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ONE WOMAN'S NATION:

**Pauline Hanson, femininity and right wing populism in
Australia**

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Communication Studies

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ABSTRACT

One Woman's Nation:

Pauline Hanson, femininity and right wing populism in Australia

Rebecca Mary Tinning

In the 1990's the most powerful right-wing populist party in Australian history, *One Nation Party*, was formed and led by Pauline Hanson. Populist parties, like Pauline Hanson's *One Nation*, have traditionally been a masculine domain yet Hanson masterfully gained support for her views by deploying the powerful rhetoric of home and family. This thesis illuminates Hanson's use of traditional notions of femininity such as mother, care-giver, and teacher in her speeches and charts the way that these gendered representations shaped key policy issues on multi-culturalism, immigration, globalisation and the family. This discourse helped Hanson articulate a politics of resentment which appealed to a constituency comprised, primarily, of "white" Australian men displaced from their traditional place of social, cultural and political privilege. To gain a greater understanding of Hanson's discursive manoeuvres, an examination of letters written by women to the editors of major Australian newspapers was undertaken. This media analysis reveals how this domestic discourse was adopted by women who supported Hanson and by women who were opposed to Hanson's racially-based views. This thesis indicates how women who opposed Hanson negotiated her domestic rhetoric to counter to her policies.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1996, Pauline Hanson was elected to Parliament in the Australian Federal election. Since then, she has been perhaps the most prominent and controversial of Australian politicians since the 1990s. Before her election Hanson was discredited as a Liberal Party candidate for making racist remarks and so she went on to form the Pauline Hanson One Nation Party in 1997. One Nation won eleven seats in the 1998 Queensland state election and one seat in the 1999 NSW election. Hanson, however, was not re-elected in the 1998 Federal Election. Since that time One Nation has been plagued by internal and legal struggles and lost most of its political power without Hanson in a seat of Parliament. But in elections held in early 2001 in both Queensland and Western Australian, One Nation had a degree of success, demonstrating that Hanson has had a lasting impact on Australian political culture.

Pauline Hanson, as a woman in the undoubtedly masculine dominated world of Australian federal politics, is an ambivalent and contradictory figure. As a working woman, and a single parent who held a seat in the nation's Parliament, Hanson does not conjure up images of a "traditional" woman. Quite the opposite, had she been of any other political persuasion, the feminist movement in Australia may well have applauded her. But her proposed changes for Australian society were ones that could only damage other women, and the way she invoked support for her policies were incredibly problematic. Hanson used her gender to attract a male constituency; she was a lone woman on an all male right wing playing field. However gender it seems is instrumental in the success of women on both sides of politics. An examination of Hanson and the response she elicited from women in the community revealed that many women still use traditional ideals of Womanhood as the basis of their participation in politics and other national processes.

Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party stands as a brilliant example of a successful right-wing nationalistic movement, but unlike the other right wing movements that have come before it, a woman led One Nation and was its namesake. However, the presence of a female leader did not necessarily mean that women were attracted to the party. The majority of Hanson's supporters were men. What I will argue is that Hanson did not appeal to these men by being masculine. She did not deny her femininity, quite the opposite. Pauline Hanson called upon traditional images of Womanhood and masculinity to gain her support base. These policies are examined in the first chapter of this thesis

Hanson attracted huge media attention. The press she received was extensive. In 1996, she was the second only to Prime Minister John Howard in national media coverage.¹ This extensive media exposure provided a wealth of sources to scrutinise. Letters to the editor in major Australian newspapers written by women gave me an opportunity look at how women positioned themselves in the issues raised by Hanson and her party. Through this analysis of women's reaction to Pauline Hanson's One Nation, I discovered that many of these women still represent themselves in traditional roles when participating in Australia's political and national processes. This examination revealed both support and opposition to Hanson from women in the electorate. However these stances for most of the respondents were based on some form of identification with Hanson's play on women's customary representations. Considering the relatively small number of female politicians in Australia, the study of Pauline Hanson and women's reaction to her, has proved to be fruitful and has led to a better understanding of women's role in politics and national processes.

The third chapter examines in detail the contradictions that surfaced in chapter one and two, firstly in Hanson's own discourse versus her position and secondly the seemingly traditional role that women play in

national processes despite the gains of the feminist revolution. An examination of right-wing women offers a key to understanding women's participation in politics, and how the discourse of the traditional family was combined with ideas of the nation as a justification for Hanson's racist political stance.

Methodology

The methodology used in this thesis was a multi-method approach. In an attempt to "triangulate" my research, I used three different techniques to investigate my question. Triangulation, a heuristic tool for researchers, as promoted by Norman Denzin,² allows for a broader understanding of a research problematic. This triangulation was performed on a variety of levels. *Data triangulation* - using a variety of data sources (original documents, media and on-line sources and literature), *methodological triangulation*, (a literature review, document and content analysis) and what Valerie Janesick calls *interdisciplinary triangulation*¹ - the use of tools learnt in my previous and current areas of study: political science, history, cultural studies and communication studies. Chapter one is a document analysis, chapter two a content analysis, and chapter three a review of literature concerning right-wing women.

From the start I was interested in gender in politics, in particular what women thought of Hanson, so I decided to undertake a content analysis that had a quantitative basis. This type of audience reception study is useful in isolating trends but did not provide me with the depth of understanding that I required. Therefore it had to be combined with other research methods. Content analyses, such as that found in chapter two, are

¹ Iva Deutchman & Anne Ellison, "A star is born." *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol.21 (1999) 42.

² N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (Thousand Oaks:Sage, 1999) 47.

¹ V. Janesick, "The Dance of Qualitative Research Design," in N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1999) 47.

often negatively associated with the social sciences tradition that has dominated media scholarship in the USA in the post-war period, but when combined with other forms of qualitative research it is far from being a cold empirical tool. Whilst statistics can be drawn using quantitative methods like content analysis, qualitative analysis of the conclusions and themes are necessary for a richer, triangulated approach to research.

For chapter one, titled "*Welcome to Pauline Hanson's One Nation: The politics of resentment*", my main focus is an analysis of primary sources; the policy documents of "Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party", her speeches, press releases and the party's official website. The most important concern in this chapter are Hanson's policies towards women. In this chapter I used original documents and not just rely on what is reported in the media. These policy documents were available through the party on-line. All of Hanson's speeches made in Parliament are published by the government through *Hansard* and were available at the National Parliament's Library and also on-line. The One Nation website published many of the Party's press releases and some her public addresses. In this chapter, I note that these policies are seen to be motivated by what I have called "the politics of resentment", bitterness towards the predominant social welfare state and its supporters who have left the average "Australian" behind.

The second chapter is a reception study undertaken by an analysis of letters to the editor written by women to major Australian newspapers in the six weeks after Hanson's controversial maiden speech to Parliament in September 1996. In this chapter titled "*Reading the papers, writing to Hanson: Australian Women and their letters to the editor*", I examined all the major daily papers in Australia; the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the tabloid *Telegraph Mirror* from New South Wales, the *Age* from Victoria, the *Advertiser* and *Sunday Mail* from Adelaide in South Australia, the *Canberra Times* from the Nation's Capital, the *Courier Mail* and *Sunday Mail* from Brisbane in Queensland, the *Mercury* and *Sunday Tasmanian* from Hobart.

Tasmania, the *Northern Territory News* from the Northern Territory, the *West Australian* from Perth and the national dailies the *Australian* and the *Financial Review*. This study revealed a lack of support for Hanson by women in the electorate, but uncovered a large number of women who saw their role in the nation and in politics linked explicitly to women's traditional position in society

My third chapter, "*Pauline Hanson and the contradictions of the 'right-wing' woman*" is a study of the literature surrounding women's political participation, conservative women and women's role in national processes. The motivation behind this review was an attempt to place Pauline Hanson in a historical and political context and to understand why Australian women reacted to her in the way that they did. Using a variety of authors and sources and a case study of Margaret Thatcher, it became clear that regardless of the advances made since the feminist revolution, the root of many women's political and national participation lies in traditional representations of gender and in women's biological roles in society.

Without a doubt there was a political agenda to my research. To put it bluntly, I am not a supporter of Hanson; in fact I am disgusted at and ashamed of most of her policies. However this has proven to be a huge motivation for my studies. It would be extremely easy to just think of Hanson as a one-off, a stupid countrywoman with no idea about the world of politics, as many other commentators have. This approach is tempting but, considering the level of her support, there is definitely more to Hanson than that, and belittling her, is the easy way out. I wanted to know what Hanson said, how she articulated her politics and how this articulation "spoke" to her supposed constituency of white Australians. I wanted to understand why she has had the success she had and what others, women in particular, found attractive or repulsive in her policies. This is a critical investigation, but it is also a political act. Being political does not mean that a work has any less academic value. I asked questions, researched thoroughly and attempted to find some answers. Every

scholar has a position, a point of view, and an agenda and whilst many try to disguise this in subjectivity, I like my work to be openly political.

Gender representations

The notion of gender is crucial to my thesis; therefore I have used the influential work of Teresa de Lauretis in an effort to avoid the trap of essentialism. I have examined gender and recognised for the purpose of this study that gender is a representation based in both the practices of daily life but also within various discourses including feminism and what de Lauretis calls the technologies of gender.⁴

Gender is not just a biological difference or the 'difference' from - of woman *from* man. Traditionally in western thought women have been defined by this difference, however the problem with this notion of gender is that it universalises both men and women, making it difficult to articulate the differences of women from Woman (with the capital W). That is, it undermines the differences in the myriad of real experiences of women as historical beings and social subjects, from the representation of a perceived series of "essences inherent in all women, which has been seen as Nature, Mother, Mystery, Evil Incarnate, object of [Masculine Desire] and knowledge, proper Womanhood, Femininity et cetera."⁵ This is what de Lauretis names the feminist subject.

De Lauretis proposes that gender is a representation and that the representation of gender *is* its construction, a construction that is ongoing in the "ideological state apparatus" – such as the home, the media,

⁴ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) 3.

⁵ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) 9-10.

government, and schools – and also within theoretical discourses including feminism. Therefore de Lauretis believes that gender is also effected by its deconstruction: “that is to say, by any discourse, feminist or otherwise, that would discard it as ideological misrepresentation.”⁶ Therefore gender exists in its representations and in the construction of those representations whether they are based on daily practises or within discourses. What becomes apparent in my study is that women in Australia express and interpellate traditional gendered positions in their discussions and debate of the political process and key issues. In particular, the discourse of home and family exerted a boundary in debates of Hanson’s policies acting as a point of reference for those who supported her and those who opposed her.

Australian Political Culture in the late 20th Century

For a clearer understanding of the impact that Hanson had on political culture in Australia, it is important to be familiar with the political system. Australia is a relatively new nation and the political system borrows from others. Australia was federated in 1901, after being settled by white colonists in 1788. The indigenous population had inhabited the continent for approximately 40,000 years before the arrival of the colonists. Australia is made up of six states and two major territories. The majority of the 20 million population live in the three most populous states; New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland (in that order). As a Federation, the political system is comprised of three-tiers of government - Local, State and Commonwealth. The local government system unlike other countries has little or no power beyond providing basic amenities, public works and town planning. Local authorities perform valuable functions, but they have nothing like the role of similar bodies in the USA or Great Britain.⁷

⁶ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) 3.

⁷ Don Aitkin et al. , *Australian Political Institutions* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1991) 54.

The second tier of government in the Australian political system, the States and Territories are responsible for areas such as education, health, and transport, providing much of the infrastructure for social and economic development. All states except Queensland have two houses of Parliament, the Legislative Assemblies and the Legislative Councils (the lower and upper houses). Most states have elections every three years or so. At the peak of One Nation's power the Party held 12 seats in the Queensland Parliament and one seat in the NSW Upper House. They currently hold two seats in the Queensland Parliament and were instrumental in the recent demise of the governments in both Queensland and Western Australia.

The Commonwealth or Federal Government has expanded rapidly since Federation and has importantly gained control of income tax, hence playing a significant role in most citizens' lives. The Commonwealth is also responsible for welfare and pension payments, tertiary education and other matters that have a more indirect impact on most citizens; foreign affairs, trade, defence amongst others.

The Australian Parliament is influenced greatly by the British Westminster System. It is a bicameral legislature, with the government forming in the Lower House- The House of Representatives- and the Upper House, the Senate acting as a "check" on legislation passed through the Lower House. In the past 20 years it has been common for the party of government (i.e. the party that has the majority in the House of Representatives) to lack a majority in the Senate.* Pauline Hanson was a member of the Lower House, and her Party currently has one member in the Federal Senate.

* Don Aitkin et al., *Australian Political Institutions* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1991) 80.

Since 1910, the Party system in Australia had been fairly stable until the emergence of the One Nation Party. Up until 1975, it was for the most part, a two party system with two major players. The Australian Labor Party (ALP), the traditional party of blue-collar workers stand on a left wing platform in the Parliament. A coalition between the Liberal Party of Australia (LPA) - the conservative party- and the National Party (formerly known as the Country Party), the party of Rural Australia, has traditionally represented right wing opinion. The Australian Democrats, formed as a breakaway from the Liberal Party in 1975, and whilst having no presence in the Lower House, have been a formidable force in the Senate. The informal motto of the Democrats is "to keep the bastards honest" and they see themselves as the safeguard of good government.

From 1949-1972, Australia was ruled by the Liberal/National Party Coalition, the bulk of the period under the leadership of Sir Robert Menzies (1949-1966). The Labor Party had a brief but influential rule between 1972-75, under the stewardship of Gough Whitlam until the Governor General Sir John Kerr dismissed the Prime Minister on November 11, 1975. This controversial use of Constitutional powers has had a lasting legacy on Australian political culture, most recently illustrated in the unsuccessful 1999 Republic Referendum. From 1975-1983, Australia was once again under the auspices of a coalition government, with 'wet' conservative Malcom Fraser as Prime Minister. In 1983 Australia moved into its longest Labor party rule in parliamentary history with Bob Hawke (1983-1991) succeeded by Paul Keating til 1996. The current Liberal Prime Minister John Howard won a landslide victory for the coalition in March 1996, the same election that saw Pauline Hanson elected into the Lower House.

Pauline Hanson may be considered the most remarkable political phenomenon in recent Australian history. Hanson became a symbol synonymous with the opposition to the changing nature of Australian

society in the late 20th Century. Like other right-wing populist leaders worldwide, her constituents are those that consider themselves left behind by great changes. They are those who instead of seeing an increase in their standards of living have been witness to and victims of the forces of the global economy and massive influxes of migration worldwide. These people need someone to blame for their perceived fall in prosperity.

Australia in the latter part of the twentieth century is remarkably different from the collection of colonies that became a nation at Federation in 1901. Like other western democracies, the half-century since World War II was a period of dramatic change, leaving no part of life or the nation untouched. Politically, the post-depression ideal of the social-welfare democracy has all but been abandoned in Australia. Since the 1970's, successive Governments have embraced the ideal of a global economy. A country once populated by white western Europeans, with indigenous peoples classified as national fauna, has become one of the most multicultural nations in the world. Australian political culture has changed, however for some Australians not for the better.

The rise and fall of Pauline Hanson

The fact that Pauline Hanson managed to win a Lower House seat in the March 1996 Election as an independent is remarkable. Her victory is even more remarkable considering that her victory was in the safest Labor Seat in Queensland. She won with a swing of twenty-one percent, the largest anti-Labor swing in the country.⁹ In September 1996 Hanson delivered her Maiden Speech to Parliament, and it immediately transformed her into a central figure in Australian Politics. In late October 1996, the Roy Morgan Gallup Poll

⁹ Robert Manne, *Two Nations: The Causes and Effects of the Rise of the One Nation Party in Australia*. (Melbourne:Bookman, 1998) 3.

asked a sample of Australians whether, if Hanson was to lead a party of her own, they might vote for her. Eighteen percent said they would, representing a level of support enough to win up to twelve senate seats if an election were held.¹⁰

In April 1997, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party was formed, although it seemed that even by this time support for Hanson was dwindling, except in her home state of Queensland.¹¹ When an election was held in June 1998 in that state, the One Nation Party received a vote of almost 23 percent, astonishing the rest of the nation. However in the Federal Election held in October 1998, Pauline Hanson's One Nation failed to perform, winning only one seat in the upper house and Hanson was not re-elected into her lower house seat. After eighteen months of internal struggles, deregistration and bankruptcy, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party emerged from the ashes in February 2001. Registering 12% support in Western Australian and Queensland elections, Hanson once again sent a clear message to the Prime Minister that her party and their politics of resentment were a force to be reckoned with.

In the three years since she first spoke in Parliament, Hanson wreaked havoc in what had been a fairly stable political environment. Although elements of resentment towards the social welfare state had been present in the nation prior to Hanson, the success of any party voicing such opinions had been limited. Hanson united the sections of the Australian community that had felt left behind by the changes that had embraced the

¹⁰ Robert Manne, *Two Nations: The Causes and Effects of the Rise of the One Nation Party in Australia*. (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 4.

