

Sara Poggio y María Amelia Viteri
Compiladoras

**Cuerpo, educación y liderazgo político:
una mirada desde el género y los
estudios feministas**

**Bodies, education and political leadership:
a gender and feminist perspective**



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FLACSO, Sede Ecuador
La Pradera E7-174 y Diego de Almagro
Quito-Ecuador
Telf.: (593-2) 323 8888
Fax: (593-2) 323 7960
www.flacso.org.ec

University of Maryland, Baltimore County
1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, MD 21250
Estados Unidos
Telf. : (011-1-410) 455 1000
www.umbc.edu/

Latin American Studies Association
416 Bellefield Hall
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Telf.: (011-1-412) 648 7929
lasa.international.pitt.edu

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What, no tie? Political campaigns, gender, and leadership in Chile*

Gwynn Thomas**

Resumen

Este ensayo analiza la campaña presidencial chilena de 2005-2006 para poner en relieve la influencia compleja y continua del género en definiciones culturales de liderazgo político, y el acceso diferencial de mujeres y hombres y su inclusión en la política chilena. Argumento las múltiples formas en las cuales los tres candidatos principales, Michelle Bachelet, Joaquín Lavín y Sebastián Piñera, utilizaron creencias marcadas por género en las conexiones entre masculinidad, feminidad y liderazgo político para presentarse como la persona ideal para liderar Chile. Lavín y Piñera utilizaron conexiones tradicionales entre hombres, masculinidades y la política para promover sus candidaturas y cuestionar las habilidades de Bachelet. Bachelet confrontó estas críticas categorizándolas como sexistas y argumentando que ella representaba una forma alterna de liderazgo femenino. La ideología de género continúa representando un factor contextual importante que condiciona los tipos de estrategias utilizados por los y las candidatas políticas.

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** Gwynn Thomas, Associate Professor, Department of Transnational Studies, Buffalo State University, New York, gmthomas@buffalo.edu.

Michelle is a brave woman [...] but to be President
 much more is required [...] Leadership, character,
 and will are required.
 –Sebastián Piñera

A president also needs to have independence, credibil-
 ity, and I am the candidate because my only interest is
 the interest of the citizenry.
 –Michelle Bachelet¹

In January 2006, Michelle Bachelet made history by getting elected as Chile's first woman president. Her emergence as the official candidate of Chile's center-left governing coalition, the Concertación, caught the world's attention. This interest reflected both on Bachelet's own personal charm and charisma, as well as the seeming paradox presented by her popularity in a country often seen as one of the most culturally conservative countries in Latin America. The paradox depended not only on her status as a woman but also on her unique personal biography. Bachelet freely admits that she is "a woman, a divorcee, an agnostic, and a socialist [...] all [the] possible sins together"², all of which make her a very unusual political figure in Chilean politics. Surprisingly, during the presidential campaign, her position as a divorced, single mother was not part of an explicit attack on her personal qualities, nor her abilities to serve as president of Chile. Instead, as demonstrated in the opening quotes, Michelle Bachelet was often attacked in terms of whether she had the type of political leadership needed to be president. During the campaign, Chileans were asked, both implicitly and explicitly, to weigh the following questions: are men and women equally capable of serving as president? Do women and men possess the same qualities and characteristics of political leadership? In other words, how and in what ways is political leadership gendered? In the Chilean election, the above questions were often posed in the following

1 Exchange between Michelle Bachelet and Sebastián Piñera during the presidential debate January 4, 2006. "Elecciones Chile 2006: Debate Presidencial", *El Mercurio*, January 8, 2007. Available at: http://www.emol.com/especiales/elecciones_debate2006/loquedijeron.htm.

2 *International Herald Tribune*, December 11, 2005.

way, did Michelle Bachelet possess the crucial, if sometimes hard to define, qualities of "presidentialness"?

In this article I analyze the debate over Michelle Bachelet's "presidentialness" as a way to reveal the complex and continuing influence of gender on cultural definitions of political leadership, and women's and men's differential access to and inclusion in Chilean politics. While it is not a new strategy to question the capability of a candidate to successfully fulfill a political appointment, the particular ways in which these charges were both leveled against Bachelet and how she and her supporters responded, provide a unique window into how traditional gendered understandings of political leadership are being both challenged and reproduced within the Chilean context. All three major presidential candidates, Michelle Bachelet, Joaquín Lavín, and Sebastián Piñera, used gendered beliefs about the connections between masculinity, femininity and political leadership to present themselves as the person best qualified to lead Chile and to question their opponents' political capabilities. Lavín and Piñera incorporated specific qualities often characterized as masculine to present themselves as the best people to be president. By referencing traditional connections between men, masculinity, and politics, they simultaneously implicitly and explicitly questioned the ability of Bachelet, as a woman, to be president.

Bachelet, on the other hand, presented herself as embodying an alternative leadership style, a style that she defined as "*liderazgo femenino*" (feminine leadership). Feminine leadership, she claimed, was based on more egalitarian principles of teamwork, participation, and inclusion, and was an alternative to the form of traditional masculine leadership. She argued that her particular style of political leadership allowed her to have a better connection with and understanding of everyday problems of most Chileans. Bachelet not only sought to construct a definition of leadership that included traits more often associated with women, but also directly challenged criticisms of her leadership style by labeling these attacks as sexist. She re-cast criticisms against her as part of a long-standing pattern of attacks on women's attempts to enter into politics, and presented her historic candidacy as both a result of women's past struggles and representative of a promise for greater equality in the future. Through a detailed

analysis of the campaign strategies used by both Bachelet and her male opponents, I reveal the complex intersection between gender and political leadership. The Chilean election demonstrates how the strategies pursued by political candidates of both sexes are influenced by the broader cultural understandings of gender ideology.

While based on a close analysis of the Chilean case, my study has broad implications for understanding the continuing gendered nature of politics, even as beliefs about both gender and politics undergo important changes. Given the relative scarcity of women who have won national presidential elections, much can be learned from a close analysis of how Bachelet and her campaign confronted doubts about a woman's abilities to serve at the highest level. My analysis is based on a close reading of visual and textual sources from the campaign (newspaper articles, editorials, web pages, billboards, pamphlets, and television propaganda), as well as over fifty interviews with political and intellectual elites, supporters, campaign workers, and participants from various campaign events I attended during my observation of the Chilean campaign between December 2005 and January 2006. My experiences, especially my participant observation of a variety of campaign events—from rallies, marches, and community organizing meetings to door-to-door canvassing—revealed that political campaigns represent a unique space in which to explore the shifting meanings of gender and politics within communities. Chile's 2005-2006 presidential campaign provided a space for both political elites and everyday Chileans to discuss and debate the gendered nature of political leadership, women's inclusion and exclusion from politics, and the relationship between the quality of Chile's democracy and these two issues.

