate reproduction and perpetuation of oppression with the dominant system (white men and women) (McIntosh, Moon & Nakayama, 2018), Haneen Shafeeq Ghabra (2018) identifies occasions where the oppressed minority woman becomes the oppressor by embodying and performing whiteness and white femininity. The Other may thereby be constructed as both privileged and oppressed; may function as a receptacle of oppression and discriminatory treatment, but also as the conveyor of whiteness and patriarchy. One example is the narrative of the oppressed Muslim woman, of which Malala Yousafzai has become the symbol in Western media. In an analysis of Malala’s speech at the United Nation, Al’Ghabra (2018) argues that Malala embodies and performs white Western feminism through the rhetoric she uses (i.e. to see every child go to school) and her sartorial style (i.e. loosening her veil). Al’Ghabra critiques the Western perspective underpinning Malala’s speech, which does not take into account the local contextual reality of, in this specific case, Pakistan. The need to consider the local context is further discussed in the section on intersectionality.

3.2.4 Anti-Māori themes

In the particular context of Aotearoa New Zealand, a large body of literature has illustrated the role New Zealand mainstream media have played in reinforcing dominant colonial norms that have sustained unequal power relations between Pākehā (Us, coloniser) and Māori (Them, the Others, colonised) (Abel, 2016; Allen & Bruce, 2017; Deckert, 2020; Hokowhitu, 2013; Matheson, 2007; Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012; Rankine et al., 2014 to cite a few). Resulting from a longitudinal study of the reporting of Māori and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* in news media in Aotearoa New Zealand, the SHORE & Whariki Research Centre, a Māori and Pākehā research group, identified patterns in media discourses that systematically marginalised and/or discriminated against Māori (and other ethnic minority groups such as Pasifika). The research group identified a non-exhaustive list of 13 recurring anti-Māori themes (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012), to which they later added a 14th theme (Kupu Taea, 2014). The Research Center aims to address the dominant narratives in mainstream media by finding alternative rhetoric that would disrupt the current power relation (see Kupu Taea, 2014 for a list of alternative themes). As only certain anti-Māori themes are explained in

Paper III in relation to the texts analysed, a brief description of all 14 themes is included below, in table 1.

Themes	Effect
Pākehā as norm*	Constructs Pākehā as the ordinary normal citizen and culture of New Zealand.
One people*	New Zealanders are represented as a single culture in which all are to be treated the same.
Rights*	Individual Pākehā right stake precedence over collective Māori rights.
Privilege*	Māori are portrayed as having resources and access denied to others.
Ignorance and Hypersensitivity*	Pākehā offend Māori because of ignorance, Māori responses are unduly sensitive.
Good Māori / Bad Māori*	Māori are seen as good or bad depending on the argument of the speaker; Pākehā are rarely described in this way.
Stirrers*	Those who challenge the social order are depicted as troublemakers who mislead others for their own ends.
Māori crime, violence*	Māori are seen as more likely to be criminal or violent than Pākehā.
Māori culture*	Māori culture is depicted as primitive and inadequate for modern life, and inferior to Pākehā culture.
Māori inheritance*	Describes ancestry in fractions in a way that denies Māori concepts of whakapapa and self-identification.
Māori resources*	Critical of any return of significant resources to Māori as a denial of Pākehā rights to exploit such opportunities.
Financial management °	Māori as financially unreliable, welfare dependent, and corrupt
Māori success*	Small scale Māori projects that fit Pākehā business models and use Māori culture can be viewed as positive.
Treaty of Waitangi*	The Treaty is a historical document of little relevance to the contemporary setting; a barrier to development.

Table 1: Anti-Māori themes

*Anti-Māori themes identified in Moewaka Barnes et al. (2012, p.198); °Anti-Māori theme added in Kupu Taea (2014).

Recent studies have examined the deployment of some of the anti-Māori themes identified by Moewaka Barnes et al. (2012): ‘bad Māori’, an underlying rhetoric common to most of the other themes such as ‘stirrer’ (Satherley & Sibley, 2019; Whetherell, et al., 2015), ‘Māori violence’ (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Deckert, 2020), and ‘Māori heritage’ (Gillon, et al., 2019). Those anti-Māori themes are usually used to support evidence of discriminatory media treatment accorded to Māori and Pākehā.

3.3 Intersectionality

Although law scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in 1989, the concept had already been articulated, such as in 1851 by Sojourner Truth in her speech “Ain’t I a woman?”. Originating from black feminism, the concept of intersectionality criticises the political discourse of “all women are white and all Black are men” (Ferree, 2011, p. 55), and is rooted in radical activism (Salem, 2018). Crenshaw (1989) argues that the uni-dimensional focus of gender or race has failed to comprehend the discrimination experienced by African American women. To Crenshaw, categories were considered homogenous and only represented the dominant in the group as the norm: “women” represents the experience of white heterosexual middle/upper class women, and “black” accounts for the experience of black heterosexual men. Therefore, she argued that sexual discriminations (which only accounted for the experience of white women) and racial discriminations (which only represented the experience of Black men) did not represent Black women’s experience of discrimination, and rather, that Black women experienced a combination of sexual and racial discriminations. The scope of intersectionality, however, has developed in recent years to encompass other social identities such as social class, religion, ableism, nationality and so on.

As intersectionality gains popularity among feminist scholars, disagreements about its use naturally occur. The difficulty of defining intersectionality as a theory or as a particular set of methods result in three main sets of disagreements: (i) the question of structural versus agency or fixed versus fluid social identities; (ii) which social identities should be focused on; and (iii) which methodologies should be deployed. While the disagreements pertaining to social identities are discussed in this section, the different methodological approaches are discussed in the method section 4.1.3 dedicated to intersectionality.

As the concept evolves, varying interpretations of intersectionality emerge. Understood as structural and political by some (e.g. Crenshaw), post-modernist scholars brought the idea of agency into the concept of intersectionality (Phoenix, 2006; Prins, 2006). Intersectionality moved from the idea of fixed and fragmented social identities and oppressions that can be accumulated, to a more fluid and holistic understanding of the complex system of inequalities and identities that constantly intersect with one another (Garneau, 2018; Lutz, 2014). The evolution of the concept, however, worries pioneer and some other scholars, concerned that the global appropriation of intersectionality will result in the “re-marginalization of black women” as in “disembodiment of black women from intersectionality” (Crenshaw, 2011, p. 224; 2014); some scholars worry about the “whitening” or “fungability” of intersectionality (Bilge, 2014; 2020), and decry the de-politization of the concept (Erel et al., 2010; Ferree, 2013). According to these scholars, the universalization of intersectionality erases the political, activist, and revolutionary intent of the original concept, but also erases Black women.

Some scholars connect the neoliberalisation of academia (production of knowledge) to the dilution and taming of intersectionality (Bilge, 2013; Salem, 2018) in the sense that the concept has become more about the intersecting social identities (individual/micro) than about the relation to the power and oppressive structures (society/macro) (Mohanty, 2013). This taming results from the neoliberal context in which knowledge is produced: challenging power relations not being in the best interest of the patriarchal capitalist society, the universalisation of the concept serves as a shield against the damage that exposing embedded power structures would cause to capitalism and patriarchy. Bilge (2019) and Salem (2018) argue that intersectionality is a useful tool to address power relations; however, it needs to remain grounded in a racial and anti-establishment context to avoid its appropriation by a neoliberal feminist academia.

The question of how many and which social identities and intersections should be included in intersectional analysis has sparked debate and disagreement among feminist scholars. While the “triple oppression” on the basis of gender, race, and social class seem to represent the main social identities, other categories are included throughout the literature. In that regard, Helma Lutz (2002) suggests a list of 14 social identities or “lines of differences”: “gender; sexuality; ‘race’/skin-colour; ethnicity; nation/state; class; culture; ability; age; sedentariness/origin; wealth; North–South; religion; stage of social development” (p. 13). However, Lutz does not consider this list exhaustive, and argues it could be extended. “Etc.”

is thus often encountered in intersectional research. Critical of such an approach, Judith Butler (1990) considered the use of “etc.” as an admission of exhaustion. Disagreeing, Knapp (1999) and Yuval-Davis (2006) argued Butler’s critique to be reductionist and limited to identity politics discourse. Yuval-Davis (2006) reasoned that social identities are not transposable, and instead are specific to a particular context (geographical, historical, cultural, political, period, and so on). The importance of the context would suggest that some social identities may be more important, or even relevant, in some contexts than in others.

As intersectionality is increasingly used outside of the North American context, the transportability of the original concept is debated, particularly the relevance and accuracy of using the term *race* in a non-Anglo-Saxon setting. Largely disavowed in Europe where it is connected to Nazi racial ideology since the Holocaust (Goldenberg, 2006), the word *race* can be substituted by terms that may be considered more acceptable: for instance, *ethnicity*, *culture*, and more recently *diversity* are used in France (Sénac, 2012). The adjustability of intersectionality outside of North America is further debated as the societal, historical, and political environment play a role in the experience of minority people, which may differ due to “migration history, length of stay, language, integration, citizenship, religion and the way in which minorities are accommodated by society” (Mügge & de Jong, 2013, p.8).

Intersectionality should, therefore, reflect the realities of the relations of the local power structures with local social identities, instead of merely applying a North American template (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Bilge, 2019).

In line with Al’Ghabra (2018) and Bilge (2019), this project understands and uses intersectionality as embedded within a specific context that reflects local social identities. Intersectionality is understood as a mean to reflect global power structures within the specific context of Aotearoa New Zealand and France. In other words, this thesis falls under the understanding that generic global power relations (macro) are likely to be constructed and perpetuated differently depending on the historical, societal, and political local context, and result in different experiences for minority groups in that context (micro) ((Mügge & de Jong, 2013). Therefore, the different colonisation history of Aotearoa and France offers the opportunity to observe the construction of minority groups’ identities in colonised versus coloniser contexts. In Aotearoa, the minority people affected by colonisation are Māori, who were invaded by British European settlers. Conversely, the minority people affected by colonisation in France are immigrants (or (grand-)children of immigrants) from former French colonies.

3.4 Research Questions

This research project asks critical questions about whether, and how, those deeply influential cultural differences affect the way French and New Zealand media represent minority and white women politicians. The aim is to examine how cultural differences influence the way media produce and reproduce societal values and norms, and power imbalance, through discriminatory coverage of minority women. The project was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How is media coverage of minority and white women politicians inflected by cultural differences in the distinct national contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France?

RQ2: How are hegemonic ideologies revealed to be entrenched in media discourses in the distinct national contexts of (bicultural) Aotearoa New Zealand and (universalist) France?

Chapter 4 Methods

4.1 Data analysis

The first article, which solely used reflexive thematic analysis, laid the methodological foundation for the three-layer analysis used in the subsequent two articles: reflexive thematic analysis, feminist critical discourse analysis, and intersectionality. In all three articles, reflexive thematic analysis is used to identify repeating patterns (or themes) and meanings in a large body of textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019). This method enables the researcher to get a comprehensive understanding of a whole dataset, and, simultaneously, to connect identified themes with the societal context.

Subsequently, in articles two and three, feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) is used to probe more deeply into some of the themes identified during the thematic analysis step. FCDA enables investigation of “complex and diverse ways by which gender ideologies that entrench power asymmetries become ‘common sense’ in particular communities and discourse contexts”, and possible challenges to those ideologies (Lazar, 2018, p. 372).

Finally, an intersectional lens is applied throughout the analysis process in articles two and three to examine and illuminate the way gender, ethnicity and other social identities are intertwined and embedded in media discourses.

4.1.1 *Thematic analysis*

At a fundamental level, thematic analysis is the process of “analysing data according to commonalities, relationships and differences across a data set” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 127). It is especially useful to identify repeating patterns and meanings in large body of textual data, and to “organise and describe your data set in (rich) detail” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). While thematic analysis holds various advantages such as enabling analysis of a large body of data, generating unforeseen insights, and enabling a social interpretation of data, it is also vulnerable to criticism. For instance, questions have been raised about the use of generalising and decontextualising themes to address complex and contextually specific aspects of social life (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Smith (2018) argues that while statistical generalization makes little sense in qualitative studies and is not a goal, qualitative research offers other opportunities for generalisabilities: resonance with reader’s personal experience,

transferability (Tracy, 2010), generalization of concept or theories, and longitudinal record of historically oppressed communities.

Thematic analysis can either provide an overall description of the data set, or zoom in on one specific aspect of the data set. In this thesis, thematic analysis is used as a means to identify predominant overarching themes, thereby providing an “accurate reflection of the content of the entire data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). This usage of the method is particularly interesting when researching a new or overlooked area of research, because it opens to emergent meanings. The descriptive usage of thematic analysis necessitates an inductive approach, meaning that themes are directed by the content of the data, without the constraints of a pre-existing coding frame. It also implies that the researcher is free from theoretical preconceptions. However, as complete objectivity is utopian, it is crucial to be transparent about the analyst’s unavoidable theoretical and epistemological influences (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Tracy, 2010).

Unlike other analytical methods, thematic analysis is not linked to a specific theoretical framework, but, instead, can be informed by various relevant frameworks (King & Brooks, 2018). I understand thematic analysis as a (social) constructionist method, which examines the way discourses are affected by its context (events, meanings, experiences and so on). The constructionist perspective considers that discourses (and therefore events, meanings, and experiences) are socially created and reproduced. Thus, a constructionist approach “seeks to theorise the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85) that inform such discourses.

Depending on the topic of the research, codes and themes can be analysed at a semantic (explicit, obvious) level, or, at a latent (underlying, implicit) level (Braun & Clarke, 2020). The semantic level enables an existing but limited interpretation of the themes, as it reflects the explicit content of the data. The semantic level is mostly surface level. Conversely, the latent level of analysis goes more in depth as it “examine[s] the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations – and ideologies – that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). In this respect, thematic analysis of the latent level overlaps in some respects with critical discourse analysis.

It is important to mention however that there is not one single approach to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2020; King & Brooks, 2018). Thus, it is essential for researchers to address the thematic analysis orientation chosen. Furthermore, not all scholars agree on the various

approaches. Braun and Clarke (2019; 2020) divide thematic analysis into reflexive, coding reliability, and codebook versions. On the other hand, King and Brooks (2018) differentiate between four approaches: Template Analysis (King & Brooks, 2017), Framework Analysis (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994), Matrix Analysis (Nadin & Cassell, 2004), and Braun and Clarke's (2006) version of Thematic Analysis. Braun and Clarke's approach to thematic analysis, or what they now call *reflexive* thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) is used in this thesis. They provide a clear tool for a step-by-step process of analysis, outlined in the following paragraph, that is flexible enough to be compatible with critical qualitative research (Clarke & Braun, 2014). Moreover, reflexive thematic analysis "emphasises the importance of the researcher's subjectivity as analytic *resource*, and their reflexive engagement with theory, data and interpretation" (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 3).

Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a clear step-by-step guide of how to perform a thematic analysis, which involves a constant back and forth work between the data set and the themes emerging from the data set. They identify six interconnected steps. The first step consists of getting familiar with the data set through immersing oneself. Through actively reading through the data set multiple times, the author identifies some patterns and meanings. This step generally involves noting down initial ideas for coding, which prepares for the next step. Second, the author develops a preliminary coding frame from the data, either in a theory-driven (deductive) or data-driven way (inductive). The data-driven coding used in this thesis refers to the on-going process of developing the coding frame as codes emerge from the data. Step three consists of sorting the different codes into themes. Coding and developing themes happen generally simultaneously (Braun & Clarke, 2020). Frequent back and forth between data, codes, and themes allows the researcher to refine themes. This refining is the essence of the fourth and fifth steps to review themes, and to get a better idea of how they fit together and how they address the research questions. Finally, the sixth and final phase consists of producing the report, through constructing a compelling story illustrated by well-chosen extracts, and contextualised within existing literature, which enables the researcher to describe the data, but more importantly to develop an argument.

In studies of media, thematic analysis has been used in various studies to identify certain recurring discourses in news coverage. For instance, Hall and Donaghue (2013) thematically analysed the way newspaper media framed former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard. The authors used thematic analysis to go beyond mere examination of positive and negative tone of coverage, to analyse how Gillard's gender influenced the positive and negative

construction of coverage. Similarly, Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) conducted a thematic analysis of the framing of the first Spanish female politician in newspapers across four European countries. Through a combination of quantitative content analysis and qualitative thematic analysis, the authors explored the way the role of women politicians has been framed across countries. Taking a different angle, Toffoletti and Thorpe (2018) thematically analysed the way female athletes self-represent in social media. These three studies all provide examples of the usage of thematic analysis to examine the role of gender when women are (self-)represented in the media.

4.1.2 Feminist critical discourse analysis

Feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) builds upon critical discourse analysis (CDA) principles and is informed also by feminist epistemology and practice to focus on the creation and reproduction of gender ideologies in texts. This section briefly discusses CDA, before moving on to FCDA.

Discourse analysis is utilised to analyse textual meaning and its role in the construction and reproduction of social phenomena. Subscribing to the social constructionism approach, discourse analysis considers that reality is socially constructed, and therefore, “social reality is not something that we uncover, but something that we actively create through meaningful interaction” (Hardy, Phillips, & Harley, 2004, p. 20). In this regard, reality is not the absolute truth, but instead, something that is true within a broader context. Since discourses do not hold inherent meanings, discourses need to be analysed in relation to the comprehensive context (social and historical) they are embedded in. Furthermore, this means that discourses are constantly in flux, with meanings that evolve and change over time (alongside the evolving context) (Hardy et al., 2004). To Fairclough (1995), discourse analysis is informed by both text and practice (context): discourse practices and social practices. Discourse analysis is a way to “show systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 17). Building from discourse analysis, CDA takes up an additional activist stand, thereby “rais[e]ing critical consciousness about the discursive dimensions of social problems involving discrimination, disadvantage, and dominance with the aim of contributing to broader emancipatory projects” (Lazar, 2018, p. 372).

Lazar (2018) defines FCDA as “a political perspective which investigates the complex and diverse ways by which gender ideologies that entrench power asymmetries become ‘common

sense' in particular communities and discourse contexts, and how they may be challenged" (p. 372). Taking as a starting point that societies are patriarchal, FCDA therefore assumes discourses are produced within a patriarchal context and sustain the power relations of privileged men and disempowered women (Dalton, 2019; Khan, 2019; Lazar, 2005). In more concrete words, FCDA aims

to interlink gender discourse in a text to deal with its representation in the social and cultural contexts. On the one side, it analyzes language and discourse from a feministic viewpoint, and on the other side, it traces feministic issues through discourse. (Khan, 2019, p. 249)

FCDA is used in this thesis to demonstrate that gender ideologies underpin media discourses of women politicians in a way that serves to reinforce and sustain a system that discriminates against and disempowers women. The use of FCDA serves to illuminate that discriminatory discourses of women do not occur in a vacuum, but rather are visible patterns characteristic of patriarchal societies.

Lazar (2004) initially identified five interrelated principles that drive FCDA, and later on added transnationalism as a sixth principle (Lazar, 2018). First, recognition of the ideological character of "gender" that divides individuals into two categories based on a "hierarchical relation of dominance and subordination" (Lazar, 2004, p. 7) is at the core of FCDA. Gender ideology is hegemonic as it does not appear as a form of domination, but instead is "largely consensual and acceptable to most in a community" (Lazar, 2004, p. 7). Moreover, gender does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in interrelation with other social identities such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, religion, profession, class, culture, and geopolitics, all of which construct differently and uniquely the way women and men experience the world. Second, power is central to the study of gender identities and relations. In this regard, a central concept is that of patriarchy, which refers to "a social system which privileges men at the expense of women" (Lazar, 2018, p. 373). The concept of intersectionality, discussed below in section 5.1.3, helps us understand patriarchy in a more encompassing and multi-faceted way. As such, patriarchy refers to a social system that privileges white heterosexual men at the expense of individuals who deviate in some way from that 'norm'. Third, gender is iteratively and actively established through discourse, thereby maintaining and perpetuating gendered social order and power relations. Fourth, FCDA develops critical thinking and reflexivity in individuals and institutions, through generating constructive discussion and

leading to social changes. Fifth, the activist characteristic makes proponents of FCDA aim to be an agent of change. Finally, transnationalism refers to the understanding that while gender has globally shared characteristics (e.g. inequalities and discrimination between men and women, which favour men), the experiences of those characteristics vary across many parts of the world (Lazar, 2018).

FCDA has been used in various studies to explore gendered (and racialised) meaning communicated through media discourse. As an example of this usage, Trimble et al. (2015) conducted a FCDA and a quantitative content analysis to understand the politicization of bodies in news coverage of candidates to Canadian Political Party Leadership elections. Using FCDA enabled the authors to go beyond the mere quantitative questions of whether news coverage pay more attention to women than men candidates, by deepening the analysis to highlight how (patriarchal) cultural norms are entangled in media discourses in ways that reinforce the idea that a white, heterosexual man embodies the political leader. In a similar fashion, Williams (2017) explored the way Australian Prime Ministers receive different media portrayal when acting in ways considered 'masculine'. By comparing Julia Gillard and Malcolm Turnbull, Williams highlighted ways media use Gillard's gender as a discursive weapon against her when she challenged her predecessor in a similar manner to Turnbull. In a study of sexual harassment in the Japanese political and media worlds (Dalton, 2019), FCDA was used to illustrate how gendered and sexist cultural norms enable sexual harassment by supporting and consolidating such discourses. Dalton argues the embedding of sexual harassment as hegemonic in Japanese culture makes it difficult to highlight and articulate it as a systemic problem that women face. The above-mentioned studies provide examples of how FCDA can be used to connect local and/or isolated discriminations against women to a wider societal norm. The articulation of such systemic problems and the understanding of how gender ideologies and power relations are reproduced (in news coverage) provide tools to challenge the system and create changes.

4.1.3 Intersectionality

According to Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013) "what makes an analysis intersectional [...] is its adoption of an intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power" (p. 795). The intersectional lens applied in this thesis throughout the analysis process illuminates the way gender, ethnicity, and other social identities are intertwined and embedded in the narratives. Moreover, the use of such an

intersectional lens enables the identification of other social categories (e.g. age, social class, and religion) that, intertwined with gender and ethnicity, inform the different layers of power relations and ideologies unfolding in the media representations studied in this thesis.

Acknowledging the complexity of social relations in intersectionality, Leslie McCall (2005) identified three ways to understand and use social categories (I refer to categories as social identities throughout this thesis, but use the word category when referring to McCall's approaches): *anticategorical complexity*, *intracategorical complexity*, and *intercategorical complexity*. First, *anticategorical complexity* favours a deconstruction and rejection of social categories. This approach is overall critical of the categorization process altogether. Second, *intracategorical complexity*, the approach endorsed in Crenshaw's (1989) initial study on intersectionality, focuses on a single group of people located at the intersection of multiple categories but is limited to the "articulation of a single dimension of each category" (McCall, 2005, 1781). Finally, *intercategorical complexity*, the approach favoured by McCall herself, observes inequalities between pre-constituted social groups. The difference between *intra-* and *inter-categorical* approaches relies on *intra-* dealing with single social categories while *inter-* focuses on complex relationships among social categories by systematically comparing them. Rodó-de-Zárate and Jorba (2012) argue that McCall's approach to intersectional complexity (*intercategorical*) merely reasserts the existence and interrelation of multiple forms of inequalities, without attempting to explain how they do so.

Falling under *intracategorical complexity*, the approach used in this thesis relies on the idea that "intersectionality neither travels outside nor is unmediated by the very field of race and gender power that it interrogates" (Cho et al., 2013, p. 791). In this regard, gender, ethnicity and race – Maghrebin background for France, and Māori ethnicity for Aotearoa New Zealand – represent important underlying social identities used for the intersectional part of this project. However, subscribing to a holistic view of intersectionality (Garneau, 2018; Lutz, 2014), other social identities that are particular to the people studied in a specific context are expected also to be identified throughout the analytical process. For instance, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem's youth was an important element in the dynamics of power present in and developed by her coverage. Lower social class background played a similar role in Rachida Dati, Metiria Turei, and Paula Bennett's coverage. As stated by Al'Ghabra "the golden key to intersectionality lies in always being grounded in and in-tune with one's privileges and oppressions simultaneously and continuously" (2018, p. 29). In other words, without privilege there is no oppression. Privileges that come with some social identities were

observed through the analysis of Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy. McIntosh, Moon, and Nakayama (2018) illustrated the ways performance of white femininity reinforces whiteness ideologies, and set standards, norms, and values which serve to Otherize minority women. While Ardern does not represent intersectionality, she does embody the privileged white woman of middle/upper class, whose experience of pregnancy, motherhood, and work/family life balance set the standards against which other women will be compared to and confronted to.

This project seeks to examine the expression of inequalities and discrimination against women politicians, and more specifically against minority women politicians, in newspapers, both in France and in Aotearoa New Zealand. Critical discourse analysis, and more precisely feminist critical discourse analysis, will shed light on the mechanisms used and replicated by the media to produce and maintain power imbalance. Moreover, both thematic analysis and FCDA find their roots in social constructionism, which informs my understanding of the way discriminations occur. Finally, both methods are appropriate to the data I am using, as they play a complementary role. While thematic analysis enables the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data set, FCDA allows the researcher to interpret more deeply a smaller part of that data.

4.2 Data

As illustrated in Table 2, different sets of data were used for each article. Data sets for this thesis are constituted of news stories from different media outlets: national newspapers, radio written news, and opinion magazine. News media outlets were chosen for their high circulation and/or geographical representation of media consumption in Aotearoa New Zealand. The international media outlets used in Article I were selected for their languages (English and French, in both of which the authors are fluent) and their different geographical areas. Finally, the French news media were chosen for their differing political stances, and their quality as sources of information.