¹¹ According to opinion polls taken in early 1988, support for Hanson had dropped to as low as 2%.

nation since World War II. Racism and intolerance reared their ugly heads, as this mainstream, white Australian mother looked for someone to blame the financial and cultural woes that her family was suffering under.

Chapter One

“WELCOME TO PAULINE HANSON’S ONE NATION”:

The politics of resentment

“My view on issues is based on common sense, and my experience as a mother of four children, as a sole parent and as a business woman running a fish and chip shop”

Pauline Hanson, Maiden speech to Parliament 10 September 1996

The aim of this chapter is to examine the policies of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. I want to explore the Hanson phenomenon by looking at what she said and why. More specifically I want to examine the nationalistic nature of the party and the role it played in Australia in the late 1990's. Given that men have traditionally led right wing groups, how was it that a woman was able to lead the most successful populist party in Australia's history? Was Hanson's gender important to the triumph of One Nation? And how instrumental was her use of populist masculinist rhetoric in maintaining her support base?

The majority of the research for this chapter was conducted on-line. Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party has an extensive web site that contains all her policy documents, press releases and major speeches given to the Parliament and to other groups. Ironically, for a party that was constantly harking back to the security of the 1950's, they had a most sophisticated use of technology.

For the purpose of this study, I have recognised as right wing or conservative those parties that are in opposition to the liberal or social-democratic states that formed governments in the period after World War

Two. During the past two decades, a number of Western democracies have witnessed the rise of right-wing populist nationalist movements that have posed serious threats to the established political parties and governments. This phenomenon of opposition has been labelled in some states as the "New Right." As the name "New Right" suggests, there has been a redefinition of traditional conservative politics. This redefinition has often led to an unsteady alliance of groups with different ideological considerations. What distinguishes this movement from those that have come before it is the extent to which various right-wing parties have established themselves in the same period in a number of countries. Unlike previous movements, these parties have influenced mainstream political opinion on a range of significant sociocultural and sociopolitical issues, and have been successful in gaining political offices and positions.¹ Hanson's One Nation Party, for a period in the mid to late 1990's established itself as a threat to traditional Australian politics and set the agenda for public discourse.

The success of the One Nation party for many lay in its nationalistic appeal. The fact that the party was called "One Nation" is significant. Hanson and her party used the rhetoric of nationalism, like many of the populist movements worldwide, to express their opposition to the changes that had occurred in Australia since the 1970's. One Nation unified a number of disenfranchised political elements in Australia and represented a variety of grievances. One Nation became the symbol for Australia's glorious past, the ANZAC tradition, the white Australian, the farmer, the small business, and the male breadwinner; the antitheses of the current government, its multicultural state, the global economy, immigration and emancipated women.

Populism, in general terms can be defined as a structure of argumentation, a particular political style and strategy, where the core element is a pronounced faith in the common sense of the ordinary people and the

¹ Hans Georg Betz, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 1.

belief that simple solutions exist for the most complex problems of the modern world.² This politics of “gut feeling” applauds the immediate perceptions of ordinary citizens on a range of political issues.³ More specifically, in the modern resurgence of populism, the ideology asserts what has been called a strong “producer ethic” that credits social worth on the basis of the individuals productive contribution to the community and the nation.⁴

This belief is linked to a hatred of the existing socioeconomic and socio-political system. To supporters of populist parties like One Nation, this ‘system’ serves the special interests of the few instead of the universal concerns of the bulk of the nation. Therefore populists hold a pronounced claim to genuine democracy and egalitarianism.⁵ In the mind of a populist, the “people”, with their inherent wisdom are the most qualified to rule the nation. In Australia the “ordinary” people, whether they are Pauline Hanson’s “Australians” or Prime Minister John Howard’s “mainstream,” possess a moral superiority and innate wisdom but were unfairly denied the opportunity to make themselves heard. The strategy of populists like Hanson was to claim to speak for the unarticulated opinions, demands and sentiments of these people and therefore the nation.

In the case of One Nation this nationalistic rhetoric was linked explicitly to the idea that the decline of the nation was the result of the rise of the social welfare state in Australia in the 1970’s and 1980’s. By channelling bitterness against those who were perceived to be benefiting from the current system, Hanson,

² Hans Georg Betz, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 4.

³ David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 18.

⁴ Hans Georg Betz, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 4.

⁵ Hans Georg Betz, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 4.

like other populist leaders in the last decades of the twentieth century, had remarkable success in mobilising the resentment of “ordinary” citizens into a right-wing agenda. The groups in Australia that were “benefiting” from the welfare state, and therefore were the focus of One Nation’s resentment, include in Hanson’s terms; Indigenous Australians, the “cultural elite,” Asians and other non-white immigrants, political careerists, feminists, “the fat-cats, bureaucrats and the do-gooders.”⁶

This resentment was evident in Pauline Hanson’s maiden speech to Parliament and in the policies of the One Nation party. Hanson’s maiden speech, delivered on the 10th of September 1996, was one of the most controversial statements to be made in Australian parliamentary history. On the evening of September the 10th, the parliamentary switchboard was inundated with telephone calls from people requesting a copy of her speech. Hanson’s office was still receiving requests for copies six months later.⁷ For Hanson, as a newly elected independent MP (Member of Parliament), the speech was her first opportunity to express her policies in Parliament. Up until that time little was known of Hanson’s opinions besides the racist remarks that had her discredited as a Liberal candidate in the 1996 Federal election. Her maiden speech went beyond attacking the “aboriginal industry,” (a term she coined for the support infrastructure for Indigenous Australians) to attacking immigration, multiculturalism, the Family Court, the United Nations, the government’s bad unemployment record, foreign investment and the international market. For the “ordinary” Australian looking to blame someone for their supposed disadvantages, Hanson provided multiple answers.

The areas of resentment that were raised in Hanson’s speech became the basis for the policies of the One Nation Party, formed in April 1997. These policies can be categorised as follows: “the Aboriginal

⁶ Pauline Hanson, *Maiden Speech to Parliament*, 10 (September 1996).

⁷ Helen Dodd, *The Hanson Phenomenon* (Brisbane: Boolarong Press, 1998) 50.

Industry”/ Immigration and Multiculturalism, Family Law, Gun Control, and in broad terms anti-Globalisation; including economic rationalism, multinational corporations, the United Nations and international treaties. All of these policies were linked to the desire to see Australia returned to its rightful place as a strong, independent and mostly white nation. Whilst public attention was focused mainly on her policies regarding race, the other sections of the party platform were just as controversial and were a contributing factor in her appeal. It is remarkable, considering the massive coverage that Hanson attracted, how policies other than those to do with the “race debate” were ignored.⁸ However since her views on immigration and Indigenous Australians were the centre of the majority of the media coverage, it is fair to say that these views were the ones that attracted the majority of her supporters.

“The Race Debate”: Hanson, Race and Populism.

Hanson’s attack on Aborigines and immigration provided the impetus -or excuse- for a huge political and media debate centred on race. Elected on a platform that focused on her status as an “ordinary Australian,” in her victory speech, delivered on the day after the election Hanson declared that she was fighting for the “*White community, the immigrants, Italians, Greeks, whoever, it doesn’t really matter- anyone apart from the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.*”⁹ Asians became the other group that Hanson excluded from her constituency with the statement: “*They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate.*”¹⁰ Hanson, from the outset racialised the “ordinary.” Suvvureri Perera and Joseph Pugliese have called this phenomenon the “re-racialisation of the Australian identity.” This policy targeted, in

⁸ Philip Bell, “News values, race and ‘The Hanson Debate,’” *Asia Pacific Media Educator* (Jan 1997) 41.

⁹ Cited in S. Perera & J Pugliese, “Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia,” *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2*, (1997) 5.

particular, Indigenous and Asian Australians as “*those groups that must be re-situated, structurally at the bottom end of the ethnic scale*” as they were the people least likely to be “recycled” into white Anglo-Australians.¹¹

At some point in the past decade, the whites (“*White community, the immigrants, Italians, Greeks, whoever, it doesn't really matter- anyone apart from the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders*”¹²) in Australia, according to Hanson's rhetoric, have become victims, a people betrayed by their government. In her narrative, this occurred when Australia embraced the policy of Multiculturalism in the late 1970's and 1980's, and in the 1990's after the landmark Mabo Decision, when attempts were made to reconcile with indigenous Australians.

The 1992 High Court judgement popularly known as the Mabo Decision recognised for the first time the existence of indigenous land title prior to white invasion in 1788, and in certain cases held that the title not to have been automatically invalidated by the principle of *terra nullius* (literally meaning ‘No one's land- a term used conveniently by the British to erase the presence of the original inhabitants from the country, hence letting the colonists to freely seize the land). This judgement was the cause of lengthy debate in Parliament throughout 1993 to enact legislation recognising Native Land title in certain rigidly defined circumstances. It has since become the subject of controversy following the election of the Coalition Government in 1996, and legislation is currently the subject of amendments (Wik) and the government is relying on the votes of Independent Members of Parliament and the Senate to have these passed.

¹¹ Cited in S. Perera & J Pugliese, “Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia,” *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2.* (1997) 5.

¹² S. Perera & J Pugliese, “Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia,” *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2.* (1997) 5.

Through these indigenous land claims, the dismantling of the "White Australia Policy" and other projects of "assimilation", visible ethnic communities emerged for the first time in white Australian history.¹³ Through the policies of the former Labor Government (1983-1996), and in particular under the direction of the former Prime Minister Paul Keating (1991-1995), The Australian Labor Party (ALP) claimed to have made the "seamless" transition from a "monoculture and imperial colony, to a postcolonial and multicultural "nation." Keating, in the early 1990's, led the nation in an obsessive re-examination of Australian national identity. What occurred as a result was that the opponents of the Labor Party and its policies, invoked a "beleaguered Anglo-Australian figure, the true-blue Aussie Battler, who had been left behind by these policies."¹⁴

The figure of the "Aussie Battler" is a racialised one that emerged in the 1890's. This underdog that battles against all odds to survive, was from the outset, exclusively Anglo-Celtic and male. Battling against authority, intellectuals and progress, the "Little Aussie Battler is a celebrated symbol of Australian mediocrity. The image of the Battler was refined in the writings of two of Australia's national icons; poets Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson- renown anti-Asian xenophobes. It is no coincidence that the birth of the "Battler" arrived simultaneously with the formation of the White Australia Policy; the inaugural legislation passed by the newly formed Australian Federal Parliament in 1901.

¹² Cited in S. Perera & J Pugliese, "Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia," *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2.* (1997) 5.

¹³ S. Perera & J Pugliese, "Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia," *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2.* (1997) 6.

¹⁴ S. Perera & J Pugliese, "Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia," *Race & Class Vol.39, no.2.* (1997) 6.

In this "narrative of victimhood" as Perera and Pugliese coin it, the minority non-Anglo groups in Australia are transformed into the majority who have control of the reigns of power.¹⁵ Control gained through the discriminatory race-based policies of multiculturalism and the unfair influence of the "Aboriginal Industry." Appropriating the notions of "democracy" and "equality" like other populists before her, Hanson attacked government policies and organisations that were race-based, arguing that they were a form of "reverse-racism" applied to mainstream Australia, creating and encouraging separatism. Hanson's "Aboriginal Industry" was the subject of her most vicious censure. When Hanson referred to the "Aboriginal Industry" she meant the support network that exists for Indigenous Australians, which for the most part comes under the auspices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Hanson called for the abolition of ATSIC and other organisations that she believed were promoting "inequality," in her Maiden Speech to Parliament, she clearly expressed these views:

Present governments are encouraging separatism in Australia by providing opportunities, land, moneys and facilities available only to Aboriginals. Along with millions of Australians, I am fed up to the back teeth with the inequalities that are being promoted by the government and paid for by the taxpayer under the assumption that Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged people in Australia... I have done my research on the benefits available only to Aboriginals and challenge anyone to tell me how Aboriginals are disadvantaged when they can obtain three and five percent loans denied to non-Aboriginals.¹⁶

Pauline Hanson, Maiden Speech

As with other populist movements there is a warped logic at work here. Without a doubt, if you take any indicator- social, economic, medical or educational - Indigenous Australians come out clearly at the bottom of the scale. For example, on average an indigenous male will die 20 years earlier than the average non-indigenous male in Australia.¹⁷ To a populist like Hanson, evidence from studies and enquiries holds no

¹⁵ S. Perera & J Pugliese, "Racial Suicide: the re-licensing of racism in Australia," *Race & Class* Vol.39, no.2. (1997) 10.

¹⁶ Pauline Hanson, "First Speech to Parliament," 10 September (1996).

¹⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, www.abs.gov.au 3307.0 Deaths, Australia.

bearing. What matters is the anecdotal evidence of friends and acquaintances and the conclusive evidence of their own "gut feelings".¹⁸ Indeed her rhetoric uses corporeal metaphors such as "I am fed up to my back teeth" to express and justify their political opinions. To Hanson and One Nation supporters -who for the most part were those that profited from the discriminatory policies of the past- any group that had been targeted by equal opportunity legislation were the ones who were racists, not the reverse. Hanson, to this day, denies that her policies were racist. She maintains that her arguments were merely in favour of equal treatment.¹⁹ But by reading the policies of her party, it becomes obvious how that fear and resentment of other races were paramount to her platform. Hanson claimed that she was fighting for what she called the unique Australian culture- a *white* Australian culture.

Our culture has developed historically on the basis of our common experiences, memories, stories and traditions.... Our Culture embodies the values of egalitarianism and mateship. It rejects excessive authority and believes in a fair go, admiration of the battler and belief in the individual.²⁰

Hanson uses the pronoun "our" to bring together white Australians in the same way she used the "One" in One Nation. It is obvious that those who do not share the values she espouses can never be a part of her "culture". Belonging to her nation means sharing a past, a past built on the white nation- a past that excludes recent immigrants. The myth of the "battler" is essential in her rhetoric, appealing to those in the community who believe that the values that the country was founded on - egalitarianism, mateship and the "fair go" - have all but disappeared with the emergence of multicultural society.

¹⁸ David Wells, "One Nation and the Politics of Populism," in David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 20.

¹⁹ Carol Johnson, "Pauline Hanson and One Nation," in Betz and Immerfall, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998) 213.

²⁰ *Pauline Hanson's One Nation Policy Document on Immigration, Population and Social Cohesion*.

Central to Hanson's rhetoric is the belief that "*we are experiencing now in Australia is a threat to the very basis of the Australian culture, identity and shared values*". However Indigenous Australians are not the only threat, other forces, multiculturalism and in particular a fear of Asianisation. "*Our politicians plan an Asian future for Australia... Australia will be 27% Asian within 25 years,*"²¹ were also the targets of Hanson's politics of resentment. Hanson's now infamous statement "*I believe that we are in danger of being swamped by Asians*"²² became the basis of One Nation's Immigration policy. Whilst One Nation declared that the policy of capping immigration numbers was non-discriminatory- that it would affect all people regardless of race- further examination revealed that the measures proposed mostly targeted Asian immigrants. This was done by avoiding any direct mention of race, but by creating immigration policies that would effectively exclude Asians. The areas to be affected were family reunion, non-skilled immigration and refugees- the programs through which most Asian immigrants enter Australia.

Hanson's attack on multiculturalism seemed to stem from her fear of losing a white Australian identity, a "way of life,"

I will not stand by and watch our Australian way of life destroyed piece by piece by these people who do not deserve the right to call themselves Australians. One Nation will abolish multiculturalism and promote integration into mainstream Australia instead- it is the policy we have had from the start and it is the only way we can truly be One Nation.²³

Hanson only supported non-Anglo-Celtic groups that could be visibly assimilated because of skin colour, arguing that multiculturalism should be abolished in order to "*save billions of dollars and allow those from*

²¹ Pauline Hanson's *One Nation Policy Document on Immigration, Population and Social Cohesion*.

²² Pauline Hanson *Maiden Speech to Parliament*, op.cit.

²³ Pauline Hanson, "Multiculturalists banning Santa Claus is just the beginning," *One Nation Press Release 31* (December 1997).

*ethnic backgrounds to join mainstream Australia.”*²⁴ She believed that cuts to the multicultural industries would stop the ‘reverse racism’ that privileged minority groups over Anglo-Australians. Hanson’s resentment of minorities was barely disguised by her claims to democracy.