This article does not attempt to examine the relative influence of gender in terms of the electoral result, but instead analyzes the different ways of using gender in constructing alternative meanings of political leadership. In taking this approach, I focus on the importance of gender as a contextual factor in defining political leadership. Recent studies have argued that gender is crucial in understanding political leadership. Indeed, the absence of interest in a gendered analysis of political leadership actually reveals the often times assumed masculine bias of these studies. Most stud-

ies assume political leaders, especially at the national level, to be men and ignore the importance of gender in rendering men's dominance unproblematic (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1998). Genovese and Thompson (1993: 2) argue that all aspects of political leadership, including the importance of influence—being able to convince others to follow you, to accept your ideas, and to place faith in your political vision or project—, interact with gender. Currently, political leadership cannot be considered gender neutral because of the power of gendered beliefs and stereotypes in assessing leadership styles. The classic example here is assertiveness. As Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1998: 28) note, while we might expect both male and female political leaders to behave assertively, women are limited in the level of aggression they can display without being seen as overly aggressive instead of assertive, while men are punished if they are seen as being too passive. These limits vary according to the gender ideologies in different cultures.

Importantly, current research does not show that voters will never be able to picture an individual woman as an expert in defense, or a man in education, but they reveal how gender shapes the political context differently for male and female candidates (Lawless, 2004; Panagopoulos, 2004; Hansen and Otero, 2006). Men and women do not compete on an equal playing field. Women candidates might benefit when citizens want characteristics associated with women candidates and be disadvantaged when the political context privileges areas seen as traditionally masculine. Men face the same issues but have an advantage because of the widespread relationship between men, masculinity, and politics. Both male and female political candidates must decide whether and to what extent they wish to confront or conform to gender stereotypes. Although many of these findings were produced in the context of the United States, their broad implications are suggestive in the Chilean context. While gender ideology in the two countries certainly differs in important ways, the larger perspective that gender functions as a contextual factor that affects both male and female candidates is highly relevant. What is needed is an understanding of the gendered nature of politics and political leadership within the Chilean context.

I develop my argument in three parts. I begin by setting the context of political leadership within Chile. I examine how gender ideology has

helped to define politics and political leadership differently for men and women. In the second section, I analyze the gendered appeals of Joaquín Lavín and Sebastián Piñera. The first round of the presidential campaign was dominated by an attempt to force a second round of voting and making sure that Bachelet received less than 50% of the vote, and through the contest between Piñera and Lavín, to see which of them would prevail as the Chilean right-wing candidate. The second round, between Piñera and Bachelet, was marked by Piñera's attempts to cast doubt on Bachelet's ability to be president. Finally, I turn to the use of gender in Bachelet's campaign. I analyze how Bachelet mobilized alternative symbolic resources to fight accusations of her lack of leadership and in her attempts to broaden the definition of a political leader, to include characteristics and qualities associated with women.

Gender and political leadership in Chile

In my discussions with Chileans about the ongoing debate around Bachelet's leadership qualities, I was routinely told that their culture is very "*machista*" (sexist). As María Esperanza Bonifaz, a participant in one of Michelle Bachelet's rallies, explained to me, "Chile is also a very conservative country, *machista* [...] Presidential leadership was seen as masculine, the force, power against someone. Piñera is more aggressive and people like that, he is a very smooth speaker and people also like that" (personal communication, December 28, 2005, Santiago). As María Esperanza reveals, the debate over the candidates' political leadership was not gender neutral. Rather, the qualities and the characteristics needed by a president were intimately tied to larger beliefs about the relationship between gender and politics and the on-going struggle to redefine this relationship in ways that promote greater equality and inclusion. A complete discussion about the growing and evolving scholarship that examines how politics is gendered and gender is political, is beyond the scope of this article. Instead, in the following section, I focus very narrowly on the intersection between gender and political leadership in Chile since women were granted the right to vote in the mid-twenti-

eth century. This scholarship details the historical processes through which political leadership has overwhelmingly been defined as a paradigmatic sphere of participation for men, and as an activity requiring characteristics defined as masculine. This understanding of politics has served as a barrier to women's full participation, and women have had to struggle to change the relationship between gender, politics, and political leadership in order to be fully included in the process. The 2005-2006 presidential campaign and the debate over the gendered nature of political leadership cannot be understood without referring to this context.

Chile's traditional gendered division of society separated spheres of activities into public and private, and it assigned men the public domains of work and politics, while women were associated with family and the home (Chaney, 1979; Dore, 1997; Dore and Molyneux, 2000; Grau *et al.*, 1997; Stevens, 1973). Feminist scholarship has shown the importance of recognizing that this dichotomy functions on a level of ideology rather than as an accurate reflection of women's and men's lived experiences (Cubitt and Greenslade, 1997; Pateman, 1988; Okin, 1989). But, at the level of ideology, it has had important and lasting effects on how politics and political leadership have been defined. The public/private dichotomy traditionally served to justify men's long-standing dominance of the arenas of formal politics (the right to vote, control of political parties, elected and appointed governmental positions at all levels) and to render women's exclusion from these same areas, unproblematic. When Chilean women began to challenge their political exclusion, they often sought to justify their inclusion by re-negotiating the boundaries between the public and private spheres. Women from across the political spectrum legitimized their entrance and interest in politics through referencing the unique perspective that they could bring because of the roles, responsibilities, and character traits associated with women, particularly those linked with motherhood (Lavrin, 1995; Power, 2002).

Elsa Chaney (1979), in one of the earliest studies done on the political involvement of women in Chile, coined the phrase "supermadre" to describe how women's political activity was seen by both themselves and by others, as an extension of their traditional roles within the home. Based on

her interviews with women involved in formal politics in Chile and Peru in the 1960s and 1970s, she argued that, “the female public official often is forced to legitimize her role as that of a mother in the larger ‘house’ of the municipality or even the nation, a kind of *supermadre*. The command echelons however are reserved for men” (Chaney, 1979: 5). Further she found that, “women overwhelmingly agreed to a division of labor in the polity that parallels the traditional, unequal roles of men and women in the family. Both men and women believe that women should participate in politics but in a style that is a ‘reflection in the political institution of the divisions of tasks in the family’” (Chaney, 1979: 21). Thus, while women were increasingly participating in politics, they did so by re-interpreting the line between what was considered private and public. Women’s political participation and leadership were easier to justify when they reproduced gender distinctions within politics. This division assigned to women the more stereotypically feminine tasks and issues, while maintaining men’s overall dominance.

