

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

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Introduction

This thesis aims to make a critical examination of the direction of a contemporary female political leader - namely Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The overarching theme and question of political image and substance will run throughout both the chapterial and holistic discussion levels of this argument. A major theme introduced in this discussion is that despite being the first female leader of Britain, Mrs. Thatcher was antagonistic and even harmful to British women and feminism. The purpose of this discussion is to examine Prime Minister Thatcher's leadership. Questions will be asked in the context of determining the extent to which image and substance existed in Mrs. Thatcher's political character. This exploration of Mrs. Thatcher's character is not simply an implicit study, but it is a detailed examination of her wider political career.

An essential goal of this study is to expose the political character of Mrs. Thatcher. In order to make this exposition of Mrs. Thatcher this discussion will need to draw out and closely examine any comparisons and question whether Mrs. Thatcher changed both her political image and substance from the time when she initially entered politics to the period when she became leader of the Opposition and Prime Minister of Britain during the 1970 and 1980's.

This discussion incorporates areas such as a number of Mrs. Thatcher's policies. Gender issues policy areas include: employment, economic equality, education and health-the NHS.

This thesis will attempt to unravel the complexities of Mrs. Thatcher's political image and political substance through a balanced portrayal of alternate perspectives surrounding the central themes of the argument. The chapterial descriptions will be followed by an explanation of why this topic and the connected issues were selected for research. Ensuing from these explanations will be a brief discussion of the implications of this discussion upon past, present and future Thatcher and related issues research. A series of necessary definitions and explanations of key political terms of reference central to the whole discussion will also be included. These key terms include: political leadership, political image and political substance and feminism. The methodology, sources and structural framework of this discussion will finally be considered.

Chapter Two questions: "Did Mrs. Thatcher adopt a political image?" As the opening discussion this chapter will address various explanations of Mrs. Thatcher's political character and will attempt to resolve these arguments. This chapter aims to show the role of political image in relation to Mrs. Thatcher's political career. In this study three options were immediately obvious: the first choice to be considered suggests that Mrs. Thatcher chose to employ a political image; the second option questions whether she was forced by the British political system to assume a political image; and lastly, that although the system inclined her to conform to it, she still could have decided to stand the more

difficult middle ground and maintain a truer self-image in her political life.

Chapter Three considers the political image and substance of Thatcherism. This third chapter is devoted to discovering the inter-connections between Thatcherism, political image and political substance. The relationship will be debated in terms of a range of Mrs. Thatcher's policies. The specific policy areas to be dealt with included: employment/unemployment; income equality; education; and health-the NHS. Another question to be raised in this investigation was the policy making power - the political image and substance - observed in policy creation under Mrs. Thatcher.

Chapter Four debates the political image and political substance of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership. This chapter considers, a number of questions about the political image and political substance of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership. The political image and political substance of the following positions will be examined: the sale of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership for media consumption; how Mrs. Thatcher worked for herself - usurping free-choice through the writing of her own history, choosing to be a Machiavellian styled leader; and finally, the notion that Mrs. Thatcher was controlled by patriarchy.

Chapter Five delves into the controversy surrounding the political image and political substance of Mrs. Thatcher and feminism. Chapter Five is the final instalment of this thesis. This deliberation undertakes to ultimately consider the duality of Mrs. Thatcher political leadership through three avenues of endeavour. This chapter will complete the theme of political image and political substance in dealing

with Mrs. Thatcher's leadership. The first part of this examination will broach the relationship between Mrs. Thatcher's leadership and feminism. This debate will deliberate the question of the image and substance behind why Mrs. Thatcher was apparently feminine, yet not a feminist in her political image? The second portion of this argument questions the degree of image and substance involved in the examination of whether Mrs. Thatcher was judged anti-feminist; as she was largely judged in terms of radical models of feminism. The final question of this chapter will explore the extent of image and substance pertinent in debating whether Mrs. Thatcher really was a liberal feminist?

Why make a detailed investigation into Mrs. Thatcher's political image and political substance?

Very little academic examination has been devoted to this particular angle of endeavour, despite the fact that so very much written analysis has been concentrated upon Mrs. Thatcher. Most successful political leaders assume a political image, unlike most other political leaders Mrs. Thatcher's assumption of a political image was a key feature of her political success. Mrs. Thatcher's political image greatly changed in appearance from the 1940's - when she first entered the political scene - to the 1970's when she won Party leadership and the Prime Ministership. Hugo Young also deciphered the change in Mrs. Thatcher's political image, saying:

"Before she got anywhere in politics, she was, as we have seen, strident in her assertion that women were as entitled as men to succeed in public life. She was saying this as early as 1952. When she has reached the top, a change came over the balance of her rhetoric. She

became a lot more ready to praise the Conservative model of the housewife and mother" (1989, 305).

From all appearances Mrs. Thatcher's political image figured more prominently than political substance in the topics designated for chapterial debated; as well as in her overall political success, her policies and the Conservative Party's programme. This was why four examples of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making were chosen for inclusion in this thesis. The four gender issues selected for examination were: equality of employment; income equality; the inequalities of the health and the NHS; and the equal educational opportunity and provision. The aim of involving these four areas of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making was to help demonstrate the intricacies of the chapterial topic debates surrounding her new political image through practical examples.

Why were gender issues selected to help exemplify practical activation of Mrs. Thatcher's new political image or political substance?

A part of this study aims to convey an in-depth appreciation of the highly politicised sphere of gender issues during Mrs. Thatcher's terms in Office. Firstly, a detailed working understanding of gender issues is necessary to establish the parameters of this topic. The term gender issues will be utilised in favour of the more frequent conversational label "women's issues", as it is a more accurate and appropriate formal reference.

Stuart Hall's The Road From Thatcherism (1989, 101-102), provided a very clear explanation of "gender issues". Hall suggested that gender issues comprised those areas of peculiar interest and significance to most women; as well as being those issues inextricably linked and couched in the promotion of individual (in most cases, poor and socio-politically disadvantaged) female rights (1989, 101-102).