One Nation, not One World: Hanson and economic nationalism

Part of Hanson’s resentment towards minority groups lay in the changes that the forces of immigration have rendered not only to Australian national identity, but also to the Australian economy and Australia’s relationship with the rest of the world. In Hanson’s discourse “immigration” is part of a bigger world-wide force, namely “globalisation.” Globalisation is a term that has been used since the 1960’s in economic circles, but did not enter the popular lexicon until the mid 1980’s. In the broadest sense, globalisation is best defined “*as the crystallisation of the entire world as a single place and as the emergence of a ‘global human.’*”²⁵ Since the end of the Second World War, and more dramatically in recent years, the forces of globalisation have led to fundamental societal changes, which are experienced as crises of national economy, as crises of culture and identity, and as political crises. Globalisation it is argued, has destabilised the “National Industrial Society” that was the norm in Western Democracies til the mid part of this century, as the central dynamics of economic life, and increasingly national belonging start to transcend state borders. The idea emerges that there is no such thing as a nationalised economy, instead transnational corporations cross all geographical and state boundaries and the economy becomes uncontrollable for national governments.

²⁴ Carol Johnson, “Pauline Hanson and One Nation,” in Betz & Immerfall, *The New Politics of the Right*. (New York: St. Martins Press, 1998) 214.

Australia, like other countries during this period moved to adjust its economy to embrace these changes. The Labor Government, under the guidance of Bob Hawke and later Paul Keating, moved to open the country onto the global market. The Australian Dollar was floated in 1983 (previously it had been tied to the English pound), signalling that Australia was entering the world economy on its own terms. The market place became increasingly important to the government as they entered into a phase of intense deregulation and privatisation. The government wanted the Australian economy to perform on a "level playing field", not only internationally competitive but also global.

This was a marked change from previous policy. During the last century the Australian economy had relied heavily on its primary industry base, one that had been protected since the turn of the century through a series of tariffs and a strong bounty system. As the government abandoned protectionism, the primary and manufacturing industries that had been surviving 'artificially' collapsed, resulting in massive unemployment (a high of approximately 13% in the early 1990's) and provoked a crisis in regional and rural Australia. The groups in Australian society that came out in support of One Nation were those most vulnerable to this structural change -farmers and blue-collar workers.²⁶

Hanson and her supporters were fiercely opposed to the rationalisation and the globalisation of the Australian economy. They adopted the populist rhetoric of "economic nationalism," providing a new target of resentment- international bankers and currency traders, international capital and transnational corporations.²⁷ In their eyes, these organisations and individuals were to blame for Australia's economic woes- high

²⁴Amson, J. "Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity," in Mike Featherstone, ed. *Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1999) 220.

²⁶ Murray Goot, "Hanson's Heartland: who's for One Nation and why," in *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 57.

²⁷ Hans Georg Betz, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 5.

unemployment, the devaluation of the dollar and dying primary industries. The populist nature of the anti globalisation argument is revealed in Hanson's use of the vernacular.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel and there are solutions. If this government wants to be fair dinkum²⁸, then it must stop kow-towing²⁹ to financial markets, international organisations, world bankers, investment companies and big business people.³⁰

Pauline Hanson, Maiden Speech

Hanson proposed the reinstatement of tariffs and bounties to restore rural Australia to its former glory, for priority to be given to small business over large business and the cessation of the privatisation of government industries. Her party was opposed to excessive foreign investment, and to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI). It was Hanson's views on the MAI that revealed her resentment of global agreements and organisations such as the United Nations and the World Health Organisation. The MAI, to One Nation, was just another example of the "thousands of treaties" that have been signed by Australian governments in betrayal of the Australian people. *"Successive coalition and Labor Governments have shockingly abused their power and destroyed the trust of the Australian people by signing thousands of treaties, without the knowledge, consent, or approval of the Australian people."*³¹

More dramatically, Hanson proposed that Australia withdraw from the United Nations. For Hanson, the United Nations was an example of an international organisation that not only infringed on Australia's national sovereignty, but also was an opportunity for the new class of "elite's" to benefit above and beyond ordinary Australians.

²⁸ "Fair Dinkum" is an Australian colloquial expression meaning true or genuine.

²⁹ This Australian colloquial expression interestingly is borrowed from the Chinese word meaning "knock head"- to show submissive respect. *Collins Australian Dictionary*.

³⁰ Pauline Hanson, "Maiden Speech to Parliament."

³¹ Pauline Hanson, "MAI wounded but not dead," *One Nation Press Release* (May 1, 1998).

Australia must review its membership and funding of the UN, as it is a little like ATSIC on a grander scale, with huge tax-free American dollar salaries, duty-free luxury cars and diplomatic status.³²

Pauline Hanson, Maiden Speech

At the basis of this argument is a total misunderstanding of the world of international politics. The populist tendency towards conspiracy theories was evident in Hanson's policies at times.³³ A central part of populist discourse is the belief that if you don't understand something, then it must be evil. Treaties with the UN and its member countries were seen as a sinister way for other people to control the nation. However, what Hanson actually said about the UN and its controlling elites wasn't necessarily important, it was how she said it. She didn't need to explain (or even know) what was wrong with the UN, her supporters believed it must be wrong when she talked about "duty-free luxury cars" and "huge tax-free American dollar salaries." Central to her discourse was the use colloquial language, to appeal to 'ordinary' constituents; Hanson justified her ignorance by speaking for the 'common man.'

With the current government's economic focus on Asia and with the supposed "Asianisation" of Australian culture, Hanson's urgent call for the reintroduction of Military service illustrated the depth of her resentment towards Asians and the xenophobic nature of her party's policies. Her use of numbers to shock Australians into action emphasised the illogical fear that 20 million unsuspecting Australians were about to be "swamped" by 2 billion Asians.

This could be a civil service with a touch of military training, because I do not feel we can go on living in a dream world forever and a day believing that war will never touch our lives again.... Time is running out. We may only have ten or fifteen years to turn things around. Because of our resources and our position in the world, we will not have a say because neighbouring countries such as Japan, with 125 million people; China, with 1.2

³² Pauline Hanson, "Maiden Speech to Parliament."

³³ David Wells, "One Nation and the Politics of Populism," in David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 20.

billion people; India, with 846 million people; Indonesia, with 178 million people; and Malaysia, with 20 million people are well aware of our resources and potential. Wake up, Australia, before it's too late.³⁴

Pauline Hanson, Maiden Speech to Parliament

Hanson and her supporters refused to believe that Australia is part of Asia, as was the policy of the former Labor government, a policy that embraced globalisation, sacrificing the *"innocent victims currently known as the Australian people."*³⁵

To the One Nation party, colonial ties were just another example of Australia being ruled by foreign powers and not the victimised Australian people. Hanson was a republican and even though she wanted a white Anglo-Celtic culture, she wanted that culture to be Australian in nature, not British. Hanson wanted an Australia that is self-sufficient, independent and insular.

"Returning men's Guns to them": Hanson and Gun Control.

Whilst the extent of gun ownership in Australia is nothing like that of the United States, the introduction of increased gun control became a controversial topic in the 1990's. In 1996 a lone gunman with a military-style weapon killed 35 people in the popular tourist destination Port Arthur, Tasmania. As a result, the Liberal-National Coalition Government implemented a series of new gun laws and initiated a gun buy-back scheme. This measure was met with loud opposition from many within the National Party ranks of the

³⁴ Pauline Hanson, "Maiden Speech to Parliament."

³⁵ Pauline Hanson, "Grievance Debate on MAI." *Australian Parliamentary Hansard* (March 9, 1998).

Coalition, the party of rural Australia. For the past decade, as violent crimes with firearms have risen in Australia, successive governments have attempted to tighten the restrictions on gun ownership. Rural Australia reacted to this move, and the Shooters Party became a powerful Lobby group. Likewise, Pauline Hanson's One Nation saw the government's move to restrict firearms as just another attack on "ordinary Australians", in this case rural Australians. Her opposition to gun control mirrored that of other right-wing parties world-wide, especially those in the United States. Her rhetoric was similar and the views she expressed can be found in numerous American Right-wing publications.³⁶

Australians have the right to defend themselves in their own homes. Shooting is a legitimate sport and pastime and participants should be treated accordingly... Be assured, the firearm owners of Australia are tired of unwarranted and unjustified interference, they are tired of being used as political scapegoats and the victims of United Nation Treaties"³⁷

Once again Hanson uses colloquial language to express her politics of resentment. Gun owners refuse to be victims or "scapegoats" anymore. Interestingly, Hanson's support of gun ownership is an example of what I would call her "masculinist agenda", consistent with her invocation of the Aussie Battler myth. The majority of guns in Australia are owned and used by men; gun control threatens male owners. Political commentator Marilyn Lake in her essay "Pauline Hanson: Virago in Parliament, Viagra in the bush" suggests that *"the reason for her appeal lies in the symbolism of her much publicised promise to return men's guns to them- dissed and disregarded, these disaffected, rural white men are looking to Pauline Hanson to restore their stolen masculinity."*³⁸ Hanson's stance on guns is an example of policies aimed to attract men, not women. Men, who had been left behind, disenfranchised, by global changes. Hanson appealed to the

³⁶ David Wells, "One Nation and the Politics of Populism," in David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 18.

³⁷ Pauline Hanson "National Firearms Program implementation," Bill 1 (October 1997) extract from Hansard.

³⁸ Marilyn Lake, "Pauline Hanson: Virago in Parliament, Viagra in the bush," in David Wells, *Two Nations*. (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 115.

resentments that they hoarded, resentment against not only gun control, but also immigrants, the government and women.

Family Law and the politics of resentment.

Even though Hanson is a woman, the bulk of her supporters were male. There was a huge gender gap in the support for One Nation, more than for any other political party. Sixty percent of her supporters were male, forty percent female.³⁹ The populist rhetoric of her party it seems was designed to appeal to a male constituency. Her politics of resentment aimed to restore the cultural icon of the Aussie Battler to a dominant position within the economy and society.⁴⁰ This position of dominance in the home had in the past been sacred, men were considered "breadwinners," but with changes to the Family Law Act, the sanctity of this role was threatened. The Aussie Battler received a particularly bad beating in the 1970's and 1980's, with economic rationalism and advances in technology making many blue-collar jobs obsolete, and with the feminist revolution taking women out from under their control and making them equals.

One of the changes that made women's freedom more tangible was the Family Law Act passed in 1974 which gave women equal economic rights with men in cases of divorce, and the subsequent introduction of child support legislation. This Act guaranteed that the custodial parent received maintenance from the non-custodial parent. Hanson, in her Maiden Speech, attacked both the Family Law Court and the Child Support Scheme and with the creation of the One Nation Party, she called for the abolition of the Family Law Court

³⁹ Marilyn Lake, "Pauline Hanson: Virago in Parliament, Viagra in the bush," David Wells, *Two Nations*, (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 114.

⁴⁰ A. Ellison & I. Deutchman, "Men only: Pauline Hanson and Australia's Far Right," in Grant Bligh ed., *Pauline Hanson: One Nation and Australian Politics* (Armidale: UNE Press, 1997) 144.

and a reworking of the child support scheme. Repeal of the act would undoubtedly benefit men economically at the expense of their divorced wives and non-custodial children.

In Hanson's own words, One Nation was "*concerned for those non-custodial parents who through government mismanagement and ineptitude have been forced to relinquish their rights to parenthood.*"⁴¹ This seems an unusual position for Hanson to take, considering that she is twice divorced and raised four children, for the most part alone. But by denouncing the Act, Hanson firmly distanced herself from women and established herself as a spokesperson for a masculinist sensibility.⁴² In her policy document entitled "*Family Law and Child Support Policy Direction*" Hanson further positioned herself as a champion of fathers.

The continued application of outdated cultural values which underlie the perception that the female is the "best" primary care giver and decision maker must be challenged. Men are good parents and should be afforded equal opportunity to gain joint custody of their offspring. Currently males seem to be penalised for earning family income by denying them equal opportunity to become the custodial parent after family breakdown.⁴³

Hanson's proposed reworking of the Child Support Scheme was aimed at decreasing the burden on the non-custodial parent. These changes included providing leniency for remarried parents with another family, "*recognition that the standard of living following divorce cannot be maintained at its pre-divorce level,*" property settlement not weighted towards the custodial parent, and property owned prior to the relationship remains the possession of the individual and not part of the settlement. Hanson's use of the terms "custodial" and "non-custodial parents" was a thin disguise. With the large majority of custodial parents being women, this amounts to an attack on the economic and social status of single mothers.

⁴¹ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 1.

⁴² A. Ellison & I. Deutchman, "Men only: Pauline Hanson and Australia's Far Right," in Grant Bligh ed. *Pauline Hanson: One Nation and Australian Politics* (Armidale: UNE Press, 1997) 144.

⁴³ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 1.

Hanson's attack on women continued when dealing with an accusation of perjury by women divorcing men on the grounds of abuse. Again the populist tendency to create conspiracy theories surfaces in this statement

Legal intervention would only be necessary in the case of alleged sexual, emotional or physical abuse charges. Domestic violence or abuse claims that are found to be vexatious or malicious will face the full force of the law... Some women will take out a domestic violence order [to gain a better position] in seeking custody of their children.⁴⁴

In Hanson's rhetoric, men become innocent victims in custody battles. Women manipulate the system with claims of domestic violence to gain unfair custody of their children, denying men their rightful place as heads of the nation's households.

The One Nation policy statement took a moral tone when dealing with government benefits paid to Sole Parents, and proposed compulsory counselling for the separating partners before receiving benefits.

Compulsory counselling reinforces societies' values and commitments to the sanctity of marriage and the individual's commitment to work strongly to retain the marriage vows.⁴⁵

Like the 1980's Right-wing Moral Majority movement in the United States, Hanson believed that the family is the centre of society: "*Pauline Hanson's One Nation believes that safe, secure and happy societies require as a guiding principle, strong functional family units.*"⁴⁶ However it seems that her idea of a strong family unit is one where the father is in control. In her policy she quoted a series of statistics concerning children who are involved in marriage breakdown. A telling statistic in her policy documents revealed the

⁴⁴ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 2.

⁴⁵ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 4.

⁴⁶ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 4.

contradiction between Pauline Hanson the woman and mother, and Pauline Hanson, the champion of fathers: "a social historian from the University of Chicago, Barbara Whitehead (1993) found that nationally more than 70% of all juveniles in State Reform Institutions came from *fatherless homes*." ⁴⁷ It really seemed a strange stance to take for a woman who had publicly prided herself on being a "mother of four children and a sole parent", but again, logic for a populist politician like Hanson was not necessarily a consideration.

Hanson's appeal lay in what David Wells called the "politics of perceived deprivation"⁴⁸ or what I have named the politics of resentment. She targeted groups of the population that felt resentment towards the government on this particular issue. In the eyes of the One Nation Party, fathers had been "deprived" for too long, and the source of this deprivation was the social welfare state. They had become a part of what McNeil has labelled a similar phenomenon in Thatcher's Britain the "New Oppressed. These groups of people are those that conservatives believe have carried the burdens of the social democratic states. These are formally privileged people who have suffered oppression through the welfare system, equal opportunity and the increasingly liberal nature of the state. They are a strange line-up, including as they do middle class parents, fathers, burdened taxpayers and foetuses. The creation of these groups during Thatcher's Britain, and to an extent with Hanson's One Nation, were defined and defended through "the cultivation of female or feminist bogeys."⁴⁹ In Hanson's rhetoric, the social welfare state had tried to take the responsibility of the family away from men. Populism, through the One Nation party, using the politics of 'gut feeling' aimed to restore these oppressed men; these 'ordinary people' do their rightful place as leaders of society and family.

⁴⁷ Pauline Hanson, "Preamble, Family and Child Support Policy Directions" (Sept 18, 1998) 7.

⁴⁸ David Wells, "One Nation and the Politics of Populism," in David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 22.

The Truth.

“For Populists do not truly value all opinions, as even their misunderstood notion of “free speech” would imply, but only certain kinds of opinions, and these are not to be taken as opinions but (tellingly) the truth.”⁵⁰

David Wells “One Nation and the Politics of Populism”

In 1997 Pauline Hanson published a collection of her speeches and thoughts titled *Pauline Hanson. The Truth: On Asian Immigration, The Aboriginal Question, The Gun Debate and the future of Australia*. Although copyrighted in Hanson’s name, the majority of the contents were contributions by “anonymous” supporters. It contained a number of controversial accounts by members of other far right groups such as *Australians Against Further Immigration, The League of Rights, National Action* and the gun lobby. The book soon became notorious for reprinting particularly lurid and dubious historical accounts of claimed cannibalism by Aboriginal people.⁵¹ After the controversy of the first limited edition, Hanson’s name was taken from the copy right and replaced with “supporters of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation.”

“The Truth” was a revealing example of the politics of resentment practised by Hanson and her followers. One contributor went as far as to say that there was no genocide of Aboriginal people in Australia, but that “*in our opinion the real ‘genocide’ which is occurring in Australia today is the dispossession of the*

⁵⁰Maureen McNeil, “Making and not making the difference,” in Sarah Franklin et. al. *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 229.