The relationship between gender and political leadership in Chile continued to be redefined during the years of military rule under Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990). During this time, the general definition of what was political shifted, as Pinochet ruthlessly suppressed the realm of formal politics by banning Chile’s political parties, closing the Chilean Parliament, and exiling and arresting former political leaders. The attack on avenues of traditional political activities had a paradoxical effect on women’s political participation. As the arena of formal politics shrank, women’s activities and leadership in a wide range of social movements –including popular women’s movements, human rights movements, and feminist movements–exploded. The traditional link between women and familial and community concerns meant that women justified their political activity in terms of trying to fulfill traditional gendered roles, roles often upheld, at least rhetorically, by the conservative military regime (Valenzuela, 1987). A wealth of studies on women’s political mobilization under dictatorships have highlighted the importance of motherhood as a “mobilizing referent” for women (Alvarez, 1990; Jaquette, 1994). The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina often serve as the paradigmatic example of this tenden-

cy (Feijoó and Nari, 1994). In Chile, while less pronounced, both human rights groups and popular women’s organizations frequently framed their demands and justified their political actions through appealing to motherhood and women’s social roles in taking care of families (Baldez, 2002; Chuchryk, 1994; Valdés 1993; Thomas 2011).

The “militant motherhood” embraced by these organizations argued that the qualities and characteristics demanded by women’s social roles as mothers stood in direct contrast to the type of political leadership being promoted by Pinochet. While Pinochet disappeared family members and promoted policies that impoverished their communities, women organized to protect their families and sustain their communities. While Pinochet embraced the image of a traditional family under the control of the male patriarch as the guiding image for his government, women activists argued that true democracy was only possible by rooting out the patriarchal nature both at home and in the country (Valenzuela and Marshall, 1983). Therefore, the use of “politicized motherhood” helped to justify women’s political involvement and expanded the definition of political leadership to include qualities and characteristics generally seen as “feminine”. While expanding the definition of political leadership, the strategies pursued by women leaders as they organized against Pinochet also continued to maintain a distinction between women and men’s styles of political leadership.

With the return to democracy in 1990, women in Chile pressed for their full incorporation into all aspects of Chilean politics. They were only partially successful. Following the election of the Concertación³ candidate, Patricio Aylwin, women were appointed to the executive branch of government, including at the level of the cabinet. The creation of the National Service for Women (SERNAM), which works to promote education around women’s issues and gender equality in public policy, provided a permanent home for women’s issues within governmental agencies. However, women were much less successful in their attempts to increase women’s participation in electoral politics and to change the masculine culture

3 The “Concertación” or Coalition of Parties for Democracy was a center-left alliance among several political parties that organized the opposition to Pinochet in a national referendum that brought an end to military rule. Concertación presidents governed Chile from 1990-2010.

of Chile's political parties. Susan Franceschet (2003: 3) argues that Chilean politics remains organized around a gendered distinction between formal and informal politics. Women are seen as more suited for informal politics which center around "issues that directly affect their families and their communities", while men have continued their dominance of the institutions of formal politics (Franceschet, 2003: 5-10) For example, during the first democratic election in 1990, only 5 women (or 5.8%) were elected to the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the government, and only one woman was elected to the Senate (Hardy, 2005; Ríos Tobar and Villar, 2006)⁴. In 2000, women continued to dominate community organizations, holding the vast majority of leadership positions in informal political organizations like community soup kitchens (95%) or solidarity and community workshops (82%), while holding only 16.2% of leadership positions within political parties (Franceschet, 2003: 3).

The continuing gendered division between informal and formal politics has shaped current beliefs about political leadership. Both men and women often see formal politics as dealing only with issues of power and self-interest, as opposed to informal politics that are organized around feminine concerns such as altruism and the general interests of families and communities. Thus, a common perception is that women's activities are not properly political. Furthermore, formal politics remain dominated by men and are associated with masculine characteristics of power, competition, and aggressiveness, as was observed by Maria Esperanza above. The masculine bias of current politics extends to the culture within Chile's powerful political parties. Based on her interviews with women involved in Chilean political parties, Susan Franceschet (2003: 91) argues that, "women have been socialized to behave at odds with current political practices, which is overwhelmingly masculine", and women are discriminated against if they do not behave in a masculine way. As María Rozas, a past member of Parliament for the Christian Democrats, notes, "In order that they [men] do listen to you, women have to shout

⁴ It should be noted that the number of women in the Senate has been very stable. Before the military coup in 1973, there were two women senators, and the highest number of women senators, three, occurred during the presidency of Eduardo Frei from 1964-1970. See also: www.camara.cl and www.senado.cl.

or swear, but that means adopting masculine behavior and it should not be like that" (Franceschet, 2003: 91).

The distinction between formal and informal has helped to maintain a definition of political leadership based on qualities associated with men and masculinity. Drawing on past political struggles, women political leaders often argue that they bring a different style of leadership that focuses more on teamwork, altruism, and reconciliation. It is important to note that these are generalizations that help set a broad context for discussions on political leadership and are often mobilized to serve as symbolic resources by different campaigns. Particular candidates craft strategies that at times might embrace, reject, or create new combinations of these beliefs. As explained below, the 2005-2006 presidential campaign invoked a range of gendered beliefs about political leadership including both traditional masculine definitions of political leadership, as well as beliefs about more feminine leadership styles.

Gender and political leadership in Chile's 2005-2006 presidential campaign

Since the return of democracy, Chilean politics have been dominated by two opposing political coalitions. The Concertación for Democracy –the center-left coalition composed of the Christian Democratic Party (CD), the Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSD), the Party for Democracy (PPD), and the Socialist Party (PS)– that has governed since the return of democracy, and on the right the Alliance for Chile, composed of two major parties, the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) and National Renovation (RN)⁵. Going into the presidential campaign, the Alliance for Chile hoped to capitalize on recent bribery scandals involving members of the Concertación and a growing sense that after sixteen years in power,

⁵ In the 2005 election, a coalition between the Chilean Communist Party and the Humanist Party fielded Tomás Hirsch, the founder of the Humanist Party, as their candidate. In the first round of the voting, he received 5.4% of the vote. For the sake of brevity, I do not analyze the gendered aspects of his campaign.

the leaders of the Concertación had grown arrogant and disconnected⁶. Political leaders within the Concertación were also worried about growing criticisms of their anti-democratic internal decision-making process and with the perception that they were generally out-of-touch with the grassroots activists that had supported them in the transition, as well as with concerns of everyday Chileans.

