Patriarchy at the Pink Palace: Gender and Work Inside the Ontario Legislature

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Abstract
This article offers an anthropological analysis of the gender politics inside Queen's Park, Ontario's provincial legislature. Using ethnographic data, I explore how political actors reproduce larger social and historical patterns of structural sexism and inequitable distributions of power, while simultaneously producing a localized political culture of inequity inside the legislature.

Résumé
Cet article offre une analyse anthropologique de la politique entre les hommes et les femmes à l'intérieur de Queen's Park, la législature provinciale de l'Ontario. En se servant de données ethnographiques, j'explore la façon dont les acteurs politiques reproduisent les modèles sociaux et historiques du sexisme structurel et la distribution inéquitable du pouvoir, tandis que simultanément une culture politique localisée existe au sein de la législature.

Introduction

Queen's Park, the Ontario provincial legislature located in Toronto, Canada, is sometimes called the "pink palace." This name stems from the pinkish hue of the building's facade and its regal architecture, but given the association of pink with the feminine, one might also be tempted to conclude that this political institution is woman friendly. The building's nickname is ironic, however, for as one veteran female political staffer acerbically remarked, "Oh, yeah, it's really pink in here." Her comment recognizes the gendered nature of daily life inside the provincial legislature, a site of official government power, a place of work for hundreds of women and men, and a space ripe with gender inequities.

Drawing on ethnographic research in the legislature, this article offers an anthropological analysis of the gender politics inside Queen's Park. Legislatures house elected representatives and political workers who are responsible for public policy, yet are not often put under a feminist lens as sites of work. As a corrective, this article offers one of the few anthropological and feminist explorations of gender relations and work inside a legislature. After studying the legislature, it becomes clear that the cultural politics in Queen's Park re-inscribe male power and a hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Despite certain strategic steps by legislators to promote gender diversity as part of both the public face and work hierarchies of government, patriarchal structures and behaviours persist, and feminist resistance is infrequent. Political actors reproduce larger social and historical patterns of structural sexism and inequitable distributions of power, while simultaneously producing a localized political culture of inequity inside the legislature.

This paper should be seen as an exploratory study of gender politics at Queen's Park, and thus is structured to provide a

cross-section of data about the ways inequity is reproduced in the Ontario legislature, each of which warrants further study. After reviewing the most relevant literature, I briefly describe my methodology. Then I explore three key domains where inequity is evident: the androcentric dimensions of the physical space, the gendered division of labour and power in the legislature, and the strategies enlisted by social actors to reaffirm and reproduce hegemonic masculinity on a daily basis. These three domains should be understood as mutually reinforcing, as well as conceptually linked, with space providing the stage on which social actors work and reproduce patterns of inequity through daily practice. Finally, I consider the few examples of feminist informed action that were evident to illustrate that inequity is occasionally challenged, however only in very particular ways.

Literature Review

Although anthropologists often study political processes, movements, and the effects of public policy, few centre on government institutions directly. A small number of anthropologists have explored political organizations and partisan actors although gender is not central to their analyses (Abeles 1992; Bailey 1969, 1988, 1991; Crewe and Müller 2006; Holmes 2000; Schumann 2007; Weatherford 1981; Wilson and Donnan 2006). Much of the feminist political science literature in Canada examines the range of social, economic, cultural, familial and personal factors that influence the gendered differences in the experiences of candidates and politicians, and argues that while broader progressive sociocultural changes and internal party policy have contributed to some increase in women's participation, their experiences continue to raise concerns (Tremblay and Trimble 2003; Trimble and Arscott 2003). While this body of feminist research bolsters my argument that broader patriarchal inequities are mirrored in political work, and that the daily experience of politics continues to replicate sexist patterns, I broaden the focus to include the experiences of political staff.

A small but important collection of feminist literature on gender inside political organizations does exist. Hester Eisenstein's (1996) important book on Australian "femocrats" looks inside state institutions at the possibilities and limitations for feminist civil servants seeking to make change. Cynthia Cockburn's (1991) analysis of men's resistance to equality focuses on a range of organizational settings, one of which is an elected local council. Similarly, Susan Halford (1992) brings a feminist analysis to bear on local government in Britain and argues for the importance of examining social relations within state institutions. In the Canadian context, Judith Grant and Peta Tancred (1992, 114) explore what they call "dual structures of unequal representation" - how women's issues are dealt with and how female political workers in government departments are relatively powerless. Themes of contestation, constraint, and shifting, but enduring, patterns of inequity are woven throughout these works. More recently, Joan Acker (2006) has highlighted the need to identify the interlocking institutional practices or "inequality regimes" that result in the continued promulgation of power differentials, and Patricia Martin (2006) has argued for the need to capture the "practising of gender" through interactions in organizations. These concerns are also taken up in this paper in order to understand how gender is enacted and inequity reinforced as part of the social relations of daily work in the legislature.