Data collection was mostly completed through the database Factiva. Potentially due to *Madame Figaro* (French media used in Article II) being a complement to *Le Figaro*, and *The Spinoff* (New Zealand media used in Article III) being online-only media, these two media outlets were absent from Factiva. Data were therefore directly collected from the media outlets' websites. Aside from Article I where a specific set of key words (e.g. "pregnancy",

“birth”, “baby”, and “Jacinda Ardern”) were used to gather stories that specifically mentioned Ardern’s pregnancy, names of the politicians were used as key phrases to collect news stories for Article II (“Rachida Dati” and “Najat Vallaud-Belkacem”) and Article III (“Metiria Turei” and “Paula Bennett”). To get a manageable and coherent dataset, news stories were then filtered to exclude those who only mentioned politicians’ names and kept stories that referenced politicians’ social identities (i.e. gender attributes and ethnic backgrounds). The purpose of sampling, and of selecting a purposive data set of articles that specifically included a gendered and / or racialized coverage, enabled the author to observe and analyse the mechanisms of discriminatory discourses. While many studies have observed and quantified gender biases in the media, this thesis did not intent to again illustrate that media are discriminatory in their representations of women politicians, but instead, it intended to examine and analyse how it is done. That is, the mechanisms that underpin such biased coverage *when* it happens, and not to assess whether it happens. Please see the method section of each article for a more detailed account of the processes followed in each piece of research.

Article	I	II		III	
Total	<i>N</i> = 158	<i>N</i> = 129		<i>N</i> = 156	
Politician	Jacinda Ardern	Rachida Dati	Najat Vallaud-Belkacem	Metiria Turei	Paula Bennett
Period	18.01.2018 – 25.06.2018	2008	2014	01.08.2016-31.08.2017	01.11.2017-30.06.2019
Scope	Aotearoa New Zealand and International	France		Aotearoa New Zealand	
Media outlets	<i>Le Monde</i> (Fr) <i>Le Figaro</i> (Fr) <i>Irish Independent</i> (Ir) <i>Irish Times</i> (Ir) <i>The Guardian</i> (UK) <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> (UK) <i>The New York Times</i> (USA)	<i>Le Figaro</i> <i>Le Monde</i>		<i>New Zealand Herald</i> <i>Dominion Post</i> <i>Otago Daily Times</i> <i>Radio New Zealand News</i> <i>The Spinoff</i>	

	<i>The Washington Post</i> (USA) <i>The Australian</i> (Au) <i>Herald Sun</i> (Au) <i>New Zealand Herald</i> (NZ) <i>Dominion Post</i> (NZ) <i>Otago Daily Times</i> (NZ)		
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Table 2. Overview of data set for each article

4.3 Summary

The table below provides an overview of the way each article addresses the overarching research questions of this project. Furthermore, this table explicitly show what theoretical framework and analytical tool were used to develop each article.

Overall Thesis	<p>RQ1: How is media coverage of minority and white women politicians inflected by cultural differences in the distinct national contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France?</p> <p>RQ2: How are hegemonic ideologies revealed to be entrenched in media discourses in the distinct national contexts of (bicultural) Aotearoa New Zealand and (universalist) France?</p>		
	Article I	Article II	Article III
Research Questions	<p>RQ1: How is the coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy reproducing and/or challenging existing discourses of pregnancy?</p> <p>RQ2: What differences and similarities can be noticed in the coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy locally and internationally?</p>	<p>RQ1: How are Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem represented in <i>Le Monde</i> and <i>Le Figaro</i> with regard to their status of diversité?</p> <p>RQ2: How do the media representations of the Maghrebian origins of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem contribute to their Othering?</p>	<p>RQ1: How are Turei’s and Bennett’s ‘Māoriness’ represented in mainstream New Zealand media?</p> <p>RQ2: Are anti-Māori themes intertwined/present in coverage of Turei and Bennett, and if so, how?</p> <p>RQ3: How do sexist and racist discourses intersect in the coverage of Turei and Bennett?</p>
Theoretical	- Neoliberal feminism	- Othering	- Anti-Māori themes

framework	- Post-feminism		
Analytical tool	- Thematic analysis	- Thematic analysis - Feminist critical discourse analysis - Intersectionality	- Thematic analysis - Feminist critical discourse analysis - Intersectionality

Table 3. Overview of the articles' research questions and theoretical and methodological approach

Chapter 5 Articles Included in the Study

This project examined media coverage of minority and white women politicians, with the aim of observing the way news media discursively (re)reproduce and perpetuate hegemonic ideologies (such as patriarchy, whiteness, heteronormativity). By focusing on two different countries (Aotearoa New Zealand and France), this project asked critical questions about how deeply influential cultural differences affect the way French and New Zealand media represent minority and white women politicians. Three articles comprise this project. A brief overview of the articles' publication status is presented before providing a summary of each article.

Article	Title	Status	Journal
Article I	“A baby bump for women’s rights”: Analysing local and international media coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy	Published	<i>Feminist Media Studies</i>
Article II	Media Coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem: An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of Minority Women in the French Political Context	Published	<i>Women’s Studies in Communication</i>
Article III	An intersectional approach to media coverage of politics in Aotearoa New Zealand: The case of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett	Published	<i>Media International Australia</i>

Table 4. Overview of the articles’ publication status

Feminist Media Studies’ focus on feminist approach to media and communication, and its international range and high ranking (Q1 in communication and gender studies categories as identified in SCImago for the year 2019) was a good fit for submission for Article I.

With a particular interest in studies that advance scholarship understanding of intersectionality, *Women’s Studies in Communication* was a natural and relevant choice for the second article. In 2019, this journal is ranked Q2 in communication and gender studies categories in SCImago.

Finally, *Media International Australia*'s primary focus on Australian and New Zealand media practices was contextually relevant to the third article. An important regional journal, it is ranked Q1 in cultural studies and Q2 in communication in SCImago in 2019.

5.1 Article I: “A baby bump for women’s rights”: Analysing local and international media coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy

The first article of this project focuses on the coverage Jacinda Ardern – New Zealand Prime Minister – received during her pregnancy. This article examines the reproduction and perpetuation of dominant ideologies of pregnancy and work / family balance. As only the second woman head of state pregnant while in office, Ardern’s particular case offered a unique opportunity to examine media coverage of a pregnant head of state. While studies have examined coverage of women politicians, most of those did not hold such a powerful and visible position. The female heads of states previously studied were either already mothers or child-free. Moreover, as it has been observed numerous times, Jacinda Ardern is beloved and praised for her leadership worldwide. The international appreciation of and fascination with Ardern provides a different angle of observation to those previously taken. The literature has illustrated so far how women politicians with(out) children are negatively covered and questioned in their political role. Therefore, it was interesting to observe that Ardern’s international appreciation translated into a more positive coverage. It is important to note that the frenzy (dubbed ‘Jacindamania’) that surrounded Ardern started when she became Leader of the Labour Party (before her pregnancy), at least in New Zealand. This ‘Jacindamania’ was therefore an opportunity to compare the coverage of a widely popular woman politician to the literature on representation of women politicians, which has mostly cast negative light on those women. To do so, a thematic analysis was undertaken of news stories ($N = 158$) in newspapers from six countries (Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, France, Ireland, UK and US): *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *Irish Independent*, *Irish Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Australian*, *Herald Sun*, *New Zealand Herald*, *Dominion Post*, and *Otago Daily Times*. The study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How is the coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy reproducing and/or challenging existing discourses of pregnancy?

RQ2: What differences and similarities can be noticed in the coverage of Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy locally and internationally?

This paper revealed overtly positive coverage of Jacinda Ardern, which diverged from previous studies on politicians' pregnancy and motherhood. Overall, New Zealand and international media constructed Ardern's pregnancy as a symbol of gender equality. With a more substantial and nuanced coverage of the pregnancy, New Zealand media showed a rather progressive representation of pregnancy and parenthood, by constructing them as a couple event and experience. In that regard, the foregrounding of Clarke Gayford's role as father and as primary caregiver provided a different image of masculinity from the stereotypical secondary father-figure one.

Presented as a game changer for working women in New Zealand and around the world, coverage of Ardern's pregnancy illustrates the neoliberal feminist ideologies underpinning such narratives as the achievability of work/family balance and women can "have it all". However, the alternative model of parenting provided a departure from neoliberal views of parenthood, and instead foregrounded a gender equalitarian experience and performance of parenting.

Finally, the generalisation of Ardern's experience of pregnancy to all women normalised the white, heteronormative, middle/upper classes (privileged) working mother performance and experience. Ardern embodies the privileged white woman of middle/upper class. The high visibility and generalisation of her specific experience of pregnancy and motherhood in mainstream news media do set the standards against which other women will be compared to and confronted to. In other words, this generalisation is detrimental as it silences the multiple other experiences of working mothers of diverse social identities. It sets the standards and norms that serve to Otherize women who are not like Ardern.

Building on these findings, the two subsequent articles focused specifically on minority women politicians in two different cultural contexts: Maghrebin immigrant women in France, and indigenous Māori women in Aotearoa New Zealand.

5.2 Article II: Media Coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem: An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of Minority Women in the French Political Context.

The second paper introduces the intersectional aspect of this thesis. This article aims to illustrate the process of discriminatory ideologies in French newspapers through analysing the discursive representation of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem - two ethnically diverse high-profile French women politicians. To do so, thematic analysis, feminist critical discourse analysis and an overall intersectional lens are used to analyse news stories ($N = 129$) from two prominent French newspapers: *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. Beyond their quality and high national circulation, these two newspapers were chosen for their divergent political stances – *Le Monde* with a centre-left positioning while *Le Figaro* situates on the right wing of the political spectrum. This political divide was all the more interesting in that the two politicians under study affiliate with similarly opposing political parties – Rachida Dati to the right-wing The Republicans Party, and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem to the left-wing Socialist Party. The study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How are Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem represented in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* with regard to their status of *diversité*?

RQ2: How do the media representations of the Maghrebian origins of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem contribute to their Othering?

Overall, the data showed no clear evidence of different treatment of Rachida Dati by *Le Monde* and of Najat Vallaud-Belkacem by *Le Figaro* on the basis of the newspapers' opposing political stances. The analysis, however, highlighted how the two politicians were constructed, by both *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, as illegitimate in their ministerial roles, not necessarily because of the quality of their work but because of their social identities. Specifically, the very nature of being of *diversité* resulted in the constructing of both Vallaud-Belkacem and Dati as illegitimate. Their status of *diversité* suggested that their ministerial appointments resulted from positive discrimination, instead of merit. Furthermore, media constructed *diversité* as a safety bubble that shields Vallaud-Belkacem and Dati against criticism and potential dismissal.

The analysis of these two case studies illustrates how the Othering of Vallaud-Belkacem and Dati conflicts with the very essence of French universalism. The basis of universalism in

France is to claim that all French people are French first and foremost, and therefore to dismiss any differences between French people. Yet, the analysis shows that the immigrant background is frequently mentioned in coverage of Vallaud-Belkacem and Dati, especially in coverage of their missteps. The emphasis of differences of the two ministers illustrates the construction of differentiation among French citizens, which conflicts with the principle of universalism.

Finally, this paper echoes Al’Ghabra’s (2018) argument that intersectional studies should take into account the historical, cultural, and socio-economical contexts in which the study takes place. This argument lays the ground for the third study of this project, which examines media discourses in the bicultural context of colonial Aotearoa New Zealand.

5.3 Article III: An intersectional approach to media coverage of politics in Aotearoa New Zealand: The case of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett.

Building on the findings of the second article, this article turns an intersectional lens to the specific context of bi-cultural colonial Aotearoa New Zealand to illustrate the discriminatory ideologies at play in coverage of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett – two former Māori women politicians. Following a similar analytical process to Article II, thematic analysis, feminist critical discourse analysis, and intersectionality are concurrently used to comprehensively analyse the data set (N = 156). The data set include news stories from media outlets broadly representative of national media consumption: *Dominion Post*, *New Zealand Herald*, *Otago Daily Times*, *The Spinoff*, and *Radio New Zealand National*. The study was guided by three research questions:

RQ1: How are Turei’s and Bennett’s ‘Māoriness’ represented in mainstream New Zealand media?

RQ2: Are anti-Māori themes intertwined/present in coverage of Turei and Bennett, and if so, how?

RQ3: How do sexist and racist discourses intersect in the coverage of Turei and Bennett?

The analysis showed that Turei and Bennett’s ‘Māoriness’ was used differently in the media. Turei’s ‘Māoriness’ served to construct her as dangerous. More particularly, Turei was

constructed in terms of ‘stirrer’ and ‘bad Māori’, two of the anti-Māori themes identified in Moewaka Barnes et al. (2012), which created a narrative that depicted Turei as dangerous to the Establishment. For instance, the mention of Turei’s anarchist background and the silencing of her career as a corporate lawyer construct her in terms of ‘stirrer’, particularly so in the context of her admission of benefit fraud.

Bennett, conversely, had her ‘Māoriness’ either foregrounded in the service of her party, or questioned in terms of its authenticity. Less so constructed in terms of anti-Māori themes, Bennett was rather portrayed as a ‘stropky woman’. The different construction of Turei and Bennett’s ‘Māoriness’ conveyed a similar message: both were denigrated as individuals and in their political roles, although on different ground.

Overall, the alignment of Bennett with a coloniser, white, neoliberal Establishment was reflected in coverage she received, which focused more on her (female) body than on her ethnicity. Conversely, Turei who represented the stereotypical (bad) Māori and the anti-Establishment, was marginalised for her Māoriness along with her gender.

Chapter 6 Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Summary of the findings

This research project examines media coverage of minority and white women politicians in the particular contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France. To avoid repeating results from each article, this section is constructed as an overall discussion of findings from the three articles developed for this project. In that regard, special attention is paid to the role different historical and cultural contexts play in the way news media constructed the women politicians under study. Similar attention is given to dominant ideologies underpinning media discourses. The results from this research project can be summarised into five main points that are addressed below.

6.1.1 Generic media representations have a particular local application

Previous studies in different countries have illustrated how media coverage of minority and white women politicians shared common characteristics (e.g. overall negative coverage, focus on family life, racial, and gender stereotypes and so on). Findings from this research project illustrate how gendered and racialised coverage has a particular local application. In Article I, Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy is extensively covered, especially in Aotearoa New Zealand and to a lesser degree in international media, revealing a traditional gendered coverage. However, New Zealand media, with its particular historical and cultural context, engage in a more nuanced coverage, providing a mostly positive representation of a woman head of state, and a progressive representation of pregnancy and parenthood as a couple's experience and responsibility. The cultural context is particularly visible when comparing the media treatment of Gayford's involvement as a father in Aotearoa New Zealand (Article I) to that of Boris Vallaud in France (Article II). For instance, Gayford is portrayed in a positive light for taking on the role of primary caregiver, both in the New Zealand and French media coverage of Ardern's pregnancy. *Le Figaro* even calls the event a revolution. This positive coverage contrasts with that of Vallaud whose caregiver role was doubted in a French article (Article II). In Articles II and III, the four minority women ministers – Rachida Dati, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, Metiria Turei, and Paula Bennett - receive negative gendered and racialised coverage that argued against their legitimacy as politicians. Findings suggest, however, that coverage took different forms and meanings, depending on the French and New Zealand context. For instance, the expectation of French society that women should be

conscious of their appearance, but to a certain degree only, is indicative of a particular French cultural context that influences the gendered coverage accorded to women (Article II). The association of Dati's fashion style with the term *beurette* epitomises the complexity of intersecting gendered and racialised discourses in the French context. This fine culturally inflected line between too much and acceptable consciousness may result in discriminatory gendered, and racialised, discourses that may be perceived differently in a different cultural context. In Article III, the gendered and racialised coverage of Māori women politicians, in the particular context of Aotearoa New Zealand, may be analysed and illuminated through the lens of anti-Māori themes. The findings suggest that the historical and cultural contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and France play a shaping role in the construction of discriminatory narratives found in the mainstream media particular to each country.

6.1.2 Media coverage: different focus but same message

The particular intersectional lens applied throughout Articles II and III illustrates how news media foreground different social identities, which work variously and in combination but ultimately convey a similar negative message. In Article II, suggested illegitimacy in ministerial roles does not result from the quality of the women politicians' work but is extrapolated from some of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem's social identities. While gender and ethnicity contribute to some level of discriminatory media treatment, the intersection of age and ideology-driven-politics (in Vallaud-Belkacem's case), or social class and religion (in Dati's case), contributes to a deeper and more complex web of discriminations that is unique to each minister. Interestingly, the French coverage of Jacinda Ardern (Article I) similarly foregrounds Ardern's youth (37 years old at the time of coverage), gender, social class (middle class), and religion (former Mormon), yet, unlike for Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem (Article II), the mention of those social identities serve to construct Ardern in a positive light. Ardern is constructed as a superwoman. Unlike Vallaud-Belkacem, Ardern is not deemed illegitimate and in need of mentoring for being a young woman. Ardern's gender, and more specifically her being a female Prime Minister is frequently mentioned in the French newspapers. The fact that France has never had a woman President may account for that coverage, which contrasts with that in Aotearoa New Zealand where no mention of Ardern's gender in relation to her Prime Minister position is made. This lack of interest arguably reflects the local context that having a woman Prime Minister in Aotearoa New Zealand is not a novelty but ordinary. Similarly to Article II, Article III highlights how social class, beneficiary status, age, and physique (in Bennett's case) result in different discourses that

undermine the women's competence and professionalism and discredit them. Furthermore, discourses of incompetence, illegitimacy, and discredit resulting from being an ethnic minority are observed in relation to the women politicians in both Article II and III. However, although quite central in the French news media (Article II), discourses of foreignness (e.g. references to country of origins) in relation to a minority group are not observed in the New Zealand data analysed for this project. It is however important to mention that only Māori women were analysed in Aotearoa New Zealand. A research focus on ethnic minority women of immigrant background in Aotearoa New Zealand may produce discourses of foreignness. Maghrebin women, who immigrated or are of immigrant background, are considered a 'minority' group in France, whereas Māori indigenous women, who are the native people of Aotearoa, constitute the primary 'minority' group in Aotearoa New Zealand. Cultural, or colonial history in this specific case, shapes the media discourses used to construct very different minority women in sometimes similarly discriminatory terms (undisciplined, unsuited for ministerial roles, illegitimate, frivolous, unprofessional, and so on). This different understanding of the concept of minority echoes Mügge and de Jong's (2013) argument that the societal, political, and historical environment necessarily influences the experience of minority people, and further reinforces the importance of taking into account the local context in a holistic way (see first point above).

6.1.3 (Re)production of hegemonic ideologies

Findings illustrate how Western, patriarchal, and neoliberal ideologies are reproduced in mainstream news media in Aotearoa New Zealand and France, through positive representation of Ardern's pregnancy and advocacy for the "having it all" model of working mothers (Article I) or, conversely, through negative representation and disempowerment (Article II and III). The neoliberal feminist discourse of work-family balance (or "having it all") identified in Article I perpetuates a heteronormative, white, middle-upper class, (and, in parts of the data, a woman-centric) experience of pregnancy and parenthood. The reinforcement of heteronormative nuclear family model ideology is particularly visible through the positive light shed on Ardern's family (Article I), as opposed to the criticism Dati and Turei received as single mothers (Article II and III). In Article I, the construction of Ardern's pregnancy and working situation as a symbol of gender equality serves to normalise and generalise Ardern's particular experience. In this regard, both the French and New Zealand media have used similar neoliberal feminist discourses to construct Ardern's pregnancy in positive and normalising terms. The generalisation of Ardern's experience of

pregnancy disregards the privileges she enjoys as a white, middle/upper class working woman, thereby perpetuating dominant ideologies of pregnancy, motherhood, and work-family balance. Furthermore, the contrast in coverage accorded to Turei, who represents the anti-Establishment, and to Bennett, who aligns with a conservative Establishment, illuminates some of the ways media reproduce patriarchal, coloniser, and white Western ideologies (Article III). By virtue of being more debatably Māori, and therefore less easily stereotyped as one, Bennett is constructed by news media in primarily gendered terms. Thus, Bennett's body and personality are used to disempower her in her political role. Conversely, Turei, whose Māori heritage is embedded in her coverage, is constructed in stereotyped anti-Māori terms alongside gendered terms. This contrast in focus of coverage reinforces the positiveness associated with white and coloniser ideologies. This is particularly well exemplified by the comparison between Metiria Turei and Bill English and John Key, in relation to the radically different media treatment accorded to wealthy white men and a poor Māori woman in regard to not dissimilar rule breaking.

6.1.4 Remaining the Other: Failure to adequately perform being French, or being a New Zealander

The findings suggest that Dati, Vallaud-Belkacem, Turei, and Bennett are all assessed by being compared to the dominant group of their respective country. The comparison process Otherizes them and enables mainstream media to set the standards of what performing in accordance with the societal norms – that are based on whiteness and Frenchness (Article II) or Pākehā-ness (whiteness and of European lineage) (Article III) - should look and be like. These findings are interesting considering the principles of biculturalism and universalism that are (supposedly) applied in Aotearoa New Zealand and France respectively.

Biculturalism suggests that two different cultures can coexist on an equal level. However, the Othering process consistently occurs through media-deployed anti-Māori narratives, and highlights the imbalance in power relation that continues to favour Pākehā at the expense of Māori. The comparison of Turei with Bill English and John Key is illustrative of narratives that Otherize. Similarly, the construction of Turei as having stolen money from hardworking honest taxpayers (aka Pākehā) because of her beneficiary status is another instance of the Othering process and of the power imbalance between Māori and Pākehā. Conversely, universalism purports to recognise all French citizens as one people: all French citizens are equal, and individual differences are denied. Yet, the Othering of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem happens through the construction of their status of *diversité* (Article II). Dati and Vallaud-

Belkacem's status of *diversité* is used in contradictory ways depending on the context. On the one hand, *diversité* is deployed in media coverage to represent the successful integration of Maghrebin women, and therefore, in line with universalism, their Frenchness. On the other hand, *diversité* is also conjured to represent missteps and failure to perform adequately, which serves to revoke their Frenchness. This Othering of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem, and by extension people like them, defies universalist ethos and calls its validity into question. Although constructed differently, French and New Zealand media convey the message that there is only one right way to be French or New Zealander.

6.1.5 Representing all women versus 'women like them'

Findings of this research support the previously made argument that a white woman can stand in for all women (Cho, Crenshaw, McCall, 2013), whereas a minority woman can only represent women like herself. In Article I, Ardern (a Pākehā woman) appears as embodying all women in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to some extent as representing working mothers more globally. More importantly, the coverage received by Ardern normalises her experience of pregnancy and being a working mother as being applicable to all women (and not just privileged – or aspirational - women like her). Conversely, Article II illustrates the various discourses used to constrain Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem to represent Maghrebian women in France, that is women who look like them. For instance, Vallaud-Belkacem's gender-ideology-driven politics, in intersection with her Moroccan and religious background, is constructed in a way that limits her ability to represent or speak for all French citizens; that is, she does not speak for all, only for people who resemble her: Maghrebin women. In a similar way, Dati is estranged from the white (and wealthy) French population during her campaign for mayoral election. Dati's working-class and Maghrebin background are foregrounded to convey her inadequacy to represent a part of the French population that does not resemble her.

Overall, this research project advances arguments from previous studies on media representation of white and minority women politicians.

6.2 Implications

This research project contributes to the gendered and racialised mediation literature and furthers the discussion on intersectionality. This project has theoretical and methodological implications that are discussed below.

This research extends the literature on media representation of minority and white women politicians beyond the North American context. Widening the predominantly North American-centred scholarship is important in various regards. While studies in North America have helped carve the path for research on gendered and racialised media representations, they have also implicitly laid the results of a particular context as the base of (academic) knowledge at a global level. The globalization and normalization of a North American production of (academic) knowledge has tended to overshadow the rest of the world. Social constructionism considers that knowledge is produced within and by a particular context; thus, the prevalent North American perspective in research considerably limits our understanding of discriminatory media representations. Therefore, this project contributes to the literature on understanding the differing systems of reproductions of discriminations, oppressions, and dominant ideologies through media coverage of white and minority women politicians in different historical, economical, and cultural contexts. Relatedly, this research project furthers the understanding of the importance of the role historical and cultural contexts have in shaping news media narratives. In this regard, the particular focus on the French and New Zealand contexts contribute to the research on the construction of media discourses involving minority and Indigenous women in different historical and cultural contexts: coloniser versus colonised in this specific case.

Further, this research project contributes to the general discussion on intersectionality. The use of intersectionality outside of a North American context has been criticised and contested by some scholars. We can agree that transporting a North American template of intersectionality might offer limited insights. This research, however, suggests that a particular use of intersectionality, one that is adapted and tailored to a specific historical, economical, and cultural context, is beneficial to illuminate the various social identities used to construct discriminatory and oppressive media discourses in that particular context. Furthermore, some social identities may have a certain meaning in one context, and a different one in another. For instance, *minority* refers to immigrants in France, but can mean native people in Aotearoa New Zealand. This difference of meaning plays a role in the

construction of minority women politicians in news media. In that sense, using intersectionality in a wider range of contexts enables the researcher to identify, and interpret, those differences. The intersectional lens illuminates the complexities of discourses that involve multiple social identities. The comparison of discourses in Aotearoa New Zealand – a nation that embraces the concepts of race and ethnicity and promotes biculturalism - and in France – a nation that disavows the concept of race and promotes universalism – further exemplifies the complexities of racialised discourses. This research project, therefore, furthers the exploration of intersectionality as a flexible and productive tool that illuminates complex discriminatory discourses in a very wide range of contexts.

Theoretically, this research project advances the literature on media representation of women politicians, more specifically in terms of pregnancy and parenthood, and on media representation of minority women politicians, more particularly with regards to Othering and anti-Māori themes. The primarily positive tone surrounding Ardern’s pregnancy, observed both in national and international news media, contrasts with that found in previous studies. Similarly, the construction of the pregnancy as a couple event and experience, observed in New Zealand news media only, established Ardern and Gayford as equally valued partners in parenthood. This egalitarian and inclusive discourse diverges from that observed in previous studies. The French part of this research contributes to the literature on Othering, by illuminating the paradoxical, various, and complex ways in which Othering is constructed in the particular context of a society that advocates for universalism. Finally, the New Zealand side of this project, explored primarily in paper three, applies anti-Māori themes to Māori women specifically. Previous studies that identified and applied those anti-Māori themes looked at them in terms of Māori as a homogenous group. This project therefore advances the literature on anti-Māori themes by exploring the way those anti-Māori narratives may be used specifically to represent Māori women in news media.