In the run-up to the election, these concerns within the Concertación provided an opening for candidates who had not previously been considered for the presidency by party elites. My interviews revealed that many people believed that many party elites were surprised when the names of two women repeatedly rose to the top of the public opinion polls, Michelle Bachelet from the Socialist Party and Soledad Alvear from the Christian Democrats. Alvear and Bachelet had both been popular ministers in Ricardo Lagos's cabinet and had taken on posts never before held by women. Alvear had served as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Bachelet was the first woman in Latin America to serve as Minister of Defense, having previously served as the Minister of Health. While Alvear and Bachelet were clearly politically experienced, they also benefited from the opening created by the internal political crises and broad public criticisms of the Concertación. The fact that they were women created a perception that they were political outsiders and would bring about the changes that many Chileans felt were needed both within the Concertación and in Chile in general. As noted by President Lagos in the early part of 2004, "The greatest change would be to have the first female president in the country"⁷. In this case, by having a female candidate, the Concertación could both promote a perception of change while still maintaining their political control. Both women also benefited from the perception that women political leaders are more honest, less corrupt, and more in touch with concerns of everyday Chileans (Franceschet, 2006).

6 This was considered to be general knowledge during the campaign, but for a thorough discussion of the election in terms of the politics between the two coalitions, see for example, Ricardo Gamboa and Carolina Segovia (2006), "Las elecciones presidenciales y parlamentarias en Chile", *Revista de Ciencia Política* 26 (1): 84-113.

7 *El Mercurio*, February 3, 2004.

While coming in as perceived political outsiders benefited both Alvear and Bachelet, this perception also had its disadvantages. One of the initial criticisms of both Bachelet and Alvear was that neither candidate had a solid power base within their respective parties. This criticism partly reflected the difficulties faced by women within Chile's political parties. Alvear's inability to consolidate the Christian Democratic party behind her candidacy was widely discussed as one factor in her decision to withdraw her candidacy and support Bachelet. Bachelet, while a member of the cabinet of a socialist president, had not been part of the governing elite within the Socialist Party structure and was not initially supported by this party. According to Clarissa Hardy, the outsider position of Bachelet in terms of party elite was one reason that fueled questions about her leadership. As she noted, "women are not incorporated into the leadership of the parties, the socialization [how you become a party leader] remains masculine [...] the trajectory of women in the parties is very slow [...] Women have the same qualifications, but the percentage of women [within leadership positions in the parties] remains very low" (personal communication, January 6, 2006, Santiago). Bachelet's candidacy, in particular, was initially driven by her popularity among Chileans as demonstrated by a number of opinion polls⁸.

Many political party elites initially viewed Bachelet's candidacy with some suspicion. This hesitancy stemmed not only from her position as a relative outsider, but also from worries about her political leadership style. A review article in the popular right-leaning *La Tercera* (on February 15, 2006) about important campaign issues, published after the first round, reported that one of the phrases dominating the election had been "No da el ancho" or "She does not have the weight". This phrase was used to imply that Michelle Bachelet was a political lightweight and that she did not have the capacity to govern. *La Tercera* claimed that this was the, "Expression used to refer to the capacity of the candidate to the presidency of

8 The importance of opinion polls in propelling Michelle Bachelet's candidacy was the consistent answer I was given when conducting interviews in Chile between December of 2005 and January of 2006. I was told this by people in the street that were demonstrating in favor of Michelle Bachelet, women who had joined some of the earliest groups of citizens to support her candidacy, and Chilean intellectuals and party activists such as Clarissa Hardy and Danae Mlynarz, and feminist activist and social scientist, Teresa Valdez.

the Concertación. Although the phrase ‘She does not have the weight’ only was articulated and verbalized publicly by adherents to Piñera and Lavín, it was also heard from the mouths of high members of the governing party, who in private questioned [the capacity] of Bachelet.” A former member of the Concertación Chamber of Deputies, Fanny Pollarolo, told me that casting aspersions on the abilities and capacity of women is the typical way of criticizing and disqualifying women who are in positions of power (personal communication, January 4, 2006, Santiago). Certainly, skepticism about women’s capacities helps to justify keeping women out of positions of political power. Danae Mlynarz, a city council member from Ñuñoa and a personal assistant to Bachelet during the first round of the campaign, noted that it continued to be a fierce fight to get the political parties to run more women for the positions of Deputies and Senators (personal communication, January 5, 2006, Santiago).

Political leadership: a man’s prerogative

If certain sectors of the traditional political leadership of the Concertación questioned the political capacity of Bachelet, then it is not surprising that Bachelet’s opponents also attacked her leadership capabilities. During the campaign, the connections between gender and political leadership presented different opportunities and challenges for the candidates. Both Lavín and Piñera needed to establish their own leadership abilities as well as criticizing Bachelet’s. Lavín entered as the favorite. He had been the previous presidential candidate of the Alliance for Chile and had almost defeated President Lagos in the 2000 elections. He was later elected the mayor of Santiago. Piñera, as the relative newcomer, needed to introduce himself to the voters and establish his credentials as a credible candidate for the right, as well as a strong opponent to Bachelet. In pursuing these goals, both Lavín and Piñera drew upon masculine definitions of leadership in shaping their political strategies.

One concrete strategy used by both candidates was to highlight their role as fathers in what were projected as their traditional Chilean fam-

ilies. In presenting themselves as fathers, both candidates drew upon a long-standing tradition of male politicians within Chile. While fatherhood has been less important in justifying men’s political participation than motherhood has been for women, men have routinely invoked their status as fathers as a way of claiming the types of qualities needed by political leaders (Thomas, 2011). This tendency cuts across the political spectrum and has been part of both left-wing and right-wing political campaigns. For example, Radomiro Tomic, the presidential candidate for the Christian Democratic Party in 1970, frequently mentioned his family and the fact that he was a father of nine children as proof that he had the qualifications needed to govern. In that same campaign, the candidate for the right Jorge Alessandri, a past president and a bachelor, was ruthlessly attacked in ads that questioned his virility and masculinity, often by questioning Alessandri’s ability to “father” Chilean children and by implicitly accusing him of being homosexual (Thomas, 2011). Pinochet presented himself as a father protecting Chilean families from dangers and providing a firm and authoritative hand for the country (Thomas, 2011). In positioning themselves as “presidential”, many male leaders have presented themselves as embodying the qualities of good fathers.

The belief that the qualities and characteristics of a good father means a man would be a good president still retains its political appeal. Both Piñera and Lavín positioned themselves as fathers in their campaigns. Lavín’s position as head of the large family was well established in his previous campaigns. In the 2005-2006 campaign, a Christmas card used as a piece of political propaganda captures this image. On the front of the card there is a photo of Lavín with his wife and seven children. Lavín stands slightly in front of the rest of his family and seems to be caught in the motion of walking towards the viewer. The rest of his family is roughly grouped in a triangle with Lavín at the pinnacle. The picture is designed to promote an image of the traditional family, united and under the authority of a father who is at its head both figuratively and in actuality. Inside the card, Lavín, with much affection, wishes the reader a Merry Christmas and a “great year for 2006 full of love and happiness”. The message draws on the implied love and happiness of the larger Lavín family.