During Mrs. Thatcher's decade of British rule there appeared to be four outstanding areas of political disadvantage experienced by women. These four gender issues took the form: women's employment and unemployment, income inequality and discrimination; women's health and the adverse affects of National Health Service (NHS) cutbacks; the inequality of educational opportunity for women.

These points were selected for examination in this study because they seemed to recur throughout a wide spectrum of studies. That is to say these gender issues appeared as a thematic concern; they were raised not only in studies dedicated to both feminist theory and Mrs. Thatcher, but were also seen in academic analyses and even everyday media reports. The criterion employed in selecting the gender issues for analysis was based upon the understanding that each of the issues was of particular relevance to the identified group or the majority of British women. In brief, these gender issues were not expected to be imperatives or areas of disadvantage in the lives of all British women. Thus, British women from more affluent, upper class backgrounds or the minority are effectively excluded from this examination. Furthermore, these four areas of study entailed much more than simply political issues of interest and significance to most British women; these issues

constituted the essentials of modern life, and were effectively rights these women had been denied.

British psychoanalyst feminist author Janet Sayers identified the same list of gender issues as chief areas of female inequality in Britain. These issues comprised the expansion of the labour market for women; the extension of care services in British society; protection and expansion of the NHS; and the promotion of educational opportunities and welfare with special reference to female residing in Britain as gender issues (1985, 114).

This choice of terminology is also up-held by the work of prominent feminist author Maureen McNeil, in her article "Making and Not Making the Difference: The Gender Politics of Thatcherism" (in Franklin, et.al., 1991, 221-240). Ms. McNeil's article identified the link between gender issues and the female leadership of Prime Minister Thatcher. Ms. McNeil strongly implied that women suffered particular political discrimination in Mrs. Thatcher's Britain because of their gender: "...women were constructed as a political category which they experienced as gender differences..." (in Franklin, et. al., 1991, 236). She added that although women's' experiences of Mrs. Thatcher differed they were similar through "...the persistence of gender difference as a mode of political categorization and oppression" (McNeil in Franklin, et.al., 1991, 236). McNeil developed this point of clarification to suggest that while she was not offering a "...reductionist version of the category 'woman' ", the notion of "gender differences" - in reference to the difficulties British women faced - was a more accurate indicator (in Franklin, et. al., 1991, 236). This point was established, when Ms. McNeil wrote "...there clearly are occasions when barriers must be

fought in the name of 'women' and through bringing attention to gender differences" (in Franklin, et.al., 1991, 236).

The implications of this thesis for previous and future investigations of Mrs. Thatcher.

The implications this thesis has for previous work completed on Mrs. Thatcher are not revolutionary or profound. However, this research does perhaps offer an interesting angle of examination, as not a great deal of similar research has been made on the political image and political substance of Mrs. Thatcher, in relation to: her choice or not of using a political image; Thatcherism; her leadership; and feminism. In addition, this discussion incorporates an in-depth examination of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making. In particular, four major gender issues were selected to lead this part of the debate. Gender issues were especially selected for investigation because of the kind of negative attention Mrs. Thatcher consistently used in dealing with these policy areas. And because of the general harm Mrs. Thatcher caused everyday British women through her gender issue policies and feminism. The policy areas of law and order and National defence were chosen for their general appeal to the wider British electorate. Also, a determining criteria behind the selection of the four policy areas was that they fitted together in terms of Mrs. Thatcher's treatment of them. As well as the way that they particularly contributed to the illumination of arguments, in each of the four chapterial/topic arguments, offering clear and practical examples.

This thesis also aims to draw attention to the plight of British women and the need for the promotion of gender issues through more thoughtful policy making. It is is not a feminist or gender issue treatise,

although feminist theory, theorists and gender issues do figure throughout the discussion. This thesis does not possess a covert agenda, instead it hopes to present a series of linked arguments which culminate in a balanced and objective discussion.

Explanations of key political terms.

In order to make clear the usage and intended meaning of certain terms (word selection) throughout this discussion it was felt that a brief explanation of these frequently used key political terms was necessary.

Firstly, an explanation of the key political term, political leadership. Martin M. Chemers' chapter "The Social, Organisational and Cultural Context of Effective Leadership", explained contemporary leadership theory (in Kellerman, 1984, 91-112). Chemers' makes a brief history of the scientific study of leadership, dividing the overall era into three distinct periods: the trait period, from around 1910 to World War Two; the behaviour period, from the onset of World War Two to the late 1960's; and the Contingency period from the late 1960's to the present (in Kellerman, 1984, 93). Kellerman concurred with this premise, adding that those who became leaders were different from those who remained followers (1984, 92) Such leadership research was based in specifically identifying what unique feature of the individual was associated with leadership (Kellerman, 1984, 93). Kellerman explained that mental testing became a a chief method employed in the development of a "personality test", in the quest for discernible leadership traits (Kellerman, 1984, 93). A large number of studies were also done to compare leaders with followers through various measures which hypothesised about the relationship between followers and leadership

status or effectiveness (Kellerman, 1984, 93). Measures such as dominance, social sensitivity, moodiness, masculinity, physical appearance, among many others were applied to both leaders and followers, the scores were then compared to demonstrate significant discrepancies (Kellerman, 1984, 93). This early research of political leadership could not be employed to analyse a leader such as Mrs. Thatcher. In 1948, Ralph Stogdill reviewed such early political leadership trait models and concluded that a mass of inconsistencies and contradictory outcomes would result, suggesting that traits alone do not identify leadership (in Kellerman, 1984, 93). Stogdill predicted that leadership theorising would be inadequate until personal and situational characteristics were integrated (1948 in Kellerman, 1984, 35-71).