⁵¹ David Wells, “One Nation and the Politics of Populism,” in David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 20.

⁵² Carol Johnson, “Pauline Hanson and One Nation,” in Betz & Immerfall, *The New Politics of the Right* (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 214.

majority of Anglo-Australians.”⁵² However the book does not just attack Aborigines and Asians, some of the most venomous invectives are aimed at the ruling elite. Hanson and her supporters’ use of colloquial language is almost comical in their description of the ruling elite. These elites go beyond left and right and consist of “a new religion of internationalism- of anti-white racism, multiculturalism, feminism and Asianation- that can be approached from the dreadlock direction (Hanson’s rent-a-crowd arts graduate dole bludgers)⁵³ or from above, (the elite economic rationalist men-in-slimy grey suits). There is little philosophical difference between them. In both cases they hate old Anglo-Australia and wish to see it destroyed.”⁵⁴ This bill illustrates the depth of resentment felt by the supporters of One Nation, perfectly expressed in populist rhetoric. Both the left and the right side of politics have betrayed white Australia with the economic and social policies of the last twenty years.

Through One Nation, Hanson rhetorically gave ordinary Australians the chance to stand up against the white race-traitors that had betrayed the country by the selling of Australia to Asia, by the destruction of the white Australian identity through forced multiculturalism and through a regime of “political correctness.” The One Nation attack on political correctness was not a phenomenon restricted to Australia; it drew upon the North American debates that depicted conservatives as oppressed by a range of vocal minority interests.⁵⁵

The Truth takes a bizarre turn when one of the anonymous author’s dystopian visions of Australia in the year 2050 is revealed. This vision sees the nation of “Australasia” with a new president Poona Li Hung.

⁵² Anonymous, *Pauline Hanson: The truth* (Ipswich: Pauline Hanson, 1997) 119.

⁵³ A dole bludger is a person on unemployment benefits (colloquially “the dole”).

⁵⁴ I would paraphrase but they phrase it so perfectly Anonymous, *Pauline Hanson: The truth* (Ipswich: Pauline Hanson, 1997) 92.

⁵⁵ Carol Johnson, “Pauline Hanson and One Nation,” in Betz & Immerfall, *The New Politics of the Right*. (New York: St.Martins Press, 1998) 215.

Ms. Hung, a lesbian, is of multicultural descent, of Indian and Chinese background and was felt by the World Government to be a most suitable president. She is also part machine- the first cyborg president. Her neuro-circuits were produced by a joint Korean-Indian-Chinese research team.⁵⁶

This very strange projection sums up the racist, homophobic, misogynist, xenophobic and technophobic stance that many of the supporters of Pauline Hanson's One Nation defended in the name of nationalism. This is a perfect example of the illogical politics of resentment ever present in the populist nationalistic rhetoric.

In these visions and in the policies of Hanson and her One Nation Party, women and minorities are equated. Women and "others" are blamed for the downfall of the society that saw Hanson's mostly male followers in positions of power. The changes that embraced the world after the Second World War, the waves of immigration and the emancipation of women- both became easy targets of resentment for these disempowered white men. Hanson's message to men was powerful because she was a lone woman on an all male playing field. Generally it has been men that have dominated right-wing politics in Australia,⁵⁷ however it was a woman that brought the far or "lunar" right, as political commentators have named parties such as One Nation, the highest degree of success. Maybe it was easier for Hanson to achieve this success by playing the anti-politician's politician - the people's crusader- because she was a woman. Marilyn Lake believed that *"It is Hanson's sex that helps her define herself against traditional politics, against the self-interest, venality and self-importance thought to characterise male party politicians. Her sexual difference thus comes to*

⁵⁶ Anonymous, *Pauline Hanson: The truth* (Ipswich: Pauline Hanson, 1997) 159.

⁵⁷ A. Ellison & I. Deutchman, "Men only: Pauline Hanson and Australia's Far Right," in Grant Bligh ed., *Pauline Hanson: One Nation and Australian Politics* (Armidale: UNE Press, 1997) 141.

symbolise her political difference and each highlight each other."⁵⁸ Through the use of her "femaleness", Hanson's political views attracted a male constituency, the traditional male breadwinner who used to vote for the ALP until it adopted economic rationalism in the 1980's.⁵⁹ Her seeming lack of sophistication combined with her femininity made her appealing to those who were most affected by economic and political changes and were searching for explanations. The explanations Hanson offered were not couched in the language of abstract analyses, instead identifiable racial and political groups became the scapegoats.

Hanson didn't claim to support the interests of women and whilst there were some women in One Nation, the majority of members and candidates were men. However some women did support Hanson and her nationalistic project. What was it in Hanson that they saw that would overcome the massive contradiction between her gender and her policies? What did or didn't women see in Hanson that more traditional parties didn't offer? What part of her message did they support or object to, and what role did they see themselves playing in the nation that Hanson's party defined?

⁵⁸ Manlyn Lake, "Pauline Hanson: Virago in Parliament, Viagra in the bush," David Wells, *Two Nations* (Melbourne: Bookman, 1998) 118.

⁵⁹ A. Ellison & I. Deutchman, "Men only: Pauline Hanson and Australia's Far Right," in Grant Bligh ed., *Pauline Hanson: One Nation and Australian Politics* (Armidale: UNE Press, 1997) 144.

Chapter Two

READING THE PAPERS, WRITING TO HANSON:

Australian women and their letters to the editor

The first chapter of this thesis was an analysis of Pauline Hanson's One Nation policies and the right-wing populist nationalistic nature of the party. Hanson's policies were used as a way to understand her political rhetoric and her mobilisation of conservative arguments about gender, race and class. Here the apparent contradictions between Hanson's gender and the politics of nationalism and populism were analysed. As my research problematic involves women's political orientation and participation in national processes this second chapter looks at how the "text" of Hanson and "Hansonism" was received by women in the nation through the media, and how women responded to Pauline Hanson in gendered terms. What is clear from the analysis is that traditional conceptions of femininity, woman as home-maker and care-giver, acted rhetorically to "contain" and "orient" both affirmative and critical responses to Hanson's policies and politics.

Pauline Hanson and the media had an intense relationship in the first months after her "maiden" speech. Since this time several media analyses of Pauline Hanson have been conducted (Bell, June 1997, Loo & Louw, July 1997), mostly focusing on the apparent co-dependent relationship between Hanson and the Australian media, the media's complicity in the construction of "Hansonism," and the media's role in free speech. The aim of my study however, is not to question the role of the media in the Hanson phenomenon, but rather to use the media as a means to examine the responses to Hanson from women in the electorate.

In this chapter I do a content analysis of letters to the editor in major Australian daily newspapers over the six-week period immediately following Hanson's controversial maiden speech to Parliament on September 10th, 1996. The aim is to solicit the reaction of women in the electorate to her "policies," to see how women positioned themselves in relation to Hanson and further still how this positioning reflected what they saw as their role in national processes.

This content analysis proved to be a flawed process but not without merit. As others have argued and I would concur, content analysis is an ideal way to capture the "massness" of the mass media. "The purpose of content analysis is to quantify salient and manifest features of a large number of texts, using the statistics to make broader inferences about the processes and politics of representation."¹ It is a method that aims to produce a big "picture," delineating trends, patterns and absences. In dealing with media texts across a time frame, content analysis provides a systematic procedure for establishing constants, and gives a basis for using words like "often," "seldom," "many" and "few" when discussing these texts.² Content or quantitative analysis is often negatively associated with the social sciences tradition that dominated media scholarship in the USA in the post-war period, but when combined with other forms of qualitative research it is far from being a cold empirical tool. Whilst statistics can be drawn using quantitative methods like content analysis, qualitative analysis of the conclusions and themes are necessary for a richer, "triangulated" approach to research.³

¹ D. Deacon, M. Pickering, P.Golding, & G. Murdock, *Researching Communications: A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis* (London :Arnold, 1999) 116.

² D. Deacon, M. Pickering, P.Golding, & G. Murdock, *Researching Communications: A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis* (London :Arnold, 1999) 116.

³ Triangulation: A specific approach for unification , a term coined by Norman Denzin see introduction.

Capturing "Audience": Letters to the editor in Australian Newspapers

In many post-war reception studies, the notion of the audience was fairly unproblematic. A certain empirical, common sense quality to these sometimes difficult and often expensive research undertakings was assumed, and the idea of the "audience" was never challenged. However today, the idea of the audience is in Peter Dahlgren's terms more "elusive." Currently, researchers are not just dealing with issues of how to get increased knowledge of audiences, but what kind of knowledge of audiences is possible or even desirable. What is the nature of audiences? Is it even meaningful to use the concept of "audience"? What does it actually refer to?⁴ In the case of my research, the "audience" was particularly hard to capture. Broadly speaking, as Pauline Hanson is a political figure, the audience then referred to all women in the electorate. Not having the resources or finances to conduct the kind of opinion poll or detailed audience research traditionally associated with political studies, or to undertake a major focus group project, I decided to examine another space where the electorate are able to express and discuss political views.

The letters pages in newspapers are taken as a place where readers act out as "citizens." As some have argued, the letters pages are one of the "few chances they have to speak their mind in public."⁵ By examining these letters, my survey of audience opinion then became limited to the readership of the newspapers analysed. Current newspaper circulation in Australia equals one paper sold for every 7.5 people.⁶ The survey is even more limited when considering the people who write letters to the editor only make up a

⁴ Peter Dahlgren, in R. Dickinson, R. Harindranath & O. Linne eds. *Approaches to Audiences: A Reader* (London: Arnold, 1998) 298.

⁵ W. Rivers, B. McIntyre, & A. Work, *Writing Opinion* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988) 271.

⁶ Trevor Barr, *newmedia.com.au: The changing face of australia's media and communications* (Sydney :Allen & Unwin, 2000) 19.

very small sample of the readership. However the focus of my study was not to gather absolute empirical data, but to isolate trends in attitudes and support for Hanson that could be used within my greater research project, but it is important to understand the potentials and limitations of this type of approach to communications.

Scientific accuracy was not achievable in this limited research project but scientific accuracy was not my aim. Rather my aim was to understand why some women supported Hanson. Unlike taking a poll of a cross-section of the population- forming and asking research questions- letters to the editor rely on the active responses of the public. Studies of letters pages in papers show that there are certain types of people who write letters, they are usually an older person and a “repeater” - that is someone who has written letters on previous occasions.⁷ However, after the analysis of the letters written in response to Pauline Hanson, it became clear that she was so controversial that she incited people who normally wouldn't write to a newspaper, to publicly put their anger into words. Therefore whilst the survey was limited, it wasn't as small as expected. In fact editors remarked on the sheer volumes of letters they received in response to Hanson.

By choosing to examine the letters, I was aware that the opinions and beliefs expressed by the subjects of study had already been solicited. The editors of the newspaper control the audience response that is presented in letters. The letters page is supposed to be a place for differing opinions, aside from the greater editorial slant of the paper, but letters *are* chosen, edited and presented by editors. Several key questions about the role of the editor in the process had to be considered. That in an effort to appear fair, to print letters from the whole spectrum of responses to an issue, do editors emphasise one case more than an other? How

does the editor decide which letter is publishable and which one isn't? By the actual editing of letters, are they cutting out important opinions? How does the editorial view of the individual and the paper as a whole influence these decisions?

The concentration of media ownership in Australia and how it effects the decisions of letters editors surfaced during the investigation. Australia has one of the most concentrated systems of media ownership in the world.⁷ Two corporations dominate the media landscape. Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation owns seven of the nation's twelve major daily newspapers:

- *Australian* (national)
- *Herald Sun* and *Sunday Herald Sun* (Melbourne)
- *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph* (Sydney)
- *Advertiser* (Adelaide)
- *Courier Mail* (Brisbane)
- *Mercury* (Hobart)
- *Northern Territory News* (Darwin)

John Fairfax Holdings Ltd owns three of the twelve:

- *The Age* and *Sunday Age* (Melbourne)
- *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)
- *Financial Review* (national)

⁷ W. Rivers, B. McIntyre, & A. Work, *Writing Opinion* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988) 65.

⁸ John Henningham, in S. Cunningham & G. Turner, *The Media in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1993) 59.

The two other papers the *Canberra Times* and the *West Australian* are independently owned. All state capitals, bar Melbourne and Sydney, only have one daily paper with a state monopoly, owned for the most part by Murdoch's News Corporation. The lack of competition, and therefore the loss of a variety of editorial views, has had its impact on the Australian mediascape. It is not that bosses actually direct their editors or journalists about what they may or may not publish or write, but rather as Trevor Barr has argued, that the values of the media organisation are internalised by media personnel, and they become conditioned by conventions of participation in commercial institutions. " It is hard to uncover exactly how this factor influenced my research, but it is important to acknowledge the importance of the political economy of the Australian media system and how it effects editorial decisions. Those who own and control the media cannot manipulate the reading public- meaning always remains in the eye of the beholder. However they do have the ability to set agendas of discourse in ways that others can't, as owners still possess the ultimate editorial control over who and what gets published.

Outside of the state capital cities, there are a number of regional and local daily, weekly and monthly newspapers. In attempting to research the smaller regional publications I discovered that most of them were not archived extensively or accessible outside of the town of publication. However I was able to examine several including *The Illawarra Mercury* (NSW), *The Launceston Examiner* (Tasmania) and the *Gympie Times* (Queensland), but found that the letters pages were concerned with local issues and there was no mention of Hanson. Major dailies are available to readers in country areas, but because of the divide between country and city in Australia, these papers are seen to represent the city "elite's" by Hanson's supporters.

"Trevor Barr, *newmedia.com.au: The changing face of australia's media and communications* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000) 9.

Therefore there is an urban slant to my study, which is problematic considering Hanson is from regional Australia.

The papers that were analysed have varied readerships. There are two main styles of papers in Australia, the broadsheet that is considered the more serious of the two, with an "educated" readership, and the tabloid, which traditionally attracts a more "working class" audience. The tabloids in Australia are not as extreme as those found in supermarkets in the United States, they are more similar to the tabloids found in Great Britain. These papers have for the most part a stronger editorial stance in favour of the "common man" or "little Aussie Battler." Like their counterparts in talk radio, columnists tend to be "shock jocks" who often attack the political correctness of other papers and media. As media ownership became more and more concentrated in the 1980's many tabloids either disappeared or merged with broadsheets. The only true tabloid style papers left in Australia are the *Daily Telegraph* in Sydney and the *Herald-Sun* in Melbourne. They are also the papers with the highest circulations. In 1999 the circulation of the *Daily Telegraph* was 432 000 and the *Herald Sun* was 554 000.¹⁰ However the nature of the publications in single paper cities such as the *Northern Territory News*, *The Mercury* and *The West Australian* is a strange blend of the broadsheet and the tabloid format. There is argument that papers such as these have "dumbed down" to accommodate their former tabloid readers. The *Australian* and *Australian Financial Review*; the two national dailies, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Courier Mail* and *The Age* are also broadsheet papers.

Problems aside, the analysis of letters was fruitful, not only in giving a picture of the support or lack of support for Hanson and her statements, but also in the revelation of interesting insights into the way that

¹⁰ Trevor Barr. *newmedia.com.au* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000) 43.

women in Australia see themselves in relation to issues of national importance such as multiculturalism, racism and free speech and the way they participate in the nation.

Methodology: A time frame for my analysis.

In the weeks following her maiden speech to Parliament Hanson dominated the press (indeed her dominance lasted well into the next year) and her extensive coverage caused an incredible response from people from all parts of the country. I decided that this approximate six week period (September 10th to October 30th 1996) was the best period to examine as it was just when the story was breaking, and when large amounts of news and editorial space was dedicated to Hanson. In the months following, and with the establishment of the Pauline Hanson One Nation Party in April 1997, Hanson lost her "newness." Even though this was perhaps a more crucial time in the development of "Hansonism," by this stage the media had either lost interest or were deliberately not reporting Hanson. Importantly, the period chosen was the period when issues concerning race and free speech were, for the first time in many years, debated publicly in Australian society.