Lavín's paternal imagery was part of his political appeal for many Chileans. In interviews, I was repeatedly told that Lavín embodied the image of the patriarch of the traditional Chilean family: socially conservative, very Catholic, and with numerous children. Carmen Dominguez Espinosa, a young lawyer who had worked on Lavín's 1999 campaign and later with him when he was Santiago's mayor, explained that Chileans liked Lavín's paternal style. She argued that the poor and working class women—among whom Lavín was popular—recognized that he was interested in people's concerns, especially in terms of issues of poverty and security. As the good patriarch, he would both protect and provide for their families as well as his own (Carmen Dominguez Espinosa, personal communication, December 30, 2005, Santiago). How he used his role as a husband and a father to relate to everyday Chileans could also be seen in the appearances made by his wife on television. María Estela frequently appeared in Lavín's advertising supporting her husband and attesting to his abilities to govern, his character, and his commitment to and understanding of the less fortunate Chileans. Thus, Lavín used his position as a husband and father as evidence of his leadership qualities, and to relate to people in ways that resonated with their beliefs.

To compete with Lavín, Piñera promoted an image of himself as embodying the same values as Lavín. He drew on traditional definitions of masculinity that served as a way to both appeal to Alliance's core conservative voters and to certain sectors of the center that might be uneasy with Bachelet as a candidate, either because she was divorced, a single-mother, or because of her affiliation with the Socialist Party. There was also the perception of Piñera as a political opportunist, and he needed to convince the conservative voters that he truly believed in their values⁹. Given these

⁹ This was especially true among supporters of Lavín. In 2004, there had been an agreement between the two parties of the alliance, the UDI and the RN, to field only one candidate, Lavín, as a way of maximizing their potential to win the presidency. However, when early opinion polls showed that Lavín was having a hard time competing against the popularity of Michelle Bachelet, Piñera saw an opportunity to further his political ambitions. In addition to attempting to win the presidency, his campaign would help to establish himself as the leader of the right and to move to the right, away from its traditional association with Pinochet's military regime, whom he had voted against in the 1988 plebiscite. The difference between the Concertación and the Alliance would then need to be more about values and policies, rather than which parties in the past had opposed Pinochet.

issues, the way masculinity was used in framing the qualities needed by the president was perhaps more explicit in Piñera's campaign. In this area, his family played an important role. As one woman noted to me, Piñera presented his family as a reason for supporting him, the fact that he had a good family. In doing so, she thought he was simply following the common practice on the part of Chilean politicians (Belgica, personal communication, January 5, 2006, Santiago).

However, what seemed to come naturally for Lavín—with his known Opus Dei affiliation, familial roots in rural Chile, and paternal role both within his family and his politics—could seem forced for Piñera. The contrast between Piñera's Christmas card and Lavín's card highlights this distinction. Giving a more glossy overall impression, Piñera stands in the middle of his family. In his arms, he holds his first grandchild, a small baby. While the card promises to "raise up Chilean families", his family seems less typically Chilean, a sense strengthened by the fact that most of the family were wearing jackets or sweaters with the snow-topped Andes in the background, giving the viewer a perception of winter. For some Chileans, this picture showed the influence of political strategists and media consultants from the United States for whom Christmas is celebrated in the winter and not in high summer as in Chile.

Interestingly, the presentation of their families on the part of both Piñera and Lavín, also served to implicitly criticize Bachelet. In my observations of the first round of the election, I was struck by the lack of a formalized attack on Bachelet in terms of her position as a divorced mother who had also given birth to a child out of wedlock from a long-term relationship. However, the attention given by Piñera and Lavín to their position as fathers within traditional families and the extensive use of images of their families in their campaigns, functioned as an implicit critique of Bachelet that positioned her as not being presidential material. As noted by Danae Mylnar, Piñera and Lavín were essentially saying "here is my family, let me show you, here are my children. This was an [implicit comparison] with Michelle Bachelet, this Señora that does not have a family, her children have different fathers [...]. The image of the family is used to also present other differences [between the candidates] tradition, church, and gender

roles” (personal communication, January 5, 2006, Santiago). Thus, Piñera and Lavín could question Bachelet’s ability to be the president because of her status as a divorced mother by focusing on how they embodied the traditional familial image of Chilean presidents. After all, what is more Chilean than the well-constituted Chilean family? This implicit strategy allowed them to attack Bachelet’s personal life without the danger of explicit attacks that might hurt their chances with working class women. In order to win the presidential election, they needed the votes of this group of women who tended to support the Alliance, but like Bachelet, many were single mothers and heads of households.

In the second round of the campaign, in the run-off between Piñera and Bachelet, Piñera increasingly turned to explicit attacks on Michelle Bachelet’s ability and capacity to be president. In an interview with *Ercilla*, Piñera repeated what was to become the standard attack on Bachelet’s leadership qualities promoted by his campaign. While noting that he considered her to be a nice person and capable, he remarked, “but to be president of the Republic, you need much more than this. It requires leadership, fortitude, knowledge, capacity to organize teams, capacity to lead a boat so that it arrives at a good port. In my opinion, when she was the Minister of Health and Defense she did not demonstrate these qualities” (Hafemann, 2006: 13). This critique was made in a number of ways, from a general questioning of Bachelet’s “presidentialness”, to attacks on her lack of strong leadership characteristics. Rodrigo Hinzpeter, one of Piñera’s campaign directors, cast aspersions on Bachelet’s ability to be an independent leader by saying, “when we see that she needs to be permanently accompanied by and defended by ‘godfathers’ and ‘godmothers’; when we see that she had serious problems in forming her command and [she] entered into important and essential differences with Soledad Alvear” (*Ercilla*, 2006). Thus, he critiqued Bachelet as not being able to stand on her own, and in essence, needing to be led by other people within the Concertación.

In making these critiques, Piñera and his campaign recognized the danger of being accused of not valuing Chilean women and attempted to mitigate the claims of sexism made by the opposition. He knew he could not afford to lose the vote of lower-class Chilean women who had voted

for Lavín¹⁰. He thus tried to distinguish Bachelet as an individual and made clear he was questioning only Bachelet’s qualities and not the capacity of Chilean women in general. For example, he stated that he firmly believed “in general terms the woman is absolutely and perfectly prepared to be president, but [a woman] has to have the qualities that this position requires and demands” (Hafemann, 2006: 13). Alberto Espina, a senator from the National Renovation party and director of Piñera’s campaign, managed to both critique Bachelet and compliment Chilean women at the same time by stating, “Bachelet is not representative of the promise of the Chilean woman. The Chilean woman can be much more than Bachelet: she [the Chilean woman] can have professional training, knowledge of the issues and leadership, that are the not the fundamental characteristics of Michelle Bachelet”¹¹.