Methodologically, this project appears to be the first to combine thematic analysis, feminist critical discourse analysis, and intersectionality in studies on media representation of minority women politicians. Building on these methods, this thesis goes beyond an often encountered mixed-qualitative and quantitative approach to qualitatively analyse in depth the discursive mechanisms that enable gender and racial ideologies and power relations to be reproduced in media coverage of women politicians. The thematic analysis layer has enabled me to analyse a large body of data and thus to gain a broad view of the media representation of those women politicians, all the while keeping a social interpretation of the data. FCDA has

allowed me to zoom in on small portions of data for an in-depth interpretation and understanding of the creation and reproduction of gender ideologies in news stories. Finally, the “intersectional way of thinking” (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013, p. 795) that I have applied throughout this project (outlined more specifically in Articles II and III) has enabled me to examine and interpret the way gender, ethnicity, and other social identities are intertwined and embedded in the narratives of these women. Applying an intersectional lens that was in a sense tailored to the particular cultural context under study was essential to interpret the reproduction of ideologies and power relations specific to that context.

To summarise, this project contributes an in-depth understanding of media representation of white and minority women politicians in Aotearoa New Zealand and France, offering a new combination of methodological tools and cultural contexts to the current literature. The comparison between French and New Zealand news media has provided a unique perspective to the literature of the role of historical and cultural contexts in the representations of white and minority women politicians in news media, which result in varying reproductions of dominant ideologies and power relations. The comparison between the French and New Zealand contexts has advanced the literature on how global media representations have a particular local application.

6.3 Limitations of the study and future directions

Because its scope was limited by practical considerations of time completion for the thesis, and particular country contexts of which I have first-hand knowledge and experience, this research project was limited to news stories in Aotearoa New Zealand and France. However, given the influence cultural and historical contexts have on the way discriminatory ideologies are subtly perpetuated in mainstream news media, further studies are needed to keep exploring the perpetuation of discriminatory ideologies in a wider range of cultural environments. Furthermore, although already an ongoing process, it is essential to extend scholarship that brings an insider perspective and experience to the analysis. For instance, using a *mana wahine* approach to media treatment of Māori women would allow a deeper insight the current project could never bring. While the aim of this project was not to bring an insider’s perspective, my positionality as researcher and human being prevented me from bringing more than an external view to the research, which constitute one limitation of this project.

This project has examined representations of white and minority women politicians in French and New Zealand news media. This project was limited to news stories in mainstream media outlets. However, research on representation of women politicians could be extended to a wider variety of media outlets. For instance, ethnic media outlets may have a different representation than what we have observed in mainstream media outlets. Research on representation of women politicians on television and radio would provide interesting insights on ‘live’ discourses versus written discourses that can be edited. Furthermore, in our digital age, it is important to continue examining how white and minority women politicians are depicted on social media.

This project has focused on discourses produced about white and minority women politicians in news stories. It would be interesting to examine how these women frame themselves either on their own social media or during interviews or some kind of public discourses. We observed that Turei and Bennett identified themselves differently to their Māori heritage, which arguably played a role in the way they were constructed in the media. Similarly, Ardern shaped the narrative of her pregnancy as a couple event and experience on her social media and public appearances, a narrative that was mirrored in the New Zealand media. Therefore, carrying on with research that explores the suggestive connection between women politicians’ self-representations and media representations of these women would advance understanding of the mutual construction of these discourses.

The size of this project necessarily prevented broader data gathering. For instance, researching the media treatment of all Māori and immigrant women politicians in Aotearoa New Zealand or all minority women politicians in France would provide a more holistic interpretation of biased coverage. While the French side of this project has focused on immigrant women politicians who are Maghrebin, France has had women politicians of various immigrant background (e.g. South Korean-born Fleur Pellerin, or Senegalese-born Rama Yade), and women politicians from overseas territories (e.g. Christiane Taubira) who would provide a more holistic view of media representation of *diversité* in France. The New Zealand side of this project has focused on Māori women politicians, but Aotearoa New Zealand also has women politicians from a wider array of ethnic backgrounds, analysis of whom would provide a more nuanced understanding of the New Zealand media scene. Finally, broader data gathering would allow a longitudinal focus that might illuminate changes in media coverage of minority, or Indigenous, women politicians over time.

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Original Papers

Article I

“A baby bump for women’s rights”: Analysing local and international media coverage of Jacinda Ardern’s pregnancy

by

Flora Galy-Badenas & Mélodie Sommier (2021)

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“A baby bump for women’s rights”: Analysing Local and International Media Coverage of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s Pregnancy

Very few studies have examined discourses about Heads of State who have been pregnant whilst in office. In January 2018, Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, announced her pregnancy and intention of taking six weeks of maternity leave, which sparked national and international interest. This study analyses the coverage of Ardern’s pregnancy and contributes to literature on representations of female politicians. A thematic analysis of newspaper articles ($N = 158$) from six countries (New Zealand, Australia, France, Ireland, the United Kingdom, & the United States) was conducted. Mild nuances between international and New Zealand data were observed. The analysis suggests that Ardern’s pregnancy was presented as a *cultural achievement*, in part through the tension between local and universal dimensions, and as a *symbolic event*, notably through the interplay between normal and extraordinary aspects. The findings indicate that Ardern’s pregnancy was represented as a *step closer to gender equality* by advancing women’s cause in society and working places and renegotiating representations of fatherhood and masculinity. The notion of *privilege* was also important, in part because of its absence as a significant consideration in the data, which further revealed normative feminist discourses.

Keywords: Media coverage; Motherhood; Female politicians’ representation; Jacinda Ardern; Masculinities

Introduction

It is totally unacceptable in 2017 to say that women should have to answer that question [about motherhood plans] in the workplace. That is unacceptable in 2017. It is a woman’s decision about when they choose to have children, it should not predetermine whether or not they are given a job or have job opportunities.⁶

As a freshly elected leader of the Labour Party, Jacinda Ardern was asked about her motherhood plans on a high-profile television show. The inquiry over Ardern’s motherhood

⁶ Ardern’s response to comments about an employer’s right to ask women about their motherhood plans on *The AM Show*, 2 August 2017.

plans sparked heated debate in Aotearoa⁷ New Zealand. Tweets critiqued the unacceptable and misogynistic tone of the questioning. The sexist tone of the questioning was further highlighted by the comparison between Ardern and Bill English, former Prime Minister, who was never asked about his plan to balance his work-family life, despite having six children during his term as Prime Minister.

Approximately a year later, much has changed in Ardern's life. Sworn in as Prime Minister on 26 October 2017, Ardern, together with partner Clarke Gayford, announced their pregnancy on 19 January 2018. Simultaneously, Ardern informed New Zealanders that following the birth she would be taking six weeks maternity leave, during which Winston Peters (Deputy Prime Minister) would become Acting Prime Minister. Following her maternity leave, Gayford would become the primary caregiver of their child. Ardern gave birth on June 21, 2018, and held on June 24, 2018, together with partner Clarke Gayford, a press conference to introduce daughter Neve Te Aroha Ardern Gayford.

The news of Ardern's pregnancy sparked national and international interest, offering a rather unique opportunity to compare cross-national discourses on the topic. This study examines newspaper articles from Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, France, Ireland, the UK, and the US to observe how Ardern's pregnancy was represented. This cross-national design widens the scope of existing research, which primarily focuses on representations of female politicians' pregnancies within their own countries. Bridging this gap is important to unearth similarities and differences in media representations and their connection to cultural and national narratives. Previous studies examining media representations of female politicians underline the scope and strength of stereotypes underpinning these discourses (Karen Ross 2017), as well as their intersections with idea(l)s of motherhood and femininity (Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels 2004; Catherine Rottenberg 2017). Yet, for obvious reasons, very few studies have examined discourses about pregnant Heads of State in office. In order to address the lack of research concerning representations of pregnant female politicians, the

⁷ Indigenous Māori's name for New Zealand. 'Aotearoa New Zealand' is used when referring to the country.

present study analyses coverage of Ardern's pregnancy by posing the following research questions:

RQ 1: How does media coverage of Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy reproduce and/or challenge existing dominant discourses of pregnancy?

RQ2: What differences and similarities can be noticed in the coverage of Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy locally and internationally?

Theoretical background

Motherhood and fatherhood are actively, albeit differently, constructed in the media. Mapping out Western media representations of pregnancy and motherhood helps identify some of the (power) issues that underpin the ways in which male and female politicians are represented as parents or future parents.

Representation of pregnancy and motherhood in the media

Historically and culturally, motherhood has been constructed as a core element of women's identity. The ability and willingness to have children is perceived to indicate a woman's degree of femininity/womanliness (Deborah Borisoff 2005). Although the image and expectations of motherhood have changed over time, child-rearing as a woman's primary concern and responsibility remains the norm in Western countries. Despite women entering the workforce, this dynamic did not change to any significant degree. Instead, the image of the *super mom* appeared, and women found themselves expected to work full-time *and* to thrive as mothers. On the one hand, media promote unattainable standards of motherhood (Douglas and Michaels 2004) which require complete devotion to children and 'expert level knowledge' in the art of child-rearing (Jiyoung Chae 2015, 505). This dominant intensive mothering ideology (Sharon Hays 1996) represents a white, heterosexual, middle/upper-class view of motherhood that excludes diverging identities (Kim Allen, Heather Mendick, Laura Harvey, and Aisha Ahmad 2015). On the other hand, capitalist societies value and reward paid employment and encourage total dedication to career progression. Although the pursuit of a career is valued, maternity and motherhood are still encouraged, but deferred. This neoliberal feminist discourse, that normalises parenthood as a woman's responsibility, suggests that 'having it all', or having a work-family balance, is the key to happiness, and becomes the 'ultimate ideal' for women to strive for (Rottenberg 2017; Sarah Banet-Weiser,

Rosalind Gill, and Catherine Rottenberg 2020). As ‘the identity of “mother” is increasingly intertwined and entangled with paid employment’ (Jane Brooks and Christabel Rogalin 2014, 665), women are confronted by conflicting ideologies of work-centered cultures (successful worker) and intensive mothering (successful mother) (Brooks and Rogalin 2014; Kate Orton-Johnson 2017).

The controlling discourse around the proper way to experience and undertake motherhood is engrained during pregnancy (Gabrielle Hine 2013). The pregnant woman becomes a ‘public figure. Her body is on display for others to comment upon, and even to touch, in ways not considered appropriate of any other adult body’ (Deborah Lupton 2012, 332). Hegemonic postfeminist discourses in Western media regulate what the experience of pregnancy and the body of a pregnant woman should look like (Banet-Weiser, Gill, and Rottenberg 2020; Rosalind Gill 2016). Pregnant women are expected to be perfect on all fronts, which often results in a double bind: women should be a knowledgeable healthy ‘container[s] for the baby’ while remaining a ‘yummy mummy’, that is keeping a fit and sexualised body (Susan Goodwin and Kate Huppatz 2010; Katrin Tiidenberg and Nancy Baym 2017). The notion that women must regain a ‘perfect’ body (slim and sexual) post-delivery is endorsed and enforced by media. An example is the waist-watch of pregnant celebrities (Banet-Weiser, Gill, and Rottenberg 2020; Angela McRobbie 2013, 2015). Exposed to these ideal images of motherhood, women are encouraged to fulfil them in order to be successful mothers.

Although media constructs and perpetuates hegemonic pregnancy discourses, pregnant women also partake in the process. As they perform their pregnancy in the right/normal/expected way (on social media), pregnant women participate in reproducing and perpetuating ‘intensive pregnancy’/mothering (Tiidenberg and Baym 2017). Furthermore, women’s performance of motherhood, especially in terms of looks and consumption, further reproduces social class divisions (Goodwin and Huppatz 2010). In this regard, postfeminist and neoliberal discourses of ‘yummy/slummy mummy’ and intensive pregnancy/motherhood are also indicative of social, economic, and cultural capital (Goodwin and Huppatz 2010).

Politicians, parenthood, and the media

Media representations of motherhood and pregnancy contrast with discourses of fatherhood. Coverage of male and female politicians illustrates this divide. The traditional notion that children are women’s responsibility is still largely embodied in coverage of female

politicians, which reflects negatively on audiences' perception of women's capacity to fulfil political duties (Diana Carlin and Kelly Winfrey 2009). Literature shows how Western media celebrate politicians that are men and fathers, whilst stigmatising politicians who are female and mothers. While a female politician's marital status and family life is dissected and commented upon, a male politician's family life is rarely mentioned (Leticia Bode and Valerie Hennings 2012; Dianne Bystrom, Terry Robertson, and Mary Christine Banwart 2001; Linda Trimble 2007). The lack of critique or attention that applies to male politicians results in their depiction as de facto 'good' fathers. In contrast, women politicians who differ from traditional/stereotypical idea(l)s of motherhood can be framed as 'bad' mothers. For instance, in coverage of her pregnancy and post-delivery, French politician Rachida Dati faced strong criticism as she returned to work less than five days after giving birth (Liza Mügge 2013). Similarly, media scrutiny over former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark's childlessness portrayed her as a dangerous woman who could not relate to, nor act in the best intentions/interests of women (Heather Devere and Sharyn Graham Davis 2006). Likewise, former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard's childlessness was associated with a lack of empathy (Roslyn Appleby 2015). Interestingly, childlessness is perceived as a weakness, unless resulting from a personal tragedy, in which case it becomes insensitive to comment on (Jessica Smith 2018). Smith (2018) argues that some conservative female politicians politicise traditional motherhood to their political benefit; which serves to demonstrate political validity and relatability through motherhood. In the 1999 New Zealand General Election, the two opposing parties were led by women; Helen Clark was childless, whilst Jenny Shipley constructed motherhood as a 'domestic normality' (Susan Fountaine and Judy McGregor 2002). Sarah Palin used similar appeals during the 2008 US Elections campaign, presenting herself as a 'hockey mom' in efforts to relate to 'everyday citizens' (Philo Wasburn and Mara Wasburn 2011). While women who do not fit the traditional image of motherhood are depicted as dangerous role models and unfit for politics (Joakim Johansson and Linda Bergström 2015; Mügge 2013), men who actively and visibly embraced their role as fathers are praised and seen as 'innovative and positive for political development' and representative of 'modern masculinity' (Johansson and Bergström 2015, 183).

Despite the positive coverage of father politicians, women are still predominantly represented as primary caregivers, even in Sweden, a country often touted as gender equalitarian (Johansson and Bergström 2015). In their study on the gender of parenthood in politics, Johansson and Bergström (2015) highlight some of the prejudicial and stereotypical

views of parenthood that are (re)produced in the media. First, parents' genuine child-care orientation is criticised. Female politicians who renounce their maternity leave to focus on their career are described as 'insufficiently child-oriented' (181), whereas men who embrace their fatherhood role are described as utilising their parental leave to take time off from politics. Second, be it male politicians taking paternity leave or female politicians declining maternity leave, both cases are interpreted and constructed as symbolic, and within the scope of the battle for gender equality. Finally, the authors argue that as gender equality policies are influenced by 'traditional male virtues', they are 'bias[ed] towards labour market policy and economic autonomy, rather than the issues of care and shared parental responsibility' (184). Johansson and Bergström (2015) provide an overview of the ideologies and discourses connected to media representations of parenthood and pregnancy. These depictions reveal, (re)produce, and challenge some of the political, cultural, historical, and economic structures that shape societal expectations regarding mothers and fathers. What these structures permit and constrain becomes more visible in connection to public figures such as politicians. Exploring media coverage of Ardern's pregnancy therefore contributes to the body of literature on representations of female politicians, while highlighting the societal, political and cultural ramifications of these discourses.

Material and method

Data ($N= 158$) were collected from 13 newspapers across six countries (see table 1 below), namely France, Ireland, the UK, the US, Australia, and Aotearoa New Zealand. Although studies on media representations of female politicians and pregnancy/motherhood primarily focus on one country, this study offers a cross-national overview of the way one pregnancy was discussed across countries simultaneously. To conduct a thorough thematic analysis and uncover latent meanings, we only selected articles written in languages we are fluent in: English and French. To mitigate this limitation, we included countries from different geographical areas (i.e. North America, Europe, Oceania). These inclusions offer different narratives about Ardern's pregnancy based on their political and cultural affinities with Aotearoa New Zealand (i.e. Commonwealth and Anglo-Saxon countries) or relative lack thereof (i.e. France). This selection allowed for comparison of a wide range of discourses circulating locally in Aotearoa New Zealand as well as across prominent countries from the Global North.

For each country, two newspapers (one with the highest circulation rate and one of record) were used as a way of identifying the predominant discourses related to this topic at the time. Given the importance of the topic in Aotearoa New Zealand, three newspapers representing the ownership and geographical diversity of the country were used for data collection: *New Zealand Herald* (Auckland, owned by NZME) and *Dominion Post* (Wellington, owned by Stuff Ltd) are the two main newspapers of the North Island, and the *Otago Daily Times* (Dunedin, South Island, owned by Allied Press Ltd) a newspaper of record. Data were collected through the database Factiva using a combination of keywords (i.e. Jacinda Ardern + pregnancy; Jacinda Ardern + baby; Jacinda Ardern + birth; Jacinda Ardern + birth + baby) and ranging from one day before the pregnancy announcement to one day after the post-birth press conference (i.e. 18 January 2018 – 25 June 2018). The search engines of the newspapers were also used, using the same keywords and dates to ensure inclusion of all relevant articles (nine articles were selected this way). During data collection, each article was assessed to ensure that it engaged meaningfully with Ardern’s pregnancy and should be selected for thematic analysis (i.e. three articles mentioned Ardern’s pregnancy only in passing, and were therefore discarded).

Country	Newspaper titles	Number of articles	
France	<i>Le Monde</i>	4	9
	<i>Le Figaro</i>	5	
Ireland	<i>Irish Independent</i>	5	7
	<i>Irish Times</i>	2	
United Kingdom	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	4	29
	<i>The Guardian</i>	25	
United States	<i>The New York Times</i>	7	12
	<i>The Washington Post</i>	5	
Australia	<i>The Australian</i>	6	10
	<i>Herald Sun (Melbourne)</i>	4	
New Zealand	<i>New Zealand Herald</i>	44	91
	<i>Dominion Post</i>	37	
	<i>Otago Daily Times</i>	10	
TOTAL		158	

Table 1. Data distribution across newspapers and countries.

Analysis drew on the steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). These include becoming acquainted with the full dataset, applying codes to data to identify patterns and distinctive elements, and navigating between the themes produced by the researchers and the original articles from the dataset to ensure accuracy and consistency. In practice, the data were divided between us and coded using an inductive approach. Several strategies, described hereafter, were used to increase the rigour and credibility of the research (Sarah Tracy 2010). The data were independently coded but into a shared file so that the labels attached to all coded extracts were accessible and constantly checked. Additionally, a shared research diary was kept to record memos and notes about the themes and patterns. This process assisted in mitigating any individual assumptions and biases by enabling an ongoing feedback process, which was important given our personal interest in the topic and positionality as women, mother(s), and local(s) of New Zealand. The overall iterative process of navigating between data, notes, discussions, literature, and the developing analysis was central to ensuring that the final themes were close enough to the data, whilst being simultaneously abstract and analytical enough to answer the research question (Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke 2006; Tracy 2010).

Ardern's pregnancy was not as widely covered in each location included in this study (see table 1 above and Appendix 1 for a detailed overview of the dataset). Additionally, some nuances were observed between international and New Zealand data. Brief news items ($N=27$) drew on international news agency releases and therefore bore some similarities across newspapers. In contrast, extended news stories ($N=94$) that combined factual elements and analysis of the situation as well as opinion pieces ($N=38$), offered original content more connected to the editorial lines and socio-cultural context of the newspapers. Within the dataset, New Zealand (57.6%) and UK (18.4%) newspapers produced the largest number of articles and, therefore, more varied content, including most of the opinion pieces. Data from North American, Irish, French and Australian (24%) newspapers offered valuable contrasting points to identify similarities and differences and draw implications regarding the main discourses circulating within the data.

Findings

The analysis revealed that discourses about Ardern's pregnancy were overtly positive across local and international newspapers. However, with far more articles about Ardern's pregnancy, New Zealand data offered a wider range of discourses and a more nuanced coverage compared to the positive tone that dominated international data. Interestingly, the idea of parenthood was observed in New Zealand data, whereas motherhood discourse was more prominent in articles from the other countries. In addition to enthusiastic articles, New Zealand data also included a more traditionally gendered form of coverage which scrutinised the evolution of Ardern's pregnancy (especially close to her due date) and included uncertainties about her ability to combine motherhood and her official duties as Prime Minister:

Within hours of Ardern's announcement, the water cooler talk had turned to the irresponsibility of her decision. How could she take a job as relentless as Prime Minister knowing she was pregnant? How little time will she have for the child? Who's going to pay to cart the child around the country with her?
(*New Zealand Herald*, January 20 2018)

We identified four main themes in the data: Ardern's pregnancy as *cultural achievement*, as *symbolic event*, as a *step closer to gender equality*, and as connected to *privilege*. The articles analysed produce representations about 'us', at the national level (New Zealanders), as well as in the West. These depictions are the result of universal assumptions about pregnancy, motherhood, the status of women and the expected impact of Ardern's pregnancy worldwide. Articles also outline what feminism means, by using Ardern's pregnancy as a 'feminist ideal' showing that women can, and should, 'have it all'. This comes across the tension between the normal and extraordinary depiction of Ardern's pregnancy in the data, which echoes the work-life balance intrinsic to neoliberal feminism (Rottenberg 2017). Aligned with the overtly positive tone of the data, articles tend to embrace Ardern's pregnancy as a symbol of gender equality and an opportunity to (re)negotiate representations of masculinities through the portrayal of her partner Gayford. However, the empowering and positive narrative identified in the data has limitations. The discussion of Ardern and Gayford as privileged in a few articles shed light on the normative feminist discourses (re)produced in the rest of the data.

Ardern's pregnancy as cultural achievement

Ardern's pregnancy was often associated with Aotearoa New Zealand and thus constructed as a local event. New Zealand newspapers conveyed the sense of national pride Ardern's pregnancy awoke in the country, as illustrated by the exhilarated quote in *Stuff* from journalist and columnist Michelle Duff picked up by *The Guardian*:

Meanwhile, columnist Michelle Duff suggested that all New Zealanders were now the child's godparents. 'Let's just take a moment to appreciate that we, as a nation, have pushed the boundaries and created an environment where this can happen. That's 4.2 million godparents for you, little pepi.' (*The Guardian*, June 22 2018)

The tying of Ardern's pregnancy to the history of Aotearoa New Zealand enhances the symbolic dimension of her pregnancy by downplaying Ardern's agency and instead highlighting the pregnancy as a product of the country's historical inclination for gender equality. Ardern's pregnancy was therefore represented as an intrinsically local event, 'a demonstration of what is possible here' (*New Zealand Herald*, June 22 2018). Similar to New Zealand media, foreign newspapers present Ardern's pregnancy while in office as logically unfolding from the country's history as it was 'the first one to grant women the right to vote in 1893'⁸ (*Le Monde*, January 27 2018). This inescapable connection to Aotearoa New Zealand reveals the symbolic dimension of Ardern's pregnancy for gender equality and its depiction as a source of national pride and idealised representation of the country:

In an unmarried prime minister who gets to take maternity leave, we could see the progressive, tolerant, open-minded nation we like to think we are. (*Dominion Post*, June 22 2018)

This quotation gestures towards some of the tropes of popular feminism which produce celebratory and inspiring discourses of high visibility (Banet-Weiser, Gill, and Rottenberg 2020).

The connection between Aotearoa New Zealand and Ardern's pregnancy is further established by articles associating it with current societal and cultural issues. In this regard, the symbolic aspect of Ardern's pregnancy appears in New Zealand data covering the celebration of the signature of the Treaty of Waitangi. It is tradition for the Prime Minister to

⁸ « le premier à avoir accordé le droit de vote aux femmes, en 1893 »

plant a tree to celebrate the Treaty of Waitangi. However, during the 2018 celebration Ardern was offered the opportunity to bury her placenta at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. Although the burial of placenta is a long-held tradition in Māoridom, offering the same privilege to a Pākehā (European New Zealander) was unprecedented. While some criticised the gesture as cultural appropriation, others viewed the honour as a symbolic gesture and a reflection of biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. Regardless of the varying interpretations, this event illustrated the connections drawn between Ardern's pregnancy and Aotearoa New Zealand, and its national symbolic resonance, as the birth was associated with 'the birthplace of the nation':

While every governor-general has planted a tree at the grounds, Henare said what better than to have the first prime minister to have a baby while in office bury the placenta at the birthplace of the nation. (*Dominion Post*, February 6 2018)

Finally, Ardern's pregnancy is constructed as a local event through associations with New Zealand policies. The literature on this topic discusses the influence politicians' motherhood has on family-friendly policies, which serves to move beyond traditional masculine views of labour, economy, and the workplace (Johansson and Bergström 2015). In this regard, the media discusses Ardern's politics in relation to her motherhood, either for her own benefits (see first quote below) or that of society (see second quote below). Ardern as a mother is represented differently than, for instance former Prime Minister Helen Clark, whose childlessness was used in the media to portray her as incapable to relate or act in the best interests of women (Devere and Graham Davies 2006). The contrast in tone illustrates the value given to the heteronormative ideals of family that are intrinsic to neoliberalism (Rottenberg 2017). The second quote below further illustrates the connection between Ardern's experience of motherhood and her assumed newly acquired adequacy to develop fair policies for working parents:

Clarke Gayford is likely to miss out on the Government's planned extension to paid parental leave. The timing of the arrival of his and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's baby in June means he will likely miss out on the increase to 22 weeks' paid parental leave, which would not come into effect until July 1 (*Dominion Post*, January 20 2018)

On many other policy issues to do with parental leave, childcare, health and early education [Ardern] will be able to speak with personal interest and, as time goes on, experience (*New Zealand Herald*, January 20 2018)

The hopeful tone conveyed in the data about Ardern's pregnancy appears connected to what she represents as a pregnant Prime Minister: her mere presence a warranty of feminism. Her position as Head of State invigorates optimistic discourses by suggesting, as in the second quote above, that she could also produce structural changes, given her position.