However, Hanson was not the only source of news during this time. Another major public debate flared up with the introduction of voluntary euthanasia legislation in the Parliament of the Northern Territory. The legislation was passed but it was not long before the Commonwealth Government chose to use Federal powers to override the new law. Concurrent with the debate on free speech surrounding Hanson's outbursts, revisionist historian David Irving was seeking to enter Australia to conduct a lecture tour after being deported from several other countries including Canada. Irving, renown for referring to the Holocaust as a "legend" that survived only because "nobody has come forward really with any kind of credibility and has rattled at the

foundations of that legend and said OK, prove it." Irving claimed that the Holocaust is a legend that the Jewish people have been "dining out on" for the last 50 years.¹¹ The Irving issue put the government into a difficult position regarding free speech, especially since Howard had claimed that a "pall of censorship" had been lifted off the nation after Hanson made her now famous maiden speech. The presence of these two issues flared public interest in Hanson and the race debate and with the addition of the argument over free speech she was never very far from the public eye during the period examined.¹²

To return to Hanson and the question of gender, I chose to examine the letters pages in the major Australian dailies during this period. The stories were gathered using keyword searches Pauline [AND] Hanson on those published on CD-ROM (*The Age*, *The Financial Review* and *Sydney Morning Herald*) or manually from Microfilm. One hundred and four in total were found and were then defined and categorised. As my research problematic involves women's political orientation and participation in national processes I chose to only use those that were written by women. I did not do any comparison to letters written by men, as I wasn't looking at gender differences but rather women's opinion of Hanson. The frame I chose to analyse the letters through was a relatively simple one. The most important information to be gathered was the paper that the letter came from, the person who wrote it, the date the letter was published, whether or not they were a supporter of Hanson, the heading (if any) how they positioned themselves and the themes/issues they raised.

For example:

¹¹ Michelle Grattan, "Free Speech could buck its rider," *Australian Financial Review* 26/9/1996.

¹² Michelle Grattan " Beware of a new 'correctness'," *Australian Financial Review* 24/9/1996.

Paper	Date	Place	Name	For	Heading	Themes/ issues	Position
<i>The West Australia n</i>	24/9/96	Dianella	Maxine Green	Yes	A very brave lady	Immigration weak government	home maker

Results

The table I developed allowed me to sort and calculate the letters, letting me manipulate the data in several ways to answer a variety of questions. The results for the most part were fairly straightforward. The number of letters from the different papers is as follows with the number that were for/against/not clear Hanson.

Paper	Who owns paper	No. of letters	Number for Hanson	Number against Hanson	Number not clear
<i>Courier Mail</i>	Newscorp	20	4	14	2
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	Newscorp	18	7	11	0
<i>NT News</i>	Newscorp	2	0	2	0
<i>Advertiser</i>	Newscorp	14	3	9	2
<i>Australian</i>	Newscorp	6	3	3	0
<i>Canberra Times</i>	Independent	3	2	1	0
<i>Sunday Mail</i>	Newscorp	2	0	2	0
<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>	Fairfax	25	3	22	0
<i>The West Australian</i>	Independent	5	2	3	0
<i>The Age</i>	Fairfax	9	4	4	1
Total		104	28	71	5

The majority of the letters written by women were against Hanson, approximately seventy percent overall. This result was fairly consistent throughout the publications, with between sixty and seventy percent of letters against Hanson in all dailies except the *Canberra Times*, which had such a small number of letters (as it is a relatively small independent paper) that perhaps it should be disregarded, and *The Age*. The publication of more letters criticising Hanson than supporting her drew charges of media bias. Conspiracy theorists who supported her claimed that it showed "bias in the selection of items" and this "bias" threatened freedom and the fabric of democracy, but as *Sydney Morning Herald* Letters editor Debra Jopson wrote on Monday 16th September, only a "handful of letters sympathetic to Hanson finally hit this desk on Friday. Only two gave a reason for this support."¹³

Reasons for support/non support

The reasons women gave for supporting Hanson mainly lay in their admiration of her courage in standing up for the silent majority against "the elites" who run the country.

I have three words for Pauline Hanson: Good on you. It's about time someone had the guts to say what is on most people's mind, including mine.
(Patricia McNichol, Rockdale *Daily Telegraph* 13/9/96)

Another emphasised resentment against the "tryanny" of political correctness:

If Pauline Hanson was elected by such a large majority in the electorate of Oxley that must surely send a clear message to the politically correct who have not had the courage or intestinal fortitude to stand up and listen to the people
(Marje Roswell, Cundletown, *Sydney Morning Herald* 23/10/96).

Some congratulated Hanson on her stand against Multiculturalism and the 'aboriginal industry':

It's time all politicians realised that Australia belongs to Australians. There is an old saying, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." Well, when in Australia, do as the Australians do.

(Elaine Whan, Belmont, *Daily Telegraph* 18/10/1996)

Others had more bizarre, but nonetheless nationalistic reasons for support:

I love Pauline Hanson. Not in a physical, sexual way, not in an emotional, loving way, but in a patriotic true blue, dinki di way

(Mog Hudson, Lalor Park, *Daily Telegraph*, 27/10/96)

Their words and phrases echo the sentiments Hanson expressed in her maiden speech. True blue and dinki di (or fair dinkum) are two epithets used in Australia to describe people who are exemplary examples of Australianness (whatever that may be). Supporters of Hanson not only identified with her politics, but also in the way she articulated them and her colloquial style. These voices of approval seem to come from those people who see themselves as dispossessed by the policies of the successive Labor and Liberal Governments since the 1980's, and by the changing face of the international economy.

The numerous letters from women who disagreed with Hanson were mostly concerned with her comments on multiculturalism and aborigines.

It is a sad indictment on our country that so many people agree with Ms Hanson. It makes me ashamed to be white.

(Margaret Roberts, Findon, *The Advertiser*, 11/10/1996).

Women responded to Hanson's re-racialisation of what it meant to be Australian. It was obvious to women such as Margaret Roberts that the targets of Hanson resentment were non-white immigrants and the indigenous population:

¹¹ Debra Jopson, "Postscript," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16/9/1996.

Ms Hanson is misinformed, ignorant and deeply worrying when she talks about multiculturalism, immigration, international aid, Australia's involvement in the United Nations and the Family Law Act. However she is frightening and dangerous when it comes to any matter pertaining to Aboriginal issues. She single handedly sets back the process of reconciliation every time she opens her mouth.

(Jack Hill, Tony O'Gorman & Mary Philips, Kalinga, *Courier Mail* 17/9/996)

The other major area of concern was revealed when the Mayor of a small South Australian town, Peter Davis, in support of Hanson's anti-immigration /multiculturalism stance, called children of 'mixed' relationships "mongrels (18/10/1996). His statement caused an incredible stir in the community. This statement serves as an excellent example of the racist opinions that had previously been unspeakable, but were legitimised by Hanson's speech in Parliament, and the "no reply" mentality of the Coalition government. The opinions of Peter Davis particularly disgusted women in the community who either had children or grand children from "mixed marriages," products of Australia's multicultural policies.

I was against mixed marriage- but I had one. I was against mixed blood children- but I've got them, and they're not mongrels: they're beautiful

(Jan Carroll, St.Kilda, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23/10/1996).

My father was Irish, my mother is English. Does that make me a mongrel?

(Donna Morris, Port Lincoln, *The Advertiser*, 22/10/96).

Themes and Issues

The themes and issues that women in the electorate raised in response to the "Hanson phenomenon" (as it soon became known) were the very ones that have preoccupied populist and conservative politicians and nationalists world-wide. Immigration, multiculturalism, racism, and the welfare state were tied in with the dispossession of white dominant culture as a result of government's active pursuit of policies of globalisation and freedom of speech versus political correctness. The biggest issue of concern for women was racism with

43 of the 104 letters discussing the "race debate." Almost all of the writers were disgusted with the impact this debate was having on the immigrant population. Hanson singled out the apparent increase in Asian immigration and there were 40 letters that mentioned/discussed Asian immigration. Again most of the letters condemned Hanson and supported the hard work of Asian immigrants. Multiculturalism was tied in with the race debate, and it was an issue that supporters of Hanson mentioned readily. Attacking Multiculturalism is a thinly veiled racist attack, as is evident in letters such as Marje Roswell from Cundletow who calls for a return to the White Australia Policy;

If I was to speak with such venom about the ethnics or Asiatics as they are doing with such impunity against Pauline Hanson, imagine where I would end up...The Australian people have been denied any say in immigration or multiculturalism... We chose not to be Asianised in the 1940's and the majority are still the same.
(Marje Roswell, Cundletow *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23/10/96)

Hanson's attack on the "Aboriginal Industry" angered some of the readers. Fourteen made reference to Indigenous peoples, ten of them outraged at her claim that they are the most advantaged people in Australia.

As a young aboriginal woman it is hard enough living around racial tension while trying desperately to make something of our lives...It is an obstacle just to get a good job. Without those aboriginal identified jobs and allowances people are permitted not to employ us because of who we are and get away with it.
(N Walker, Liverpool, *Daily Telegraph*, 4/10/96)

However the other four letters mentioning Indigenous Australians were supporters of Hanson and revealed the problem that some Australians have with reconciliation:

What happened 200 years ago has nothing to do with us. I don't care what race a person is, just get on with life and make the most of what you have.
(Patricia F McNicol, Rockdale, *Daily Telegraph*, 13/9/96)

Hanson's extreme views on immigration and Indigenous Australians brought issues of race to the forefront of politics. The race debate that developed was harmful to Australians from non English speaking backgrounds, in particular visible non-white immigrants such as the Asian and middle eastern communities. The letters written by women about the race debate - specific views of race aside - not only revealed how Australians understand racism, but also how this discourse was played out within a greater discourse of political correctness and freedom of speech. The terms race and racism proved confusing for many readers. Alice De Angelis of East Lindfield, an opponent of Hanson, whilst discussing her love for her new Australian Indian son-in-law, states that *"everyone is a little bit racist when it comes to the crunch"* (*Sydney Morning Herald* 9/10/96). In reply to her statement, Dr. Jill Gordon of Roseville (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/10/96) separates race anxiety: *"We are a little anxious about anyone who looks unfamiliar"* - from racism: *"a pathological state of mind, born of the same fear, but taken to extremes."* The letters to the editors sections in the daily papers provided a forum where the electorate were able to discuss issues of race in a way that elected representatives seemed unable to do in the nation's Parliament.

The massive stir caused by Hanson and her newly found supporters had many sections of the community calling on the Prime Minister John Howard to denounce her speech in Parliament. Howard refused to do so for a substantial length of time, claiming that Hanson had the democratic right of "free speech" to say what she wanted to say without censure. Free speech became for a time, the critical issue, particularly when the government was faced with the decision to grant or refuse David Irving entry into Australia. This incredible mismanagement of the Hanson phenomenon by Howard was a huge issue of

contention for many of the writers. Thirty-three readers had issues with the “free speech” that Howard was claiming as his reason for not confronting her or her supporters.

Now that the Prime Minister is an advocate of “Freedom of Speech” he won’t mind it if I call him a little, insipid, narrow-minded, racist, uncaring blankety-blank, worse than any type of leader we have ever had in Australia.

(Barbara Fuller-Quinn, Bondi, *Sydney Morning Herald* 25/9/96)

However, “freedom of speech” was celebrated by some of the respondents, especially those feeling after years of suffering under a regime of “political correctness” they were able to talk openly about the issues that concerned them. This populist ideal of free speech appealed to one reader, who applauding Hanson’s actions:

Obviously she is the only politician in this current climate who has captured the essence of democracy. Her “populist” thinking is the basis of democracy. Of course the Ancient Greeks may have got this wrong, and the real meaning of democracy should be that unless one is politically correct, one is not democratic.

(Christine Rolfe, Chapel Hill, *Courier Mail*, 19/10/96)

The anti-political correctness evident in this letter was to be found in most of the letters that supported Hanson. That Hanson was speaking for the “silent majority” and therefore had democracy on her side was a repeated theme.

In addition to enunciating fundamental democratic principles, she (Hanson) seems to be advocating equal treatment of all Australians irrespective of skin colour. What’s so heinous about that?”

(Celistino Campos, Caboolture, *Courier Mail*, 17/10/96)

This letter is also a perfect example of the screwed logic of the populist, twisting notions of equality to defend inequalities already present in the social system.

The apparent loss of a white Australian culture was mourned by some of the respondents.

We need to recognise the legitimacy of the grief people can feel at the loss of the familiar. We recognise that this is a major source of heartache for migrants. It is hypocritical.

especially of the ethnic lobby, to label the same emotions in other Australians (white) as racism.

(Mary M Anich, Birchgrove, *The Australian*, 24/10/96)

This emphasis on the whiteness of Australian National culture was an important part of the Hanson campaign where non-English speaking Immigrants and indigenous Australians are seen as a threat to the dominant white culture.

Of course many Australians are worried about Asian Immigration. With Unemployment over 8%, and our culture going down the plughole, it's time for a major rethink."

(Netta Moore, Manningham, *The Advertiser*, 23/9/96)

Interestingly, only one letter mentioned Hanson in reference to women in politics. The writer was unclear as to whether or not she was for or against Hanson.

Finally, a female politician worth listening to. Thank you Trish Worth for you brilliant article (8/10/96) I've also found that Pauline Hanson's comments can bring out the worst in people.

(Gaynor Scheer, Taninda, *The Advertiser*, 9/10/96)

Hanson as a woman in politics may not have been an issue of great importance in the letters analysed, but women's role in other national processes was. A surprising number of women discussed how they saw themselves in relation to Hanson and the issues she raised.

Women and Hanson

Perhaps the most interesting factor to be revealed by the media analysis was how women in Australia positioned themselves in relation to the issues of national importance that Hanson raised, such as multiculturalism, racism and nationalism. Whether or not the women analysed were for or against Hanson, they engaged with her at many levels, identifying in her several roles that they saw themselves playing in

national processes. Identification for the purpose of this study is used to mean sympathising or engaging with a character (in this case Hanson and Hansonism), through the perception of common qualities shared with the subject, whether it be knowledge, sympathies or moral values.¹⁴ Hanson, in her maiden speech from the outset positioned herself as a mother and likewise, in nineteen of the letters surveyed, the women identified themselves as mothers or grandmothers. However, unlike Hanson, who tried to use her status as a mother to protect the dominant Australian culture from "swarms" of migrants, the women's letters studied showed how crucial motherhood is to the policy of multiculturalism. Women here demonstrated the pride they saw in stretching the nations boundaries in their roles as the producers of children and grandchildren from mixed ethnicities.

Children are beautiful whatever their nationality and racial mix, and one's grandchildren should especially be so... successive waves of post-war immigration have enriched what would have otherwise been a fairly barren and sterile Australian culture; I believe we are fortunate to live in such a vibrant and exciting period in our history- does it matter if, in future, Australia becomes a nation of "coffee coloured people."

(Helen Bell, Scone, *Sydney Morning Herald* 26/10/96)

Just as women were used as breeders of the white nation in the times of the White Australia Policy, ironically they have now recognised in themselves the capacity to eliminate racial boundaries through the once despised and illegal process of miscegenation. However, this is still an example of the representation of women in traditional roles, as reproducers of the national process, and with the adoption of multiculturalism, this national process just took on a modified form.

Whilst by far the majority of the letters focused on issues of race and immigration, a few women did pick up on the other controversial statements made by Hanson in her maiden speech. Hanson's attack on the single parent's benefits was recognised by some as an ironic attack on single mothers. A. Anderson of

¹⁴ Jackie Stacey, *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and female spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1994) 141.

Kambah in the Australian Capital Territory, a social worker (another nurturing role for women) argued against this backlash against women;

Abuse and violence aside, no right-minded parent prevents a child from seeing its father and yes, it does happen and of course it should not. For the sake of some balance, however, may we also hear of the men who won't take the access they are encouraged to have?
(A.Anderson, Kambah, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16/10/96)

Hanson's suggestion to cut benefits to unemployed sole parents is refuted by Mrs P.Burns who refers to herself as a single mother.

Pauline Hanson has truly lost the plot this time. I am referring to her recent comments regarding sole parents- another group she obviously believes are incapable of adequately defending themselves.
(Blacktown, *Daily Telegraph*, 15/10/96)

Divorced and unwed mothers are often a target for certain sections of the right-wing community. Moral conservatives blame these women for the moral decay of society, a decay that is said to have increased when women found freedom and left the home to work. The destruction of the home for some equals the destruction of the nation. Men in this picture are innocents, caught in the middle of divorce with vicious women not wanting them to play their natural paternal role in creating the next generation of "true-blue Aussies."

The family is of great importance to moral conservatives and populists, as discussed in chapter one, and whilst the protection of the family has been used to support an attack on women, the media and drugs; the all-forgiving heart of the mother can be used to promote tolerance. One writer from Auchenflower wrote to *Courier-Mail* with her beliefs.

Like a family we should be working to make this country a unified nation. A mother does not love her first and last born less; neither does she love her children less because they do not look alike...A divided and argumentative household is a sad one. Let us work on being more harmonious.
(Peggy Rush, Auchenflower, *Courier-Mail*, 26/10/96)

What is interesting in this statement is that the writers mobilise Hanson's discourse of femininity and unity, using it against her.

In her maiden speech Hanson used her home as an analogy for the nation whilst defending her immigration and welfare policies. "*Of course, I will be called a racist, but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country.*"¹⁵ The home is the place where the nation's morals and values are transmitted and where women actively participate in the national process.¹⁶ The home, the hearth, is often seen as the moral heart of the nation. Populist and conservative politicians often call upon it as a space to be protected from the dangers of the liberated outside world. Working women, divorce, drugs and television are all blamed for the destruction of the traditional family home and as a result greater society. In this age of multiculturalism, Hanson's home is also under threat by nosy neighbours, one of Hanson's metaphors for immigration. Several women identified with this metaphor and applauded her.