While criticizing Bachelet for not being the right type of leader to be president, Piñera presented himself as embodying those qualities that were lacking in Bachelet. In addition to his use of family and an explicitly paternal discourse, his campaign presented him as embodying a traditional masculine style of leadership: aggressive, competitive, and authoritative. Piñera made it clear that he was the one in charge, the one who would wield the power, and a man that would lead the government rather than making decisions in a more collective fashion. The pamphlets passed out in the streets emphasized his personal abilities as a leader. The back of one card read, “Piñera, More President. Because he has the capacity to carry the country forward... Because he is a family man... Because he has the capacity to work. Because he is a modern man... Because he has the character to lead the country. Because he has the presidential standing to represent us better... Because he is a man of action.” As presented by his campaign,

10 In the first round of voting, a noticeable gender gap had emerged between the two candidates on the right. Lavín had maintained his strong showing among women while Piñera had captured more men than women. Lavín had received 24.85% of women’s votes compared to 21.37% of men’s votes, while Piñera had received 24.1% of women’s votes and 26.8% of men’s. This gender gap was significant because the right has traditionally garnered a greater percentage of its support from women. If only women’s votes had counted, Lavín would have beaten Lagos in the 2000 elections. Piñera could not afford to lose the vote of more conservative women if he was to win the presidency. For a more detailed discussion, see Gamboa and Segovia (2006: 102).

11 *El Mercurio*, January 8, 2006.

the reasons to elect Piñera were based on his abilities, what he represented and what he could do for Chile. The focus was on what Piñera could do as an individual. As noted by Clarisa Hardy, “Piñera presents himself as the seat of authority [...] His rhetoric is, ‘I know, I can, I did’” (personal communication, January 6, 2006, Santiago). Thus, his campaign was all about him and his qualities. It was his leadership that would bring a better future to Chile. As one of his supporters told me, “Chileans like a strict, ordered father”, and partly for this reason they liked both Lagos and Piñera (Alvaro Undurraga, personal communication, January, 2006, Santiago).

In the second round, Piñera further “masculinized” his campaign. His strategy during the second round was to frame the election as a choice between himself and Bachelet as individuals, rather than between two political coalitions or between different political ideologies. The argument for Piñera as the better choice ultimately rested upon his leadership qualities –qualities traditionally associated with male political leaders. Piñera continued to use his family, especially the participation of his wife Cecilia Morel, to present himself as the candidate that understood and would protect traditional Chilean values. As he noted in one of his television campaign spots, he was prepared to be president because of his leadership, political will, and his life experiences which included being the head of his family, a professor, a businessman, and a senator. His campaign slogan for the second round, “Piñera, More President”, meant both that Piñera was more presidential than his opponent, and with Piñera as president, more was possible for Chile. Finally, the masculine style of his leadership was perhaps best captured in the car air fresheners passed out on the streets as campaign tokens made to resemble the traditional symbol of professional men, a blue tie striped with red and white, emblazoned with his campaign slogan. What could be more presidential than a tie?

Certainly, positioning the central debate around issues of political leadership was driven by a number of factors and political calculations. The generally good economic conditions of Chile at the time of the election, the broad support enjoyed by departing Concertación president, Ricardo Lagos, and the weaker position of the Alliance for Chile as the opposition coalition, all benefited Bachelet’s position as the Concertación candidate

and weakened Piñera’s position as the challenger. Bachelet was more vulnerable in terms of her individual characteristics than as the official candidate of the Concertación, whose candidates for Congress in the first round of voting had won a combined total of 54.31% of the vote, and for the first time since the return to democracy gained a majority of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Thus, Piñera had a number of reasons for trying to focus the campaign on his and Bachelet’s personal qualities and qualifications, rather than trying to frame the campaign as a choice between opposing political coalitions. In constructing his arguments about why he was the better candidate for the presidency, gendered understandings of politics and political leadership provided him with a number of advantages in his contest against Bachelet. Piñera drew upon the traditional understanding of political leadership as embodying male characteristics in crafting his arguments about both his strengths as a candidate as well as Bachelet’s weaknesses. Even when not explicit, gendered beliefs helped to set the context and the content of Piñera’s campaign. His claims to be “presidential” and his attacks on the “presidentialness” of Bachelet were embedded within a gendered definition of political leadership.

She is a woman’s woman: gender in Michelle Bachelet’s campaign

While conducting interviews with participants in marches, rallies, and other street activities that were organized in support of Michelle Bachelet, I was told again and again by women that they were supporting Bachelet because she was a woman. Her being a woman symbolized a variety of things for my respondents: a challenge to Chile’s sexist culture, a greater commitment to citizen participation and inclusion, more democracy, and new role models for their daughters. Many people also told me that what they really liked was that Bachelet was a woman’s woman. This saying also had multiple meanings. For some it meant that Bachelet understood their lives, that she knew what it was like to be woman, a mother and the head of her household. Many people recognized that Bachelet represented a change not simply because she was female, but also because she was chal-

lenging the traditional masculine style of Chilean politics. Many Chileans, especially women, felt that while Michelle Bachelet was pursuing the most masculine job in Chile, she was not doing so by taking on the traditional masculine leadership style, but by bringing in her own style of feminine leadership. These sentiments in part reflected the strategies of Bachelet's campaign in promoting her style of feminine leadership as a challenge to the traditional status quo and as a response to closed, anti-democratic and elitist politics. Her leadership style, more than simply her candidacy, represented a challenge to traditional Chilean politics, a system that had excluded not only women in general but many other marginalized groups, including Chile's indigenous population, the youth, and poor women. Bachelet's campaign, however, did not simply highlight her unique qualities; it also sought to generally redefine the qualities needed by a political leader away from the traditional masculine bias, by explicitly labeling attacks on Bachelet's leadership as sexist.

Early in the first round, Michelle Bachelet's campaign embraced the slogan "Continuity and Change". The continuity was, of course, that a Bachelet presidency would be the fourth consecutive government for the Concertación. The most obvious change was that Bachelet, if elected, would become the first female president to govern Chile. But Bachelet also argued that her candidacy symbolized the inclusion of all groups of Chileans. Many women that I talked to at different campaign rallies had been active during 1980s in the women's movement and had participated in the social mobilizations that helped to bring democracy back, but had stopped participating in politics because they felt that the reorganized political parties did not welcome their participation. Many felt that Bachelet's campaign re-opened these spaces for women in politics.