Later, Kurt Lewin and associates developed a leadership model based upon behaviours indicative of three leadership styles: Autocratic, Democratic and Laissez-faire (Lewin, Lippitt and White in Kellerman, 1984, 93). Kellerman's investigation of both the trait and behaviour leadership models suggested that the researchers sought to identify the "best" style of leadership (1984, 95). Kellerman's examination of these political leadership models recognised that no single style of leadership was universally best across all situations and environments (1984, 95).

Kellerman additionally investigated more current theories and research of political leadership models. The contingency approach concentrated upon the reliable prediction of the effects of leadership style. The first contingency approach, developed by Fred Fiedler, centred on a personality measure called the "esteem for the least-preferred-co-worker" scale (1964 in Kellerman, 1984, 95-96). Like Fiedler, Kellerman determined that political leadership style alone was

not sufficient to explain leadership effectiveness (1964 in Kellerman 1984, 96). In summary, Kellerman found:

“Leadership ultimately involves a job to do and people to do with it. The Likelihood of successful goal accomplishment, must, then depend upon the degree to which the support of the people and the control of the test are facilitative” (1984, 105).

Dr. Bruce Mazlish's chapter, “History, Psychology, and Leadership”, is a very comprehensive explanation of political leadership (in Kellerman, 1984, 1-21). Mazlish's analysis of political leadership first considered that leadership could take many forms - intellectual, artistic, religious as well as political (in Kellerman, 1984, 4). For instance, Mazlish used an example from the late 1960's. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences held a conference, later published as a *Daedalus* issue called “Philosophers and Kings”; the conference tried to take account of this fact through its content of articles from both intellectual and political leaders (in Kellerman, 1984, 4). Mazlish espoused that the exhibition demonstrated that the study of leadership really centred upon the study of political leadership (in Kellerman, 1984, 4). A further example used by Mazlish was Erikson's pioneering studies of the two great religious figures, Luther and Gandhi, which dealt with them as great political and revolutionary figures (in Kellerman, 1984, 4). In sum, Mazlish suggested that as historians have done, wherever a structure of power-relations existed, political leadership could be analysed (in Kellerman, 1984, 4).

Susan J. Carroll, in her chapter “Feminist Scholarship on Political Leadership” (in Kellerman, 1984, 139-156), suggested that in politics and political science the concepts of power and leadership have been

closely linked. Kenneth F. Janda was quoted in the same article, "...leadership must be viewed as a 'particular type of power relationship...'" (Janda x Carroll in Kellerman, 1984, 140). Carroll expounded that Richard E. Neustadt's seminal study of power in the Oval Office (Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership), made the same connection between leadership and power (Neustadt x Carroll in Kellerman, 1984, 140). Carroll noted that James MacGregor Burns made a similar tie between these two concepts, writing: "...To understand the nature of leadership requires understanding of the essence of power, for leadership is a special form of power..." (Burns MacGregor x Carroll in Kellerman, 1984, 140). Carroll focused her attention upon the understandings of feminist scholars, who she said: "...have noted that power, as discussed in social science literature and practiced in contemporary politics, has generally been equated with dominance and control" (in Kellerman, 1984, 140). Carroll used the work a variety of feminist scholars to highlight feminist calls to change political leadership and the power relationship with females, whilst at the same time acknowledging the different explanations feminist theorists promoted about generally desired changes to political leadership. Socialist feminist writing, such as that of Nancy Hartsock was based upon conceptions of power being derived from the oppression of the Capitalist system. Carroll used Hartsock's work to help illustrate her point:

"...Most social scientists have based their discussions of power on definitions of power as the ability to compel obedience, or as control and dominance. They link this definition with Bertrand Russell's statement that power is the production of intended effects, and added that power must be power over someone - something possessed, a property of an actor such that he can alter the will or actions of others in a way that

produces results in conformity with his own will..." (Hartsock x Carroll in Kellerman, 1984, 140).

Whilst radical feminists such as Adrienne Rich viewed sex as the most fundamental form of oppression saying, "Power is... a primal relationship under patriarchy... (T)he identity, the very personality, of the man depends on power in a certain, specific sense: that of power over others, beginning with a woman and her children..." (Rich x Carroll in Kellerman, 1984, 140-141).

In completion a statement of political leadership would be unfulfilled without addressing the Socratic model.

"...To locate a philosophical perspective on leadership in a democratic historical consensus on the essence of leadership..." was how Leonard Grob summed the Socratic model in his essay "Leadership: The Socratic Model" (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 263-280).

Grob began his analysis of the Socratic model by suggesting,

"...Leadership in the political sphere is to be understood in the same manner as leadership in any other environment (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 275). Grob explained that according to the Socratic model "...the core of democratic process is embodied in our notion of leadership as a dialogical activity..." (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 275). Grob went further to speak about political leadership being based in consent, saying:

"The justification for consent, in other words, is to be looked for neither in the needs or abilities of leaders and/or their followers nor in the demands of historical circumstances, but rather in the nature of leadership itself" (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 275). The Grob depiction of the Socratic leader "...is one who steadfastly acknowledges his or her ignorance of a static truth in the affairs of the polis, one who refuses to

be identified with any credo, solute..." (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 275).

Grob added that political leadership in the Socratic sense:

"...in no way is to be equated with a hindering or postponement of political action. Not only does the exercise of political leadership in dialogue not hinder or inhibit effective action but a sense of 'empowering' here manifests itself, an empowering which, in sharp contrast to the 'power' employed in verbal or physical coercion, accounts for the deep gratitude we extend to the true leaders of our past and the yearning we express for the birth of those who will so lead us in the future..." (Grob in Kellerman, 1984, 276). From these explanations of the key political term of political leadership, a combined meaning has been drawn and will be used in this analysis of Mrs. Thatcher's political leadership.