My mother used to say charity begins at home and this is how it should be. Australia is our home. Look after our fellow Australians first - they need jobs, housing and security too.
(Catherine Barrett, Warnbro, *The West Australian* 19/9/96)

The common sense of the housekeeper - evident in the policies and tactics of populist like Hanson - is used to refute the intellectual laws of the cultural elites.

Women do not only transmit the national culture through the home: their role as nurturers is extended to other parts of society such as the welfare and education system. In several of the letters, the

¹⁵ Pauline Hanson, "Maiden speech to Parliament," (10 September, 1996).

¹⁶ Nira Yuval-Davis, and Floya Anthias, eds., *Woman-Nation-State* (London: Macmillan, 1989) 7-11.

writers identified themselves as teachers and discussed the impact that the race debate was having on students. The school, a place where children are taught to be good "citizens" is seen as a miniature example of greater Australian society;

At this Australian High School we treat each other as equals, without thinking about it.
Most of Australia is like that
(Maria Ieraci, Summer Hill, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10/9/96)

The school is a place where changes in a government's cultural policy are very noticeable. With the introduction of multiculturalism in Australia, the curriculum was changed to be more "culturally aware," instigating "English as a second language" programs. And after years of studying a white British history of the Nation, with the moves towards reconciliation in the early 1990's' aboriginal history was introduced into Australian schools. These types of changes in schools and especially tertiary institutions have been attacked by the anti-intellectual movement in Australia, accusing the proponents of the programs of bowing to powerful ethnic minorities against the wishes of the silenced majorities.

Women's participation in national processes is not just limited to breeding and the home. They also contribute economically and politically. Hanson prided herself on being a successful businesswoman, helping to build the nation with her hard work. The idea of the hardworking underdog white Australian is central to the populist rhetoric of the One Nation Party. Whilst some readers look down on Hanson for her infamous "fish n' chips business," she was the subject of admiration by others:

I am disgusted at the numerous writers to the Herald who, apparently, consider that her occupation as a Fish 'n Chips shop proprietor is contemptible. On the contrary, her occupation shows that she is a hard working and capable woman
(Ruth de Mountfort, Balgowlah Heights, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1/10/96)

Ironically, the image of the hard working migrant in takeaway shops such as Hanson's has been used as an example of immigrant's contribution to the nation. In small country towns across Australia - in towns

like Hanson's Ipswich - for many years, "foreigners" would run the fruit shops, delis and takeaways and Chinese Australian Restaurants, slowly introducing multicultural cuisine to the nation. All of these businesses had very long hours, and were jobs that "white" Australians were not interested in, in the fear that work would infringe on "the Great Australian leisure time." These were businesses that were ultimately profitable for their hardworking migrant owners, who were seen to embody the success of multiculturalism in Australia. Several of the women who wrote letters identified themselves in this representation.

I have lived her for 20 years; I work very hard and pay lots of tax so that our politicians are paid. But now and then Pauline Hanson's come along and tell me I should not have done any of it because I do not look Australian.

(Dr. Janet Kim, Campsie, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21/10/96)

Another group of Asian Australians including Members of Parliaments, nurses and neurologists, wrote and identified themselves as "prominent members of the Asian community" who were successfully participating in the nation (*The Advertiser*, 17/10/96). Ms Peggy Lau of Urrbrae also wrote to the *Advertiser* as a "business migrant" to draw attention to the role that immigrants had in building the economic basis of the nation.

I understand, over the past decade, we have done a lot of research on the extent, nature and consequences of international population movements to and from Australia...One report shows that for every migrant family that enters the country, four new jobs are created because of their consumption of services.

(Ms Peggy Lau, Urrbrae, *The Adelaide Advertiser*, 22/10/96)

These migrant women identified with the idea of the hardworking citizen and wrote to express a desire to be recognised for their economic participation in nation building, which is a relatively new role for women.

The analysis of letters written by women in response to Hanson was revealing. Women have fairly limited political power in the state's official apparatus and when choosing to discuss issues of national importance in this quasi-political forum many were drawn to "feminine" ideals and representations. Mother

and grandmother, housekeeper and teacher, these are positions where women's agency has traditionally lain. In the past there have been attempts to control these roles through anti-miscegenation laws. With Hanson, attacks were made on the agency of single mothers, with policies aiming to slash welfare benefits. Yet women have also discovered great power in these representations, as the mothers of a new, ethnically mixed generation of Australians and as teachers of tolerance and harmony. Since the feminist movements in the 1960's women have ventured into the male dominated economic and political realm of the nation and have flourished. The importance of women's participation in these national processes has for many years been underestimated. By trivialising the role of the home and the family, in these processes, women's power is diminished. Hanson and her populist, conservative rhetoric was a controversial and contradictory text that prompted a myriad of responses from women. Most women identified with her, that is, they responded to the representations she played with; as a mother, a housekeeper and as a businesswomen, and they recognised in themselves the important and varied function that they play in national processes though they didn't necessarily agree with her.

Chapter Three

PAULINE HANSON AND THE CONTRADICTIONS OF THE "RIGHT-WING" WOMAN.

"I regard this country like I regard my home, and that I have a responsibility...its like a woman who has your home and you want to look after it...pride and responsibility first and foremost to this country...I am responsible for this, like a mother, to actually look after the country first and foremost, before worrying about your neighbours.¹

(Pauline Hanson)

The study of the policies of Pauline Hanson's One Nation party and the analysis of the response to Hanson by women in the electorate has revealed interesting contradictions in two areas: first in Hanson's own discourse versus her actual position and life experience.; second in women's representation of their own gender and the roles they see themselves playing in the processes mentioned by Hanson against the gains of the feminist revolution and feminist rhetoric. Through the examinations in chapter one and two, it becomes apparent that both proponents and opponents of Hanson still represent themselves as traditional participants in the nation. Whilst there is a long history of conservative women maintaining these traditions,² ironically even "left-wing" women call upon representations of what de Lauretis calls "Woman"³ Mothers, care-givers and housekeeper were used to defend political beliefs. Why then are these traditional representations so important to women from all sides of the political spectrum? And how was Hanson able to use them to gain support from her mostly male voters?

¹ Quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (September 22, 1998).

² Andrea Dworkin, *Right Wing Women: The Politics of Domesticated Females* (London: The Women's Press, 1983).

³ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) 8.

Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party was a brilliant example of a right-wing nationalistic movement, but unlike the other right wing movements that have come before it, a woman led One Nation. However, the presence of a female leader did not necessarily mean that women were attracted to the party. As examined in the first chapter of this thesis, the majority of Hanson's supporters were men. Hanson did not appeal to these men by using masculine ideals and tactics. She did not deny her femininity, quite the opposite: Pauline Hanson called upon traditional images of Womanhood to gain her support base. Yet as the second chapter of this thesis revealed, whilst not always supporting Hanson, women responded to the roles that she conjured up. In this final chapter I want to understand Hanson's policies and her reception by women in light of the work that has been completed on right wing women.

Mothers of the Nation

Hanson used traditional images of women in a variety of ways, perhaps the most obvious was illustrated when she christened herself "The mother of the Nation," calling upon a role that women have traditionally played in national processes. Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias in their examination of women and nationalism have labelled a major part of women's participation in national processes as "biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectives."⁴ In this discussion women are traditionally seen as the "breeders of the Nation." This role was particularly pertinent at times of perceived danger for nation states in the past, when in fear of being "swamped" by different racial or ethnic groups, they encouraged the population growth of the dominant group, often using nationalist and religious discourse.

⁴ Nira Yuval-Davis, and Floya Anthias, eds., *Woman-Nation-State* (London: Macmillian 1989)7-11.

Like so many of Hanson's policies, her mother of the nation speech harked back to the glorious Australian past, to the tradition of Australian motherhood. In the same way that the government at the turn of the century, parallel with the passing of Immigrations Restrictions, called on white women's duty to prevent a racial holocaust by bearing more children,⁵ Hanson used the image of the mother to protect her nation.⁶ By making herself to be the victimised symbol of the white nation, a woman whose land was under attack from "swarms" of Asians and vindictive natives, Hanson portrayed herself to her constituency as the underdog, the "Aussie Battler" mum with four kids and a fish and chip shop to support. This image was particularly attractive to white men in the community who through the changes that had embraced Australian culture since the middle of the century had no mothers or wives to fight for. They were no longer in their traditional dominant positions to protect those that they had. Hanson used this image as justification of her racist immigration and economic policies. As a mother, she had a duty to protect her white Australian children from pestering and dangerous foreign-born neighbours.

In her essay "No longer in a Future Heaven", Ann McClintock identifies the "temporal anomaly" within nationalism. Nationalist movements veer between nostalgia on the one hand and the impatient, progressive sloughing off of the past on the other. McClintock has figured these contradictions in the representation of time as a natural gender division. Women, as the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition, embody the desire of the nations past, while men represent the future and revolutionary principle of

⁵ M.de Lepervanche, "Women, nation and the State in Australia," in Nira Yuval-Davis & Floya Anthias, eds. *Woman-Nation-State* (London: Macmillan, 1989) 46.

⁶ As there was concern in the newly formed Federation that the "white race" was dying out, this belief was particularly pertinent in the period after the First World War when thousands of young Australian men were killed on the battle fields of Gallipoli and France.

discontinuity.⁷ This desire to return to the “good old days” was an important part of One Nation’s rhetoric. Using the symbol of the “Aussie Battler,” as discussed in chapter one, the project of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Party concentrated on an image of Australia pre 1965. Hanson in her Policy on Population and social cohesion stated that: “*The policy of Multiculturalism attempts to discredit and destroy our shared story and impose upon us a different story. This will produce Australians whose feelings toward the pre 1965 Australian and her heroes will be those of contempt, guilt, indifference and ignorance.*”⁸ In effect what the One Nation party was looking to reconstitute an Australia that had been largely consigned to the past,⁹ a past where women were at home looking after the children of the nation.

Both her supporters and opponents mirrored Hanson’s invocation of motherhood. Perhaps the most obvious issues that were highlighted in the media analysis in chapter two, were how women in the electorate emphasised the importance of having children, and motherhood’s place in national processes. From the responses of these women and from examples in the past, women’s role as breeders of the nation not only lies in just having children, but producing *the right kind* of children. The prevention of the dilution of national stock has historically been of great importance to leaders, who saw women as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups. Women have been controlled in terms of the “proper” way they should have children, ways which would reproduce the boundaries of the symbolic identity of their ethnic groups or of that of their husbands. Women were not only to reproduce, but also to preserve the purity of the race.

⁷ A. McClintock, “No longer in a Future Heaven,” in A. McClintock & E. Shohat eds, *Dangerous Liaisons* (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 92.

⁸ *Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Policy Document on Immigration, Population and Social Cohesion.*

⁹ “The cry from the outback,” *The Economist*, London, (September 5, 1998).

Examples of this can be found in Australia's past, where these boundaries were maintained by the policing of women's sexual activity through anti-miscegenation laws, and the prevention of women immigrating to the colonies. In the words of Anne Summers, middle-class white women in colonial Australia were expected to be "God's Police,"¹⁰ their sexual subjectivity denied, as was the possibility of them seeking out or welcoming Aboriginal men. Any relationship between aboriginal men and white women was defined as rape. The children of these relationships - the results of either the forced or welcomed sexual relations of white men and indigenous women- were labelled "half-castes" and not recognised as a part of the dominant culture.

Whilst Hanson never proclaimed that children should not be born from mixed marriages or relationships, some of her supporters did. The reaction to the statement that "children from mixed marriages were mongrels" by the mayor of a South Australian town soon after Hanson's maiden speech was intense. Mothers and grandmothers from across the nation wrote to papers rejoicing in their role in the multicultural project. Ironically, these women, who were opposed to Hanson and her policies, used the same basis as their opponents for arguing different racial points of view. They believed that breeding was paramount to the success of multiculturalism, and those opposed to mixed marriages, saw reproduction as crucial to protecting the white race. Either way, these women's invocation of motherhood and their perceived position in either expanding or protecting racial/ethnic boundaries is indicative of the importance that women still place on traditional roles in national processes when representing their gender.

"As every housewife knows..."

¹⁰ Anne Summers, *Damned whores and God's Police* (Blackburn:Penguin, 1975).

Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias point out that from the home and within the family, women participate centrally in the nation in the ideological reproduction of the collective and as transmitters of its cultures. Through their roles in upbringing the “children of the nation,” in the domestic space, women actively participate in the reproduction of the nation. Through language and cultural ideals, the importance and influence of women’s domestic role cannot be underestimated. Interestingly, this domestic space was often the place where white women and black women met in Australia’s colonial past. The relationship of mistress and maid, the constructed interracial domestic space, enforced the subordination of the indigenous population. Although some white women were sensitive to the situation of their charges, and their attitudes towards the indigenous population was different to that of men’s, most never fundamentally challenged the morality of settler colonisation.¹¹ Traditionally, women are seen to possess some sort of innate common sense that comes from keeping house. Hanson drew upon her status as a single mother looking after a house, and made a parallel to looking after the country or nation. This parallel was used to defend not only her immigration policies, but also her economic policies. Hanson, as a mother and housekeeper, did not have to let strangers into her “house”, and she also had experience in running a household economy. What other qualifications did she need to run a country? It is this type of “wisdom” that populists use to gain support from the community. The fact that Hanson was able to use her common sense in everyday life (after all she was a successful businesswoman, mother and proud housekeeper) was ample evidence that she was suitable to rule wisely and with the mandate of the “people.”

¹¹ Patricia Grimshaw & Julie Evans, “Colonial Women on Intercultural Frontiers,” *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 27, no 106 (1996) 80.

Hanson's rhetoric of the housekeeper was not a new phenomenon in conservative politics. Margaret Thatcher, perhaps the most famous of all female conservatives, called upon the housewife and other traditional female roles to support her economic and social reforms.

Women and Thatcherism

Thatcherism is a very important, perhaps the most important, example of the contradictory role that women hold in national processes and more particularly in conservative movements. That Thatcher was a woman and Prime Minister was significant, but it was no real victory for women. Like Hanson, Thatcher's policies were not aimed at improving the life of the "sisterhood," in fact most of her policies attacked the social and economic gains that women had achieved in the twenty years since the feminist revolution. Britain in the 1980's was a time when the social welfare state that had been in place since after the Second World War was ruthlessly dismantled.

From a feminist point of view, the development of the welfare state had problematic implications. The welfare state did nothing to challenge the underlying sexual division of labour, indeed it was premised upon the need to minimally compensate women for their unpaid work of social reproduction, through a variety of benefits, and hence ensured that women's identities and interests were still linked with those of their children and families.¹² However Thatcher's series of cutbacks still had profound negative effects on women and gender relations. Coupled with the push for a new consumer culture and the privatisation and deregulation of the workforce, cutbacks in health and education meant the use of mothers as volunteers to

back up services on an unpaid basis.¹³ The Conservative government's social and fiscal policy spelt an increased insecurity and dependency for women. This movement has been labelled the "feminisation of poverty."¹⁴ Thatcher's "enterprise culture" increased the gap between women in different segments of society, to the benefit of some and to the detriment of the majority, and exacerbated the forms of inequality that divide women.¹⁵

Thatcher did not directly advocate a return to the home for women, or did not blame feminism per se for the social disintegration following on from the "permissive" era of the 1960's.¹⁶ However, indirectly her policies and rhetoric placed women back in traditional roles.

The role of the family in society became an important tool for Thatcher. Thatcher's rhetoric neatly tied the notion of the family to enterprise culture. She promoted the family as a source of freedom, liberty, dignity; of national pride; of moral values and most importantly, of consumption. Therefore Thatcher's enterprise culture was "*rooted in the family unit and its acquisitive drive for an even more materially enriched future.*"¹⁷ The family became the society as the state's role in its life diminished. This family rhetoric in Thatcher's conservatism was not necessarily about improving how society is cared for. Quite the opposite, it was essentially an appeal to individualism. "*It is about confirming that we must look after ourselves and be self-sufficient. We are told we must look after what we can claim as our own- our wives, children's and other*

¹³ S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 24.

¹⁴ M.David & R.Levitas. "Antifeminism and the British and American New Rights" in Gill Seidel ed., *The Nature of the Right* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Co, 1988) 148.

¹⁵ S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 27.

¹⁶ S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 38.

¹⁷ S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 43.