Despite its strong tie to Aotearoa New Zealand, Ardern's pregnancy is also used to draw cross-national comparisons. Foreign newspaper articles focus on Ardern as an individual (as will be discussed in further subsections) as well as on the societal, historical, and cultural forces that allowed her to be pregnant while in office. Her pregnancy is therefore used to reflect on and evaluate local structures as well as expectations towards female politicians. Ten articles draw a parallel between Ardern's situation and what had happened to local female politicians who were also expecting. More commonly, articles employ Ardern's pregnancy as a benchmark to the local situation, and also as a signal of change across borders. The connections drawn between national contexts (i.e. Aotearoa New Zealand and the United States) can suggest changes happening on a broader scale:

While Duckworth may be the Senate's first expectant mother, she will not be the last. The upper house has a record 22 women senators serving. Internationally, ideas about mothers in public service are changing. Last week, New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced she was pregnant, a development the world leader said confidently would have no impact on her abilities in office. (*Washington Post*, January 24 2018)

Evidently, discourses about Ardern's pregnancy in the data are connected to discourses about female politicians and expectant women in general, both locally and across borders. The use of Ardern's pregnancy to reflect more largely on the status of women and national structures across countries hints at the symbolic and universalising dimensions ascribed in the data to the Prime Minister's pregnancy. More than one third of the articles represent Ardern as symbol of change for women around the world, optimistically arguing that 'she'll be showing the world that women don't need to sacrifice their careers to become mothers' (*Herald Sun*, June 16 2018). Thus, the tying of Ardern's pregnancy with Aotearoa New Zealand and

idealised representations of the country as a champion of women's rights are used in the data to highlight the values that make such a situation possible in this country and depict them as within reach of other countries.

The emphasis placed on Aotearoa New Zealand as a nation, and its values and history, represent Ardern's pregnancy as a *cultural* achievement, shifting the focus away from the inherently unequal patriarchal and capitalist structures that discouraged such event in the past. While articles advocate for gender equality, they do so within the confines of neoliberal ideologies and, ultimately, pay less attention to racial or economic justice. The tension between local and universal elements therefore offers a normative picture of feminism in the West: one embedded in universalism, connected to cultural progress, and overlooking intersectionality.

Ardern's pregnancy as symbolic

The coverage of Ardern's pregnancy in the data is overtly positive and often associated with a larger cause as explicitly illustrated by *The Guardian's* title: 'Jacinda Ardern: Pregnant with meaning'. The symbolic dimension of Ardern's pregnancy is constructed in part through the tension between the *normal* and *extraordinary* characteristics which made Ardern's pregnancy relatable and appealing, respectively.

The representation of the pregnancy as normal echoes Ardern's own communication on social media, and in press conferences and interviews about the pregnancy which position herself and her partner as 'joining the many parents out there who wear two hats' (Ardern 2018). However, Ardern's communication about her pregnancy is not commented on in the data but rather used as a stepping stone to reinforce the construction of the event as normal and therefore relatable. Several aspects are represented as both normal and extraordinary throughout the data: Ardern and Gayford as individuals and as a couple, the pregnancy, and Ardern's situation as a working mother. The narrative around the couple often underlines personal information about Ardern and Gayford (e.g. personalities, backgrounds, relationship history, information about the pregnancy) that makes them relatable:

The couple's easy-going style and small-town backgrounds (her father was a police officer, his a farmer) sparked nationwide 'Jacindamania' but inevitably she has her critics. (*Daily Telegraph*, May 1 2018)

Normalising Ardern and Gayford contributes to the normalisation of Ardern's pregnancy, by focusing on the individuals rather than their official functions. Ardern's pregnancy is therefore represented as the pregnancy of a woman, and sometimes of a couple – at least in the New Zealand data, and not only as that of a Prime Minister. In that regard, articles and editorials that embrace Ardern's pregnancy appear to do so in order to normalise pregnancy (in the workplace) on a larger societal level. The way that Ardern is spoken about in relation to other women as well as in opposition to male politicians is notable:

There's also the simple fact that pregnancy is a perfectly normal, healthy part of life for many women. It is not, for example, a serious illness, which can be far more distracting and debilitating, and which plenty of male leaders and lawmakers have found themselves facing while in office. (*The Washington Post*, January 19 2018)

In the data, the emphasis is placed on the normalcy of pregnancy in general to legitimise and to tone down that of Ardern. Similarly, the tension between normal and extraordinary elements present in the data stems from Ardern being at once compared to all women, and to male politicians as in the quote above. This dual comparison contributes to the depiction of her situation as illustrative of the gender inequalities that permeate not only politics, but society as a whole. The symbolic scope of Ardern's pregnancy is woven into its universalising dimension as both aspects made her pregnancy relevant for women across borders as well as workplaces. Articles from the data depict Ardern's pregnancy as hope for advancing the cause of working mothers in general. Through global resonance and the extraordinary context of her pregnancy, Ardern came to be portrayed as a model of what equality between women and men in the workplace could look like:

If women do face penalties for having children - and studies suggest they certainly do - maybe Ardern's own experience will highlight this and usher in an era of improved workplace rights. Maybe equality will be within our grasp. (*Dominion Post*, January 20 2018)

Alongside comments emphasising the normalcy of Ardern's pregnancy, her modest upbringing and low-key lifestyle, many articles also underline the uniqueness of her situation and profile. Across the international data in particular, Ardern is repeatedly depicted as 'breaking boundaries' (*The Guardian*, April 20 2018) for being a female leader, the youngest

ever Prime Minister in Aotearoa New Zealand, and only the second Head of State worldwide to give birth while in office (Benazir Bhutto was the first one, when she gave birth to her daughter in 1990). The juxtaposition of Ardern as *just* a woman as much as an *extraordinary* woman elevates her as a model that can inspire beyond the political sphere and across borders. Contrary to the rest of the data, the New Zealand data did not focus on the novelty of a female leader since Ardern is the third female Prime Minister. The New Zealand data however align with the rest of the data by the representing Ardern's pregnancy as both normal and extraordinary (respectively):

Yet, it is inescapable that the considerable demands of being prime minister will place Ardern in the same position as many other women in New Zealand who both work and care for their children. (*Dominion Post*, January 31 2018)

But this is not just any pregnancy. This is the hatching of a baby inside the most powerful woman in this country. Most women hope to schedule in a bit of sleep around the baby's breastfeeding. She'll hope to schedule in world leaders. (*New Zealand Herald*, January 20 2018)

The representation of Ardern's pregnancy as both normal and extraordinary mirrors discourses of pregnancy in general and the construction of mothers as everyday superheroines (Douglas and Michaels 2005). Ardern herself draws on such discourses to shift focus away from her and onto all mothers and women: 'Asked by a reporter how she managed to set up a government at the same time as having morning sickness, Ardern replied: "It's what ladies do."' (*The Guardian*, January 19 2018). By depicting herself as *any woman*, Ardern facilitates discourses that portray her as representative of women and as encapsulating pregnancy and motherhood as simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary. While Ardern's own (social media) communication and the media coverage she receives works to normalise pregnancy and motherhood in working women, this normalisation only speaks/applies to a specific segment of the population - 'aspirational women' like Ardern (Banet-Weiser, Gill, and Rottenberg 2020, 8). Furthermore, although Ardern and the media reproduce a neoliberal feminist discourse of work-family balance (Rottenberg 2017), the construction of Ardern's pregnancy as a couple experience and responsibility allows a departure from discourses which maintain the placement of reproductive and rearing duties on women's shoulders.

Ardern's pregnancy as a step closer to gender equality

Similar to the communication about the pregnancy, the articles primarily draw on Ardern's personal branding as a feminist and employ her as a symbol of the fight for gender equality. In this regard, the question of fatherhood, and the idea of a gender equal family relationship appears sporadically in the dataset, particularly in the New Zealand data. New Zealand media embraced Ardern's communication about the event that made the pregnancy a couple's issue to a certain extent (e.g. joint press conference with her partner, and the use of 'we' in public announcements on her social media accounts and in interviews). The inclusion of Gayford in reporting the birth acknowledges the father and his role in a moment that is often made solely about the mother and the baby. This depiction of shared responsibility for the child is notable:

The parents, who were expected to take their baby home today, were both doing well. (*New Zealand Herald*, June 24 2018)

Jacinda Ardern looked exhausted, beautiful and exhilarated and her partner, Clarke Gayford, had the sort of expression I've seen on the faces of many new dads — proud, terrified and relieved. (*New Zealand Herald*, June 24 2018)

While Ardern's pregnancy is also represented primarily as a matter of motherhood, thereby mirroring literature on motherhood ideologies (Douglas and Michaels 2005; Tiidenberg and Baym 2017), the examples above suggest that some of the discourses circulating in the data depart from depictions of child bearing and rearing as a woman's only responsibility and solitary experience. The representation of Ardern's pregnancy as deviating from the dominant ideology of 'intensive mothering' (Chae 2015) is further illustrated in the references made to the supportive network she has:

She has a partner committed to being a full-time parent. Two sets of grandparents are ready, willing and able to help out. Her job gives her sufficient income not to worry about paying the bills. (*New Zealand Herald*, June 24 2018)

The involvement of Gayford in the rearing of the child is mentioned in the data but is not the norm across the dataset. New Zealand media incorporate Gayford more systematically when giving information about the pregnancy and birth than foreign newspapers do. Mentions of Gayford in New Zealand articles convey more inclusive views of pregnancy and parenthood (i.e. 'their baby'), which contrasts with the international portion of the dataset. In this regard, in dismissing Gayford's agency, either explicitly (quote 1 below) or by omitting him

(highlights in quote 2 below), foreign articles sustain normative representations of child-bearing and child-rearing as exclusively a female issue, undermining discourses presenting Ardern's pregnancy as the epitome of gender equality.

When she returns to running the country, baby duties will be assigned to Gayford, 40, a former radio host who now presents television fishing programme *Fish of the Day*. (*The Daily Telegraph*, May 1 2018)

New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, said she had named her first child Neve Te Aroha Ardern Gayford, as she left an Auckland hospital with her partner on Sunday, three days after her daughter was born. (*New York Times*, June 24 2018, our emphasis).

When attention is given to Gayford's role as primary caregiver, this is mostly relayed positively and leads to reflections on the role that societies allow men to take as fathers and on the representations of fatherhood and masculinity. Gayford is depicted as representing 'new masculinity', although to a lesser degree than Ardern being portrayed as a symbol of women empowerment and gender equality. Gayford's depiction resonates even more strongly as Gayford embodies traditional masculine norms in his 'screen persona as a macho outdoor' (*The Guardian*, January 19 2018) (i.e. he hosts the fishing show *Fish of the Day*). The contrasting image of Gayford conflates traditional and modern images of masculinities, therefore showing that traditional displays of masculinity are compatible with stay-at-home father duties. Editorial pieces build on that situation to stress the possible discursive shifts towards fatherhood and masculinity that Gayford's profile and situation could trigger in society:

It's exciting because her partner Clarke Gayford will be the primary caregiver, hopefully opening up a national conversation about how entirely possible it should be for men to take more paternal leave, and challenging stereotypical and outdated ideas around masculinity. It shows little boys there are other ways of being men, too. (*Dominion Post*, January 20 2018)

Such portrayal stands in contrast to his Swedish (male politician) peers who were criticized for taking parental leave (Johansson & Bergström, 2015). The general tone of articles in the

data appears to embrace and support a progressive representation of masculinity and fatherhood, and, to a further extent, of gender equal family relationships.

Ardern and Gayford as privileged

Despite primarily positive coverage, less than ten articles raise the issue of Ardern's and Gayford's privileged situation. New Zealand coverage, for instance, highlights that Ardern and Gayford are privileged on several levels because of the various support systems in place: couple, family, professional and financial. Her situation is unique because she is well-surrounded as a mother (as mentioned above) and, more importantly, because of the nature of her work:

Ardern will have a tonne of support from her partner, Clarke Gayford, family, friends, a Parliament more tolerant of new mothers and a society with changing views on the workplace. (*New Zealand Herald*, January 20 2018)

Less attention is paid to Ardern's and Gayford's privileged situation in the international data. In that regard, one article from *The Guardian* (June 25 2018) stands out and addresses class (more than gender) when commenting on the parental leave Ardern and Gayford took (a luxury many parents cannot afford). The limited attention paid to privilege across the data suggests that the portrayal of Ardern as a symbol overlooks issues of race, class and western centrality. Representations of Ardern's pregnancy therefore reproduce normative views by equating universal and normal with Western, white, middle-class and heterosexual (Sara Salem 2013). In that regard, articles from the data also reproduce dominant discourses of pregnancy which revolve around white middle-class images of motherhood and push working-class and minority mothers to the margins (Tiidenberg and Baym 2017).

The notion of privilege is an important aspect of the empowering narrative identified in the data about Ardern's pregnancy. 'Jacindamania' and 'Jacindababymania' (*The Guardian*, January 26 2018) hint in some ways at popular feminism and reveal the emphasis placed on Ardern as embodying the fight for gender equality. *She* signifies feminism, her 'baby bump [stands] for women's rights' (*Dominion Post*, January 20 2018). This emphasis on individualism points to the neoliberal underpinnings of discourses from the data that focus on the *persona* of Ardern and Gayford more than on actively interrogating or challenging existing patriarchal structures. Such discourses position Ardern as the exception that validates the system, by showing that the system *can* provide women with equal opportunities. Not all

women though. The overtly positive coverage of Ardern's pregnancy re-emphasises the propensity of 'white, heteronormative, corporate and neoliberal-friendly versions' of feminism in the spotlight (Banet-Weiser, Gill, and Rottenberg 2020, 16). Thus, Ardern may have been the perfect candidate to elicit such overwhelmingly positive discourses about pregnancy by being only mildly disruptive to the status-quo, advocating for feminist views while reinforcing normative feminist discourses.

Conclusion

This study adds to the body of work concerned with representations of (expectant) female politicians; it offers a cross-national and recent overview of media coverage of Ardern's pregnancy. Additionally, the findings provide contrast to existing literature on this topic, revealing an overtly positive coverage of a pregnant politician. Although New Zealand media offers (understandably) more nuanced coverage, it also provides a progressive representation of pregnancy and parenthood. This article suggests that Ardern's pregnancy is addressed as a *cultural achievement* and a *symbolic event*, and represented as a *step closer to gender equality*. The findings also point to the ways that this pregnancy was employed to address representations of masculinities through the portrayal of Ardern's partner Gayford and in support of him taking parental leave. However, the empowering and positive narrative identified in the data is also connected to the notion of *privilege* in a few articles, and through the normative feminist discourses the data (re)produce.

The shift towards a more positive coverage of pregnant female politician identified in this study may be accounted for on multiple levels. First, the 'Jacindamania' that followed the election of Ardern as Prime Minister suggests that the frenzy around Ardern's persona predated the pregnancy announcement. Additionally, the historical aspect of the pregnancy of a Head of State whilst in office cannot be overlooked. Ardern's position reinforced the extraordinary dimension of her pregnancy, echoing popular feminism where visibility is enough to ensure change, but also creating hopes for structural change. Finally, Ardern's pregnancy reinforces hegemonically neoliberal feminist ideologies, despite suggesting change. Ardern's pregnancy is constructed in neoliberal feminist terms, while simultaneously departing from neoliberal views of parenthood. Ardern's pregnancy is presented as a sign of change for all working women/mothers around the world. However, this representation only benefits white, heterosexual, middle/upper class (privileged) working mothers who resemble

Ardern. The generalisation of this one experience is detrimental to the multiple other experiences of working mothers of diverse social identities, and reinforces the dominance of a neoliberal feminist view of work/family balance. However, the spotlight shed on Gayford and his role of primary caregiver provides a significant departure from neoliberal feminist discourses by providing an alternative model of parenting: a gender equalitarian experience and performance of parenting. Although the positive coverage of Ardern (and Gayford)'s pregnancy is a significant step forward for women, mothers, and gender equality as a whole, its benefits are limited as it nevertheless shadows discriminations that are imbedded in race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation and so on.

While the scope of this study is limited to media coverage of Ardern's pregnancy by newspapers in English and French, future studies could include sources from more countries and in additional languages. The analysis also suggests that articles draw on Ardern's own communication in (social) media and press conferences about the pregnancy. Additional research could therefore focus on the discourses produced by Ardern about her pregnancy to examine how they are situated in relation to discourses of maternity and feminism, as well as complement literature on the way (conservative) female politicians politicise motherhood.

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Appendix 1. Overview of the dataset

<i>Le Monde</i> (France)			
	19/01/2018	Nouvelle-Zélande : la première ministre annonce qu'elle est enceinte	Brief news item
	24/01/2018	#KnitforJacinda : quand la grossesse de leur première ministre incite les Néo-Zélandais à tricoter	Brief news item
Isabelle Dellerba	27/01/2018	La Nouvelle-Zélande, fière de son futur "premier bébé".	Extended news story
Isabelle Dellerba	09/07/2018	En Nouvelle-Zélande, un premier bébé très médiatique	Extended news story
<i>Le Figaro</i> (France)			
	19/01/2018	Nouvelle-Zélande : la première ministre enceinte	Brief news item
Aude Bariéty	06/03/2018	À 37 ans et enceinte, la première ministre Jacinda Ardern est le visage du renouveau en Nouvelle-Zélande	Extended news story
Nicolas Barotte	17/04/2018	Merkel-Ardern, deux icônes du pouvoir au féminin	Extended news story
Aude Bariéty	21/06/2018	Nouvelle-Zélande : la première ministre Jacinda Ardern accouche d'une petite fille	Extended news story
	21/06/2018	Nouvelle-Zélande : la première ministre accouche de son 1er enfant	Brief news item
<i>Irish Independent</i> (Ireland)			
Taylor Heyman	19/01/2018	New Zealand's PM announces she is pregnant and Twitter is ablaze with excitement	Brief news item
	20/01/2018	New Zealand prime minister announces she's expecting first child	Brief news item
Jonathan Pearlman	06/02/2018	Ardern invited to bury placenta at historical Maori site	Extended news story
Peter Stublely	27/02/2018	Watch: New Zealand's prime minister asked about the conception of her baby in 'sexist' interview	Extended news story
Danny Boyle	22/06/2018	I'm very lucky' - New Zealand's PM celebrates birth of daughter	Extended news story
<i>Irish Times</i> (Ireland)			
Jamie Smyth, Peter Wells	20/01/2018	New Zealand's prime minister reveals pregnancy; Ardern will be one of only a few female political leaders to have baby while in office	Extended news story
	22/06/2018	New Zealand prime minister gives birth to baby girl	Brief news item
<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (U.K.)			
	19/01/2018	New Zealand's leader expecting her first baby	Brief news item

Jonathan Pearlman	20/01/2018	I'll only take six weeks' leave, says pregnant NZ prime minister	Extended news story
	01/05/2018	Meet New Zealand's 'First Bloke'	Extended news story
John Cowley	22/06/2018	After campaign of staying mum, NZ leader is now a mother	Extended news story
<i>The Guardian (U.K.)</i>			
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	18/01/2018	Jacinda Ardern: New Zealand's prime minister announces she is pregnant	Extended news story
	19/01/2018	The Guardian view on Jacinda Ardern: pregnant with meaning	Opinion
Ruby Hamad	19/01/2018	It's what ladies do'. Of course Jacinda Ardern can be 'prime minister and a mum'	Opinion
Yvette Cooper	22/01/2018	Like Jacinda Ardern, I rewrote the rules on having a baby in office	Opinion
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	26/01/2018	#knitforJacinda: New Zealanders join forces to make baby clothes for the needy	Extended news story
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	26/01/2018	I'm pregnant, not incapacitated': PM Jacinda Ardern on baby mania	Extended news story
Toby Manhire	01/02/2018	Jacinda Ardern: 'I'm not going to leave any room for doubt that I can do this'	Extended news story
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	07/02/2018	Jacinda Ardern defuses tensions on New Zealand's sacred Waitangi Day	Extended news story
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	26/02/2018	Jacinda Ardern's 'sexist, creepy' 60 Minutes interview angers New Zealand	Extended news story
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	30/03/2018	Jacinda Ardern on life as a leader, Trump and selfies in the lingerie department	Extended news story
Guardian staff	03/04/2018	Aren't you exhausted? Guardian readers ask Jacinda Ardern the questions	Q&A
Van Badham	02/05/2018	Beware, fellow feminist witches, conservative columnists are on to us!	Opinion
Alexandra Spring	06/05/2018	Growing wave of feminist energy': Julia Gillard on Clinton, Ardern and #MeToo	Extended news story
Mark Broatch	31/05/2018	Clarke Gayford on fatherhood, food and fending off sharks	Extended news story
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	02/06/2018	Phenomenal' Ardern: NZ mothers-to-be on the birth of a new kind of prime minister	Extended news story
Charles Anderson	05/06/2018	Jacinda Ardern will work up until she goes to hospital to give birth	Extended news story
Charles Anderson	12/06/2018	New Zealand coalition under strain as Jacinda Ardern prepares for maternity leave	Extended news story
Charles Anderson	20/06/2018	New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern goes into hospital to give birth	Extended news story
Charles Anderson	21/06/2018	Jacinda Ardern #babywatch sends New Zealand media gaga	Extended news story
Charles Anderson	21/06/2018	New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern welcomes baby girl 'to our village'	Extended news story
Charles Anderson,	22/06/2018	That's 4.2 million godparents': New Zealand basks in 'first baby' glow	Extended news story

Aimie Cronin			
Helen Clark	22/06/2018	Jacinda Ardern shows that no doors are closed to women	Opinion
Naaman Zhou; Charles Anderson	24/06/2018	Neve Te Aroha: New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern reveals name of baby daughter	Extended news story
Chitra Ramaswamy	25/06/2018	Jacinda Ardern will be back running a country weeks after giving birth – what does that mean for other women?	Opinion
Eleanor Ainge-Roy	02/07/2018	Jacinda Ardern welcomes new welfare reforms from the sofa with new baby	Extended news story
<i>New York Times (U.S.)</i>			
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	19/01/2018 – 20/01/2018	New Zealand's Prime Minister Says That She Is Pregnant – New Zealander's Leader, 37, is expecting	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	26/01/2018	'Creepy' Interview Quizzes New Zealand's Prime Minister on Conception	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	21/06/2018	Jacinda Ardern, New Zealand's Prime Minister, Is Expected to Have Her Baby Soon	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	21/06/2018	New Zealand's Leader, Jacinda Ardern, Delivers a Baby Girl	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	22/06/2018	New 'Wee One' in New Zealand: Prime Minister Has a Baby	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	24/06/2018	New Zealand's Leader, Jacinda Ardern, Introduces Baby Daughter	Extended news story
Charlotte Graham-Mclay	25/06/2018	New Zealand Greets Baby With a Flurry Of Names	Extended news story
<i>Washington Post (U.S.)</i>			
Samantha Schmidt	19/01/2018	New Zealand's prime minister is pregnant. 'I am not the first woman to multitask,' she says.; For many, Jacinda Ardern is showing that a woman should not have to choose between motherhood and a position of leadership.	Extended news story
Caitlin Gibson	19/01/2018	New Zealand leader Jacinda Ardern is pregnant. Guess how the Internet reacted.	Extended news story
Kyle Swenson	24/01/2018	Tammy Duckworth will be the Senate's first new mom, but she already has a record of blazing trails	Extended news story
Adam Taylor	18/04/2018	New Zealand's prime minister 'extremely angry' with people saying she is like Trump;	Extended news story

		The 37-year-old Jacinda Ardern, who helms her country's Labour Party and is expecting a baby in June, pushes back on comparisons to the U.S. leader.	
Samantha Schmidt	21/06/2018	New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern gives birth to a 'healthy baby girl'; She became only the second elected world leader to give birth while in office.	Extended news story
<i>The Australian</i> (Australia)			
Jamie Walker	20/01/2018	Kiwi PM to expand her kitchen cabinet	Extended news story
Conrad Liveris	03/02/2018	It doesn't hurt to work, the kids will be just fine	Opinion
Stephen Brook	12/03/2018	Ten questions	Interview
Angela Shanahan	28/04/2018	Your career can wait, a baby can't	Opinion
James O'Doherty	15/06/2018	The politics of a baby bump	Extended news story
	25/06/2018	Benazir Bhutto led way for PM Ardern	Brief news item
<i>The Herald Sun</i> (Australia)			
Sarrah Le Marquand	23/01/2018	Kiwi PM the essence of a modern mum	Opinion
Siobhan Duck	03/03/2018	Labour of loveliness	Opinion
Matthew Brockett	16/06/2018	Birth of a new era	Extended news story
	22/06/2018	Mum's the new word for Ardern	Brief news item
<i>NZ Herald</i> (New Zealand)			
	20/01/2018	NZ rejoices with PM at baby news - Our view	Opinion
Audrey Young	20/01/2018	The first 100 days	Extended news story
Heather du Plessis-Allan	20/01/2018	Ardern's baby the bump we needed	Opinion
Audrey Young	20/01/2018	New Zealand rejoices with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her partner Clarke	Extended news story
	20/01/2018	Born in Girls Can Do Anything decade, Jacinda showing how to do it	Opinion
Cherie Howie	20/01/2018	Two's company, three's a crowdpleaser	Extended news story
	21/01/2018	PM's baby news is global news	Extended news story
Kirsty Wynn	21/01/2018	Labour heads to retreat	Extended news story

Heather du Plessis-Allan	21/01/2018	The hard hearts of cynics will melt	Opinion
Alicia Young	24/01/2018	Jacinda babymania no bundle of joy for some	Extended news story
Claire Trevett	25/01/2018	Ardern gifted baby name at Ratana	Extended news story
Jennifer Curtin	26/01/2018	Politics still has mother of problem	Opinion
Audrey Young	29/01/2018	PM's news added reason for celebrations	Brief news item
Staff reporter	29/01/2018	I've hit the jackpot, Gayford says	Extended news story
Cherie Howie	04/02/2018	What makes us want to touch that baby bump?	Extended news story
Claire Trevett	07/02/2018	Ardern: Hard work is ahead to meet high expectations	Extended news story
	07/02/2018	First time's a charm for Prime Minister — but where to from here?	Extended news story
	17/02/2018	Judith to Jacinda: Keep your eyes on the job	Extended news story
	05/03/2018	Flip side of Prime Minister	Extended news story
	14/04/2018	Pregnancy complicates flights	Extended news story
Lucy Bennett	25/04/2018	Ardern's baby plan: We'll wing it	Extended news story
	26/04/2018	Third time clucky - baby fever rages	Opinion
Simon Collins	29/05/2018	The cost of motherhood study finds mums take 4.4% pay cut to have a baby	Brief mention in extended news story
Claire Travett	31/05/2018	Ardern limits travel as baby date approaches	Extended news story
	01/06/2018	Expectant NZ all ready for PM to deliver	Extended news story - Opinion
Audrey Young	12/06/2018	Timing of Peters' new legal action stuns	Brief mention
Lucy Bennet	12/06/2018	PM close to home as due date near	Extended news story
	15/06/2018	PM: resignation call is not Government policy	Brief mention
	16/06/2018	Peters faces his hardest job filling PM's shoes Our view	Opinion
	21/06/2018	PM keeps head down during wait	Brief news item
	22/06/2018	Wonderful moment for this country	Opinion