The next key political term to be clarified is political image. Jeremy Moon's article "The Cult of Personality: Perspectives on Margaret Thatcher" (1985, 261-163), made mention of Mrs. Thatcher's use of a political image. Moon suggested that a political image was the result of character developments initiated to promote a political candidate, as is the case when promoting any kind of commodity (1985, 261). Moon said of Mrs. Thatcher, "...Mrs. T has been promoted as a political commodity such that her hair, voice, clothes, words and sentiments are designed to suit the occasion. Image has been fundamental to her success..." (1985, 261).

Murray Edelman, in his book The Symbolic Uses of Politics (1985), spoke about political leadership being what he termed a symbolic state (1985, 73). Edelman seemed to have preferred synonymic terminology, using "symbol" rather than image, to describe

the same political state. According to Edelman's analysis, the advent of a political symbol is result of:

"The reaction of large publics to leaders is that rarely a simple, rational judgement that the leader can get his followers what they want and therefore should be followed. Governmental leaders have tremendous potential capacity for evoking strong emotional responses in large populations. When an individual is recognised as a legitimate leading official of the state, he becomes a symbol of some or all the aspects of the state: its capacity for benefiting and nurturing, for threatening and reassuring..." (1985, 73).

Edelman implied that political image is what the political leader uses to be politically successful, "...he is made to be what will serve the interests of those who follow his or her write about him or remember him (1985, 94).

The next key political term to be described is political substance. Although not a popularly defined term, political substance is frequently used in political analysis to indicate what an observer deems the reality of a political predicament. The term political substance is mostly used to describe the factual aspects of a political situation or personality. The terms political substance and political image refer to opposing political states.

The final key political understanding to be explained is feminism. In attempting to explain or create a working definition of feminism for the purposes of this discussion, it has to be immediately recognised that only a narrow context of feminism and feminist debate was being addressed. The triple roles of using this explanation of feminism for this examination were: firstly as a tool of dissection; secondly as a term

of reference and source of critical contention; and attempting to make links and draw conclusions about Mrs. Thatcher's relationship with feminism and her treatment of the four gender issues in contention. Feminism is an incredibly broad based and layered political theory. To try and briefly define such a widely interpreted and highly complex political theory for the aim of drawing particular conclusions with Mrs. Thatcher's style of political was a carefully considered task.

These were just examples of some of the major difficulties that had to be dealt with in attempting to develop a working understanding of feminism for the purposes of this debate. For instance, according to modern Marxist/socialist feminist traditions, such as Juliet Mitchell in Women's Estate (1971), women had been analysed in terms of four key social roles/structures - production, family, reproduction, sex and the socialisation of children - thus sexual oppression and class exploitation were of equal analytical emphasis (Coxall and Robins, 1994, 74-76). In addition, socialist feminists directly linked capitalist property relations to the basis of women's inequality and identified it as the main tool of patriarchal exploitation and oppression of women (Coxall and Robins, 1994, 75). Radical feminists reasoning differed to socialist feminists in that they believed that women were exploited and oppressed by the nature of males and patriarchy. Radical feminists generally implied that patriarchy was a traditionally, socially and culturally all-pervasive political concept (Coxall and Robins, 1994, 76). For radical feminists cited gender as the core political and social cleavage, rather than being simply a biological division between the sexes, and thus regarded it as a remarkable gulf (Coxall and Robins, 1994, 76). Sylvia Walby, in her text Theorizing Patriarchy, explained liberal feminism as differing from the other strands in that it did not have an analysis of women's

subordination in terms of overarching social structures, instead of conceiving this as the summation of numerous small-scale deprivations (1990, 4-5). Liberal feminism borrows much from theory of liberalism, including the major focus upon equality of rights for all individuals and self-reliance; whilst failing to acknowledge and deal with the special needs of disadvantaged groups, such as women through issues of gender inequality (Walby, 1990, 5). Hence, was the highly volatile and difficult nature of dealing with the theory of feminism.

After a great deal of research there seemed to be common threads and debates running through the various main and combined strands of feminism and gender issues. Quintessentially, feminism appeared to be about attempting to address and identify the root causes of the on-going political, social and economic struggle, oppression and exploitation of females.

The methodology and use of sources.

The methodology employed in the thesis discussion will primarily consist of biographical and academic texts, journals, newspaper reports, private diary entries of various Thatcher Ministers, as well as excerpts from speeches given by Mrs. Thatcher which will be used to develop an understanding of Mrs. Thatcher. The components of this discussion include a fairly even mixture of primary and secondary sourced evidence. That is, a half proportion of primary sourced material, and a half proportion of secondary sourced support data comprise this thesis.

This thesis discussion will recount some of the debates still raging about Mrs. Thatcher. The sources will include descriptions ranging from feminist theorists, newspaper reporters, journal contributors, plus the

considered studies of numerous academics and other interested writers. The various sources used in the discussion will hopefully create an adequate balance of variety, whilst at the same time providing what Jenson terms an essential "staple" required in social science writing (1990).

The structural framework.

The structural framework of the thesis is traditional. This thesis' traditional format consists of an introduction followed by four chapters which make up the body of the argument and a conclusion. The overall thesis discussion centres about the overarching theme of the political image and political substance of Mrs. Thatcher. Each chapter builds upon the overarching theme through the discussion of four subsidiary-themes. The chapters maintain the overarching theme and add to it, as they consider: Image and Substance, Margaret Thatcher; Image and Substance, Thatcherism; Image and Substance, Leadership; and Image and Substance, Feminism. The chapter arguments or subsidiary-themes are introduced by the posing of usually three controversial questions on each topic. The argument is balanced and aims to sway opinion through weight of evidence. In summary of this discussion will be a conventionally structured concluding chapter which will attempt to evaluate the merits of this study and recommendations for this research.

The implications of this thesis for previous and future investigations of Mrs. Thatcher.

