Conclusion

The continuity of damaging gendered constructions of women in politics within macro media, as well as a culture of sexism within parliament have cultivated widespread misalignments between perceptions of women and power. Resultantly, womens accessibility to positions of power continues to be hindered, effectively contributing to their social exclusion from parliament. Whilst representations of female politicians in media are beginning to improve over time somewhat aided by the autonomous nature of social media and legislative changes, ingrained gender roles sustained by the continuity of negative media coverage and an ample culture of sexism in Australian Parliament, prevent women's accessibility and desire to enter the political sphere.

As my hypothesis states *'the continuity of the political influence of mass media and systematic misogyny within Parliament are greatly responsible for the disparity of men to women's involvement and success within Australian Federal Politics'* this was proven to a significant extent throughout my investigation however, it should be noted that several limitations to my research remain, potentially interfering with the reliability and validity of my findings. Whilst a consideration of possible future directions of women's increased participation in politics found limited avenues for change, due to the dynamic nature of technology and its ability to influence social norms and values, a positive progression of the way women in power are reflected in media is possible.

Primary research was integral as it facilitated more diverse and reliable conclusions to be drawn from secondary research. However, confinements of data to a meso-level investigation hindered the ability of my research to reflect the macro-scale nature of women's social exclusion from Parliament. An online questionnaire with 87 participants was initially conducted to gain a base understanding of meso sphere attitudes, with closed questions ensuring the data was easily interpreted and open ended questions were added to collect qualitative data. This research was imperative to correlate and compare secondary research with other forms of primary data;

however, as it was conducted early in the research process it did not reflect all aspects of my PIP, especially as my focus developed and shifted with the influence of other research methods. Furthermore, many refused to takepart in my questionnaire as they felt my topic was 'controversial' and ironically 'too political' cultivating a small sample size of respondents. I conducted four content analysis to ensure primary data addressed all aspects of my investigation. These included qualitative analysis of three electoral cartoons, two on Julia Gillard and one on Malcom Turnbull contributing to a cross-cultural, qualitative investigation. I also conducted a content analysis on an 'anti-suffrage' poster from the early twentieth century. These were essential to my understanding of the evident continuity of degrading stereotypes in the media. Despite this, as these analyses are qualitative and selected by myself, bias may manifest within some conclusions drawn from them, though both primary and secondary sources were used to corroborate my findings, improving their reliability. Finally, an interview with Politician and newly elected independent member for North Sydney, Tink, provided a detailed and contemporary perspective into my topic, granting insights that supported primary data and secondary research collected, deepening my understanding. However, through providing an individual perspective, Tink may possess bias as she does not reflect a holistic view of women's experience in parliament nor political media and society's broader beliefs.

Through investigating this topic I began to question the minimal progression of equality throughout Australia's executive arm of government and thus opportunities and barriers that may arise for women in the workforce. Understanding the influence of macro-scale media technologies in sustaining misogynistic values towards women and politics, as well as the importance of improving their accessibility to positions of power, are imperative to dismantling the patriarchal and sexist systems that diminish womens credibility and voices in Australia's Parliament. This is as justice is ultimately achieved when those who obtain parliamentary, judiciary and executive powers reflect the society in which they are governed by.