¹⁷ S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 31.

possessions. Because if we don't nobody else will." ¹⁸ Ironically, the version of nuclear family life that Thatcher proposed was being destroyed through her policies of privatisation and deregulation, resulting in high unemployment and massive welfare cutbacks. And whilst Thatcher used the family as a central institution in the "new society" she was creating, it was curiously exempt from close political analysis and "remained at the level of distant fantasy in order to avoid an exposure of the gendered inequalities within it." ¹⁹

The ascendancy of a woman to the nation's highest political office, and the subsequent stamping of an entire era with her name ("Thatcherism" was first used by Stuart Hall in 1979 but it was embraced by both sides of the political spectrum in the 1980's and 1990's), during a time of a massive challenge to male dominance and privilege in public life is important. Thatcher would never have reached her position without the achievements of the feminist movement, but claiming Thatcher as a sign of success for feminism is problematic. Like Hanson, "Thatcher assumed a position of political leadership on very patriarchal terms, however much she may have played upon her identity as a mother, homemaker and housewife in her professional life." ²⁰ Thatcher was certain that the feminist battle had been fought and won. In the true spirit of liberal humanism, she saw herself acting as a unique individual, working her way through the ranks of the party to the top, with no help from her "sisters." She did not challenge the male hierarchy of politics, there were no real political advantages for women introduced when she came to power; there were no "jobs for the girls." The fact that she surrounded herself with an almost exclusively male cabinet exemplifies this. Thatcher was without a doubt conservative. She was not challenging the status quo, or the fundamental rules of the

¹⁸ L. Segal, "The Heat In The Kitchen," in Stuart Hall & Martin Jacques. Eds. *The Politics of Thatcherism*. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1983) 298.

¹⁹ S. Franklin, C. Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 41.

²⁰ S. Franklin, C. Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 41.

“boy’s game” of mainstream politics, she did not change precedents or improve opportunities for women. However the irony was, that as a female she proved that women were capable of holding high political offices.

The rhetoric of Thatcherism illustrates the conservative disdain for many women’s experiences and a distaste for some features in feminine culture. One particularly famous phrase “*As every housewife knows*” was used by Thatcher to establish parallels between the domestic and national economies. Thatcher, drawing on her practice in running a household economy, translated economic doctrine into the populist “*language of experience, moral imperative and common sense.*”²¹ This phrase had a double effect. It was not directly aimed at women, it spoke *about* the housewife, not necessarily to her, and it also used a female role that was increasingly diminishing throughout Thatcher’s rule as more women entered the workforce. Ironically, through the Conservative Party’s policies, maintaining a household economy in Thatcher’s Britain was incredibly hard. Statements like this also harked “*back to the wartime conventions strongly associated with British nationalism and nostalgia, women were encouraged to carry heavy domestic burdens and to make great self-sacrifices in the ‘national interest’.*”²²

One other term used by the Thatcher government was an explicitly gendered representation of the aim to dissolve the welfare state: “*Fighting the Nanny State.*” The negative association implicit in this phrase is attached not only to the state but also to a distinctive kind of feminine labour. Like Pauline Hanson, Thatcher and her party drew on traditional images of motherhood and women’s domesticity to express policies of national importance. And like Thatcher, Hanson’s use of feminine roles was not necessarily to gain

²¹ Stuart Hall, *The Politics of Thatcherism* (London:Lawrence & Wishart, 1983) 8.

²² Maureen McNeil in S.Franklin, C.Lury, & J. Stacey, *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (London: Harper Collins, 1991) 225.

the support of women in the electorate, but for the most part a way of attracting those men who responded to traditional ideas of women.

However the role of the housekeeper was still attractive to women surveyed in the media analysis, in particular those women who supported Hanson. They were able to relate to her comparison of the home and the nation. The home, the hearth, was seen as the moral heart of the nation and was a space to be protected from the dangers of the changing outside world. For some of those women who were to oppose Hanson, whilst they didn't necessarily relate to the role of housekeeper, they did see their role as nurturers extended to other parts of society such as the welfare and education system. In several of the letters, the writers identified themselves as teachers and discussed the impact that the race debate was having on students. They saw that the school, like the home, is a place where children are taught how to participate in the national project by learning to be good "citizens". It was women's responsibility as teachers (the role of teacher is traditionally one filled by women) to nurture in their charges the roots of multiculturalism and equality.

Women's political orientation

Why then do women on both sides of the political spectrum still conjure up traditional representations of women in support of their political views? An examination of women's political orientation provides some answers. Political scientists (an almost exclusively male discipline until the 1970's) have traditionally seen women as conservative in their political orientation. Studies from the 1950's in women's political participation show that women held a "moralistic or reform orientation towards politics."²¹ Up until

²¹ Susan Bourque & Jean Grosshotz, in A. Philips ed., *Feminism and Politics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)29.

the 1970's, women were apparently more inclined than men to vote conservatively in every country that information was available.²⁴ Women were seen as a source of political and moral conservatism, as relatively "pure" carriers of a culture's traditions.²⁵ These studies also reveal that the main forum for women's political participation was through the family. Their primary political function was to socialise children and to filter the needs of the home into the political system.²⁶ The conservatism of women was tied directly to their position as the moral guardians of society. Whilst this social conservatism is still a major part of right-wing politics, as the roles available to women in society, outside of the home broadened, there appeared to be a marked change in their political participation and orientation. Women it seems, with the success of the second wave of feminism, and as their focus was pulled away from the family, were becoming less conservative than their male counterparts.

The feminist revolution was part of a broader societal change that swept the western world after the Second World War. As a result, the direction of many parties on the left was moved from its traditional trade union base to encompass and accommodate the changing situation. Along with fighting for the rights of the workers, issues such as the environment, social programs and peace became part of the "leftist" agenda. As women entered the paid labour force, various studies conducted in the 1980's have shown that they became more sympathetic than men to these issues in most Western Democracies.²⁷ This phenomenon has been christened the "gender-gap" by political-scientists and sociologists.

²⁴ Pippa Norris. "Mobilizing the 'Women's Vote': The Gender Generation Gap". *Parliamentary Affairs Vol.49* (1996).336..

²⁵ Ted Jelen, Sue Thomas & Clyde Wilcox. "The Gender Gap in Comparative Perspective" *European Journal of Parliamentary Affairs Vol 25* (1994)171.

²⁶ Susan Bourque & Jean Grossholtz, in Philips, Anne (ed) *Feminism and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 36.

²⁷ Ted Jelen, Sue Thomas & Clyde Wilcox. "The Gender Gap in Comparative Perspective." *European Journal of Parliamentary Affairs Vol 25* (1994) 172.

Some attempt to explain the now famous gap in gender attitudes has been made; the most prominent explanation is that women have different political values to men. Women have been seen to embody an "ethic of caring"- biological or socialised- as a result of their ability to give birth, or because they are taught to cooperate and help each other. This is the "essence of Woman" that Teresa de Lauretis examines in the *Technologies of Gender*.²⁸ Therefore women's traditional social role has now become a source of her "leftist" attitudes not her conservatism. This unveils the confusion apparent in the study of women's political orientation. Added to this, more recent studies are revealing that the so-called "gender-gap" is actually more complicated than just gender. Showing that the universalisation of women's experience by concentrating on the "essences" of Womanhood can delay any meaningful discussion on differences among women. Norris, in her 1996 examination of British voting behaviour, has revealed that rather than a simple gender-gap, it is more useful to talk about a "gender-generation-gap." Women are not acting as a homogeneous voting bloc; there is a deep divide between younger and older women in their party preferences.²⁹ Women, like men do not vote necessarily according to their gender. However, it does seem that whether women vote either conservatively or liberally, many of them still call upon the traditional biological or socialised "ethic of caring" that women are supposed to embody.

Whilst Hanson cannot really be categorised as strictly conservative- she is not religious or an economic rationalist- she does draw on major conservative arguments to defend her nationalistic, anti-welfare stance. For many of the female supporters of Hanson, most of whom are older Australians, the traditional conservative representation of women is paramount to the well being of the Australian nation. They

²⁸ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

recognised in Hanson's policies an opportunity to return the nation to the god fearing, family orientated country it was in the 1950's. This electoral behaviour is not exclusive to Australia.

Feminism has had a massive impact on women's political behaviour worldwide, and like other ideological forces associated with the latter part of the 20th Century, it has been a major factor in the global move towards conservatism. Rebecca Klatch in her study of women in the New Right in the USA- a case that is pertinent also to the Australian experience- examines the motivation of these types of social or moral conservative women and finds in many of them a backlash attitude towards feminism. The issues raised by the supporters (female and male) of Hanson are at times very similar to those of the New Right in the USA in the 1980's. As I will explain in the next section, an examination of social or moral conservative women reveals a great deal about how women position themselves in the nation.

Social or Moral Conservative Women

Social conservative women are concerned with the maintenance of the traditional religious and family based nature of the nation, calling on the "common sense" of the population. Their political beliefs come from a traditional standpoint, advocating the restraint and curbing of individual self interest, and sometimes focusing on man as a moral being: as part of a religious community destined for the next world. For many conservatives, religion provides the unquestionable basis for their logic. However the logic of the social conservative is questionable as illustrated by Andrew Sullivan, an Eighties editor of the famous

²⁹ Pippa Norris, "Mobilizing the 'Women's Vote': The Gender Generation Gap," *Parliamentary Affairs Vol.49* (1996) 332.

American Right-wing publication "The New Republic." He offered a particularly extraordinary view on the autonomous self

"The cultural signals given by elite's since the 1960's- the downgrading of fidelity, the rejection of marital self-discipline, the rise of female independence- have coincided with the collapse of the poor black family. While perfectly sustainable among the prosperous, such permissive forms have proved disastrous in the ghettos."³⁰

All of the factors he blamed for the prominence of the "autonomous self" were caused by the revolutionary changes of the feminist movement. Infidelity, in the past seen as a momentary lapse of reason or weakness in men, and either celebrated or brushed under the carpet, became responsible for the massive inequalities in the economic system. Tied in with this backlash reasoning is the racially based generalisation that the poorer black classes are not responsible or intelligent enough to enjoy the kind of freedoms that come with adopting the liberal doctrines of feminism and equality. Likewise in Australia, racial generalisations were the speciality of Hanson's discourse of resentment. Fear that Asians were swamping her "house" was the logic behind her immigration policies. A bastardisation of the notion of "equality" formed the basis of her welfare reforms, particularly her proposed halt of "hand outs" to Aborigines.

Social conservative women want to use the state to achieve righteous ends, by legislating on moral issues. They view the total autonomy of individuals as narcissistic and amoral, a triumph of the "secular humanism" that is responsible for the downfall of civilisation. They seek to return the nation to the authority of God, the church and the patriarchal family. Whilst Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party did not have a strong religious element, the return to the patriarchal family was indeed an important part of their policies on Family Law and proposed reforms of the social welfare system. Hanson's support of the dominant father figure was barely disguised in her fight for non-custodial parents. The father was the rightful head of the

family and recently emancipated women and an interfering court system were tearing his children away from him.

Most importantly, the women of social conservative groups see their political activism as anti-feminist. Feminists are seen as "masculinised women," and therefore they threaten to destroy the traditional 'feminine' domains of the family and its moral values. In their battle to restore tradition, "social conservative women then, act as an extension of their role as women- as mothers, as nurturers, as caretakers, as upholders of moral values,"³¹ they are fighting a political war in their own interests as women. Ironically they are vocal and active as they call for traditional roles. Hanson did not call herself a feminist, feminists were one of the groups of "do gooders" who she believed were enjoying the fruits of the Australian welfare state at the expense of the Aussie battlers she was fighting for. However, Like Margaret Thatcher, Hanson obviously benefited from the achievements of feminists- she was a business woman, a single parent and the leader of her own political party- achievements that were unheard of in the era that her supporters so longed for. But she disregarded feminist representations of gender and instead chose to invoke traditional notions of Womanhood in her rhetoric: like the social conservatives did in the USA- the idea of Woman as a nurturer, carer, and mother- and used her own moral position of being an anti-politician to gain political support and further her agenda for the nation.

As women in the electorate indicated in the media analysis, these traditional images are still politically relevant to them, no matter where their political allegiances lie. Ironically, even some "left wing" women draw on the same representations of Womanhood that Hanson uses to attack them. What is seen as

³¹ quoted in O'Sullivan & Eatwell, *The Nature of the Right* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Co, 1988) 172.

³² Rebecca Klatch, "The New Right and its Women," *Society March/April* (1988) 34.

women's source of conservatism, served as a different dish, is also women's source of liberalism. The social welfare state embraced traditional ideals of caring and supporting all members in the community. The fact that Thatcher had christened it the "Nanny State" neatly illustrates this point. Policies of "multiculturalism" and "equal opportunity" call on the belief that in mother's eyes all children are to be embraced and nurtured, regardless of gender, ethnicity and ability. Since the 1980's, the environment movement has used "mother nature" to gain support for their concerns. The common generalisation that if women ruled the world there would be no more wars is a perfect example of the feminisation of the leftist agenda. Essentialist feminism dictates that women as children are taught to be tolerant, peaceful and encouraged to talk instead of fighting. Traditional representations of gender are used daily by some of those who have fought so hard for modern women's equality, and ironically they are the same images that their opponents, both female and male use as a weapon in the feminist backlash.

However sources of women's political motivation do not necessarily lie in their gender. Some right-wing women place primary importance on the market place, viewing humans as individuals best left on their own, freedom being paramount, regardless of gender. These women are sometimes called laissez-faire conservatives. Their major political motivation is the rejection of any effort to introduce public authority into the private realm; seeking to return authority from the Federal state into the hands of individuals; in the belief that each person should be the sole determinant of his or her own life.¹² Following the liberal doctrine, moral matters are to be decided by individuals, provided that they do not brutalise others. The laissez-faire conservative woman does not act as an extension of her female role: "While gender identity is central to the activism of both social conservative women and feminists, laissez-faire women do not recognise their

¹² Rebecca Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia: Temple, University Press, 1987) 116.

collective interests as women.”³³ While they share the feminist belief in the construction of gender and also recognise the existence of sexual inequality, they act as self-interested members of the market, as opposed to acting as members of the female sex. These women will support issues concerning freedom for women (for the most part they are pro-choice), but they will not support other feminist causes that encourage state interference (such as Equal Opportunity legislation, and welfare).

Klatch in her work points out that the paradox between conservative women and feminism is in the fact that those women, whose beliefs are furthest from feminists, actually act in their own interest as “women.” While those who may even share a part of the “feminist vision” do not act in their collective gender interests. In their attempts to act as self-interested members of the market they simultaneously attack the positions that they hold. The backlash against women that has become enshrined in conservative politics, through Thatcher’s economic rationalist opposition to the “Nanny state” and in Hanson’s attacks on single mothers and welfare, undermines the position of women in the electorate.

In Hanson’s discourse and in the greater discourse of her politics of resentment, representations of gender – both male and female- were based in a historical reality placed in the 1950’s and a rejection of feminist discourse. It offered her supporters an imagined gender relations that was specifically Australian. The myth of the Aussie battler – the underdog who comes up with the goods against all odds- on the one hand, and the good wife of the battler-the Aussie mother and nurturer to be protected by him- on the other. It becomes obvious that the inherent “essence” of what de lauretis calls Woman (with the capital W) was incredible important to Hanson’s politics of resentment.

³³ Rebecca Klatch, “The New Right and its Women,” *Society March/April* (1988) 35.

Women's biological roles and traditional representations are a major source of their political motivation, and shapes the way they participate in national processes. This motivation can be used to support a variety of ideologies and standpoints. It seems, however that the most successful women in politics are those that have used these traditional representations of gender to attack the position of women in society. Margaret Thatcher in the UK mobilized the idea of the mother as leader of the family and nation. The religious representation of the mother was used in the USA to defend the policies of the New Right. Pauline Hanson, drawing on her so-called responsibility as "mother of the nation" tied these notions of Womanhood to the great Australian myth of the Aussie Battler, to create a powerful populist rhetoric. Using the politics of resentment she appealed to the sense of loss that many men in the community were feeling as a result of the changes that had swept the globe since the 1970's. The support for Hanson by women in the electorate was smaller, however both those who supported her and those who were opposed to her were able to respond to her representations of gender and her vision of women's role in national processes.

CONCLUSION

At the time of writing, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party is on a remarkable road to recovery after nearly deteriorating in 2000. In recent State elections in Queensland and Western Australia, Hanson's party proved to be the key in the downfall of Coalition governments. Polling close to 12% overall and up to 20% in some electorates, Hanson's instruction to "place the sitting member last" on ballot cards in Western Australia and Queensland, meant a landslide victory for Labor in both states. This seemingly brilliant tactic brought Hanson to the forefront of Australian politics again after nearly eighteen months in political oblivion.

In the past year Pauline Hanson and her party have suffered major setbacks. In New South Wales a war was fought between Hanson and former political advisor David Oldfield. Hanson expelled Oldfield from the party over his involvement in the registering of two new political parties in September 2000 and gained approval to appoint a provisional liquidator to One Nation Limited. The New South Wales branch of the One Nation party has been deregistered. However David Oldfield, the One Nation representative in the New South Wales Upper House, continues to operate the party.