The implications this thesis has for previous work completed on Mrs. Thatcher are not revolutionary or profound. However, this research does perhaps offer an interesting angle of examination, as not a great deal of similar research has been made on the political image and

political substance of Mrs. Thatcher, in relation to: her choice or not of using a political image; Thatcherism; her leadership; and feminism. In addition, this discussion incorporates an in-depth examination of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making. In particular, four major gender issues were selected to lead this part of the debate. Gender issues were especially selected for investigation because of the kind of negative attention Mrs. Thatcher consistently used in dealing with these policy areas. And because of the general harm Mrs. Thatcher caused everyday British women through her gender issue policies and feminism. The policy areas of law and order and National defence were chosen for their general appeal to the wider British electorate. Finally, a determining criteria behind the selection of the six policy areas was that they fit together - because of the attention Mrs. Thatcher focused upon them - and that they particularly contributed to the illumination of arguments, in each of the four chapterial topic arguments, with clearly pertinent practical examples.

This thesis also aims to draw attention to the plight of British women and the need for the promotion of gender issues through more thoughtful policy making. This thesis is not a feminist or gender issue treatise, although feminist theory, theorists and gender issues do figure throughout the discussion. This thesis does not possess a covert agenda, instead it hopes to present a series of linked arguments which culminate in a balanced and objective discussion.

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CHAPTER TWO
Image and Substance: Margaret Thatcher

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This chapter will open the debate surrounding Mrs. Thatcher's image. The initial part of this discussion will examine whether Mrs. Thatcher chose or was pressured to assume a political image. This examination will include possible motivations for why Mrs. Thatcher chose to adopt a new political image. The second part of this discussion will comment on the argument of political image versus political substance upon whether Mrs. Thatcher was controlled by some major elements of the British political system and forced to assume a political image or whether she dominated the system and freely chose to take on a new political image. Elements such as Mrs. Thatcher's interpretation of the role of Prime Minister, mechanism and traditions of the Westminster political system, the Conservative Party and the civil service are part of this discussion. In addition to these options is a third perspective which contemplates whether Mrs. Thatcher, although inclined by the British political system, could have decided to project a more realistic self-image.

(1) Why did Mrs. Thatcher chose to assume a political image?

This image chapter asks the question whether Mrs. Thatcher chose to assume a new political image? This initial debate will consider the possible reasons why a politician, such as Mrs. Thatcher, may have elected to adopt and use a new political image. Did Mrs. Thatcher do the most prudent thing and make herself appear as popular as possible through the assumption of a new political image? This initial deliberation will now put forward through various arguments for and against this perplexing question.

Political success is an almost irresistible motivation for most politicians and their Party. It is usually then up to the individual politician to decide if and what changes are necessary to improve the overall appearance of their political character and their chances with the electorate. For instance, most politicians make some very carefully advised changes to their character. Changes are made with the aim of complementing original character features and enhancing the overall political image of the candidate. Naturally, the ultimate goal of making character changes is to improve the political image of the candidate in order to make them most preferable to the electorate. This is the usual situation.

In her essay, "Tales of Thatcher" Sarah Benton concurred with the suggestion that Mrs. Thatcher assumed a new political image (1989, 8). Ms. Benton explained: "Mrs. Thatcher makes up stories. The best politicians do, for this is their chief art: to tell the people of their history, to name their character and their enemies, to offer them the happy ending." (1989, 8). Benton seemed to be saying that Mrs. Thatcher had just been more successful with the re-creation of her "self-image". According to Benton, at the peak of her political success Mrs. Thatcher's stories became the unshakeable common sense for a good two-fifths of the British population (1989, 8). The success of Mrs. Thatcher's image was a political achievement, as Benton added "...this is a tribute to her remarkable skills. No other recent British politician has done it." (1989, 8). Hence, the re-creation of Mrs. Thatcher's political image was a part of her political success.

The most fundamental changes to Mrs. Thatcher's political image occurred just prior to when she became Conservative Party leader. Mrs. Thatcher sought out an expert political image-maker. A recent article from internationally renowned communications specialist Allan Pease, "Body Language: It's Not What You Say" supports the pragmatic thinking of Mrs. Thatcher in altering many aspects of her self so as to project an altogether better political image (1995, 4-5). Pease drew upon research revealing, "...that 90% of the impression you make... is achieved within the first four minutes..." (1995, 4). Communications specialists found that most of the initial impact comes from the non-verbal cues we give out, noted Pease (1995, 4). It seems as much as 60-80% of our image is from our body language, 20-30% from vocal non-verbal signals such as hesitation sounds or nervous coughs, and just 7-10% comes from what is spoken (Pease, 1995, 4). Pease indicated the main aspects for improvement of our non-verbal communications range from the way we stand, walk and sit to the way we dress (1995, 4). This was certainly in the vein of the advice Mrs. Thatcher followed when she completely changed the style of her hair, dress, tone, placement and pattern of speech, dress and generally feminine demeanour to create her new political image. Pease implied that we should mindfully aim to match our appearance with the expectations of our audience; as we have the ability to cast a particular image and mould others opinions of us (1995, 4). Pease's article suggested the power of the psychology behind body language and how it is in the individual's interests to be in command of their own body language so that they can avoid creating unwanted or wrong impressions (1995, 4).

Mr. Gordon Reece began working as Mrs. Thatcher's image-maker in October 1974 for the up-coming election. Mr. Reece was experienced with the process of image creation (in Mrs. Thatcher's case, political transformation), from his work as a television producer and star maker (Young, 1989, 124-125). With the help of Mr. Reece, Mrs. Thatcher was going to be transformed from an everyday politician, into a more attractive, popular, trendsetting and winning political candidate.