Recognition of a hegemonic masculinity is also useful for understanding gender politics in the legislature, and how gender is practised (Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Hegemonic masculinity should be understood as a lived prioritization of a dominant kind of maleness, and a dominant group of men who possess the desired characteristics. This concept reminds us that gender is both performative and relational, and is most valuable for helping us understand the third ethnographic section of the paper on daily practice.

Method: Gendered Ethnographic Eyes

My methodological approach allowed me to explore the lived experiences of elected and hired political workers. I conducted fulltime fieldwork in Queen's Park, Ontario's provincial

legislative building, from January 2004 until May 2005 and the majority of the data I use was collected during this period. I was researching the production of government (Coulter 2007 & 2009b), and the gender politics of labour within the legislature was not the focus of my research. However, the prevalence and recurrence of gender inequity was glaring and troubling. As a feminist, I felt compelled to present an overview of the processes at play so that they might be better known to other feminist scholars, offer a small contribution to ongoing conversations about politics and sexism, and, most importantly, encourage challenges to inequity.

As part of conducting participant-observation research, I collected data from a broad range of locations within the legislature. These included the daily question period and debates in the legislative chamber; committee hearings and public consultations; formal legislative events such as budgets and throne speeches; media conferences; media scrums; meals in the cafeteria; and social/political functions including lobbying receptions. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with partisan political actors in all three parties including executive and legislative assistants, ministerial issues managers, stakeholder relations managers, caucus researchers, communications directors, press secretaries, and strategists. These women and men were of various ages and sexual orientations and came from different class and ethnic backgrounds. The majority of the most revealing data about gender politics was obtained through participant-observation, by seeing and hearing the ways that political actors do their work, and engage with each other.

Gendered Space

The legislative building provides the physical frame within which partisan actors work. For women working in the legislature, the androcentrism of the official, constructed narrative of the building was obvious. For example, female New Democratic Party (NDP) and Liberal Party workers were very aware of the portraits of prominent men hung throughout the building. It was widely observed that these men were united by economic privilege and "dead white guy" status, and their portraits served as a constant reminder of patriarchal power, past and present. NDP Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) Cheri diNovo said, "All women have to do is look at the walls to see where they fit."

Even mythical stories gender the legislative space and reinforce a predictable pattern. It is said that ghosts haunt Queen's Park and newspaper stories appear occasionally (Blizzard 2006) to reinforce this legislative folklore. The male ghosts are identified as high ranking soldiers in uniform or as former Lieutenant-Governors in swallowtail coats. On the other hand, the three female ghosts are a domestic servant hiding her face in her dress, a woman hanging on a hook in the basement, and a woman in a calico dress stalking the fourth floor. All are said to be madwomen, a reference to the fact that the legislature was built on the grounds of the former University Hospital for the Insane.

It might be argued that such stories serve no real social or political purpose beyond entertaining and perhaps frightening some contemporary social actors. Nonetheless, as Gaston Gordillo (2002) has pointed out, collective constructions of mythical figures are often interwoven with the memory of real political projects and social processes. We cannot trace the origins or evolutions of these ghost stories, but it is notable that the haunting figures mirror the history of hegemonic gender roles more broadly, with women being seen as servants, victimized bodies and anonymous madwomen, and men as representatives of grandeur, public service and power.

Gendered Labour and Power

Women hold the minority of elected, appointed and high salaried positions in the Ontario legislature, as in other provincial governments in Canada (Trimble and Arscott 2003). During the first Liberal mandate, the proportion of female MPPs fluctuated between a quarter and a third of the total. Similarly, the ethnic diversity of MPPs was minimal, and even smaller was representation from racialized groups. However, the first elected Speaker, Alvin Curling, was black. George Smitherman was the first openly gay Minister of Health in

Canada and Kathleen Wynne, a lesbian, served in several cabinet posts, including Minister of Education. It also remained true that lawyers, business leaders and property developers were over-represented in the ranks of MPPs and cabinet ministers, with only a few MPPs coming from working class backgrounds. This is a powerful reminder that it is primarily white men enjoying economic comfort and privilege who still hold the majority of the positions of formal political power.