Lucy Bennett	22/06/2018	Peters top dog for next 6 weeks	Extended news story
Ryan Dunlop	22/06/2018	New arrival 'superband wonderful news'	Extended news story
	22/06/2018	It's piles of nappies for a change	Opinion
	22/06/2018	Clark: PM shows 'no doors are closed for women'	Extended news story
	22/06/2018	Headlines born	Extended news story
	23/06/2018	PM knows her baby's value for the country	Opinion
	23/06/2018	Deferential attitude to US should be dumped	Brief mention
Cherie Howie	23/06/2018	Little lady's first day races round world	Extended news story
	23/06/2018	The birth	Extended news story
Kerre McIvor	24/06/2018	Let's support our young families	Opinion
Heather du Plessis-Allan	24/06/2018	It's not hip to be square	Opinion
Cherie Howdie	24/06/2018	Finn lullaby for Prime Miniature: 'Hold her close'	Extended news story
Meghan Lawrence	25/06/2018	Radiant PM heads home	Extended news story
<i>The Dominion Post (New Zealand)</i>			
Staff reporter	20/01/2018	Big news travels fast...and far	Media review
Laura Walters	20/01/2018	NZ going to help us raise our child	Extended news story
Michelle Duff	20/01/2018	A baby bump for women's rights	Opinion
	22/01/2018	Disapproval from gran	Brief news item
Nina Hall	23/01/2018	Opportunity for NZ to rethink global role	Extended news story - Opinion
Sue Allen	23/01/2018	The business of baby product endorsement just got bigger	Opinion
Ewan Sargent	23/01/2018	PM denies spilling beans on baby's gender	Extended news story
Laura Walters	25/01/2018	Ratana offers support, and baby name	Extended news story
Heather Roberts	26/01/2018	Reason wrong	Opinion
Paddy O'Gorman	27/01/2018	Sad tirade	Opinion
	27/01/2018	Is English suffering the baby blues?	Extended new story

Jane Bowron	29/01/2018	Some incredible cards dealt to our charismatic new PM	Opinion
	30/01/2018	English celebrate a parental milestone of a different kind	Brief news item
Peter Cullen	31/01/2018	Business sense behind family-friendly policies	Opinion
	06/02/2018	PM's placenta invite	Opinion
Danielle Clent	10/02/2018	Dressing pregnant PM a labour of love	Extended news story
	12/02/2018	Pregnant PM tells of her back-alley route to scan	Brief news item
	12/02/2018	Enduring story of Liz, Phil, and the kids	Extended news story – brief mention
Henry Cooke	19/02/2018	Gender pregnant, still in greens race	Extended news story
Tony Passman	27/02/2018	Public should know	Opinion
	21/04/2018	Ardern's baby bump rubbed for good luck	Brief news item
	25/04/2018	PM has no plans to follow the lead of Kate Middleton	Brief news item
Stacey Kirk	06/05/2018	Ardern gets house in order	Extended news story
	06/06/2018	PM reveals plans for arrival of first baby	Brief news item
Tracy Watkins	09/06/2018	Captain takes helm of a wayward ship	Extended news story
	12/06/2018	Situation normal: Birth in Beehive	Opinion
	12/06/2018	PM stays close to home as due date nears	Brief news item
Henry Cooke	18/06/2018	Life improving for MP mums	Extended news story - Opinion
Jane Bowron	18/06/2018	In the muck at fieldays	Opinion
	19/06/2018	Reading and waiting	Brief news item
Tracy Watkins	22/06/2018	Then there were three...	Opinion
	22/06/2018	Hope, humility and fine values	Opinion
Laura Walters	23/06/2018	Baby's birth launches 'modern family' story	Extended news story
Tracy Watkins	23/06/2018	Let Jacinda be a mum for six weeks	Opinion
Laura Walters	25/06/2018	PM Lauds 'value' of healthcare workers	Extended news story

	25/06/2018	Ardern introduced baby Neve to NZ	Extended news story
Jane Bowron	25/06/2018	Media labours all in vain	Extended news story
<i>Otago Daily Times (New Zealand)</i>			
Audrey Young	20/01/2018	Baby 'fantastic surprise'	Extended news story
John Lewis	20/01/2018	Lecturer sees implications for NZ's future social policy	Extended news story
Audrey Young	20/01/2018	Easing into new challenge	Extended news story
Chris Morris	27/01/2018	Ardern out and about – and approachable	Extended news story
Clair Trevett	03/02/2018	Warm welcome masks thorny issues	Extended news story
Claire Trevett	07/02/2018	Meeting expectations real test: Ardern	Extended news story
Staff reporters	07/04/2018	Otago visit gives PM plenty to talk about	Extended news story
Audrey Young	28/04/2018	Past 50 days show not all ministers able to handle difficulties well	Brief news item
Ryan Dunlop	22/06/2018	Historic moment for NZ	Extended news story
Audrey Young	23/06/2018	New Zealand slow to respond to Trump's world influence	Brief news item

Article II

**Media Coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem:
An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of Minority
Women in the French Political Context.**

by

Flora Galy-Badenas & Elizabeth F. Gray (2020)

Women's Studies in Communication.

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STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

Name of candidate:	Flora Galy-Badenas	
Name/title of Primary Supervisor:	Stephen Croucher	
Name of Research Output and full reference:		
<small>» Galy-Badenas, F. & Gray, F. E. (2020). Media Coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem: An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of Minority Women in the French Political Context. <i>Women's Studies in Communication</i>, 43(2), 181-200.</small>		
In which Chapter is the Manuscript /Published work:		
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of the manuscript/Published Work that was contributed by the candidate: 	95%	
and		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the contribution that the candidate has made to the Manuscript/Published Work: 		
The candidate carried out data collection, coding, and analysis, and did most of the writing.		
For manuscripts intended for publication please indicate target journal:		
Candidate's Signature:	Flora Galy-Badenas	Digitally signed by Flora Galy-Badenas Date: 2021.05.24 14:25:51 +12'00'
Date:	24/05/2021	
Primary Supervisor's Signature:	Stephen M Croucher	Digitally signed by Stephen M Croucher DN: cn=Stephen M Croucher, c=NZ, o=Massey University, ou=School of Communication, Journalism & Marketing, email=S.Croucher@massey.ac.nz Reason: I am approving this document Date: 2021.05.27 17:27:26 +12'00'
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Media coverage of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem: An intersectional analysis of representations of minority women in the French political context

This paper examines the discursive representations of two ethnically diverse French women political figures, Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, to illuminate the operation of discriminatory ideologies in French Newspapers *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. To complement thematic analysis and feminist critical discourse analysis, this essay applies an intersectional lens throughout. In line with previous research, the study shows that both newspapers reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. Moreover, both papers suggest these politicians are illegitimate in their ministerial roles, not because of the quality of their work, but because of certain aspects of their social identities. This illegitimation is undertaken by subtle but persistent Othering in the newspaper coverage, with particular reference to the Maghrebin origins of both women.

Keywords: intersectionality; *diversité*; women politicians; news media

Introduction

Her delicate features, her cat's eyes, her elegant suits, her obvious charm would only be a way to dress up the vacuity of the Socialist Party's politics.⁹ (Stainville, 2014, *Le Figaro*)
The [UMP] party also thought that she would be more useful in provincial France or in another district of Paris, where her Maghrebin origins would be an asset rather than a handicap.¹⁰ (Bommelaer, 2008, *Le Figaro*)

There continues to be no shortage of examples of sexist and racist coverage of women politicians. In 2019, gendered and racist critiques of United States political figures such as

⁹ « Ses traits délicats, ses yeux de chat, ses tailleurs élégants, son charme évident ne seraient qu'une manière d'habiller la vacuité de la politique du PS. »

¹⁰ « Le parti pensait aussi qu'elle serait plus utile en province ou dans un autre arrondissement parisien, où ses origines maghrébines auraient fait figure d'atout plus que de handicap. »

Alexandria Octavia Cortez, Ilhan Omar, and Kamala Harris have been widely reported; in the case of Omar, her Muslim religion has also been attacked. Globally and persistently, mentions of personality traits, physical appearance, sartorial style, motherliness, and ethnic origins constitute a not inconsiderable amount of coverage of women politicians. Such limitations of coverage undermine women's authority and legitimacy as political figures (Dan & Iorgoveanu, 2013; Tolley, 2016). Moreover, news media routinely perpetuate and reinforce traditional, dominant social norms and values in their narratives (Ross, 2010). Recognizing that discourse is a powerful tool to maintain and perpetuate ideologies, this paper examines representations of French women politicians of immigrant background in French newspapers, applying an intersectional lens to extend earlier analyses.

This research looks at the ways *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* represent two high-profile, ethnically diverse French political figures: Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. The study explores how these two newspapers deploy gender, ethnicity, religion, and other social identities to convey certain messages about politicians to readers. Both Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem illustrated a new face of twenty-first-century French politics in their own particular way—the current government's retreat from the Sarkozy and Hollande governments' promotion of minority women ministers notwithstanding. Born in France of a Moroccan father and an Algerian mother, Rachida Dati was raised in a working class environment. In 2007, she was among the three first minority women appointed minister, and the third woman to become Minister of Justice. Najat Vallaud-Belkacem was born in Morocco of Moroccan parents but grew up in France (French-Moroccan nationalities). Appointed Minister of Women's Rights in 2012, she became the first woman ever appointed Minister of National Education, Higher Education, and Research in 2014.

This study addresses gaps in the gendered mediation literature and advances the general discussion on intersectionality. First, it extends the current North American-focused

literature to consider the European context, particularly the French situation. Second, the intersectional lens illuminates some of the complexities of racialized discussions in a nation where the concept of *race* is disavowed and the idea of *Frenchness* and universalism is promoted. Third, most studies have examined coverage of candidates during electoral periods. In this study, the focus on sitting governments reduces the potential skew of media frenzy that occurs during major political elections. The coverage of sitting governments is likely to be more revelatory of typical media and social attitudes towards (minority) women (politicians). Finally, former studies have generally compared either women to minority men politicians, or minority women to white women politicians, but little research has focused exclusively on minority women politicians. Therefore, by comparing the discursive representation of two ethnically diverse women political figures, this paper sheds light on the complexly constructed discriminatory ideologies conveyed by French media.

Literature Review

Women politicians in the media

Women politicians are exposed to different norms of media coverage and portrayal. Studies have provided evidence of different, less frequent, and often negative treatments accorded by the media to women in comparison to men (Blight, Schlehofer, Casad, & Gaffney, 2012; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Trimble, Raphael, Sampert, Wagner, & Gerrits, 2015). Research to date has focused predominantly on (white) women candidates in various elections in North America, with an emphasis on the differences in media treatment of (white) men and (white) women politicians, by quantitatively investigating the visibility, tone, and substance of coverage. Overall, women politicians receive less coverage and more negative coverage than men politicians (Heldman, Carroll, & Olson, 2005). Recent studies indicate an increase in the presence of U.S. (white) women politicians in the media (Bode & Hennings, 2012;

Wasburn & Wasburn, 2011). However, such visibility does not necessarily equate to positivity and quality of coverage.

Women politicians are often covered by news media in opposition to their men counterparts, thereby positioning women politicians as “others” and “outsiders” in the political sphere. This Othering is illustrated in the way media give greater attention to women politicians’ sartorial style (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012; Verge & Pastor, 2018), personality traits (Williams, 2017), power of seduction (Krogstad & Storvik, 2012), physical appearance (Trimble et al., 2015; Verge & Pastor, 2018), and motherhood (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012). The recurring focus on women politicians’ appearance and family life effectively estranges women from the political realm (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012) and shows women politicians as “deviant from the male norm” (Verge & Pastor, 2018, p. 42). The difference of focus discredits and undermines the authority of women politicians in the audience’s mind but appears to have no effect on the public’s perception of men politicians (Bystrom & Hennings, 2013).

Media play an important role in maintaining the traditional dichotomy between the professional and domestic spheres. This separation is largely illustrated by the greater media attention given to women politicians’ marital and parental status (Bystrom, Robertson, & Banwart, 2001; Trimble, 2007). Differences of discursive treatment, however, are observable across countries and cultures. Western media tend to use the narrative of the “evil mother” to refer to women politicians who favor their career, and who, therefore, depart from a traditional image of motherhood (Johansson & Bergström, 2015). For example, Rachida Dati was portrayed as flouting the maternal model as she returned to work less than five days after delivery (Mügge, 2013). Conversely, Lee (2004) suggests that Hong Kong media present a more idyllic image of women officials, that of a “perfect woman” who can be “[...] a rational and decisive career woman who is also caring and loving and who performs the roles of

mother and wife competently” (p. 216). By complying with traditional gender roles, Hong Kong women officials are exempt from criticism for displaying traditional masculine traits. Finally, Western media also reinforce dichotomous roles by applying double standards to the behavior of women politicians in comparison to that of men. While men politicians are praised for their agency and their strong personality, women politicians are blamed and vilified for displaying similar assertive behaviors (Ross, 2010; Williams, 2017).

Intersectional construction / representation of minority women politicians in the media

Originating in Black Feminism and coined by law scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), the concept of intersectionality is crucial to research on minority women politicians. Initially, intersectionality criticized the political discourse that implied “all women are white and all Blacks are men” (Ferree, 2011, p. 55). Developing a more nuanced and holistic critical range, intersectionality now suggests individuals are composed of multiple social identities that constantly and simultaneously intersect with one another (Phoenix, 2006). The multiplicity and disparity of those identities result in different forms and degrees of discrimination and forms of oppression, complexly experienced by individuals. Furthermore, intersectionality comprehensively integrates privilege within the construction of discrimination: “The golden key to intersectionality lies in always being grounded in and in-tune with one’s privileges and oppressions simultaneously and continuously” (Al’Ghabra, 2018, p. 29). Forms of oppression and privilege are intrinsically linked and interdependent. The privilege/oppression tandem can be understood also in terms of an ineluctable “I” or “Us” versus “Them” or “Others” opposition; such an opposition regularly surfaces as Whiteness / Western versus “Other.”

The rhetoric of Otherness animates multiple representations of minority women. The “Otherization” process enables one group to define its normalcy by opposition to the Other,

and scholars have identified a number of elements and categories that serve to “Otherize” specific minority groups in ways that rationalize and normalize oppression systems and social injustices by making them part of everyday life (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Hill Collins, 2000; Morrison, 2017). Hill Collins (2000) has coined the term “controlling images” to refer to restrictive archetypes of Black women; such restrictive figures, along with the archetypes of Muslim women described by Al’Ghabra (2018), shape ideas of what these women should be or do, and what they should not be/do, based on White standards. Thus, these images serve to rationalize oppressive control over minority women’s bodies and agency, all the while further reinforcing and perpetuating Whiteness ideology (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Hill Collins, 2000). Oppressed because of their identities, minorities may also take on the role of oppressor by embodying Whiteness and White performance (Al’Ghabra, 2018). McIntosh, Moon, and Nakayama (2018) illustrate the ways Whiteness may be socially constructed and perpetuated through performances of White femininity that, in addition to reinforcing Whiteness ideologies, set standards, norms, and values that themselves serve to Otherize minority women. Media and other social institutions are highly influential sites for reflecting and reproducing controlling images, archetypes, and performances, which are circulated worldwide via global access to almost every form of media. Although a global phenomenon, the manifestation, realities, and lived experiences created by systems of oppression differ depending on the local context (Al’Ghabra, 2018). Therefore, intersectionality enables scholars to gain a holistic understanding of the unique and multiple oppressions at play in a specific context, while illuminating connections to global Whiteness ideologies.

The valuable, although limited, literature on minority women politicians helps reveal the ways different systems of oppression and layers of discrimination operate in media coverage. In addition to receiving gendered coverage, minority women politicians face a “double barrier” (Gershon, 2012), in the form of “racial barrier(s)” (Tolley, 2016, p. 123). A

study of U.S. minority congresswomen illustrates the way the different ethnic/racial backgrounds result in varying degrees and forms of discrimination in media coverage (Gershon, 2013). Latina congresswomen receive more negative coverage that focuses often on ethnicity related topics such as (illegal) immigration, while African-American politicians receive more positive coverage with a higher focus on healthcare topics (Gershon, 2013). The unequal coverage is reflected in the behavior of voters, who are more likely to support congresswomen described as African-American than as Latina. These studies demonstrate the importance of considering the wide range of different social identities when researching media representations.

Media discourses not only reflect social norms and values, but also maintain and perpetuate them. For instance, Nielsen (2013) illustrates the way editorial lines reflect the norms and values of a media outlet and its readership. While mainstream media regularly portray diversity negatively, ethnic media often shed a positive light on diversity. Similarly, the differences between self-representations and media representations of a minority woman politician foreground the role of media in reproducing certain social norms, values, and interests. Fiig (2010) analyzes the case of Danish ethnic minority congresswoman, Özlem Cekic, who self-represented as a “left-wing politician with a background in the health sector,” while Danish mainstream media portrayed her as a “Muslim woman politician” (p. 48). By highlighting specific racial, religious, and gender characteristics of a minority woman politician, media contribute to the creation of racialized and gendered discourse that maintains power dynamics and discrimination (Tolley, 2016), while also “Othering” said politicians. The perpetuation of social norms and values further occurs through rendering invisible certain traits in politicians (i.e. maleness, whiteness, and heterosexuality), while emphasizing others. This process preserves power imbalances (Tolley, 2016), as implicit hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity, and racism in media discourses about politicians

reinforce and maintain the idea of the white, heterosexual man as the standard political figure (Trimble et al., 2015). Consequently, all politicians are compared to this idealized political body.

The French political context

The Sarkozy presidency marked a change in the French political landscape: the ethnic diversity of high-ranking political figures increased, and the de-consecration of the function of President of the Republic resulted in the *celebrification* of some politicians.

Celebrification refers to the media exposure of the private life of individuals who do not belong to the entertainment world, e.g. politicians (Goepfert, 2011). The tradition of separating private and political life came to an end with the “over-mediatised showbiz lifestyle” of Nicolas Sarkozy (Murray, 2013, p. 207).¹¹ Rachida Dati famously embraced the “bling bling” lifestyle of the President, and also became a victim of *celebrification*.¹² The “showy” presidency resulted in wide criticism and general disapproval, which pressured the President to drastically change his strategy (Dakhliya, 2013; Murray, 2013) and ultimately led to the dismissal of Rachida Dati as a symbol of “bling bling” Sarkozism. Conversely, Sarkozy’s successor François Hollande aspired to be a “normal” President, seeking to separate his private and political life.¹³ Unfortunately for him (and politicians more generally), coverage of “Gayet Gate” has proven the media’s appetite for exposing politicians’ personal life is here to stay.¹⁴

¹¹ French President from 16 May 2007 to 15 May 2012. Successor: François Hollande.

¹² Extravagant and Hollywood-like.

¹³ French President from 15 May 2012 to 14 May 2017. Successor: Emmanuel Macron.

¹⁴ “Gayet Gate” refers to Hollande’s affair with French actress Julie Gayet.

Although not directly addressed to governments, the law of 6 June 2000 (also called *Parity law*) played an important role in increasing the representation of women politicians in the highest spheres of the French political system (Lépinard, 2013). In 2019, with women making up 50% of the government, France ranks among a small group of countries achieving parity in terms of number of women in ministerial positions (UN Women, 2019). In France, the government (cabinet) is composed by ministers and ministers of state, who are appointed by the President of the Republic upon proposal from the Prime Minister. Sarkozy revised the government landscape by significantly increasing the number of women ministers. Though his presidency almost reached a parity government, the number of women ministers decreased along with his mandate (Murray, 2012). However, although Sarkozy's Presidency lacked a gender-equal government in strictly numerical terms, women ministers accessed high-profile positions such as Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance (Murray, 2009). France saw its first gender-equal government in 2012, after the victory of Hollande in the Presidential elections. However, as reported by UN Women (2017) and earlier pointed out by Murray (2013), the Hollande governments actually featured an unequal distribution of power, with the most important portfolios/ministries allocated to men. Christiane Taubira, Minister of Justice, and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, Minister of National Education, Higher Education, and Research were the only exceptions. Murray (2013) argues that women ministers had actually taken a step backward when compared with the earlier Sarkozy era. Under the current President, Emmanuel Macron, the French government is comprised of the Prime Minister and 16 ministries, nine of which are headed by women, thus continuing with parity governments (accurate at time of writing). However, unlike his two predecessors, Macron's governments are not representative of the French population, containing no ministers of *diversité*.

The French societal context

Diversité is a generic and encompassing term used in France to summarize the idea of multiple cultures, ethnic/racial origins, religions, gender, and sexual orientations (Naves, 2012). With regard to ethnic/racial origins, *diversité* more precisely refers to French people of foreign origins: immigrants, or (grand)children of immigrants, from the Maghreb region (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia), sub-Saharan Africa, and South-East Asia. These African and East-Asian regions correspond, for the most part, to former French colonies. France has a challenging history with some of its former colonies, especially with Algeria, that continues to this day. The many repercussions of the Algerian War (or Algerian War for Independence 1954-1962) may help account for ongoing resentments felt by people from both countries. (Notably, *diversité* excludes immigrants from European countries such as Spain, Germany, and Poland.) Hussey (2014) argues that France's historical missionary-like colonization of the Maghreb region shaped the relationship between France and the Arab world and contributes to contemporary tensions experienced between Maghrebin and non-Maghrebin French citizens.

The 1978 law banning the collection of racial, ethnic, or religious data makes it impossible to know the exact percentage of the Maghrebin population in France. In popular understanding, however, populations of people of Maghrebin descent are often concentrated in French city outskirts. The term *banlieues*, translated as suburbs, literally refers to the outskirts of a city. However, the concept of *banlieues* more commonly connotes the poorer and more densely populated suburbs of French cities, generally home to a high number of immigrants and their descendants (Hussey, 2014; Sloomer, 2019). As such, the *banlieues* have come to be seen as the site of "Otherness" in the French context (Hussey, 2014; Sloomer, 2019). In line with an assimilationist view on integration, France embraces a universalistic perspective that denies differences among French citizens and only recognizes a distinction

between French citizens and foreigners. Such assimilationism causes the Maghrebin population in France to neither “feel authentically ‘at home’” in France, nor in the former colonies (Hussey, 2014).

Historically, few French citizens of *diversité* entered politics. To a certain extent, the lack of representation of visible minorities in politics illustrates a democratic malfunction (Avanza, 2010) as it reflects a non-representation of (and disinvestment in) the diversity of the French population. This representation evolved in 2007 when President Sarkozy appointed, for the first time, three women of *diversité* (Rachida Dati, Rama Yade, and Fadela Amara) as ministers (Green, 2014). The appointment of three icons of *diversité* illustrated Sarkozy’s desire for novelty and openness (Gastaut, 2012), and aligned with a general idea of renewing the political class to include more women, younger people, and individuals of different social classes (Simon & Escafré-Dublet, 2009). However, the appointment of Rachida Dati was also perceived as an example of the French government using *diversité* as a marketing tool to neutralize social conflicts that arose from the French riots of 2005, which turned *diversité* into a negative stigmatizing term directed towards Muslims and French citizens of foreign origins (Naves, 2012).

Resulting from a political goal to make French society a fairer place for women, a 2017 revision of the 2014 law for equality between women and men amended an article to ensure respectful representation of women in the media. The French Superior Audio-visual Council (CSA) took action against any stereotypical, sexist and/or degrading images of women on French radio and television programs.¹⁵ The CSA regulations are limited to radio and TV channels, excluding other national media such as newspapers. Interestingly, in their study of the coverage of the relatively low-profile French politician Arlette Laguiller by *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, and *Libération*, Barnes and Larrivée (2011) found no marks of sexism in

¹⁵ The French institution that regulates the content of media in France.

any of the three newspapers.¹⁶ However, the authors acknowledge a possible difference of treatment accorded to higher-profile women politicians. Echoing the findings of Barnes and Larrivée (2011), Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen's (2012) study of the European media coverage of the first Spanish women ministers revealed the low level of reporting by *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* of ministers' sartorial style and physical appearance. The authors linked such findings to the existing progressive legislation in France and suggested they reflected a lack of political instrumentalization of the press in France. However, research has yet to determine whether French newspapers are neutral in their coverage of all women politicians, or only some.

Drawing from previous research and using an intersectional lens, the current study examines the way *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* represent Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. The following research questions guide the study:

RQ1: How are Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem represented in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* with regard to their status of « *diversité* »?

RQ2: How do the media representations of the Maghrebin origins of Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem contribute to their "Othering"?

Method

To address the research questions, the two daily newspapers *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* were chosen for their quality as sources of information, their high circulation in France (2 803 000 and 1 972 000 respectively in 2016-2017), their differing political stances (center-left and center-right respectively), and their visibility and credibility at an international level. To put those newspapers into perspective, with regard to political leaning and national prominence,

¹⁶ French politician affiliated with the Trotskyist Far-Left Party – Lutte Ouvrière (Workers' Struggle). She ran in the French presidential elections six times.

Le Monde is similar to *The Guardian* and the *New York Times*, while *Le Figaro* is roughly comparable to *The Telegraph* and the *Washington Times*.

Data collection began with *Le Monde*'s website, for which a subscription was required for full access. The internal search browser enabled simple research by inputting keywords and specific dates. The keyword "Rachida Dati" was used to collect news stories that mentioned the minister during the year 2008.¹⁷ Similarly, the keyword "Najat Vallaud-Belkacem" was used to collect news stories that mentioned the minister during the year 2014.¹⁸ After removing duplicate stories and simple mentions of ministers' names, the data collection resulted in $N = 404$ stories for Rachida Dati, and $N = 237$ stories for Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. The database Factiva was used to collect news stories from *Le Figaro* following the exact same procedure than for *Le Monde*.¹⁹ As Factiva did not cover the supplement *Madame Figaro*, the woman's magazine of *Le Figaro*, a complementary search was performed on *Le Figaro* website. After removal of duplicates, surveys, and introductory front-page teasers, this step led to $N = 419$ stories for RD, and $N = 169$ stories for NVB. The data collections of both newspapers resulted in a data corpus totaling 1229 news stories.