At a national level, in early 1999, Heather Hill, the One Nation candidate in the National Upper House, was forced to resign when it was revealed that she held British Citizenship. Hanson didn't replace her on the Senate as was speculated, deciding instead to wait for the next federal election. At a state and federal level, support for Hanson plummeted. The woman, who had previously rocked the Australian political system to the core, was moved to tears on National Television whilst pleading for her supporters to pledge money to

fight the legal battles she and her party were facing. It seemed that the Hanson phenomenon is well and truly over.

However, the ultimate success of the One Nation Party in recent times is hardly surprising. In the years since Hanson first appeared on the political stage, the major parties have done little or nothing to address the discontent felt by Hanson's supporters. The gap between rural and urban Australia has widened as farmers buckle under the pressure of international competitiveness. The recent influx of illegal immigrants arriving on the coast of north Western Australia has highlighted Hanson's call for the cessation of immigration programs, and the introduction of a Goods and Services Tax in July 2001 has increased the burden on small businesses "battling" to survive in the global economy. As Australia approaches a federal election in late 2001, it seems that Ms Hanson has become a permanent fixture on the Australian political landscape. The people who voted for her "politics of discontent" have not gone away like the Prime Minister had hoped.

Yet John Howard owes a lot to Hanson for his political success. As was discussed in chapter one, while men have dominated right-wing politics in Australia, it took a woman to successfully move the line of acceptable, mainstream political views further to the right. Perhaps it was easier for Hanson to achieve this success by playing the anti-politicians politician - the peoples' crusader- because she was a woman. Women are relatively rare in National Politics, and because of her sex she may have been seen as a symbol of opposition to traditional male politics.

Hanson's seeming lack of sophistication, her entrepreneurial flair and her femininity were an attractive mix. She embodied the new right side of politics, with an uneasy alliance, between tradition and liberalism. An embodiment that was despite her gender, designed to attract a male constituency. In the

rhetoric of the populist right and in the policies of Hanson and her One Nation Party, women were attacked. They were blamed for the downfall of the great male dominated society. They represented the changes that embraced the world after the Second World War; the waves of immigration and the emancipation of women, and became easy targets of resentment for these disempowered white men. Whilst these populist, right wing tendencies had lingered in Australia since the early eighties, ironically in Hanson they found a voice. A voice that has been since carried on legitimately by the Prime Minister John Howard.

Support for Hanson in the community was a part of the backlash against the welfare state that had been prominent in the 1990's. The welfare state, renamed the "Nanny State" by Thatcher in the 1980's as discussed in chapter three, was a gendered entity. The development of this state coincided with gains made by women through the feminist revolution. And it is no coincidence then that the attempted destruction of the Nanny State is occurring during a feminist backlash.

Support for Hanson in a sense can be seen as support for the defeminisation of the "Nanny State." How this defeminisation is being achieved holds the key to the contradictions that Hanson represents. By using traditional ideals of Womanhood, such as the mother, carer, teacher and moral guide- all images associated with the feminine role of the nanny- Hanson reminded her male supporters of what they have lost. It is ironic however that Hanson, as a divorcee, single mother, successful businesswoman and national parliamentarian embodied all that her supporters were fighting against. The traditional representations that were espoused in her policies were contradictory to the person she actually was. What she was in life was not the same as what she came to represent symbolically in her speeches and in her political statements.

Interestingly, Hanson didn't espouse the reverse of the Nanny State that economic rationalists like Thatcher proposed. The eighties idiom "greed is good" held no place in the policies of the One Nation Party. The free market state, embracing economics at the mercy of the people, was not the state that Hanson and her supporters desired. They sought the idea of another gendered state, the "mother country." They wanted to return to the time when the nation was watched over by strong, loving but hard mother.

Yet it seems that the contradiction between traditional and modern roles for women in national processes is continued with many women in the electorate, regardless of ideology. As the media analysis in chapter two revealed, women still have a strong connection to their biological and customary cultural roles, regardless of the attempt to separate women's participation in the nation from child rearing. Whether or not they agreed with what Hanson was actually saying, most women who responded to Hanson in the papers identified with her. They reacted to the roles she played; as a mother, a housekeeper and as a businesswomen. Women on all sides of the political spectrum turned to their biological roles and traditional representations of gender as the source of their political beliefs.

The importance of women's participation in national processes has for many years, been underestimated and understudied. By trivialising the role of the home and the family, in these processes, women's power has been diminished. The analysis of letters written by women in response to Hanson was revealing. Women have limited political power in the official domains of the state, and women who are elected to government often shy away from portraying themselves in feminine roles. They stay away from "soft" portfolios like the environment and the arts preferring to enter politics on male terms or as self-interested members of the market. But many of the women who chose to discuss issues of national

importance in letters to the editor, were drawn to traditional "feminine" ideals and roles. Mother and grandmother, housekeeper and teacher - positions where women's agency has traditionally lay.

The representation of gender that Hanson used in her policies and within her discourse of discontent and resentment was interpellated by her mostly male supporters. Her supporters believed in the essentialist notions of Woman that was so prominent in her discourse. Yet many women in the community negotiated this interpellation. Whilst gender for them did have some basis in the representation of women as mothers, grandmothers and nurturers, it also lay in what de Lauretis has called "the other space:"

...those other spaces both discursive and social that exist, since feminist practices have (re)constructed them, in the margins (or "between the lines," or "against the grain") of hegemonic discourses and in the interstices of institutions, in counter-practices, and new forms of community.¹

These women were able to use Hanson's own representations of gender to counter her policies and inhabit a discourse of their own. Traditional representations of gender have been transformed as women have discovered great power in these roles, as the mothers of a new, ethnically mixed generation of Australians and as teachers of tolerance and harmony. And since the feminist revolution women have ventured into the male-dominated economic and political realm of the nation, and have flourished.

Hanson's populist, conservative rhetoric was a controversial and contradictory text that provoked a myriad of responses from women in the community. By calling the nation her "home" Hanson encouraged women to look at their "homes" and the roles they performed in them. Through invoking the family in this rhetoric, she managed to legitimise her racist political platform. This mix of race and gender was the key

¹ Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) 26.

means of the consolidation of One Nation's support, yet women were able to mobilize and turn Hanson's discourse against her, using her own words to create the idea of a nation in which they could believe.

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Appendix

Pauline Hanson's Maiden Speech

(from HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Official Hansard Tuesday, 10 September 1996)

THIRTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

Ms HANSON (Oxley) (5.15 p.m.)—"Mr Acting Speaker, in making my first speech in this place, I congratulate you on your election and wish to say how proud I am to be here as the Independent member for Oxley. I come here not as a polished politician but as a woman who has had her fair share of life's knocks. My view on issues is based on common-sense, and my experience as a mother of four children, as a sole parent, and as a business-woman running a fish and chip shop. I won the seat of Oxley largely on an issue that has resulted in me being called a racist. That issue related to my comment that Aboriginals received more benefits than non-Aboriginals.

We now have a situation where a type of reverse racism is applied to mainstream Australians by those who promote political correctness and those who control the various taxpayer funded 'industries' that flourish in our society servicing Aboriginals, multiculturalists and a host of other minority groups. In response to my call for equality for all Australians, the most noisy criticism came from the fat cats, bureaucrats and the do-gooders. They screamed the loudest because they stand to lose the most—their power, money and position, all funded by ordinary Australian taxpayers.

Present governments are encouraging separatism in Australia by providing opportunities, land, moneys and facilities available only to Aboriginals. Along with millions of Australians, I am fed up to the

back teeth with the inequalities that are being promoted by the government and paid for by the taxpayer under the assumption that Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged people in Australia. I do not believe that the colour of one's skin determines whether you are disadvantaged. As Paul Hasluck said in parliament in October 1955 when he was Minister for Territories:

“The distinction I make is this. A social problem is one that concerns the way in which people live together in one society. A racial problem is a problem which confronts two different races who live in two separate societies, even if those societies are side by side. We do not want a society in Australia in which one group enjoy one set of privileges and another group enjoy another set of privileges.”

Hasluck's vision was of a single society in which racial emphases were rejected and social issues addressed. I totally agree with him, and so would the majority of Australians.

But, remember, when he gave his speech he was talking about the privileges that white Australians were seen to be enjoying over Aboriginals. Today, 41 years later, I talk about the exact opposite—the privileges Aboriginals enjoy over other Australians. I have done research on benefits available only to Aboriginals and challenge anyone to tell me how Aboriginals are disadvantaged when they can obtain three and five per cent housing loans denied to non-Aboriginals. This nation is being divided into black and white, and the present system encourages this. I am fed up with being told, 'This is our land.' Well, where the hell do I go? I was born here, and so were my parents and children. I will work beside anyone and they will be my equal but I draw the line when told I must pay and continue paying for something that happened over 200 years ago. Like most Australians, I worked for my land; no-one gave it to me. Apart from the \$40 million spent so far since Mabo on native title claims, the government has made available \$1 billion for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders as compensation for land they cannot claim under native title. Bear in mind that the

\$40 million spent so far in native title has gone into the pockets of grateful lawyers and consultants. Not one native title has been granted as I speak. The majority of Aboriginals do not want handouts because they realise that welfare is killing them. This quote says it all: 'If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day. If you teach him how to fish you feed him for a lifetime.' Those who feed off the Aboriginal industry do not want to see things changed. Look at the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Members receive \$290 a day sitting allowance and \$320 a day travelling allowance, and most of these people also hold other very well paid positions. No wonder they did not want to resign recently! Reconciliation is everyone recognising and treating each other as equals, and everyone must be responsible for their own actions.

This is why I am calling for ATSIC to be abolished. It is a failed, hypocritical and discriminatory organisation that has failed dismally the people it was meant to serve. It will take more than Senator Herron's surgical skills to correct the terminal mess it is in. Anyone with a criminal record can, and does, hold a position with ATSIC. I cannot hold my position as a politician if I have a criminal record—once again, two sets of rules. If politicians continue to promote separatism in Australia, they should not continue to hold their seats in this parliament. They are not truly representing all Australians, and I call on the people to throw them out. To survive in peace and harmony, united and strong, we must have one people, one nation, one flag. The greatest cause of family breakdown is unemployment. This country of ours has the richest mineral deposits in the world and vast rich lands for agriculture and is surrounded by oceans that provide a wealth of seafood, yet we are \$190 billion in debt with an interest bill that is strangling us. Youth unemployment between the ages of 15 to 24 runs at 25 per cent and is even higher in my electorate of Oxley. Statistics, by cooking the books, say that Australia's unemployment is at 8.6 per cent, or just under one million people. If we disregard that one hour's work a week classifies a person as employed, then the figure is really between 1.5 million and 1.9 million unemployed. This is a crisis that recent governments have ignored because of a lack of will. We are

regarded as a Third World country with First World living conditions. We have one of the highest interest rates in the world, and we owe more money per capita than any other country. All we need is a nail hole in the bottom of the boat and we're sunk. In real dollar terms, our standard of living has dropped over the past 10 years. In the 1960s, our wages increase ran at three per cent and unemployment at two per cent. Today, not only is there no wage increase, we have gone backwards and unemployment is officially 8.6 per cent. The real figure must be close to 12 to 13 per cent. I wish to comment briefly on some social and legal problems encountered by many of my constituents—problems not restricted to just my electorate of Oxley. I refer to the social and family upheaval created by the Family Law Act and the ramifications of that act embodied in the child support scheme. The Family Law Act, which was the child of the disgraceful Senator Lionel Murphy, should be repealed. It has brought death, misery and heartache to countless thousands of Australians. Children are treated like pawns in some crazy game of chess.

The child support scheme has become unworkable, very unfair and one sided. Custodial parents can often profit handsomely at the expense of a parent paying child support, and in many cases the non-custodial parent simply gives up employment to escape the, in many cases, heavy and punitive financial demands. Governments must give to all those who have hit life's hurdles the chance to rebuild and have a future.

We have lost all our big Australian industries and icons, including Qantas when it sold 25 per cent of its shares and a controlling interest to British Airways. Now this government want to sell Telstra, a company that made a \$1.2 billion profit last year and will make a \$2 billion profit this year. But, first, they want to sack 54,000 employees to show better profits and share prices. Anyone with business sense knows that you do not sell off your assets especially when they are making money. I may be only 'a fish and chip shop lady', but

some of these economists need to get their heads out of the textbooks and get a job in the real world. I would not even let one of them handle my grocery shopping.

Immigration and multiculturalism are issues that this government is trying to address, but for far too long ordinary Australians have been kept out of any debate by the major parties. I and most Australians want our immigration policy radically reviewed and that of multiculturalism abolished. I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. Between 1984 and 1995, 40 per cent of all migrants coming into this country were of Asian origin. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country. A truly multicultural country can never be strong or united. The world is full of failed and tragic examples, ranging from Ireland to Bosnia to Africa and, closer to home, Papua New Guinea. America and Great Britain are currently paying the price. Arthur Calwell was a great Australian and Labor leader, and it is a pity that there are not men of his stature sitting on the opposition benches today. Arthur Calwell said: Japan, India, Burma, Ceylon and every new African nation are fiercely anti-white and anti one another. Do we want or need any of these people here? I am one red-blooded Australian who says no and who speaks for 90% of Australians.

I have no hesitation in echoing the words of Arthur Calwell. There is light at the end of the tunnel and there are solutions. If this government wants to be fair dinkum, then it must stop kowtow-ing to financial markets, international organisations, world bankers, investment companies and big business people. The Howard government must become visionary and be prepared to act, even at the risk of making mistakes. In this financial year we will be spending at least \$1.5 billion on foreign aid and we cannot be sure that this money will be properly spent, as corruption and mismanagement in many of the recipient countries are

legend. Australia must review its membership and funding of the UN, as it is a little like ATSI on a grander scale, with huge tax-free American dollar salaries, duty-free luxury cars and diplomatic status. The World Health Organisation has a lot of its medical experts sitting in Geneva while hospitals in Africa have no drugs and desperate patients are forced to seek medication on the black market. I am going to find out how many treaties we have signed with the UN, have them exposed and then call for their repudiation. The government should cease all foreign aid immediately and apply the savings to generate employment here at home. Abolishing the policy of multiculturalism will save billions of dollars and allow those from ethnic backgrounds to join mainstream Australia, paving the way to a strong, united country. Immigration must be halted in the short term so that our dole queues are not added to by, in many cases, unskilled migrants not fluent in the English language. This would be one positive step to rescue many young and older Australians from a predicament which has become a national disgrace and crisis. I must stress at this stage that I do not consider those people from ethnic backgrounds currently living in Australia anything but first-class citizens, provided of course that they give this country their full, undivided loyalty.

The government must be imaginative enough to become involved, in the short term at least, in job creating projects that will help establish the foundation for a resurgence of national development and enterprise. Such schemes would be the building of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway line, new roads and ports, water conservation, reforestation and other sensible and practical environmental projects.

Therefore I call for the introduction of national service for a period of 12 months, compulsory for males and females upon finishing year 12 or reaching 18 years of age. This could be a civil service with a touch of military training, because I do not feel we can go on living in a dream world forever and a day believing that war will never touch our lives again.

The government must do all it can to help reduce interest rates for business. How can we compete with Japan, Germany and Singapore, which enjoy rates of two per cent, 5.5 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively? Reduced tariffs on foreign goods that compete with local products seem only to cost Australians their jobs. We must look after our own before lining the pockets of overseas countries and investors at the expense of our living standards and future.

Time is running out. We may have only 10 to 15 years left to turn things around. Because of our resources and our position in the world, we will not have a say because neighbouring countries such as Japan, with 125 million people; China, with 1.2 billion people; India, with 846 million people; Indonesia, with 178 million people; and Malaysia, with 20 million people are well aware of our resources and potential. Wake up, Australia, before it is too late. Australians need and want leaders who can inspire and give hope in difficult times. Now is the time for the Howard government to accept the challenge. Everything I have said is relevant to my electorate of Oxley, which is typical of mainstream Australia. I do have concerns for my country and I am going to do my best to speak my mind and stand up for what I believe in. As an Independent I am confident that I can look after the needs of the people of Oxley and I will always be guided by their advice. It is refreshing to be able to express my views without having to toe a party line. It has got me into trouble on the odd occasion, but I am not going to stop saying what I think. I consider myself just an ordinary Australian who wants to keep this great country strong and independent, and my greatest desire is to see all Australians treat each other as equals as we travel together towards the new century.

I will fight hard to keep my seat in this place, but that will depend on the people who sent me here.

Mr Acting Speaker, I thank you for your attention and trust that you will not think me presumptuous if I dedicate this speech to the people of Oxley and those Australians who have supported me. I salute them all."