The elected leaders of all three parties were men, although the appointed deputy leaders of both opposition parties were women. These data remind us that in elections, whether general elections or internal partisan leadership campaigns, men are far more often selected for the positions with the most status and authority, a pattern reaffirmed in the 2008 elections in the United States. This means elected male leaders are in positions which allow them to give women access to power and profile (or take it away), and to select who will be promoted or not. Admittedly, part of the decision is based on geographic representation, ideological slant, instrumental equity considerations and certain more elusive factors such as a desire to reward personal supporters or appease antagonistic members. Promotion also involves an evaluation of competency and public appeal, thus gendered assumptions and assessments will certainly come into play.

During my fieldwork, all three parties spoke publicly of the importance of electing more women. This most often occurred when party leaders were asked questions by representatives of organizations advocating gender equity in politics, or when the gendered distribution of cabinet positions was being probed by journalists (Gillespie 2007). This reveals that gender equity is still only discussed explicitly on occasion, and in very particular, limited ways. By primarily discussing women's access to positions of power, while not seriously analysing or even recognizing the feminization of poverty, the effects of neoliberal restructuring on women, the lack of pay equity, or the absence of affordable child care, gaping holes in policy and political culture are ignored, and women's material conditions are disconnected from questions of representation,

and from the political sphere overall.

While there is a growing body of research on politicians, partisan staff members are an under-studied but crucial group of political actors. In each party, staff work in different areas including in members' and leader's office, and in caucus research and communications departments. While precise data about the sexual division of labour in each party are not available, participant-observation methodology allowed me to see who did what work. The division of labour in staff positions, the tasks assigned, and the differential power accruing to the holders of those positions, reproduced predictable gendered patterns.

The hierarchies across the three parties demonstrated strong similarities. Women served as office receptionists for leaders and caucuses. Women held the majority of positions which were of the legislative assistant type. This job category involves the more clerical and administrative tasks, written and verbal correspondence, and, often, scheduling work. These sorts of positions have different levels of responsibility across the parties, but fall squarely within traditional categories of women's work. The pink palace had its own pink collar ghetto.

Research departments were organized in slightly different ways by each of the three parties. These research departments employed women and men of various ages who were responsible for partisan dirt digging, and to varying degrees, issue-based research. The Conservative research department was consistently dominated by men. The NDP's research department was small and also dominated by men, but notably men who professed an interest in women focussed policies and revealed varying degrees of awareness about gender inequities and hegemonic masculinity inside and outside the legislature.

The Liberal Caucus Service Bureau (LCSB) was responsible for research on opposition parties and was separate from ministerial research departments. The LCSB had a small number of mid-level workers and strategists, but also served as a shallow pool for new, junior staffers who would be rewarded with promotions to more challenging ministerial

positions if they proved they could swim. At any given moment, the bureau employed many young women and some young men who were visible inside Queen's Park through their low responsibility work such as taping the media scrums with opposition members.

Mid-level communications workers mirrored the patterns in research departments, with women being present, but in lower positions, and in smaller numbers. The Liberals had far greater numbers of mid-level positions of different kinds within the government ministries, and the gendered division of these positions was somewhat equitable, although with some variation across the ministries. Certain "feminized" ministries such as culture, children and youth services, and community and social services had greater numbers of women staffers at all levels than did a "hard" portfolio like finance.

Broader organizational patterns that see men in positions of power and influence at the top of the labour hierarchy were also replicated. There were women serving as managers of certain departments in all three parties, but they were in the minority. The Premier's Office had a more equitable workforce in the mid-level positions, but most of the strategic and powerful director positions, including Chief of Staff, were held by men. This is significant for, as one columnist noted about the backroom players in the Premier's Office, "None of these people is a household name, at least not yet. None of them will have the profile of a cabinet minister... [but] most of these people will wield power that cabinet ministers will only dream of" (Urquhart 2003, A25). The chiefs of staff for both opposition parties were men. The three house leaders, who would manage partisan strategy in the legislature, were also men.

Senior political work is the most intellectually engaging, creative and rewarding, both with respect to individual salaries earned, and the potential for impact. The hierarchical structure of partisan work at Queen's Park affected and reflected social actors' relationships to political strategy. The higher you were, the more you knew; the lower you were, the less you knew, and the less you got to know. This held true for ambitious political initiatives, as well as for daily machinations. Since women were in the minority in senior positions, women disproportionately got to know less and to influence less.