Authors including Young believed it was at this moment Mrs. Thatcher's more womanly and popular Conservative Party leader image emerged (Young, 1989, 124). Mr. Reece offered Mrs. Thatcher a sharpened sense of the value of television, whilst also possessing the capacity to appeal to Mrs. Thatcher's trust in his judgements and advice (Young, 1989, 125). Mr. Reece re-defined Mrs. Thatcher's overall political image, mostly through changes to her physical appearance. Both Mr. Reece and Mrs. Thatcher sought to match her appearance and political message, with the aim of producing a more appealing political image. Mrs. Thatcher was groomed to project a more desirable and even feminine image to the electorate; for example, she had her hair done in a softer yet well-kept looking style (Young, 1989, 125). Mrs. Thatcher's clothing was another part of her image make-over; her clothing was selected for her and promoted a tailored, but not too stiff appearance (Young, 1989, 125). Mr. Reece was also responsible for the British media's consumption of Mrs. Thatcher's new political image. He thoughtfully selected photographic opportunities which associated Mrs. Thatcher with more traditional female roles and settings (Young, 1989, 124). It seemed Mrs. Thatcher's arrival onto the National political arena had triggered these fundamental changes to her political image; as it

was from 1974 onwards that she was regularly seen in "womanly poses beside the kitchen sink".

Young suggested Mr. Reece's work was so effective because he was unique among her staff (1989, 125). From Young's interviews with Mr. Reece, it seemed, that he was able to work confidently with Mrs. Thatcher and not be intimidated by her gender (1989, 125).

Mr. Reece explained that Mrs. Thatcher was very open about her need for a new political image and wholeheartedly accepted his advice on improving her political image. It seemed that Mrs. Thatcher was very aware of her image problems and was prepared to make improvements where ever necessary. Mr. Reece commented that making changes to a woman's image was easier than for a man, as women were more receptive to changes (Young, 1989, 125). Mr. Reece believed women were more accustomed to the attention and suggestions of dressers, coiffeurs and most other people and took their advice more constructively, as cosmetic improvements; adding this was they way Mrs. Thatcher accepted his advice (Young, 1989, 125). Mr. Reece was like Mrs. Thatcher's valet, political adviser and even her friend. And so it seems that with the help of Mr. Reece's expertise, Mrs. Thatcher's political image was a product of her own creation.

Benton made a very detailed chronological breakdown of the development of Mrs. Thatcher's new political image. (See Appendix One). Benton believed Mrs. Thatcher's new image was born in the 1975-'79 period, at the same moment she emerged as the Party leader (1989, 8). Benton identified two separate stages of Mrs. Thatcher's political image development, noting that the image could possibly manifest itself

in one of several versions (1989, 8). Benton explained how Mrs. Thatcher's 1975-1979 image story unfolded, telling that she was: the truth; the only truthful candidate amidst a field of competitors including other politicians, para-political groups, intellectuals and institutional forces; and the only candidate not primarily responsible for all of Britain's problems (1989, 8). Benton offered a detailed schedule of how Mrs. Thatcher would deliver her image story. The story was an incredibly accurate account of Mrs. Thatcher's use of her political image, manipulation and rise to ultimate success. Benton's story began with Mrs. Thatcher:

“...telling the audience who they were. The Party faithful were the spirit of Britain itself. Young people were ‘the future pillars of the community;’ small businessmen were the Cinderellas of the tale, unsung heroes of moral virtue, working hard to sustain a spiteful and rivalrous future. All are told of their place in the tale. She then described the good future they might have had, given the past qualities of Britain they represent - free, bold, hard-working the best in the world. Then she tells them what blocks their advance: the sneering, denigrating, vindictive favourites of their feeble old fathers (Wilson and Callaghan) who deludes himself about their malign intents” (1989, 8).

Benton explained how the second phase of Mrs. Thatcher's image emphasised the way Mrs. Thatcher presented the main characters: herself, as the “I”; “you” the audience of the story; the way she merged these to “us”; and finally, the way she defined the “they”, as the alien and the “others” (1989, 8). Mrs. Thatcher then says:

“I, originating from the essence of British values, am uniquely able to tell you the truth about yourselves and Britain. I, unlike the Labour Government, am young, vigorous and courageous, and will release you

from the chains of envy and spite. Through this liberation, you will again become true to yourselves, which means being true to the essence of Britain" (Benton, 1989, 8).

In completion, Mrs. Thatcher's decision to adopt a new political image was not the result of the Conservative Party and Cabinet's control over her, on the contrary Mrs. Thatcher was apparently in control of the Conservative Party and Cabinet.

In response to the view that Mrs. Thatcher was in control of the Conservative Party and Cabinet it will be suggested that she was heavily directed by her Party and Cabinet. In her text Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives (1984, 54-58), Barbara Kellerman contributed a very interesting dimension to this debate through her theory of "stratiform leadership".

Kellerman defined stratiform leadership as a "...system occurring where there is a hierarchical distinction between those who control the productive resources of society and those who are the direct producers..." adding that the system of leadership can fit both democratic and authoritarian leadership models. The chief difference with the two leadership systems being the relationship between political and economic structures - there being greater cohesion between the two which enable the political leader to also orchestrate the economy; whilst in democratic systems, there appears to be greater separation between the economic and political segments of the state giving the leader less control of the economy.

According to Kellerman's model, Britain fitted the democratic leadership system (1984, 54-58). Kellerman implied that the controlling elements of a democratic political leadership system were not only

sourced in pressure - from a strong bureaucracy, from an extensive para-political networks outside the formal state political system, as well as from contacts established by the leader with groups such as business, labour unions, social and even criminal elements (1984, 54-58).

Kellerman made an interesting observation about leadership saying it is very difficult for the modern-day leader to exercise unilateral political power; she added that, within the democratic leadership system "...gaining access to leadership involves gaining access to power as well as surrendering power to those forces through whom a leader must work in order to lead..." (1984, 59-60). According to Kellerman's analysis, Mrs. Thatcher surrendered some of her political power to her Party, the upper and middle-classes, the business community, employer groups and right wing political exponents, such as the New Right and others. Kellerman's study also suggested Mrs. Thatcher's relationship with these para-political groups confirmed she was not in absolute control of the British political system; whilst at the same time placing Mrs. Thatcher in a position where she may have had to acquiesce and change her political image and behaviour to better suit other political forces. Thus, it would appear Prime Minister Thatcher could have succumbed to political pressure from the British political system to change her political image.