To get a manageable and coherent data set, the data corpus was reduced to include only news stories that mentioned Rachida Dati's and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem's gender attributes and ethnic background. Drawing on previous research on gendered mediation, stories were kept for analysis if they met the following conditions: they emphasized the word woman (e.g. "la première *femme* ministre" "the first *woman* minister"); and/or they mentioned one or more of the following: ministers' traits (Williams, 2017), sartorial style

¹⁷ In 2008, RD ran for mayoral elections in the 7th arrondissement of Paris, and became pregnant; both events drew a lot of media attention.

¹⁸ In 2014, NVB became the first woman ever appointed to Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research.

¹⁹ *Le Monde* was not available on Factiva at the time of data collection.

(Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012), motherliness/motherhood (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012), seductiveness (Krogstad & Storvik, 2012), and physical attractiveness/beauty (Trimble et al., 2015). Adapting the measure of racialization proposed by Tolley (2016) to the French context, news stories that explicitly referred to Rachida Dati’s and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem’s origins (i.e. Maghrebi), place of birth (i.e. Morocco), religion (i.e. Muslim), Maghrebin culture (e.g. mention of traditional food in link to Rachida Dati or Najat Vallaud-Belkacem), and parents (if mentioned as immigrants or originating from another country) were added to the data set. Further, news stories that mentioned Rachida Dati or Najat Vallaud-Belkacem directly in relation to a racist or immigration-related event were also included. This step limited the data set to $N = 129$ news stories (see Table 1 below).

	Rachida Dati	Najat Vallaud-Belkacem	Total
<i>Le Monde</i>	38	15	53
<i>Le Figaro</i>	54	22	76
Total	92	37	129

Table 1. Number of stories based on newspapers, and ministers.

It is important to disclose that the authors of this article are white women. As Al’Ghabra (2018) explains, when undertaking studies that involve minority groups, researchers must acknowledge and be transparent about their identities, and resultant privileges. Failing to do so may lead researchers to speak “for” the minority group, applying a Western/White or otherwise privileged perspective, thereby actively combating the purpose of intersectionality. In addition to reflecting on their own privileges, the authors have discussed ways dominant ideologies (White femininity and White *Frenchness* in this case) may unconsciously be performed.

Using NVivo, one of the authors, a native French person, inductively coded the data in the original language. (For transparency purposes, quotations extracted from the data sample are

translated into English by the author, and checked by another native French speaker, and are presented together with their original versions in the discussion section). The analysis consists of two parts. First, to get a comprehensive understanding of the overall dataset, thematic analysis is used to identify repeating themes and meanings whilst connecting them to their societal and historical contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) is applied to deepen the analysis by delving into the texts to identify media discourses that reinforce and propagate discriminatory messages, thereby subtly perpetuating power relations. Finally, the intersectional lens applied throughout the analysis process illuminates the way gender, ethnicity, and other social categories are intertwined and embedded in the narratives. The findings are first presented for Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem separately, and the conclusions reflect on the similarities and disparities in the media coverage the two women received.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis reveals no major differences in the coverage produced by *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, although *Le Figaro* produces somewhat more gendered and racialized coverage than *Le Monde*. However, the amount of gendered and racialized coverage decreased significantly between 2008 and 2014 for both newspapers, despite Rachida Dati and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem being equally high profile politicians.

Rachida Dati

Analysis reveals a particular media interest in Rachida Dati's pregnancy and sartorial style. These elements of coverage are intertwined with discourses of celebrification, her presentation as femme fatale, and ultimately her unsuitability for a ministerial role. Furthermore, Dati is represented consistently both as a symbol of *diversité*—in terms of her gender, her immigrant and working-class backgrounds—and as a political tool utilized by

Sarkozy, suggesting the idea of illegitimacy. Finally, a rhetoric of “Othering” appears in Dati’s coverage. Her gendered coverage serves to “Other” Dati from her political counterparts, while coverage of her Maghrebin, religious, and social class background “Others” Dati from White French citizens.

Unsurprisingly, Rachida Dati’s coverage pays great attention to gender-related elements. The intense mediatization of Dati’s luxurious sartorial style, unconventional pregnancy as a solo mother, her sexuality and lack of stable partner, and her pursuit of media attention all combine to portray her more as a celebrity than a politician. Celebrity frivolity contrasts with political solemnity and respectability but more crucially diverges from the expected image associated with the appointment of a woman of immigrant background and modest origins. The gendered, celebrity, and diversity aspects of the coverage accorded Dati are complexly linked.

The media focus on Dati’s private life overshadows her ministerial role, depicting her as a second-class minister, as illustrated by the following quote: “Is Rachida Dati a minister like the others? Not yet. The first part of the TV program was dedicated to her pregnancy, to the father of her child, and to her unprecedented career trajectory” (De Charette & Rovin, 2008, *Le Figaro*).²⁰ Moreover, the mediatized line up of men disclaiming paternity of Dati’s child portrays her as an inconstant and promiscuous woman: a femme fatale and a “man eater.” As noted by Hill Collins (2000), such portrayal conveys an image of hyper-sexuality or “excessive sexual appetites,” which is (un)consciously linked to that of a “whore.” Additionally, the mystery surrounding the father’s identity subtly links to the narrative of “bad mother.” Dati is represented as an irresponsible woman who cannot provide a stable

²⁰ « Rachida Dati, un ministre comme les autres ? Pas encore. C'est à sa grossesse, au père de son enfant et à son parcours atypique qu'a été consacrée la première partie de l'émission. »

family environment for her unborn child. These media narratives serve to discredit her as a respectable and competent Minister.

Both newspapers' coverage filter Dati's ministerial performance and worthiness through her sartorial style. When fulfilling her Justice Minister role, a detailed description of her outfit and looks is often added to the coverage of the occasion: "Belted red dress, lipstick, long black jacket and high-heeled boots: Rachida Dati did not sacrifice her elegance to visit the closed educational center of Lusigny" (De Charette, 2008, *Le Figaro*).²¹ Similarly, the contrast between Dati's luxurious taste and the social reality of her role are often used to portray her as frivolous, professionally immature, and insensitive. French society expects women to be conscious of their appearance, but not too conscious. However, Fulda (2008) illustrates how the blurry line between "acceptably conscious" and "too conscious" enables the journalist to adjudicate the appropriateness of Dati's appearance: "In France, freshly appointed Justice Minister, Rachida Dati shocked or irritated by seemingly appearing more comfortable when attending parties at Dior's than when visiting prisons, too concerned about her appearance. *A woman can appear coquette, but not frivolous*" (*Le Figaro*: emphasis added).²²

Dati's luxurious fashion style is also associated with (albeit in opposition to) her Maghrebin background: "She is not a 'beurette' anymore, she is a fashion victim." (Bacqué, 2008, *Le Monde*).²³ The term *beurette* refers to the 'integrated' Maghrebin young woman. A *beurette* is a symbol of 'successful integration' and an emancipatory model from the

²¹ « Robe rouge ceinturée, rouge à lèvres, longue veste noire et bottes à talons : Rachida Dati n'a pas sacrifié à son élégance pour visiter le centre éducatif fermé de Lusigny. ».

²² « En France, Rachida Dati a choqué ou énervé certains en semblant, à ses débuts place Vendôme, être plus à l'aise dans les soirées Dior que dans les prisons, trop soucieuse de son apparence. Une femme peut apparaître coquette. Mais frivole, non. »

²³ « Ce n'est plus une beurette, c'est une fashion victim »

constraints and interdictions of the culture of “origin,” e.g. enjoying sexual freedom (Kemp, 2009; Ramdani 2011) and embracing a ‘normal,’ ‘natural’ French femininity as opposed to that of the veiled woman (Kemp, 2009). The intrinsic dialectic within the term *beurette* instantly “Others” Dati. Dati initially personifies an idealized French White femininity through her elegant outfits, high heels, and make up, and she is (again initially) constructed as a positive symbol of successful integration. As Al’Ghabra (2018) has noted, Muslim women who assimilate to the dominant culture become “good subjects”/good Muslims. Because Dati embraces and embodies White femininity and White *Frenchness*, and even more because she refuses to acknowledge her Maghrebin background, Dati at first seems to represent the “good immigrant” who has assimilated to French culture. However, the newspaper coverage subsequently suggests she has over-performed her femininity and turns her into a negative model. The French assimilationist view advocates for sameness – promoting solely *Frenchness*; however, the analysis shows that Whiteness, and thereby *Frenchness*, is denied to Dati as she crosses the blurry line of “acceptably conscious” of her femininity and steps into frivolity. At that point, Dati ceases to embody White French femininity; instead, she is estranged from *Frenchness* and becomes the “Other” as her Maghrebin/immigrant background is summoned to acknowledge her shortcoming. Such coverage reinforces the idea that there is only one way to be French; but, more importantly it implies that not assimilating to *Frenchness* is bad. It is safe to assume that no White French politician is subjected to such pressure to be French enough.

With Barack Obama’s 2007 run for the Democratic nomination and 2008 election as U.S. President, the topic of *diversité* in politics was brought into the international spotlight (Simon & Escafré-Dublet, 2009). Within the media coverage under scrutiny in this study, Dati’s appointment to Justice Minister - given her immigrant and working class backgrounds - is reported as an illustration of deliberate actions taken to reflect the *diversité* of the French

population in political bodies (Sineau, 2011). This coverage conveys that Dati's rise is not necessarily the product of meritocracy but is instead an attempt to reach out to a specific part of the French population – a ploy to understand and appeal to people of the *diversité*. In other words, Dati's political role is not rightfully earned: she is illegitimate. Illegitimation on the ground of *diversité* further "Others" Dati from White French politicians. Consequently, as she is supposed to represent *diversité*, members of the population represented by Dati are in turn "Othered" from the French population that looks like White French politicians. Salles (2008) illustrates this point:

At the end of 2007, Rachida Dati's front page of *Paris Match*, wearing couture and high heels, epitomized her haughtiness. She was at her peak. The Elysée disliked the image. Such arrogant luxury clashing with the symbol Sarkozy had wanted to convey when he chose to appoint a woman of immigrant and modest origin to a central ministry.²⁴ (*Le Monde*)

While Dati was meant to provide a positive symbol by the President, her Maghrebin background resonates as a hindrance in some reportage. This negative resonance is particularly illustrated by the coverage of Dati's run for mayoral election in the 7th arrondissement of Paris, famously home of the French upper class, where she is portrayed as a foreigner. While the coverage does not specify whether Dati is a foreigner in France, through her Maghrebin/immigrant background, or a foreigner to the upper class 7th arrondissement due to her working-class upbringing, or both, Dati is, regardless, portrayed as an alien to this environment/world. Dati's Otherness and exoticism are conveyed further through descriptions that could be used for the observation of unfamiliar animals, as

²⁴ « Fin 2007, la "une" de Paris Match, talons aiguilles et grand couturier, symbolisait cette superbe. C'était son apogée. L'image déplut à l'Elysée. Ce luxe arrogant coïncidait mal avec le symbole voulu par le président en nommant une fille d'immigrés, d'origine modeste, dans un ministère régalien ».

illustrated by this extract: “During apartment meetings where [inhabitants of the 7th arrondissement] come to test her, and perhaps also to examine her as though she comes from a distant world; all make an effort” (*Le Figaro*, 2008).²⁵ Moreover, this coverage shows the dissonance between those who inhabit *les cités* (the poorest and densest *banlieues*) and the rest of the French population. It also suggests that while White politicians are fit to represent the French population in all its diversity, an immigrant woman politician of working class background can only represent the part of the French population that resembles her. Bacqué (2008) exemplifies this point, reporting that “Rachida Dati thought she was a minister, however she has been met as the daughter of an immigrant. In a UMP (Sarkozy’s party) branch, a member pedantically asked: ‘Why doesn’t she campaign among her own, in the cités?’” (*Le Monde*).²⁶

Treatment of Dati’s religious identity further conveys the idea of “Otherness,” as illustrated through coverage of the mayoral elections in the 7th arrondissement of Paris. Although it is normal for campaigning politicians to try to appeal to and meet with people from all walks of life, Dati’s coverage conveys a different story. The suggestion that Dati is estranged from the Catholic world hints at her distinct religious background and her “Otherness.” Fiig (2010) and Tolley (2016) argue that highlighting specific characteristics of minority women politicians creates racialized discourses, and Trimble et al. (2015) illustrate that silencing Whiteness normalizes and reinforces White norms. The following quotation demonstrates how the emphasis put on Dati’s attempts to reach out to and appeal to the Catholic electorate creates a silenced but nonetheless eloquent racialized/religious discourse.

²⁵ « Dans les réunions d'appartement où l'on vient la tester, l'examiner sans doute tant elle provient d'un univers éloigné, chacun y met du sien ».

²⁶ « Rachida Dati se pensait ministre, elle a été parfois accueillie en fille d'immigrés. Dans une section UMP, un militant a doctement demandé : "Pourquoi ne fait-elle pas campagne chez les siens, dans les cités ?" »

Dati has decided to “play the game to the fullest” [...] She even goes to mass [...] She tries to organize a trip to the Vatican, as she is convinced that a picture with the Pope will seduce the catholic electorate. That is unless the marketing aspect of the plan disturbs that electorate. “I have done all my education in private schools, with the nuns”, Dati adds by way of justification. “She knows all the chants”, claim her relatives.²⁷ (Bommelaer, 2008, *Le Figaro*)

Finally, the association of Dati with the narrative surrounding the annulment of the marriage of a Muslim couple (on the basis that the wife lied about her virginity), echoes the archetype of the oppressed Muslim woman developed by Al’Ghabra (2018). *Le Figaro* reported, “These questions have a particular resonance for Rachida Dati, as she personally experienced [a forced marriage]. According to Dati, she had her own marriage annulled, as it was ‘decided without [her] consent’” (De Mallevoüe, 2008, *Le Figaro*).²⁸ This coverage reinforces the common rhetoric that Islam oppresses and denies Muslim women – and therefore Dati - agency. By linking Dati’s support of this marriage annulment to her own experience, *Le Figaro* subtly positions Dati in the role of a “rescuer.” Moreover, it emphasizes the dichotomy between *them* (Muslim people who oppress their women) and *us* (White people who save said women). It also promotes Dati’s status as a well-integrated Muslim immigrant woman, who embodies White French femininity (through *Frenchness*) by saving other Muslim women. In these various and overlapping narratives, Dati is often presented as a privileged, even ‘special’ Other, but nonetheless inescapably an Other.

²⁷ « Dati a décidé de « jouer le jeu à fond » [...] elle assiste même à la messe. [...] Elle cherche à organiser un déplacement au Vatican, persuadée qu'une photo avec le Pape séduira l'électorat catholique. À moins que celui-ci ne soit perturbé par le côté marketing de la démarche. « J'ai fait toute ma scolarité dans une école privée, chez les bonnes sœurs », tente le ministre en forme d'explication. « Elle connaît tous les chants », abonde son entourage. »

²⁸ « Ces questions ont un écho tout particulier pour Rachida Dati qui a eu à les éprouver à titre personnel. En effet, elle a fait annuler son propre mariage, « décidé sans le vouloir », selon ses propos. »

Najat Vallaud-Belkacem

The analysis reveals a predominant emphasis on the historical aspect of Najat Vallaud-Belkacem's appointment as Minister of National Education, Higher Education, and Research. This aspect of coverage is intertwined with her youth and gender and ultimately depicts Najat Vallaud-Belkacem as unsuitable to her ministerial role. Moreover, the "Othering" of Vallaud-Belkacem transpires through entangled discourses of ethnicity, religion, and gender-ideology-driven politics. These elements "Other" Vallaud-Belkacem, and by extension those who resemble her, from the standard (White) French citizen and from her peer politicians. Finally, Vallaud-Belkacem is presented as a symbol of *diversité* – in terms of her gender, ethnicity, religion, and age - which suggests she is both protected and illegitimate in her ministerial role.

Other than presenting Vallaud-Belkacem as a positive symbol of advancement for women in the political sphere, newspaper coverage does not emphasize gender. However, applying an intersectional lens shows how the gender coverage reveals patronizing elements once intertwined with narratives of age and political experience. Courtois (2014) exemplifies this point well:

This is the first time that a woman, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, is appointed to control the Mammoth.²⁹ 36 years old, and without any other experience than the meteoric journey of a smiling and disciplined model student.³⁰ (*Le Monde*).

The metaphorical analogy of Vallaud-Belkacem as a smiling and disciplined student portrays her as a docile pawn who lacks political experience (an unfair depiction given Vallaud-

²⁹ Nickname given to the Education Ministry in France.

³⁰ « Voilà donc pour la première fois une femme, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, chargée de dompter le Mammouth. Sans autre expérience, à 36 ans, que son parcours météorique d'élève modèle, souriante et disciplinée. »

Belkacem's actual political history) and who, ultimately, is unqualified for the portfolio. Furthermore, given the nature of her previously held Ministry (for Women's Rights), the coverage subtly reinforces the idea that while some ministries can be handled by women, others are more difficult, or more important, and therefore require men's input. In other words, the controlling metaphor suggests a woman needs supervision/schooling to lead such ministries.

Arguably due to her stable marital life and meticulous care in keeping media away from her private life, Vallaud-Belkacem receives little media coverage with regard to her motherliness. Nonetheless, narratives built around traditional motherliness do appear. In a story that analyses the power dynamic in the Vallaud-Belkacem couple, *Madame Figaro* implies that children are women's primary responsibilities, with fathers being secondary figures in emergency situations.

Married in 2005 to Boris Vallaud, whom she met at Science Po, NVB has twins, Louis and Nour, and a life as regular as clockwork between Lyon and Paris. Senior civil servant, he [B. Vallaud] has worked with Arnaud Montebourg [former prominent politician] for a few years, and returns home to put the children to bed when necessary. That is the official story. Surely, real life is not so easy-going.³¹ (Chocas, Girard, Kerchouche, & Miel, 2014, *Madame Figaro*).

Madame Figaro's analysis of the couple reinforces the traditional gender roles ascribed to women and men. The ironic tone suggests skepticism of the family's novel situation and a disregard for or disbelief of men as eager and responsible fathers. Moreover, in light of Vallaud-Belkacem's earlier work as Minister for Women's Rights, this coverage suggests

³¹ « Avec Boris Vallaud, rencontré à Sciences Po, épousé en 2005, elle a des jumeaux, Louis et Nour, une vie réglée comme du papier à musique entre Lyon et Paris. Haut fonctionnaire, il travaille auprès d'Arnaud Montebourg pendant quelques années, et rentre sans aucun problème coucher les enfants si besoin. Voilà ce qui se dit. La vraie vie est sûrement plus agitée. »

(and implicitly criticizes) a dichotomy between Vallaud-Belkacem's ministerial work and the reality of her life. It discredits her work as minister. The relative lack of interest in Vallaud-Belkacem's motherliness by both newspapers in 2014, in comparison to the narratives surrounding Dati in 2008, could be interpreted as either a decrease of interest in women politicians' personal lives on the part of newspapers, or as reflecting the fact that Vallaud-Belkacem's quiet life did not provide much fodder for media attention. However, an extract from French tabloid *Closer*, which labels Vallaud-Belkacem "a bad mother who never picks up her children from school" (Quillet, 2014, *Le Figaro*), tends to suggest any decreasing interest in politicians' motherhood might represent only a certain segment of the press.

The analysis reveals prominent and judgmental coverage of Vallaud-Belkacem's gender-ideology-driven politics. The conservative view of *Le Figaro* is reflected in its portrayal of Vallaud-Belkacem as undermining norms of gender and sexual orientation through her alleged advocacy of gender neutrality, which *Le Figaro* connects with promoting homosexuality. Furthermore, applying an intersectional lens reveals that Vallaud-Belkacem and her advocacy become defined through her Moroccan and religious background. Her ethnicity and religion inform the direction her ministerial role should take, according to *Le Figaro*. Moreover, because of her Moroccan origins and her Muslim religion, the newspaper provides a racist definition of sexism, linking Vallaud-Belkacem's fight for gender equality with triggering words and phrases such as Islam and veiled women.

The fight [for gender equality] would be useful if it served women from the cités who undergo sexism of a culture which, in its most extreme manifestation, veils them and submits them to males. The determination shown by Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, of Moroccan origin herself, would prove even more meaningful among the 'rebels of Allah', those Muslim women who defy Islamist order [...]. However, such is not the minister's goal. She seeks to advocate in favor of gender neutrality on the basis of gender

theory: one more ideology, taught from primary school, which aims at trivializing and promoting homosexuality.³² (Rioufol, 2014, *Le Figaro*).

Trimble et al. (2015) have argued that the Whiteness aspect of sexism is often rendered invisible, and in this case, the association of sexism with the *cités* silences sexism's relationship to Whiteness, and makes sexism exclusively experienced by Maghrebin and/or Muslim women. This coverage suggests that Vallaud-Belkacem's gender ideology driven politics should serve people she "represents" due to her religious and ethnic background, which conveys the limiting and limited reach of her ministerial role and political ability. The operation of such coverage also works to "Other" both Vallaud-Belkacem and people living in the *cités*. Stating that Vallaud-Belkacem should (only) represent people who resemble her effectively estranges her from those different from her.

Overall, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem receives little explicit media coverage in the two newspapers concerning her origin/background. In a few instances her origin, social class, age, gender, educational background, religion, and ideology are presented as a way of providing biography and context to the reader. "A graduate from Sciences Po, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem was born in Morocco, and arrived in France at the age of 4. The young woman who refuses to be viewed as the token 'diversity representative' is renowned for her self-

³² « Ce combat [égalité femmes-hommes] serait utile s'il venait en aide aux femmes des cités qui ont à subir le sexisme d'une culture qui, quand elle se laisse gagner par l'obscurantisme, leur fait porter le voile et les soumet aux mâles. La détermination de Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, d'origine marocaine, trouverait tout son sens auprès des « rebelles d'Allah », ces musulmanes qui défient l'ordre islamiste [...]. Mais l'objectif de la ministre n'est pas celui-là. Elle veut promouvoir l'indifférenciation des sexes, défendue par la théorie du genre : une idéologie de plus, enseignée dès la petite école, destinée à banaliser et promouvoir l'homosexualité. »

control and cautious words” (Fulda, 2014, *Madame Figaro*).³³ However, the origin details also establish Vallaud-Belkacem as embodying *diversité*. During her ministerial activity, Vallaud-Belkacem was frequently the target of racist attacks and rumors linked to her origin, religion, and Maghrebin-sounding name. *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* both condemned the overtly racist front pages of extreme-right newspapers *Minute* and *Valeurs Actuelles*. Nonetheless, Vallaud-Belkacem’s origin and representation of *diversité* are also used by *Le Figaro* (less so by *Le Monde*) to portray Vallaud-Belkacem as protected and untouchable in her ministerial role because of her *diversité* status. *Diversité* is thus presented cynically both as a shield against criticism and also as a steppingstone towards ministerial positions.

Rioufol (2014) illustrates this point by claiming that:

The ban to criticize Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, who has been appointed Minister of National Education without particular competences, is a foretaste of what the rejected left [wing] has in store. [...] The new Minister of National Education is untouchable because she represents youth, and even more so, *diversité*³⁴ (*Le Figaro*).

The idea of illegitimacy is connected with that of protection: because of Vallaud-Belkacem’s *diversité* status, she has been elevated to an undeserved role and exempted from critique.

Finally, analysis suggests Vallaud-Belkacem is portrayed, because of her religion, as the face of a successful integration process of Muslims. The promotion of Vallaud-Belkacem as a figurehead for all Muslims in France serves to obscure the ongoing racism and

³³ « Diplômée de Sciences Po, née au Maroc, arrivée en France à l'âge de 4 ans dans la Somme, la jeune femme qui refuse d'être la « caution de la diversité » est réputée pour son sang-froid et sa parole contrôlée. »

³⁴ « L'interdiction de critiquer Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, nommée sans compétence particulière à l'Éducation nationale, est un avant-goût de ce que réserve la gauche rejetée. [...] La nouvelle ministre de l'Éducation est intouchable parce qu'elle représente la jeunesse et, plus encore, la diversité. »

discrimination against Muslims. Moreover, it limits and questions her political ascension, and further implies the idea of illegitimacy, as exemplified below:

Muslims' integration in France has been attained for the most part. Regardless of what people think, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem (who was my student) is one of the most resounding symbols [of such successful integration]³⁵ (Tremolet de Villers, 2014, *Le Figaro*).

While the coverage accorded to Najat Vallaud-Belkacem displays less explicit sexist and racist content than that of Rachida Dati, intersectional analysis reveals the multiple ways her cultural and ideological identities are reported in combinations that both render her Other and diminish her standing as a capable Minister.

Conclusion

This article shows Rachida Dati's and Najat Vallaud-Belkacem's media coverage differs in terms of focus, yet conveys similar messages. While *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* focused on the historical aspect of Vallaud-Belkacem's appointment and on her ideology-driven politics, Dati received extensive coverage of her sartorial style and pregnancy. Nonetheless, common narratives emerged throughout the analysis: lack of credibility, incompetence, and inadequacy. Simply put, throughout their coverage, *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* conveyed the idea that both Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem were illegitimate in their ministerial roles, not because of the quality of their work, but because of some of their social identities.

In line with previous research, this analysis illustrates how the gendered coverage of Dati, and to a lesser extent of Vallaud-Belkacem, published in both *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* conveys and reinforces traditional gender stereotypes within the particular French context.

³⁵ « L'intégration des musulmans, dans notre pays, est en grande partie réalisée. Najat Vallaud-Belkacem (qui fut mon étudiante) en est, quoi qu'on en pense, un des symboles éclatants. »

The intersectional lens reveals that discrimination may emerge not solely or simply via gendered coverage but via intertwining narratives of differing social identities, which serve to reinforce the idea of the illegitimacy of these minority women politicians.