In summary, work hierarchies which provide key positions to men and invest these key positions with significant power and control are present and consistently maintained in the legislature. However, male dominance also operates through gendered daily practice at Queen's Park.

Gender, Power and Daily Practice

In a discussion about sexism with a long-serving female MPP, she observed, "Oh, Queen's Park is about ten years behind everywhere else." She was referring to the strides made in other work places with respect to anti-discrimination policies, anti-harassment measures and enforced standards of professional behaviour, and to hegemonic masculinity within the legislature, "the pattern of practice... that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 832). She was referencing recurring overt expressions of sexism, including male MPPs observations about female staffers' bodies, verbal speculations about women's underwear choices, and incidents such as when a male backbencher in the Liberal government yelled, "OK, the hot flash is over now" across the legislative floor to mock Marilyn Churley, an outspoken feminist legislator. A strange contradiction exists at Queen's Park. On the one hand, the legislature is the site of government, a place occupied by elected representatives and political staff entrusted with the responsibility for making provincial laws and public policy which affect women and men. On the other hand, the legislature also houses sexist behaviour, and some legislators honour equity and anti-discrimination legislation mostly through its breach. The legislative space is androcentric, and the division of labour and power is inequitable. These empirical realities are compounded by the patterns of practice reproduced through daily work in the legislature, and how elected and hired political workers actively contribute to a legislative culture of inequity.

One of my strongest preliminary responses was to the reproduction of a hegemonic masculinity. This was first apparent in the radical ideological and personal politics of the young, male Conservative staffers. Their harsh means of marginalizing social actors, even other men, was very forceful. Previously, they had worked in government and most were virulently neoliberal. Some referred to Joe Clark, a centre-right Canadian politician who had led their party federally, as "a communist." Some, invoking ideological and racialized marginalization, referred to Ernie Eves, their own former Premier who had also served as Finance Minister during the years of the most aggressive restructuring, as an "elusive moderate" who sent them "broadcasts sometimes on Al-Jazeera."

This pattern of collective daily marginalization, judgement and mockery was not just about reinforcing ideology; it was interwoven with a particular prioritized masculinity, a "strong," uncompromising political man. Their patterns of practice served to exclude and discipline, as well as identify and reinforce narrower ideological groups within political parties, a pattern of rituals also noted by Philip Lalander (2003) in his work among young right-wing men in Sweden. In the legislature, this strategy of disciplining and regulating masculinity was most apparent in the Conservative offices, although it also appeared elsewhere. The degrees and specific forms varied across and within parties, depending on the particular location and function in question, but the pattern was a strong, active social process fundamental to the production of the localized shape of patriarchy in the pink palace, but linked to broader social and political ideals about male dominance and ideology.

Because there were three parties of different sizes working in the same space, partisan antagonism was broad and deep, although social interactions were cordial. Male and female elected representatives would create a rowdy, confrontational social climate in the legislative chamber. In this climate of confrontation, opponents were boisterously ridiculed, heckled, interrupted, or simply discounted through the physical act of turning away. Staff of both genders and from all the parties referred to the legislative spectacle in the chamber as akin to warring groups on the battlefield or swordsmen duelling in a town square, notably both violent metaphors.

Patterns of inclusion and exclusion also took form through intra-caucus cliques, with men wielding primary power. Outright bullying would occur, and heated confrontation was common, as was marginalization. Women would sometimes bond together, but more often would form strategic alliances with members of both genders, particularly with men who did not embrace the hegemonic masculinity. Deliberate interpersonal marginalization or disciplining of women was compounded by the fact that men were already in higher political and staff positions, and thus possessed of more knowledge and influence.

Although such practices cannot be ascribed exclusively to one gender, and strategies of marginalization, mockery, disciplining and reward were used by both men and women, the effects of such practices enhanced the dominance of powerful males, gay and straight. Furthermore, aggressive confrontation is a predominantly male strategy and privileges dominant male characteristics, temperaments, and even voices, in formal legislative proceedings, but also in conversations and various daily practices. Although mockery of male and female political opponents was commonplace, when certain female MPPs participated in the chest-pounding hyperbole common in the chamber, and replicated male practices in an attempt to "play the game," they would face gendered mockery from the MPPs and staff of the other political parties. For example, a female Conservative staffer would often refer to female Liberal ministers who engaged in the rowdy legislative rituals as "un-feminine." On the other hand, her insults about male ministers, including both out and closeted gay members, would be related to their competence, ego, and sometimes their word choices, but never to gender-based characteristics. This is because such rowdy behaviour is associated with hegemonic masculinity which she was simply reaffirming.