Another angle supporting the notion that Mrs. Thatcher was expected to take on a political image by the nature of the British political system will be considered. Like any other politician and Prime Minister of Britain Mrs. Thatcher was bound by the conventions and traditional restrictions of the British Westminster political system. The Westminster system is renowned for its emphasis upon notions of

responsible government, Ministerial responsibility and tradition. The Westminster system binds all the political players to convention based roles. The system essentially dictates the capabilities and actions of everyone within it. Hence, the behaviours of the Prime Minister are certainly outlined by previous character examples - successful and less successful models - as well as traditions. The system could thence have pressured Mrs. Thatcher, through conventions of behaviour, to perform and appear in a desired fashion.

To this stage, the debate has not addressed the possible motivations surrounding Mrs. Thatcher's decision to use a feminine aspect in her political image. This is the case with every political candidate, their priority is to be the preferred competitor with the wider electorate. If this goal can be realised then the political candidate has real potential to move up the Party ladder. Mrs. Thatcher was certainly one of the most astute political players in Britain. Mrs. Thatcher fast interpreted the British political climate of the late 1970's, analysed the Conservative Party's electoral weaknesses and needs then converted them into her own political image goals. Mrs. Thatcher was well aware that the Conservative Party consistently failed to win several different sectors of the British community. These elusive voter segments included the Scottish, parts of the industrial North of England and the female vote. Of the three of these elusive voter groups the largest, most easily identified and targeted was the female electorate. The female electorate targeted by Mrs. Thatcher mostly comprised ordinary, average British women. Mrs. Thatcher selected the female vote as a key sector to focus her political attentions upon and model chief political image characteristics after. It seemed that Mrs. Thatcher incorporated more feminine traits into her political image in an attempt

to attract the female vote essential to her Conservative Party success. It was well publicised that Mrs. Thatcher saw her gender as a political disadvantage. Cosgrave confirmed this point in his analysis of Mrs. Thatcher saying, "Discussion of her sex appeal - even her sex - is not something that particularly pleases Margaret Thatcher." (1975, 14). Mrs. Thatcher's concerns about her gender being a disadvantage were also recognised in Young's examination (1989). Young noted, "She had mastered perhaps first of all, the problem of her sex. This remained the biggest psychic obstacle, the fact which she had always feared would most impair her credibility... Being a woman was still a disadvantage, she was sure." (1989, 135). However, in the case of constructing Mrs. Thatcher's political image, her gender was a distinct difference in the political field - gender gave her the advantage of something unique in a field of politically similar, male Conservatives who had previously had little success in capturing the swinging female vote - and one way for her to attract the female vote.

Mrs. Thatcher did choose to adopt a political image. Image enabled Mrs. Thatcher to distract attention from some of her more unpopular character aspects, detracting from some of her more obvious character flaws, attempt to relate to a greater proportion of the electorate and making herself the preferred candidate among swinging voter groups such as women. It has already been suggested that the British political system invested a great deal of confidence in its pre-selection and decade long Prime Ministerial support of Mrs. Thatcher. Despite all other political influences Mrs. Thatcher's own political power and choice seemed paramount concerning her political image.

The feminine aspect of Mrs. Thatcher's political image was central to the overall appearance. This point was confirmed by Cosgrave's story. Cosgrave commented that, "In her speeches, broadcasts, and off-the-cuff replies to questions, she regularly invokes and identifies with the image of the housewife. The family and family life is another recurring theme." (1975, 14). However, Cosgrave made this point with a hint of reservation, adding that expression of Mrs. Thatcher's political image was "...somewhat ritualised" (1975, 14). Beatrix Campbell agreed saying, "...while plainly remaining a woman, she used womanhood merely as a helpful device. 'She shows how much femininity is a production. Femininity is what she wears,..." (Campbell, 1987). A previous point noted the generally unsophisticated, uneasy fit and absence of feminist theory in Mrs. Thatcher's feminine image, as an indication of her lack of involvement with the development and choice in assuming the image. However, the weaknesses of this point became plain when evidence such as Sarah Benton's essay (1989, 8-11) and others were considered. Benton explained that a major component of Mrs. Thatcher's image was the identification of rivals and enemies (1989, 8-11). Benton called these groups "...rivals of the role as 'truth tellers'" and cited the Church and intellectuals as these rivals (1989, 8). The identification of Mrs. Thatcher's enemies was crucial because they were to be used when necessary as multi-purpose scapegoats. Benton concurred with this assessment in her article where she suggested that Mrs. Thatcher cited enemies to "...beat the primary responsibility for Benton's one-time decline, deceiving the people and thus ensnaring their vigour." (1989, 8). Rowthorn agreed with this point about Mrs. Thatcher's enemies in his essay "The Thatcher Revolution"; where he said, she "...pursued a relentless crusade against socialism and all its manifestations" and later intimidated the other groups through the way

she "...vigorously promoted her harsh philosophy of individualism and self-help" (1989, 2). Mrs. Thatcher's did not include any elements of feminist theory because she had earlier identified feminist theory and the exponents of feminism, socialists, the Labour Party, unionists, women and people from coloured, immigrant and poor, lower-working-class backgrounds of the community as her enemies. Mrs. Thatcher's feminine image was deliberately distanced from any relation with feminist theory so that a contrast was easily apparent.

This point offers a very plausible explanation for some of the inconsistencies of Mrs. Thatcher's feminine political image, such as the problem of Mrs. Thatcher's women's liberation gender issue promoting appearance of the early 1940's and 1950's and the feminine image she projected after becoming Prime Minister in the 1970's.