Coverage of both Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem emphasizes their status of “*diversité*.” Although diversity status also has some positive resonance, Dati’s and Vallaud-Belkacem’s coverage generates negative narratives in two respects. First, the diversity coverage suggests positive discrimination in the appointment of both women to ministerial positions. Their legitimacy as ministers is therefore contested. Second, Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem are portrayed as benefiting from their status of *diversité*: being of *diversité* protects them against criticism and dismissal.

The “Othering” evident in coverage of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem highlights a conflict between the theory behind the principle of universalism in France and its actual application. Immigrants in France are under pressure to assimilate, yet when they fail to adequately perform (White) *Frenchness* their immigrant or religious background is immediately emphasized. Coverage of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem illustrates how *Frenchness* is denied, even to well-integrated, high profile, privileged minority women politicians, and their status as Other is subtly but repeatedly reiterated. This process effectively creates a differentiation between French citizens that conflicts with the essence of French universalism.

Interestingly, this research shows no clear evidence of coverage of the two women differing between *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, despite their opposing political stances. The amount of coverage was observed to decrease between 2008 and 2014 for both newspapers. Contradicting Barnes and Larrivée’s (2011) finding of no sexism in major newspaper coverage of women politicians, this paper reveals that Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem continue to face discriminatory and sexist media coverage. While less blatant than in the case of Dati,

sexism lurks nonetheless in Vallaud-Belkacem's coverage, in combination with other Othering discourses. As women and minorities continue to push against political glass ceilings, critiquing media coverage is increasingly important to illuminate and disrupt the perpetuation of discriminatory ideologies. An intersectional lens proves particularly useful in identifying the complexly and often opaquely intertwined narratives of discrimination.

Finally, this study illustrates Al'Ghabra's (2018) claim that global systems of oppression have particular local manifestations. Local cultural and historical contexts influence the way discriminatory ideologies are subtly perpetuated through media discourse. Although some coverage would not appear discriminatory in other settings, the particular cultural and personal context in which media discourse is embedded may animate a deeper or hidden discriminatory meaning. Perpetuation of discriminatory ideologies is implemented differently and in alignment with the local cultural, historical context – and, in the case of this study, is linked specifically to the personal history of Dati and Vallaud-Belkacem. Further research is needed to understand better the various and specific ways in which discriminatory ideologies are perpetuated in a wide range of cultural environments.

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Article III

**An intersectional approach to media coverage of politics in
Aotearoa New Zealand: The case of Metiria Turei and Paula
Bennett.**

by

Flora Galy-Badenas, Elizabeth F. Gray, & Fiona Cassidy (2021)

Media International Australia

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Primary Supervisor's Signature:	Stephen M Croucher	Digitally signed by Stephen M Croucher DN: cn=Stephen M Croucher, c=NZ, o=Massey University, ou=School of Communication, Journalism & Marketing, email=S.Croucher@massey.ac.nz Reason: I am approving this document Date: 2021.05.27 17:25:49 +12'00'
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An intersectional approach to media coverage of politics in New Zealand: The case of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett

Abstract

This study analyses media coverage of two Māori women politicians in New Zealand. This paper adopts an intersectional lens to critically examine the discriminatory ideologies at play in mainstream New Zealand media coverage of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett. The analysis reveals that although the coverage examined in this article presents the Māori heritage of the two women very differently, the coverage pays close attention to both women's gender and bodies, while simultaneously diminishing their individuality by folding them into stereotypes. Classification and disempowerment of 'stropy women'/'stirrer Māori' is enabled by the intersection of racist, sexist, and classist discourses.

Keywords: Māori women; political reporting; news media; intersectionality; gender; racism

Introduction

From an international perspective, New Zealand appears to have an enviable track record of gender equity in political representation. In 1893 it was the first country in the world to extend the franchise to women (while the first woman to win a seat in the House of Representatives was Elizabeth McCombs, in 1933), and the first country to elect an openly transgender person to Parliament, Georgina Beyer in 1999. It was only the second country in the world to have a sitting leader give birth while in office when Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern had a child, in 2018. At the time of writing, 48% of Members of Parliament identify as women. New Zealand's Ministry for Women, *Te Minitatanga mō ngā Wāhine*, proudly states:

“New Zealand continues to maintain its role as a leader in the field of gender equality. We are proud of our record of human rights and our legal framework that provides women with comprehensive protection against all forms of discrimination.”

However, analysis of the New Zealand media's representations of women politicians problematises suggestions that a non-discriminatory and egalitarian ideal prevails in the country. Over several decades, studies of media representations of New Zealand women

politicians have revealed both blatant and subtle discrimination (Devere and Davies, 2006; Fountaine, 2002; Fountaine and Comrie, 2016; Van Acker, 2003).

Egalitarianism and inclusivity in New Zealand politics also need interrogation in terms of representations of ethnicity and class in the media. Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, and although significant work has been done illuminating the biases endemic in media representations of Māori (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012; Nairn et al., 2017; Rankine et al., 2014), comparatively little scholarly attention has been paid to media representations of Māori politicians, either male or female (Gray, 2019; McDowell, 2015; Phelan and Salter, 2019). Given media's constitutive role in legitimizing and naturalizing attitudes that support the ideological agendas of key power-holding institutions (Downing and Husband, 2005; Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012), which have frequently worked to Other and suppress non-dominant identities (Nairn et al., 2017), it is essential to unveil the mechanisms that perpetuate such pervasive systems. This paper adopts an intersectional lens in considering the mediated marginalization of women and indigenous peoples in politics in New Zealand, not collapsing the real differences between the lived experiences of such diverse groups, but foregrounding the multiple identities of two individuals to reveal the dynamic composition of intersecting forms of discrimination at work in media representations.

A series of interconnected questions animate this study. Different countries' responses to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in more positive framing of a number of women leaders (Johnson and Williams, 2020; Windsor et al, 2020). However, has the framing of women politicians in Aotearoa New Zealand fundamentally changed since Van Acker (2003) observed that "women are generally treated differently than their male counterparts by the media, with a keener focus on their private relationships, sexual lives and appearance" (116), and McGregor (1996) decried New Zealand's "media misogyny" (187)? More particularly, how does the coverage of New Zealand women politicians consider Māori ethnicity? Do anti-Māori themes (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012) reveal particular nuances in the presentation of Māori women politicians?

A nuanced critical framework is needed to understand and critique the operations of the New Zealand media, and to articulate the inseparability of discussions of gender from discussions of race, ethnicity, class, and other social identities in purportedly egalitarian Aotearoa New Zealand.

This study aims to "document and demystify current representational politics" (Loto et al., 2006: 103) in the case of two recent Māori women politicians, Metiria Turei and Paula

Bennett, who had similar experiences as young poor solo mothers on benefits but who took divergent political paths. Turei joined the left-wing Green Party, whereas Bennett affiliated with the centre-right National Party. Moreover, Bennett self-identifies as an “urban Māori”, which she defines as a Māori who is disconnected from his/her Māori heritage, not necessarily speaking *te reo* (the Māori language) or maintaining connection with the *marae* or tribal centre (Moir, 2019a). Conversely, Turei describes herself as a “Māori woman from a working-class background” (Rutherford, 2014). The politicians’ backgrounds and their different connection to *te ao Māori* (the Māori world) provide a point of entry through which to observe the complex and dynamic use of intersecting social identities in the differing ways New Zealand mainstream media have portrayed the two. The analysis demonstrates that multiple social identities are at play within any given depiction of an individual, and that the discursive webs animated in media depictions trigger particular intertextual associations that invoke certain standard stereotypes, and that reinforce patriarchal, classist, and colonial interests, even in overtly ‘positive’ news stories.

Literature review

The New Zealand context

European settlement of the land the indigenous Māori called Aotearoa (renamed New Zealand by colonizers) began in earnest in the early years of the nineteenth century, and in 1840 the founding document the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. While the Māori chiefs who signed the Māori version, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, believed they were agreeing to an assurance of their sovereignty (*tino rangatiratanga*), and the protection of their rights to land, the English version of that Treaty provided the foundation for political and social systems that have systematically pushed Māori to the margins. The bicultural partnership that ostensibly guaranteed equal rights, protection, and status only began to be constructed by the New Zealand Government in the 1970s, when the Treaty of Waitangi began to be accorded a more central position in legislation, and when a dedicated Tribunal was set up (in 1975) to decide land ownership cases. In 1987 *te reo Māori* (Māori language) was legally designated one of the official languages of New Zealand, and *tikanga Māori* (Māori customary practice) became increasingly accorded equivalent status to Pākehā (European) custom. While the Treaty of Waitangi establishes a particular expectation for the Crown to protect the rights of Māori, biculturalism is perceived by many as remaining more aspirational than actual. The shape (or lack) of Māori representation in the political system continues to be a subject of debate and protest.

As in other aspects of Māori society, British colonization had a destructive impact on the status of Māori women in Aotearoa. In fact, prior to colonization, Māori women and men had distinct but complementary roles which did not necessarily reflect a gendered hierarchical order (Hokowhitu, 2008; Simmonds, 2011). While not an egalitarian society, pre-colonial Aotearoa had a hierarchical system informed by *whakapapa* (ancestry lines) rather than by gender (Mikaere, 2003, in Simmonds, 2011). Introduced by Christian missionaries, patriarchal and other colonial ideologies have subsequently defined the societal order in Aotearoa New Zealand, Othering Māori and positioning Māori women as inferior to Māori men and (all) Pākehā (Johnston and Pihama, 1995; Pihama, 2001; Simmonds, 2011). Political representation still reflects the impact of this Othering and inferiorisation process.

Aotearoa New Zealand has a long history of agitation for greater representation of Māori within (and outside of) Parliament, even before the 1867 Māori Representation Act that granted all Māori men over 21 the right to vote for four Māori seats in Parliament. The first male Māori MPs took their seats in the House in 1868; the first Māori woman MP, Iriaka Rātana, was elected in 1949. In 2020, New Zealand's Mixed Member Proportional System sees voters selecting MPs for 65 general seats and 7 Māori seats, with the Party vote bringing the total to 120 representatives. Māori (and Pasifika) are represented within the major mainstream parties in the Parliament (centre-right National Party and centre-left Labour party), and in a number of portfolios: Defence, Māori Affairs, and Social Development, to name a few. In an historic appointment, Nanaia Mahuta, a Māori *wāhine* (woman), became the first woman Minister for Foreign Affairs in Aotearoa. At the time of writing, there are 23 Māori politicians in Parliament. The National Party, which leads the Opposition, had until June 2020 both a leader and deputy leader (Simon Bridges and Paula Bennett), both Māori (Ngāti Maniapoto and Tainui, respective *iwi* affiliations).

In the twentieth century, mainstream New Zealand newspapers broadly avoid party alignments, largely as a response to the economic exigencies of the small population and concomitant imperative to maintain broad appeal (Ellis, 2015). There are two public/state-/crown-owned broadcasts (TVNZ and RNZ), and three main news organizations (Stuff Ltd, recently bought by NZ-based Sinead Boucher; NZME, publicly/shareholder-owned; and Newshub, recently sold to Discovery) that dominate the New Zealand media landscape. Although recent, the change in Stuff ownership to NZ privately owned may reflect a change of journalism practices. In Aotearoa New Zealand as elsewhere in the world, a decline in serious journalism has been decried (Atkinson, 2003), although there are some signs the trend may be shifting – e.g. Stuff's 2020 acknowledgment of and apologies to Māori for

unequitable coverage. Ellis (2015) writes of the mainstream New Zealand media that “traditional political reportage has largely given way to personalised journalism” (246) with a growing emphasis across a range of media on opinion, and elevation of the entertainment or ‘clickbait’ factor (Stuff claims to have now changed its practices). Although a wide range of commentators may contribute, including academics, bloggers, members of the public, and politicians themselves, Ellis argues that in non-state news organizations, editorials continue to shape public opinion (2015).

The authors acknowledge that the power and authority of colonial institutions has historically been reproduced via mainstream, Anglo-settler media (Abel, 2016; Nairn et al., 2017). The growth of Māori-produced news, which encompasses some 21 iwi-run radio stations and, since 2004, Māori Television, promises a wider range of representations of indigenous people and at least in theory suggests that media might contribute to the construction of a truly bicultural society. However, to date audience numbers are not large and the Anglo-settler mainstream media remains a tremendously powerful shaping voice.

Kiwi women politicians in New Zealand media

Literature on New Zealand media coverage of women politicians in New Zealand has shown evolving but also recurring patterns of discriminatory media treatment (Devere and Davies, 2006; Fountaine, 2002; Fountaine and Comrie, 2016; McGregor, 1996; Van Acker, 2003). Although media interest in women politicians may have become less overtly sexist, early research suggested that New Zealand media “desire a Beehive bimbo-Boaticea who combines political energy and power with a stereotypical femininity expressed in conventional prettiness” (McGregor, 1996; 183). The particularly negative coverage received by Helen Clark, then Labour Party Leader, in the earlier stages of her career, illustrated media’s differential treatment of women and men politicians. Childless and “unconventionally” feminine, Clark did not fit the traditional stereotypical feminine role, which reflected in trivializing and undermining coverage.

The 1999 General Election led to an unprecedented face-to-face contest between two women party leaders, and demonstrated that even when women politicians dominated media coverage, gendered coverage still occurred (Fountaine, 2002; Fountaine and McGregor, 2002). The media reported disproportionately on the “private relationships, sexual lives, and appearance” of women politicians (Van Acker, 2003; 116). Interestingly, women politicians themselves on occasion contributed to sexist media representation by canonizing traditional feminine roles (i.e. motherhood) as a means of gaining advantage over female opponents (e.g.

Jenny Shipley constructed parenthood as a “domestic normality” when opposing Helen Clark) (see Fountaine and McGregor, 2002). Moreover, denial of sexism in politics and media by (right-wing) women politicians further reinforces sexist attitudes (Fountaine, 2002).

New Zealand media’s promulgation of gendered ideals for women politicians both set unattainable expectations of perfection at their job and at performing traditional femininity, and criticised women for failing to achieve them (Van Acker, 2003). Devere and Graham Davies (2006) argued that “the qualities expected in a leader, such as assertiveness, ambition and strength, are perceived as inappropriate for a woman” (75). The vilifying rhetoric that accompanied Helen Clark’s ‘coup’ to take the Labour Party Leadership in 1993 exemplified such backlash: Clark became a “villainous, cruel, heartless, and power-hungry” woman with “blood on her hands” (Trimble, 2014: 670). This episode landed Clark the derogatory and sexualized label of “political dominatrix” (Trimble, 2014: 674). Interest in Clark’s sexuality escalated as she became the second woman Prime Minister of New Zealand, through media questioning her “ambiguous” marriage and her looks (Fountaine and Comrie, 2016). Media coverage of power and leadership in New Zealand (as globally) is historically, inescapably gendered (Trimble, 2014).

The gendered frame effectively depicts women as political outsiders. Even when not blatantly sexist, sporting and mechanical metaphors in coverage of women politicians still establish and reinforce traditional masculinity (and men) as the norm of political leadership (and leaders) (Fountaine and McGregor, 2002; Trimble, 2014). Although arguably less visible, “media misogyny” still characterises today’s coverage (Fountaine and Comrie, 2016), although the public backlash in 2017 after television presenter Mark Richardson questioned freshly elected Labour Party Leader Jacinda Arden about her motherhood plans could suggest tolerance is shifting.

Māori / Indigenous people in the media

Media play a key role in reinforcing dominant colonial norms in Aotearoa New Zealand (Rankine et al., 2014). Similarly to their indigenous/native counterparts in other parts of the world, Māori face negative media coverage in Aotearoa New Zealand (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012; Rankine et al., 2014), with mainstream media constructing and maintaining “Māori as marginal, problematic or ‘other’ in their land of origin” (Allen and Bruce, 2017; Rankine et al., 2014: 228). Scholars have argued the power mainstream media have in “determining the majorities’ perceptions of indigenous peoples [...] [and in] the hegemonic determination of indigenous peoples’ worlds” (Downing and Husband, 2005: 133). Far from promulgating

biculturalism, New Zealand media have perpetuated dominant/subordinate, colonizer/colonized power relations through their consistent undermining representation of Māori (Matheson, 2007). Studies consistently illustrate how the lack of Māori journalists and Pākehā journalists' limited awareness and understanding of Māori culture result in further marginalization of Māori, and perpetuate White/colonial dominance through biased coverage of Māori stories (Allen and Bruce, 2017; Hokowhitu, 2013; Matheson, 2007; Moewaka Barnes, et al., 2013). In mainstream media, news stories about Māori continue to be framed by and within a Pākehā perspective (Abel, 2016).

SHORE & Whariki Research Centre, a Māori and Pākehā research group, focuses on the reporting of Māori and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* in news media in Aotearoa New Zealand. Addressing biased coverage, 13 recurring anti-Māori themes were identified (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012), and alternative phrasings were developed for each theme (Kupu Taea, 2014; Nairn et al., 2017). The anti-Māori themes that are particularly relevant to this study are outlined below. First, a reductive rhetoric of “good Māori” versus “bad Māori” underpins many anti-Māori themes. Māori who assimilate to Pākehā culture, don't complain, and who are hard-working for and by Pākehā criteria are considered “good Māori” (Kupu Taea, 2014; Nairn et al., 2017; Wetherell et al., 2015). Conversely, Māori who fail to assimilate and stir up trouble are labelled “bad Māori”. More visible in news media, “bad Māori” are set up in general as bitter, grumpy, ill-mannered and divisive” (Wetherell et al., 2015: 61). Second, associated with “bad Māori”, “stirrers” (Māori who actively critique colonialism and its repercussions) are usually constructed as activists, radicals, or, in extreme cases, terrorists, and credited for the tense relations between Pākehā and Māori (Satherley and Sibley, 2018). Research show that indigenous women activists (i.e. T. Harawhai, Whina Cooper, and Patricia O'Shane) may be constructed as “stirrers” for the radicality of their activism (Fox, 2011, 2012; Wetherell et al., 2015). Furthermore, ‘stirrers’ are linked to emotional characteristics: “protesting from insincere motives of attention seeking, making a fuss for the sake of it” (Wetherell et al., 2015: 61). Wetherell et al. (2015) illustrate how Titewhai Harawira, a prominent Māori woman activist, became “the symbolic figure of Māori trouble” (a ‘stirrer’) as she was criticized for her “dramatization, self-serving interest, privilege, [and] bullying” (61). Interestingly, Wetherell et al. (2015) gender the emotions attributed to Pākehā and (bad) Māori. Their analysis suggests Pākehā are aligned with (authentically) emoting men who “reveal[s] truth”, serve as “social signal” and who are overall respected and worthy of response (62). Conversely, Wetherell et al. (2015) associate (bad) Māori to emoting women who are extreme, irrational, and express “inappropriate emotions”. In other

words, “stirrer” implies that Māori are hyper-sensitive and over-reactive, is linked to irrationality, and justifies disregard and disrespect.

A third theme in media coverage is Māori violence and crime, which connects to the “bad Māori” stereotype, establishing Māori as uncivilized and dishonest (Nairn et al., 2017: 35). Media report more and give greater visibility to crimes and violence committed by Māori and Pasifika than by Pākehā (Allen and Bruce, 2017; McCreanor et al., 2014). This distorted coverage is afforded to both genders, with crime committed by Māori women being more often and more unfavourably reported on than crime by Pākehā women (Deckert, 2020). Māori, thus, become stigmatized as violent/dangerous, while Pākehā violence is silenced (or mis-assigned to Māori/Pasifika), which creates an unjustified fear of Māori and a false sense of security in relation to Pākehā (Allen and Bruce, 2017; Kupu Taea, 2014; Nairn et al., 2017). Furthermore, mainstream media regularly construct Māori as financially unreliable, welfare dependent, and corrupt (Gray, 2019).

Finally, the theme of “Māori inheritance” questions ‘degree of Māoriness’ (Kupu Taea, 2014; Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012). Ethnicity authenticity becomes contingent, determinable via genealogical computations or displayed cultural skills (see Richards, 2007 in Nairn et al., 2017). Māori may see their Māori authenticity questioned by Māori and non-Māori alike (Gillon, Cormack, and Borell, 2019). Smith (2012) argues that debates around authenticity additionally tend to make Māori a homogenous group, thereby silencing/making invisible minorities within that group (e.g. women). Smith (2012) and Bell (2014) argue that at a fundamental level the authenticity of indigenous’ identity is constructed by the dominant group: Western/colonizer/Pākehā; who, therefore may evade consideration of the authenticity (and heterogeneity, and contingency) of their own identity.

Intersectionality and media coverage of minority women politicians

Intersectionality recognizes that people are made up of multiple social identities that work together (Phoenix, 2006) and create different life experiences. Disparate combinations of social identities result in varying social inequalities, discriminations, and forms of oppressions. An integral element of intersectionality is the essential and interdependent relationship between privilege and oppression (Al’Ghabra, 2018). Coined by law scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), the concept of intersectionality originates in Black feminism in the United States. As intersectionality has become a globalized concept, scholars argue the need to re-contextualize power relations that result from intersecting identities within a specific context, instead of generalizing a Western/North American application, approach,

and understanding (Al’Ghabra, 2018; Bilge, 2019; Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020). In this regard, Larner (1995) insists a holistic understanding of power relations must take into account all social identities: “Māori feminists have forced the majority of Pākehā feminists to acknowledge, and to understand, that there is more than one way of interpreting gender relations” (177). Integration of specific context pushes intersectional analysis beyond the mere identification of intertwined social identities by linking them to the bigger picture of social constructions (Bilge, 2009). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) has called for research on indigenous people by indigenous people, consciously departing from the dominant Western/colonizer approach, and (in New Zealand) taking into account the cultural integrity of Māori people. Such a decolonising method may usefully draw on *mana wāhine*, a theoretical framework used by Māori feminist scholars, which explicitly uses a Māori women’s perspective to research being woman and Māori in colonial New Zealand and explores the “diverse Māori realities from a position of power” (Simmonds, 2011: 11).

Scholarly literature illustrates the difference of media treatment minority women politicians are accorded around the globe. In the US context, a pioneering study establishes a hierarchy of discrimination minority women politicians experience in their media coverage (Gershon, 2013). Gershon illustrates how Latina congresswomen are more negatively covered by mainstream media than their African American peers. Subsequent studies have illustrated how the gendered and racialized coverage reflects hegemonic social norms and values, while simultaneously maintaining and perpetuating them (Nielsen, 2013), ultimately serving to reinforce the prevailing image of a white, heterosexual man as the norm in political leader (Trimble et al., 2015).

Research outside of the North American context illustrates how differences in historical and cultural background, and different political and media systems influence the form and content of biases in media coverage. For instance, Danish mainstream media have stressed the Muslim religious background of congresswoman Özlem Cekic (Fiig, 2010), revealing and shaping audience interest and biases. French mainstream newspapers otherize French minority women politicians, and construct them as unfit and illegitimate to represent the French population in its diverse entirety (Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020). New Zealand mainstream media’s construction of Māori woman politician, Metiria Turei, as a stereotype of a “welfare mother” influenced the audience’s negative attitude towards her, arguably contributing to her resignation (Gray, 2019).

The following research questions have emerged from this review:

RQ1: How are Turei's and Bennett's 'Māoriness' represented in mainstream New Zealand media?

RQ2: Are anti-Māori themes intertwined/present in coverage of Turei and Bennett, and if so, how?

RQ3: How do sexist and racist discourses intersect in the coverage of Turei and Bennett?

Methods

To explore intersecting discriminatory discourses in coverage of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett, two Māori women politicians, a total of 1069 news stories were collected from media outlets broadly representative of national media consumption: The *Dominion Post*, a Wellington-published metropolitan daily newspaper; the *New Zealand Herald*, an Auckland-published daily, with the largest circulation in New Zealand; the *Otago Daily Times*, New Zealand's oldest daily newspaper; *Radio New Zealand National* (RNZ), an independent News and Current Affairs platform; and *The Spinoff*, a more recently founded left-leaning online commentary magazine.

The database Factiva was used to collect news stories from all media outlets, except for *The Spinoff*; absent from Factiva, *Spinoff* stories were therefore accessed through the website. A similar process of data collection was used for both politicians. The key phrase "Metiria Turei" was used to collect news stories for the period of August 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017, the year leading up to the MP's resignation. The data collection yielded $N = 171$ for *RNZ News*, $N = 164$ for the *New Zealand Herald*, $N = 150$ for the *Dominion Post*, $N = 44$ for *The Spinoff*, and $N = 19$ for the *Otago Daily Times*: a total of 458 news stories. The key phrase "Paula Bennett" was used to collect news stories for the period of November 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019, the year and a half following the MP's bypass surgery. The data collection resulted in $N = 206$ for the *New Zealand Herald*, $N = 170$ for *RNZ News*, $N = 119$ for the *Dominion Post*, $N = 91$ for *The Spinoff*, and $N = 25$ for the *Otago Daily Times*: a total of 611 news stories.

To conduct a coherent analysis, the corpus ($N = 1069$) was filtered for stories that specifically focused on identity, eliminating the many stories that made no more than passing reference to either politician, for example, attending a particular celebration. Stories were filtered for: 1) allusion to Turei's or Bennett's 'Māoriness'; 2) reference to Turei's or Bennett's gender attributes: physical, sartorial, or familial; 3) mention of another social identity of Turei or Bennett (e.g. social class); 4) discussion of Turei or Bennett in relation to

a Māori-related or racist event; and/or 5) mention of any anti-Māori theme (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012) in direct relation to Turei or Bennett. This reduced the corpus to a dataset of $N = 156$ news stories (see Table 1).

	Metiria Turei	Paula Bennett	Total
Dominion Post	25	14	39
New Zealand Herald	28	28	56
Otago Daily Times	5	2	7
Radio New Zealand News	27	5	32
The Spinoff	15	7	22
Total	100	56	156

Table 1. Number of stories focussing on identity aspects.

While some might raise a question as to the generalisability of findings based on this method, the authors argue that the point of the study is to observe and analyse the specific mechanisms of discriminatory narratives in coverage of Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett, through the use/representation of multiple, and at times intersecting, social identities of these two politicians. This deep level of critical analysis is not possible to achieve with a large sample, hence the authors' choice to deploy qualitative analysis of a small, focussed dataset.