My conversation with Soledad Quiroz at a march in downtown Santiago was typical of many responses I was given when I asked participants why they were supporting Bachelet's candidacy. She told me, "I am voting for her because it is historic for the country. She is the fruit of the fight and work of the women of Chile. Just five years ago, I could not have thought it was possible to have a woman president. It is an opening up of possibilities, especially for the young girls –now that they have in their heads

the possibility of being president. It will mean... more democracy, more citizen participation" (personal communication, December 20, 2005, Santiago). This woman identified with Bachelet's presentation of herself as similar to all Chilean women. This strategy was promoted throughout Bachelet's television campaign as well. In one of her campaign spots, she talks about her daily schedule: she gets up, makes breakfast for her family, takes her daughter to school, and goes to work. She also noted how through her work as a doctor, she knew about the problems and struggles of everyday Chileans, especially Chilean women and those who had been discriminated against.

Bachelet's recognition of the importance of greater citizen participation, a strong focus of her early campaign, was also part of her argument about her style of leadership. Bachelet claimed that rather than having the traditional masculine style that was more formal and authoritarian, her style was grounded in her experiences as a woman and was more open, more participatory, and more about working for consensus than imposing her will. Bachelet was careful to note, however, that her more feminine style of leadership did not mean that she could not, when needed, make decisions and remain firm in those decisions. Michelle Bachelet claimed, "Chileans are looking for a new kind of leadership, one that a woman symbolizes"¹². The type of leadership that women embody, according to Bachelet, is partly based on a "different kind of ethics than men. Usually the woman tries to find a win-win solution. They are more interested in considering the process than men, who are interested mainly in the results. It's not a thing about being hard or soft. Women can be firm, but they can also be caring, nurturing [...] I was Minister of Defense and nobody thought I was soft like jelly" (Powers, 2006: 268).

Her argument resonated with many Chileans. As one woman told me, "women have a different style of governing, of doing democracy" (personal communication, January 2, 2005, Santiago). Sergio Bitar, the Minister of Education in Lagos' cabinet, who left his position to help run Bachelet's campaign in the second round, stated, "Character is not pounding on the

¹² *Newsweek*, August 22, 2005, p. 32.

table. Character and leadership are not about imposition and authoritarianism; it is not being the leader of a company that gives instructions. Modern leadership is arousing the will of the majority to advance together” (Guerra, 2005). Bachelet supporter, Sofia Vergara, expressed this distinction between the leadership qualities of the two candidates slightly differently. She highlighted Bachelet’s choice of career and what that said about the type of leadership she would have: “Michelle is a doctor. Doctors do not have to express their leadership abilities; it is a type of leadership that they do not have to publish; they do not have a discourse of leadership” (personal communication, Santiago, December 20, 2005). Bachelet’s type of leadership and its connection to gender were explained to me by journalist Monica Silva in the following way, “Women have common sense, they know the real problems of a person, she knows the problems. Bachelet has lived in the hospitals [...] the political men, they know the problems of the world as they present them, not the world as it is [...] It is natural that gender is in play, this is a sexist country, a country where machismo circulates among the men. She is the best of our politics, and this is something that many people know [...] She might not win the vote of older men, but the culture is changing. The vote of the conservative woman is now with Bachelet and this is a very strong change” (personal communication, January 7, 2006, Santiago). As noted by Silva, the idea that Bachelet possessed a different style of leadership, a style rooted in her gendered experiences, was an idea that resonated with many Chileans, even many women who had not traditionally supported the Concertación candidates.

The final strategy pursued by Bachelet and her campaign was to directly confront the criticism of her leadership capacities by labeling them as sexist (or machista) and the typical response by men when women challenged their historical dominance in politics. This strategy was displayed in an interview given by Sergio Bitar at the beginning of the second round of the campaign. He stated, “if someone thinks that to have character is to be a man, they are mistaken” (Guerra, 2005). As Fanny Pollarolo noted, “Piñera knows that machismo is evident [in Chile]. He is using terms like capacity, but these terms are historically a way to disqualify women in our culture of sexism –that women are less qualified. In this way, it appears

to say that equality is good but this person is less qualified. It is a trap for women” (personal communication, January 4, 2006, Santiago). By forthrightly labeling Piñera’s critiques as sexist, Bachelet’s supporters confronted the critiques that framed the issue in terms of Piñera’s qualities rather than Bachelet’s.

The first television advertisement that aired during the second round of the campaign, on the first of January, encapsulated all three of these strategies. In it Bachelet began by calling on those that do not want to vote for her because she is a woman. Bachelet then went on to note all the positions of leadership that Chilean women have held, by saying:

Female scientists, engineers, workers –we are all accustomed to working twice as hard. We have always had to give 100%, at home and at work, to be there 24 hours a day, and of course never to have headaches. Every family is a kingdom in which the father rules but the mother governs. Your wife, your girlfriend, your daughter and your mother can do it –they demonstrate it every day of their lives. Strength knows no gender and neither does honesty, conviction or ability. I bring a different kind of leadership, with the perspective of someone who looks at things from a different angle. Let us change our mentality; when all is said and done, a woman President is simply a head of government who doesn’t wear a tie.

This statement directly addresses the concerns about her leadership. She explicitly compares herself to Chilean women in general and draws on the leadership qualities embodied in the diversity of Chilean women. Therefore, to doubt her leadership abilities is to doubt the capabilities of both women in general and the particular woman that the viewers know. She then goes on to claim that while strength, honesty, and conviction do not have a gender, her gender does allow her to bring a different perspective into politics, a perspective that has been excluded.

Bachelet’s campaign argued, through their framing of Bachelet’s personal strengths and qualifications, that she represented a new type of leadership, a feminine leadership style. Her feminine leadership style would combine the particular strengths associated with her position as a woman –greater knowledge of every day life, more participatory leadership styles,

less interest in personal power— with certain characteristics that were traditionally considered to be more masculine, but which she argued were actually universal such as, the ability to stand firm in your decisions, to take charge when necessary, and to provide a shared vision. What is rejected in this feminine leadership style is the association of political leadership with a more authoritarian decision-making style, a style that Bachelet's campaign explicitly linked to the traditional masculine style of politics in Chile. This can be seen in the above distinction Bachelet drew between “rules” and “governs”. The rule of the father connoted the traditional position of the father as the head of the family, in which authority and power within the family are vested in the father. The idea of the mother governing represents the idea that modern families and leadership styles represent a more democratic and participatory model, one based in the everyday experiences of the family and in which the mother consults with the other members of the family rather than ruling over them. This model has “strength [...] honesty, conviction and ability”; it can be authoritative without being authoritarian.