When such practices are welded to the inequitable political history of Ontario, the division of power within the legislature and,

most significantly, to enduring patriarchy at a societal and systemic level, childish rituals take on an even deeper gendered significance. In Queen's Park, women and men participate in the reproduction of broader patterns of gender inequality through the differential distribution of access to official power, while simultaneously contributing to a localized Queen's Park brand of hegemonic daily practice which defends and maintains inequality and exclusion. Women may continue to enter Queen's Park, and liberal rhetoric encourages them to do so, but by and large they are still doing so in traditional categories of work, and as a minority of elected representatives who wield less official power and must endeavour to play the man's game of bluster and ridicule, while being chastised for doing so. It is predominantly men who still run the province and who still control the nature and form of daily practice in the legislature; thus, androcentrism prevails, and hegemonic patriarchal practices are reproduced and reinforced.

However, at the same time, a handful of explicitly feminist actions reveal that while inequity is prevalent, it is not un-challenged, and it is important to consider these efforts.

Gendered Contestation

Without question, female politicians and staffers exercised individual agency by supporting other women in an informal way, a common strategy used by women within organizations (Eisenstein 1996). This would primarily take the form of mentorship or promotion within work hierarchies. These acts are of particular significance because women workers across the three parties, particularly younger women, commented on a lack of respect for their work in contrast to a continual reinforcement of male efforts through circles of power and reward. Even some of the Conservative workers who would enlist gendered, stereotypical critiques of women politicians and who would make anti-feminist comments, complained that their work was not recognized or valued fairly in comparison to their male co-workers. The lack of recognition for women's work was not explicitly called sexist by these Conservative workers, and was not seen by them as bound to broader or

historical patterns of gender discrimination. Instead, the inequity was treated as an individual frustration to be dealt with through work responsibility and remuneration discussions at a later date. In keeping with their ideological approach to politics more broadly, in their own lives, the solution was individualistic.

Other women workers spoke frankly about feeling that they only had one or two allies in the senior ranks of their parties who recognized the value of their contributions, and that these allies were usually the few high ranking elected or hired women, although certainly not all powerful women supported all other women.

The work of young feminist activists outside the legislature caused one of the most explicitly feminist events inside the legislature. The Miss G_ Project was founded at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario by undergraduate students, with the support of feminist scholars and activists. The primary goal was the introduction of a women's studies course in Ontario high schools, as well as the development of anti-oppressive education more broadly (Miller 2008). In the spring of 2006, the steering committee of the Miss G_ Project organized a women's lunch at Queen's Park to press for a women's studies course. Calling the event the "New Girls Club," and staging a media-grabbing game of croquet on the front lawn of the legislature prior to the lunch, The Miss G_ Project explicitly sought to challenge patriarchy, build sisterhood, and ensure that all students in Ontario's public schools had access to a women's studies course (Mohan *et al.* 2006).

MPPs from all three parties attended the lunch, as did feminist activists from across the province. Representatives from each of the parties spoke, and their remarks reflected their party's overall relationship with women's issues and feminism. Elizabeth Witmer, a Conservative member, and Liberal politicians Deborah Matthews, Sandra Pupatello and Laurel Broten focused primarily on women's access to positions of power and the importance of interpersonal networking among women. New Democratic representative Andrea Horwath moved beyond liberal representation and emphasized links between

women-focussed events and policy decisions. Explicit talk of feminism among the politicians, although minimal, was evident at the event. Horwath drew from her experiences in the women's movement in her remarks. Broten, then Minister of the Environment, spoke openly about her "feminist friends" being central to her decision to run.

The lunch is noteworthy for two important, interwoven reasons. First, it stood out as the most overtly feminist event I witnessed at the legislature, and provided a space within which women spoke openly about women's positions and power relations, albeit to varying degrees. Second, because even though the young activists spoke directly about patriarchy and patterns of male privilege, and despite being at a women-centred event specifically organized to expand women's rights, most politicians remained very cautious about what they said, and what practices, barriers and power relations they identified as present and problematic. Thus, it is important to see the event as a powerful indicator of the state of feminist thought and praxis among Ontario's female politicians as it pertains to their own work - present, but by and large, marginal and guarded.