The dataset was inductively coded using the software NVivo. To comprehensively address the research questions, a two-step analysis was applied to the data. First, thematic analysis was used to enable an overall understanding of the data set through identifying recurring themes. The constructionist understanding of thematic analysis allows the themes to be connected to their sociocultural and historical contexts (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Subsequently, feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA), which provides tools to examine the complex and subtle mechanisms used to reproduce gender ideologies in media discourses, was undertaken with selected media texts to deepen the analysis and investigate the “diverse ways by which gender ideologies that entrench power asymmetries become ‘common sense’” in this particular discourse context (Lazar, 2018: 372). Finally, the intersectional lens applied throughout the analysis illuminates how various social identities are deployed within the multiple layers of discrimination and power relations operating in media discourses.

Agreeing with Al’Ghabra’s (2018) argument that researchers should display self-awareness and transparency about their identities and privileges, the authors of this paper

identify as two White women and a Māori woman. To avoid speaking “for” Māori women, the two White women authors reflected on the ways their privileged perceptions could influence their understanding, analysis, and discussion of the data. Additionally, the Māori woman author advised on descriptions of Māori identity, phrasing, and connection to Māori scholars and thinkers.

Discussion

The analysis shows that despite being represented as individuals with reference to their ethnicity, gender, and bodies, Metiria Turei and Paula Bennett are also constructed by the media as embodying depersonalized and highly politicized stereotypes of class, gender and ‘Māoriness’. Turei and Bennett are devalued and diminished in distinct ways through media representations that highlight certain social identities.

Metiria Turei

Metiria Turei was a Māori woman politician who resigned from politics in 2017. As a young woman, she was a poor solo mother on a benefit while studying law. Formerly a student activist, Turei became the Green Party’s co-leader in 2009. In 2017, Turei spoke about raising her daughter as a beneficiary and admitted to, many years previously, committing benefit fraud. Turei’s benefit fraud is conjured by the majority of the coverage analysed in the dataset. In relation to the benefit fraud, and consistent with gendered mediation literature, Turei’s family dynamics received a significant amount of coverage, particularly the relationship of Turei to her daughter’s father. The coverage of the fraud is intertwined with discourses of gender, Māoriness, and social class, which construct Turei as a “stropy woman” and a “stirrer Māori”, and ultimately portray her as dangerous to the political establishment.

Gray (2019) has illustrated how the “emotionally-laden language of welfare” that media use in coverage of Metiria Turei constructs her as a symbol of the socially denigrated “welfare mother,” which, the author argues, both contributed to the end of Turei’s political career and cast a more general negative light on women on benefits. This study builds on elements of Gray’s research, and reveals that the predominant coverage of Turei’s welfare story is intertwined with anti-Māori themes (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012), gender, and social class discourses. Turei’s Māoriness is regularly foregrounded in the coverage:

The Greens went into the 2017 election campaign with a complete contrast at the top. Not just male and female, but Pākehā and Māori. The suit-wearing Shaw is from a

business background while Turei comes from the activist and anarchist Left (*Dominion Post* 2017).

Turei's Māoriness and gender are used to construct a stark opposition to the other co-leader, James Shaw, a Pākehā man. The *Dominion Post* emphasizes Shaw's serious professional background in management consulting but ignores Turei's equally serious career as a corporate lawyer, diminishing her professional identity to her early political affiliations, thereby portraying her as anti-establishment and overall less serious. Furthermore, the mention of Turei's gender, ethnicity, and anarchist background also constructs her in terms of anti-Māori themes, specifically as a "stirrer" or troublemaker (Kupu Taea, 2014). In light of Turei's later revelation of benefit fraud and the resultant disruption, the 'stirrer' stereotype suggests Turei as dangerous to the stability and security of the Green Party, and more generally to the New Zealand political landscape. This general characterisation of dangerousness is further illustrated by Young (2017):

LABOUR could be forgiven for having had a momentary sense of utu [revenge] when Greens co-leader Metiria Turei was facing her own existential crisis yesterday after fresh revelations of dishonesty. If Turei had not *fashioned herself as a victim of poverty* that had demanded she commit benefit fraud, the Green Party would not have surged in the polls, Labour would not have plunged (emphasis added).

The emphasized sentence illustrates the construction of Turei as manipulative and ultimately dangerous. First, the author insinuates that Turei adopts an identity that suits her, constructing her as opportunistic and deceitful. Then, the author lists a succession of events that unfolded from Turei's revelation and damaged the Labour Party, thereby depicting Turei as dangerous to the political system. Drawing from Gray's (2019) argument that the presentation of Turei's Māoriness is intrinsic to the media coverage of her benefit fraud, the construction of Turei as manipulative and dangerous reinforces the image of the (Māori) stirrer and troublemaker. Turei's admission is presented as a solely self-serving action, instead of the strategic use of a personal experience to highlight a broken system. This narrative moves the spotlight from the flawed welfare system to Turei's personal wrongdoing, which reduces the whole story to her. Emphasizing the self-serving commission and admission of the fraud, media subscribe to an anti-Māori narrative that ultimately elevates Turei to represent and embody the 'bad Māori'.

The anti-Māori narrative surfaces in a complex of ways. Van Beynen (2017) illustrates the construction of Turei as dishonestly privileged within a wider cast of beneficiaries: "She was also clever, artistic, motivated and had a great case worker. Very few beneficiaries have those sorts of advantages and most don't cheat the system". First, the

statement generalizes beneficiaries as dumb and lazy in blunt aporophobia. Additionally, the suggestion that Turei was privileged in her precarity serves both to undermine the reality of her situation, and to worsen what she did in the readers' mind. Turei is thus constructed as greedy, entitled, dishonest, and untrustworthy, reinforcing her portrayal as a “stirrer” and “bad Māori”. Interestingly, her relative privilege is not used to highlight the difficulty for any individual to escape a pervasive system, but instead is used as character assassination.

Turei's motives for deliberately invoking the beneficiary frame and disclosing her fraud (hardly naive, Turei had been in Parliament since 2002) are interrogated in a number of articles in unsympathetic and even hostile formulations, suggesting her intent was personal advancement at least as much as issue advancement. Even a connection to another beneficiary's suicide is deployed to construct Turei as lacking integrity and manipulating others:

Turei revealed her fraud, she says, shocked at news that a woman mistakenly accused of welfare fraud had taken her own life - then been exonerated, too late. *My guess is Turei was after exoneration herself.* It can't be comfortable keeping a secret like that in public life, even if she got away with it, though she revealed the news as if it was a good thing. [...] We now know that Turei, as a 22-year-old solo mother, received the DPB and a grant to study for a law degree - *which sounds pretty generous to me* - while not admitting she lived with people who were sharing the rent, which means she conceivably got an accommodation allowance on top of her basic benefit. She admits she was helped by her own family as well as her child's father's family, but says she couldn't get by on that. *So Turei took money from working people, through their taxes,* who were probably no better off than she was. I can't detect heroism in that. (McLeod, 2017, emphasis added)

Here, the narrative of dishonesty and untrustworthiness is constructed through depicting Turei as motivated by personal gain, both at the time of the fraud and at the public admission. The journalist insinuates that Turei stole from taxpayers, the ‘working people’, terms used in a discursive pattern that asserts Pākehā identity as the default (Kupu Taea, 2014; Moewaka-Barnes et al., 2012). This depiction Otherizes Turei, and through extension people like her: Māori (solo) mothers on benefits; and it reinforces the construction of Turei as a “stirrer” who - by stealing from taxpayers (and by extension the nation) – dangerously disrupts the social order.

In terms of narratives of personal gain, one might briefly examine the media treatment accorded to two Pākehā male politicians who committed comparative fraud, and compare that

with Turei's treatment. In 2008, Bill English (former Leader of the National Party) received an accommodation allowance (\$900 a week) for a house that he owned; while John Key (former Leader of the National Party), in 2002, enrolled in an electorate he did not reside in with the intent to represent it (see Trevett 2017 and Wilson 2017 for detailed reviews). While the backlash Turei received for her fraud admission ultimately led her to retire from politics, English and Key carried on to both serve terms as Prime Minister. Metiria Turei, a Māori woman, was a young solo mother and a student at the time of the fraud she committed. Conversely, Bill English, a Pākehā man, was an established politician, while John Key, a middle-aged Pākehā self-made millionaire, already had a foot in politics. Even though both Turei and Key were self-made from working class roots, Turei was portrayed quite differently from Key. In 2017 the New Zealand Herald published a fact-checking article entitled "Are English and Key as 'bad' as Turei?" (Trevett, 2017). The self-consciously judicious headline still conveys that Turei represents the standard of 'bad' to which English and Key are compared. If the silenced social identities of each of the protagonists are brought into focus, what the headline really asks is: Are wealthy middle-age Pākehā male politicians as 'bad' as a poor Māori student solo mother on benefit? Racism, sexism, classism, and agism underpin the very articulation of the question.

Paula Bennett

Paula Bennett, a Māori woman politician who raised her child as a solo mother on a benefit, became the National Party's first woman and Māori Deputy Leader in 2016. She announced her retirement from politics in 2020. During her term as Minister for Social Welfare, Bennett was criticised for inconsistencies between her personal history as a solo mother on benefits and her strict benefit policies. Bennett has also been the recipient of racist comments and questioning of her Māori heritage. In 2017, after Bennett announced she had undergone gastric bypass surgery, considerable media interest in her body ensued.

Analysis of the media coverage shows little evidence of overt or persistent anti-Māori themes in the coverage of Paula Bennett. However, certain problematic themes emerge, illuminating deep-seated conflicts around race. Plentiful coverage reflects the novelty of having (at that time) two Māori leading the National Party, embedded in a larger discussion about the increase of Māori representation in Parliament, as illustrated by Kamo (2018):

I want to acknowledge a remarkable change to the make-up of our Parliament that the Bridges selection and Paula Bennett's reappointment signify. And that is that six of the party leaders and deputies in the House are of Māori descent.

In this context, Bennett is listed without questioning along other politicians as having Māori heritage. Similarly, Bennett's gender is highlighted, along with that of other women politicians who constituted a redoubtable bloc of female representation in the top ranks of the National Party: "Offsetting the potential for Bridges to accentuate the conservative is the fact he is surrounded by *stroppy women* on his front bench, whom he put there: Paula Bennett as deputy, Amy Adams in finance and Judith Collins in housing" (Young, 2018, emphasis added). Bennett's Māoriness and gender are mentioned as a testimony to the modernity of the National Party, and to position the party positively in terms of diversity representation.

However, Bennett's Māori identity is also problematised in the coverage analysed. Questioning of Bennett's Māoriness by Peeni Henare and Willie Jackson, two Māori men politicians affiliated with the Labour Party, is much reported. Henare was quoted as saying: "I haven't seen her on the marae; I haven't seen her dry dishes, I haven't seen her do a *karanga* - therefore, it [Bennett's Māori identity] should be raised as a question" (Moir, 2019b). It is important to note that, with the exception of two stories written by Māori women journalists that explicitly call out such racist comments (see Marvelly, 2018; Hayden, 2018), the other news stories neutrally report the debate. The underlying assumptions of "strong cultural identity" and "Māori and European [Pākehā] [as] mutually exclusive categories" evident in this coverage are constitutive of the "Māori inheritance" theme, and are profoundly reductive, including when these assumptions are voiced by Māori speakers (Kupu Taea, 2014).

To a far greater degree than Turei, Bennett's coverage is closely intertwined with discourses of physical appearance and sartorial style. Arguably, a lack of signs of accepted/acceptable *cultural* Māoriness led to increased attention to Bennett's *embodiment* (or lack thereof) of Māoriness, and to her physical body in general, thus operating in different ways to marginalise and diminish her. Coverage of Bennett's gastric bypass surgery intersects with discourses of age and political ability, and varies from mere mention to lengthy stories. The *Spinoff*, which does not explicitly cover the surgery, nonetheless alludes to Bennett's new physical appearance in unrelated coverage:

But one risk with that approach is that a year or later down the track, National might instead see its best bet at replicating Jacindamania in, say, Nikki Kaye, or a *rejuvenated Paula Bennett*, or Mark Mitchell, or someone else entirely (Manhire, 2019; emphasis added).

"Rejuvenated" suggests a parallel between youth, weight loss or improved physical appearance, and political value and capability. The association of weight loss with youth

suggests that Bennett gains political value through her body changes, rather than by virtue of her political experience. Although the 51-year-old Bennett is compared to Nikki Kaye, a 40-year-old Pākehā female politician, and Mark Mitchell, a 52-year-old Pākehā male politician, only Bennett needs to be “rejuvenated” to still be relevant and valued in politics.

Bowron (2018) links political capabilities, physical appearance, and moral failings: During the election campaign Mrs Bennett became highly jocular and seemed to be afflicted by a nervous tic of giggling, any small amusement setting her off in gales of mysterious laughter.

Timing is everything and before the prime minister's baby news broke, Mrs Bennett revealed she had taken steps to decrease her stomach, while, shortly afterwards, Ms Ardern announced she would be increasing hers. *Who wins in the discipline stakes - a giggling deputy leader having trouble controlling their appetite, or a grinning leader who didn't bother practicing birth control?* (emphasis added)

In addition to the blatant fatphobia and sexist discourses evident in this coverage, both Bennett and Ardern are portrayed as irresponsible, in thrall to physical and sexual appetites. Clear links are drawn between physical appearance and political capability. First, Bennett is infantilised, reduced to a little girl who finds anything amusing. Then, the author portrays Bennett as unable to control herself, whether in terms of laughter or weight. The underlying suggestion is that someone who cannot control their weight cannot manage a country, a party, nor a portfolio.

Finally, the analysis shows how personality and sartorial style discourses contribute to diminishing Bennett as a politician. Media portray Bennett's assertive persona by referring to her as a “stropky woman” (Young, 2018). In New Zealand as in Australia, the term “stropky” is frequently gendered and negatively freighted when applied to women who are considered outspoken, argumentative, and/or to be taking up issues inappropriate for women (Eisenstein, 1996). While outspokenness may be a necessary trait in a politician, it is also “unwomanly” in its combativeness (see also Bain, 1999; Fox, 2012). Her assertiveness devalorised, Bennett is thus portrayed as a faulty woman, further discrediting and diminishing her. Finally, renowned for her fashion, Bennett is regularly depicted with sartorial descriptions: “Her office was full of gifts — from large bunches of flowers to shoes — one of her favourite shopping items. She also got another leopard-print jacket — a staple in her wardrobe” (*New Zealand Herald*, 2019). Focus on Bennett's sartorial predilections shadows her work as a politician, insinuating frivolity and ultimately undermining her competence and professionalism.

Conclusion

Unlike Turei who was constructed as a dangerous “stirrer” through foregrounding of her Māoriness, the Māoriness of Bennett is framed in very different ways and she is denigrated in additional ways. Bennett’s Māori heritage is foregrounded only in service of her party; at other times, it is questioned. While Bennett benefited from the social welfare state to lift herself out of poverty, as a minister and National Party representative she took a much harder line on social welfare, allying herself more closely with a colonizer/White/neoliberal Establishment. Conversely, Turei’s Māori heritage is intrinsic to her coverage. Differently to Bennett, Turei benefited from the social welfare state and subsequently worked to reform a punitive system and help lift others out of poverty. These differences of affiliation to dominant systems of power reflect in the way media cover and construct these two women. Bennett, aligned with a conservative Establishment and not a stereotypical Māori, is still objectified and marginalised by virtue of the attention paid to her (gendered) body. Turei, depicted as representing the anti-Establishment, is marginalised for her Māoriness along with her gender.

This analysis reveals the operation of not just one Māori type or treatment: these media depictions are multi-layered and intersectional. Turei, constructed as embodying certain Māori stereotypes, is summarily depersonalised, devalued, and dismissed. Bennett, more debatably Māori, is less easily stereotyped, but is consequently devalued for exactly that evasion of easy stereotypes, in concert with transgressing feminine norms of quietness and restraint. Racist, sexist, and other discriminatory discourses intersect to disempower these two political figures.

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Appendixes

Table 5. Appendix 1: Codes for Article I. Number of stories per code

<i>New Zealand Herald</i>		<i>Dominion Post</i>		<i>Otago Daily Times</i>	
Code	Source nbr	Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr
National resonance	16	National resonance	8	National resonance	3
International interest	8	International interest	7	International interest	1
A media/public event	13	A media(tic)/public event	7	A media(tic)/public event	3
Social media	3	Social media event	4	Social media event	1
Jacinda & Clarke as a team	5	Couple dynamic	2	Jacinda & Clarke as a team	2
Couple dynamic	4	Information about the couple/pregnancy	13	Jacinda & Clarke as relatable, authentic	2
Jacinda & Clarke as relatable, authentic	4	Jacinda as unique	4	Information about the couple/pregnancy	2
Information about the couple/pregnancy	9	Pregnancy/birth/baby information	5	Pregnancy/birth/baby information	3
Jacinda as a well surrounded/equipped mother	2	An extraordinary couple	1	An extraordinary couple	1
Jacinda as unique	5	Jacinda & Clarke as (ab)normal parents	4	Jacinda & Clarke as (ab)normal parents	2
Pregnancy/birth/baby information	15	Unusual pregnancy/birth	1	Pregnancy/baby intertwined with Māori elements	2
An extraordinary couple	5	Maternity / paternity leave	9	Maternity / paternity leave	3
Jacinda & Clarke as normal parents	13	(In)compatibility with PM duties	11	(In)compatibility with PM duties	2
Clarke as a (ab)normal man	1	Policy making	3	Ardern as symbol of gender equality fight/women empowerment	2
Pregnancy/baby intertwined with Māori elements	5	Jacinda a symbol for women empowerment	4	Reaction from politics	2
Unusual pregnancy/birth	2	Ardern as symbol of gender equality fight	2	A normalized/normalizing event	1
Maternity / paternity leave	12	Preg increases Jacinda's popularity/political influence	3	Freedom to choose vs societal constraints	1
(In)compatibility with PM duties	15	A symbolic event	3	Historical/iconic/fate lens	3
Policy making	2	A normalized/normalizing event	5	Information about her election	1

Jacinda a symbol for women empowerment	10	Historical/iconic/fate lens	4	Pregnancy news intertwined with politics	4
Ardern as symbol of gender equality fight	7	Information about her election	1	Women in politics	2
Preg increases Jacinda's popularity/political influence	3	Pregnancy news intertwined with politics	1	Consequence of Ardern's pregnancy on NZ politics	1
Reaction from politics	6	Comparison to Royal Family	2		
A rare event	1	"First baby" as a valuable brand/PR coup for NZ	1		
A normalized/normalizing event	4	Interest in pregnancy intention	3		
Freedom to choose vs societal constraints	2	Women in politics	2		
Historical/iconic/fate lens	9	Consequence of Ardern's pregnancy on NZ politics	5		
Information about her election	2	Jacinda as valuable brand for NZ	2		
Pregnancy news intertwined with politics	12	Transparency towards citizens	1		
Comparison to Royal Family	8	Comparison to other politician parents	1		
"First baby" as a valuable brand/PR coup for NZ	1	Ardern as defined through her pregnancy	4		
<i>Le Monde</i>		<i>Le Figaro</i>		<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	
Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr
National resonance	1	A popular event in NZ	1	Maternity leave	4
A popular event in NZ	3	Social media event	1	National resonance	2
Social media event	2	Jacinda as unique	4	International interest	1
Jacinda as a woman / mother	1	Pregnancy/birth/baby information	3	Women in politics	3
Jacinda as unique	1	Maternity / paternity leave	2	Symbolic event	3
Pregnancy/birth/baby information	4	(In)compatibility with PM duties	1	A rare event	1
Maternity / paternity leave	3	A gender equality event	1	Ardern as unique	4
(In)compatibility with PM duties	1	A rare event	4	Information about the couple / pregnancy	3
A gender equality event	1	A normalized/normalizing event	1	Connection between Ardern and UK	2
Reaction from politics	1	Comparison to Royal Family	1	A social media event	1
A rare event	3	Women in politics	2	Reaction from politics	1
A normalized/normalizing event	2	Politics	1	Clarke Gayford as a normal man	1

Historical/iconic/fate lens	1	Media pressure	1	Gayford in an unusual situation	1
Information about her election	2	Modern political leaders	2	Ardern defined through her pregnancy	1
Pregnancy news intertwined with politics	1	Jacinda's personal life	1	A normal couple	1
Women's rights	2	Jacinda's political career	1		
Used for a good cause	1	Information about her election	1		
		A social media	2		
		Ardern as unique	3		
		Ardern defined through her pregnancy	2		
		Historical / ionic / fate lens	1		
<i>The Guardian</i>		<i>New York Time</i>		<i>Washington Post</i>	
Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr
A symbolic / Rare event	14	Information about birth / pregnancy	7	Women in politics	3
Not a symbolic event	1	A symbolic / rare event	6	Ardern as symbol of gender equality fight	3
Challenges faced by women / mothers (in and out of politics)	4	Maternity leave	6	Incompatibility with PM duties	2
National resonance	7	Gender equality	5	A normalized - ing event	4
International attention	3	International attention	3	Information about pregnancy / couple	2
A popular event in NZ	12	Normalized - ing event	3	Maternity leave	2
Pregnancy / birth information	15	Extra-ordinary situation	5	National resonance	2
Maternity leave	11	(In)compatibility with PM duties	1	A popular event	1
A normalized / normalizing event	12	A popular event	3	A media event	1
Not reality	3	Politics in NZ (intertwined with pregnancy)	3	Information about her election	1
Gender equality / feminism	11	Ardern's defined through her pregnancy	1	Social media	2
An extra-ordinary couple	4	Ardern as unique	3	Ardern as unique	3
Being a parent	7	Political correctness	1	Ardern defined through her pregnancy	2
Freedom to choose vs societal constraints	2	Ardern and Gayford as couple	1	Historical / fate / iconic lens	1
Need for structural changes	6	Gayford as a symbol	1		
Pregnancy news / family intertwined with politics	8				
Ardern as unique	9				

Ardern as normal	2				
A normal family	7				
Incompatibility with PM duties	8				
Women in politics	5				
Jacinda & Clarke as a team	1				
Used for a good cause	1				
(Domestic) politics	5				
Connection between Jacinda Ardern and UK	2				
Clarke Gayford	2				
Ardern's upbringing	1				
Ardern's popularity	3				
<i>The Australian</i>		<i>Herald Sun</i>		<i>Irish Independent</i>	
Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr	Code	Source Nbr
Being a parent	1	Pregnancy as rare / symbolic	2	Baby as connection between Pakeha and Māori	1
(in)compatibility with PM	4	Ardern as symbol of gender equality fight / women empowerment	2	Information about baby / pregnancy	4
Mothers in politics	2	National resonance	1	Jacinda & Clarke as a team	1
(inter)national interest	3	Maternity leave	3	A rare event	3
Ardern as feminist	1	Gender equality	2	Ardern as unique	5
Not reality / elitist discourse	1	Being a parent / mother	2	Pregnancy news intertwined with politics	4
Politics	1	(in)compatibility with PM	1	Information about NZ history / politics	2
Rare / symbolic event	4	A media(tic) event	1	Being a parent	1
Ardern as unique	1	Information about the pregnancy / birth	1	Maternity / paternity leave	4
Information about pregnancy / birth	1			A normalized event	2
Maternity leave	2			Ardern as advocate for gender equality	2
Politics	2			Symbolic event (nationally & internationally)	1
Working mothers	1				
Controversies around the coverage of pregnancy	1				

Table 6. Appendix 2: Codes for Article II. Number of stories per code

Codes	Metiria Turei					Paula Bennett				
	DomPost	NZHerald	RNZ	SpinOff	ODT	DomPost	NZHerald	RNZ	SpinOff	ODT
Age	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Doubt about political capabilities	1	4	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Educational background	2	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gastric surgery	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	1	-	-
- A champion	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-
- Lack of control	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-
Gender	2	-	-	-	-	2	8	1	-	2
Gender: Personality trait	2	3	-	3	2	3	7	-	1	1
Gender: Physical appearance	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	2	-
Gender: Motherhood	1	-	3	2	1	-	2	-	-	-
- Solo parent	3	10	12	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
- Solo parent: Difficult to go by	7	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gender: Romantic relationship	5	6	11	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
- Spotlight on family	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gender: Sartorial style	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Māori ethnicity	1	-	-	2	1	2	6	3	1	1
- Māori enough?	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	-
- Racist attack	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Political ideology, background	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reaction to benefit fraud	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Shapes and launches Greens Policy	2	3	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Negative reaction	8	6	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
- Neg reaction: Hinders Party	3	5	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
- Neg reaction: Metiria Girl	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
- Neg reaction: manipulative / political move	9	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Positive reaction, Supportive	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
- (Failed) tool to shine light on societal issues	5	11	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Turei unapologetic	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 7. Appendix 3: Codes for Article III. Number of stories per code.

Codes	Rachida Dati		Najat Vallaud-Belkacem	
	<i>Le Monde</i>	<i>Le Figaro</i>	<i>Le Monde</i>	<i>Le Figaro</i>
Age	-	-	9	3
Gender (general)	3	1	5	-
Gender: Motherhood	10	13	-	2
- Potential career consequence of pregnancy	3	1	-	-
- Who's the father	4	7	-	-
Gender: Personality traits	6	6	-	4
Gender: Physical appearances	4	7	2	4
Gender: Power of seduction	1	-	2	3
Gender: Sartorial style	9	14	1	1
Gender: ideology-driven	-	-	2	6
Gender: Courtesan	1	2	-	-
Gender: Historical aspect	-	1	7	5
Origin: Beurette	2	-	-	-
Origin: Immigrant background	2	1	2	3
- Illegitimate	-	1	1	-
- Positive impact - Reaction	1	1	-	-
- Racist discourse – Attacks - Rumours	1	4	2	1
- Foreigners	3	5	-	1
- Refuse to be seen as foreigners	2	-	-	1
Peopolisation	4	12	-	-
Religion	1	2	1	1
Religion: Influences ministerial decisions	-	2	-	1
Social class background	2	3	2	-
<i>Diversité</i>	3	-	-	-
<i>Diversité</i> : Promoting diversity	4	4	-	1
<i>Diversité</i> : Negative reaction - Impact	-	-	1	1

- An illusion – A trap	4	1	-	1
- Political marketing coup	2	3	-	-
<i>Diversité</i> : Positive reaction - Impact	4	2	1	-
<i>Diversité</i> : Protecting diversity (political tactic)	3	2	-	-
<i>Diversité</i> : Parallel with B. Obama	1	7	-	-
Symbol of successful integration	1	-	-	2