The above ad also clearly demarcates the differences between Bachelet and her two opponents on the right in terms of her use of family and its connection to questions of political leadership. While both Piñera and Lavín drew upon traditional understandings of men's roles within the family to strengthen their claims about political leadership, Bachelet's campaign pursued a more modern conception of her role within the family. Bachelet eschewed the most traditional definitions of motherhood and instead drew heavily upon ideas associated with the women's movement in Chile that argued for the interconnected nature of democracy in both familial as well as political relations. The women's movements more progressive understandings of women as “militant mothers”, and a greater emphasis on women's political equality, provided Bachelet with a more fluid political context in which to craft her image as a political leader and to argue for a new style of political leadership, one that could be based partly in traits considered feminine. She also attempted to redefine leadership qualities like “strength” and “decisiveness” away from their past connection with specific character traits usually associated with men. Thus,

strength could mean more than imposing your will on others, and decisiveness did not need to mean making a decision without consulting the opinions of others.

As the campaign drew to a close, issues of leadership continued to dominate the debate. In the last opinion polls, while Bachelet continued to perform well in terms of citizens' perceptions of her as honest and trustworthy, Piñera increased his numbers in terms of “leadership”, “the ability to make difficult decisions”, and “firmness when facing pressure”¹³. These gains possibly reflected the success of Piñera's attacks against Bachelet's leadership style that referenced continued gendered perceptions of political leadership. In the end, Bachelet won the second round against Piñera as she managed to bring back the Concertación's traditional vote among Chilean men, while for the first time, getting an overall majority of Chilean women to vote for the coalition. Although an election is never decided on any one issue, many Chileans seemed to want a president with the type of political leadership that Bachelet had presented —someone who seemed to understand their daily lives— would bring about greater citizen participation and inclusion in politics, and would prove to be honest and trustworthy.

Conclusion

Michelle Bachelet's election as Chile's first woman president certainly reflects the immense gains that Chilean women have made in terms of gaining equal inclusion into the political system. Her election, however, does not signify that gender equality has been achieved, or that Chilean politics have lost their masculine bias. My analysis of the campaign strategies of Bachelet and her two main opponents reveals that gender continues to be an important factor in Chilean politics. It also shows that the relationship between gender and politics is much more flexible and complex than it was in the past. Gender continues to influence the contextual nature of

¹³ *La Tercera*, January 8, 2006.

political leadership by both providing and limiting the types of opportunities and resources available to political candidates. The debate around the connection between gender and political leadership during the 2005-2006 Chilean campaign demonstrates that more traditional gendered meanings coexist with more recent and oppositional understandings of political leadership that emerged both during the struggle against Pinochet and in the process of democratization. Importantly, the strategies pursued by Bachelet and her opponents had to take into account the current gendered definitions of political leadership, regardless of whether as candidates they sought to challenge or uphold these different meanings.

The importance of gender in setting the political context can be seen by looking at the different ways in which the candidates drew upon familial connections to present their leadership qualities. Both Lavín and Piñera, for example, consistently presented themselves as fairly traditional fathers of large Chilean families. The use of their families in their campaigns drew upon imagery, symbols, and discourses within Chilean culture that continue to link the qualities and characteristics of a father with those needed by political leaders. They were able to incorporate into their campaigns traditional connections between being a good father and being a good president. Promoting their traditional roles also allowed them to establish their connection to the generally conservative values of the Chilean right. In using their families, Lavín and Piñera were not just invoking a general connection between men's position in the family and politics, but they were also presenting their adherence to a particular type of masculine political leadership, one that linked a traditional understanding of paternal authority to political rule.

In her campaign, Bachelet did not position herself in terms of traditional understandings of motherhood. Unlike the political "superadres" described by Elsa Chaney in the 1960s and 1970s that justified their participation in politics by referencing motherhood, Bachelet did not use motherhood to justify her participation in politics, but rather to show her personal character and to make connections with the experiences of everyday Chileans. Her position as a single mother, therefore, became part of her general campaign strategy that highlighted her connection to the lived experiences of Chileans, especially women.

Bachelet's treatment of motherhood reveals that Chilean women now have a greater variety and flexibility of cultural resources available to them in creating claims about their leadership strengths. The significance of Bachelet's campaign in this regard can perhaps be best seen through a brief comparison between herself and Violetta Chamorro who was President of Nicaragua from 1990 to 1997. In pursuing her candidacy, Chamorro projected a political identity centered around her martyred husband, Pedro Joaquín Chamorro and her family, and argued that it was her identity as a traditional Nicaraguan mother (apolitical, self-abnegating, subservient to the wishes of her husband, even though he was dead) that provided her with the political skills that were needed. Her political leadership was based on the symbols of "wife, widow, mother, and virgin" and she claimed that as a mother, she had the leadership necessary to "reconcile the Nicaraguan people, torn by more than a decade of war" (Kampwirth, 1996: 72-67). Bachelet's personal history and political development would have made it impossible to embrace the traditional gender ideology used by Chamorro. Without the changes in the relationship between gender and politics brought about by women's activism, Bachelet might not have had the cultural resources necessary to craft her version of "feminine leadership".

The difference between Bachelet and Chamorro and between Bachelet and Lavín and Piñera also partly reflects the intersection between gender and political ideology. Lavín's and Piñera's gendered portrayal of their political leadership fit well within the gender ideology of the Chilean right with its emphasis on "family values" and the importance of conservative Catholic social thought. Certainly, some of the unease Lavín supporters felt towards Piñera in the second round of the elections was based in a sense that Piñera was using his family as a way of claiming particular values that he did not really embody. In terms of Bachelet, her position as the candidate for the center-left Concertación provided her with more flexibility. Bachelet could draw upon the Concertación's official support for women's political inclusion and equality, as well as the arguments put forward by different women's movements about the qualities and strengths of Chilean women. As I discuss above, this did not render Bachelet's claims about her political leadership immune from criticism, but it did provide her with resources to respond.

Whether Bachelet's successful presidency will ultimately result in breaking the traditional links between masculinity and political leadership is still a matter for debate. The strategies pursued by Bachelet's campaign reveal that questioning the linkages between masculinity and leadership and stressing the importance of traits more often associated with women can open political space for women in pursuit of the highest elected office of their country. Bachelet's presidency will continue to offer important lessons for understanding the evolving and complex relationship between gender and politics. Whether Bachelet succeeded in legitimizing a more feminine style of political leadership will ultimately depend, in part, on her ability to convince Chileans that her leadership style promoted the larger political goals and visions for which she was elected.

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