Another snapshot of feminist action has been spotlighted by the media recently. Conservative Lisa MacLeod was elected to the Ontario legislature in a by-election in 2006. At 31, she was the youngest MPP, and had a pre-school age child. MacLeod began to find the legislative schedule, particularly late evening sittings, challenging, unpredictable, and not "family-friendly," and along with women from the other parties, took her complaints to the media (Ferguson 2007). In the context of this coverage, and the fact that both rookie and veteran female MPPs opted not to seek re-election in 2007 citing family commitments as their primary reason, an all-party committee was established to explore ways to make the legislative building and schedule more compatible with child care responsibilities and family life, and both male and female politicians spoke in support of the initiative (Gillespie 2007).

The informal response to this initiative within the legislature was mixed, with some members and workers in MacLeod's own party calling her a hypocrite for seeking collective solutions and child care in her own place of work, while supporting the federal Conservative child care policy which prioritizes tax-credits instead of the expansion of public child care spaces. Columnist Christina Blizzard was also critical. She reinforced the individual responsibility emphasis characteristic of neoliberal political culture that failed to recognize the disproportionate burden placed on women as care givers. She wrote: "When a mom or dad chooses a demanding profession such as politics, they should first work out their own domestic arrangements....They can look after their own daycare needs" (Blizzard 2007, 21). The argument that women need to simply adapt to the male-dominated world of politics is powerful, and is promoted by men and women.

Contestation of gender inequity continues inside and outside the legislature. Organizations such as Equal Voice continue to push for increased participation of women in partisan politics. Further examples include NDP MPP Cheri diNovo's private member resolution encouraging the legislature to elect a female Speaker and the launching of the "Ontario's Greatest Female Premier" contest by former MPP Marilyn Churley to recognize women who would make great leaders, but efforts must be expanded and strengthened as they remain the exception in a legislature within which the space, power distribution and daily practices reaffirm inequity. Countries with more equitable distribution of political power such as Sweden and Finland offer important lessons (Maillé and Wängerud 1999). The recent election of Andrea Horwath as leader of the Ontario NDP and her immediate injection of gender analysis into debate has changed the public face of Ontario politics somewhat (Coyle 2009).

At the same time, it is important to remember that while women's involvement is important, it is no guarantee of a changed institutional climate, nor of more progressive policy pursuits. Increasing women's participation alone is a necessary but not sufficient condition for equity if power is not distributed fairly, if daily practices continue to reproduce hegemonic masculinity, and if the identification, let alone the eradication, of

informal and formal sexism does not occur.

Conclusion

Comments made by Frances Lankin, a former NDP cabinet minister, provide a dire assessment of patriarchy in the pink palace: "There aren't enough women (at Queen's Park) for a critical mass to change the culture, (so) you have to learn to play the game the way it is done, and honestly, I'll tell you, it's a little soul-destroying" (Gillespie 2007, A15). Her frank words pinpoint what became very clear as I researched daily practice in the legislature - for many women, everyday life inside Queen's Park is an exclusionary process driven by multiple levels and types of inequity.

Examining the ethnographic data, it is clear that inside the legislature, patriarchal patterns persist. More women and men must challenge, in theory and in practice, the structures and strategies that contribute to women's ongoing marginalization (Coulter 2009a). This paper has examined the androcentrism of the legislative space, the enduring inequitable division of labour and power within partisan work hierarchies, and the daily strategies used by social actors to re-inscribe inequity and hegemonic masculinity. I have demonstrated that in all of these arenas gender inequities persist and are reinforcing. Challenges to the norm have also been considered in order to recognize that inequity is not monolithic. Examples of feminist praxis, however mild, raise important questions about what forms of action are considered possible and which are deemed unwise. Not surprisingly, given the broader neoliberal political climate, liberal feminist strategies emphasizing individual networking and advancement are the most prevalent approaches. Collective strategies that openly question causality, draw links among gender, class and race politics, and make the connections between broader political agendas and women's experiences are eschewed.

Daily practice in the legislature reproduces a particular, localized form of inequity exemplifying both the particulars of Queen's Park and broader societal patterns of inequity in representation, participation, power and experience. Inequity inside organizations must be challenged specifically through targeted steps, but because organizational patterns replicate and reinforce broader social structures and power relations, even in sites of official leadership like legislatures, male privilege must be confronted at interpersonal, institutional and structural levels. Challenging patriarchy in the pink palace is inextricably connected to challenging inequity more broadly and with creating a political cultural climate within which gendered policy impacts are recognized, women's rights are emphasized, and feminist actors are supported. In this task, collective action inside and outside political institutions is crucial.

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