From her early university experience throughout the 1940's and being a female and aspiring politician in 1952, the newly married Mrs. Thatcher espoused a more expected message. This point was well expressed by Mrs. Thatcher's response to the Sunday Graphic's invitation to contribute to a popular series about women and public life from 1952: Mrs. Thatcher emphatically commented, "...women should not feel obliged to stay at home. They should have careers. 'In this way, gifts and talents that would otherwise be wasted are developed to the benefit of the community'" (1952 in Young, 1989, 36). Also in the Sunday Graphic article, Mrs. Thatcher implied it was nonsense to say that the family suffered because a woman worked (1952 in Young, 1989, 36). Mrs. Thatcher went on to say,

"Women, indeed, should not merely work but strive to reach the top of their profession. Above all this should be true in politics. There

should be more women at Westminster" (1952 in Young, 1989, 36). Mrs. Thatcher went on to say: "Women, indeed, should not merely aim but strive to reach the top of their profession. Above all this should be true in politics. There should be more women at Westminster" (1952 in Young, 1989, 36). At this time, 1952, only 17 out of 625 Members were women (Young, 1989, 36). Mrs. Thatcher added they "...should not be satisfied with lesser posts...", when questioned, "Should a woman rise to the task, I say let her have an equal chance with the men for the leading Cabinet posts. Why not a woman Chancellor? Or Foreign Secretary?" (1952 in Young, 1989, 36).

Mrs. Thatcher began telling women their place was in the home, as early as her first election campaign in 1950-1951. Mrs. Thatcher availed herself of numerous speaking engagements, particularly all-female audiences, where her message focused upon the role of women in her vision of the future. Young made a similar observation about how Mrs. Thatcher's speeches to female audiences concentrated upon themes, such as: a Britain wrought with fear, problems, escalating crime and violence (Young, 1989, 31). Young explained how Mrs. Thatcher told the women that all these pressures would directly impact upon them and the home life of Britain (1989, 31). Mrs. Thatcher then told the women "...facing up to the position..." by relinquishing personal political rights and ambitions to focus their attentions upon problems in the home arena was essential. In her next breath Mrs. Thatcher explained that a woman had to empower herself and other Conservative political representatives with the power necessary to take care of affairs of State. Mrs. Thatcher concluded her speech by stating, "...remembering that as more power is taken away from the people, so there is less responsible for us to assume" (Young, 1989, 31). Young's analysis of Mrs. Thatcher's

speech making is a typical example of Mrs. Thatcher's changed attitude towards women and her own political image as a woman. Mrs. Thatcher's new political image and attitude pushed women to adopt a more maternalistic, homey and selfless role. Biddiss also saw the unfolding of Mrs. Thatcher's new political image and intentions through the way she wrapped her policies in homey notions of "...self-reliance, initiative and the maintenance of the traditional structure of the family...", and the way she called women to, "...recognise the demands of duty and the allure of entitlements" (1987, 2). Biddiss particularly noted Mrs. Thatcher's new policy presentation in the area of employment. Biddiss observed Mrs. Thatcher's new political image, attitude towards women and gender issues in-action, whilst she delivered a harsh change to employment strategies and cuts to welfare yet assured them she still was "...the champion of the keenest to exercise personal responsibility..." (1987, 2). It thus appeared Mrs. Thatcher had been highly motivated to assume a new political image.

(2) Was Mrs. Thatcher forced to assume a political image by the British political system?

a) The role of leader and Prime Minister.

This part of the discussion considers whether Mrs. Thatcher was controlled and forced to assume a political image by some major elements of the British political system. This part of the discussion will look at the party, cabinet and civil service in relation to Prime Minister Thatcher as integral parts of what is only conveniently termed the British political system in this discussion. It must also be stressed that the elements selected for discussion are merely some of the components which comprise the British political system and are not the sum of it. This particular debate will examine Mrs. Thatcher's role as Prime

Minister. It will firstly be argued that Mrs. Thatcher was not controlled by the British political system. The view that Mrs. Thatcher manipulated the British political system and made her role as Prime Minister unusually powerful will be implied. It will be shown through her use of the role of Prime Minister she was able to ultimately obtain power and take charge of the British political system. Mrs. Thatcher, thus, assumed the political image and powers of some type of absolutist national head - such as a monarch not unlike the British Queen - by her own volition.

Mrs. Thatcher had a rather narrow interpretation of the role of Prime Minister, a point reflected in her personal and political image. Hugo Young suggested Mrs. Thatcher preferred to appear as if she were a Queen of Britain, rather than as the Prime Minister of a first-world, contemporary democracy (1989, 305). In more ways than any of her predecessors, Mrs. Thatcher was noted for her monarchical even presidential use of the position and powers of Prime Minister. In his paper "Prime-Ministerial Power and Ministerial Responsibility in the Thatcher Era", Michael Doherty interpreted the Prime Ministerial style of Mrs. Thatcher. Doherty's article drew upon the opinions of a number of prominent past and present U.K. politicians and the research of Richard Crossman, who wrote the "Introduction" to the 1963 edition of Walter Bagehot's, The English Constitution (1988).

Doherty's understanding of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership style was initially developed from a dissection of the Westminster system, Prime Ministerial Government, the relationship between the Prime Minister and other Ministers and Mrs. Thatcher's treatment of these roles (1988, 49). With the aid of Crossman's research, Doherty put forward the

theory that on the basis of her interpretation of the role of Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher was able to exert a dominant political image by ultimately deciding the structure of the Government (1988, 49).

Doherty cited the words of John Mackintosh who proffered, "...the country is governed by the Prime Minister..." (1962 in 1988, 50). He also offered the thoughts of F. W. Benemy who implied, "...the Prime Minister is a sovereign - that is to say that the Prime Minister governs with an absolute authority..." (1965 in Doherty, 1988, 50).

The opinions of Sir George Mallaby were also espoused by Doherty:

 "...Cabinet Ministers will pay special attention to the Prime Minister's views and leadership, with a strong inclination to sink in their own opinion and defer to the Prime Ministers..." (19?? in 1988, 50).

Doherty concluded his argument about Mrs. Thatcher's Prime Ministerial power, by respectively borrowing from the experiences of Humphrey Berkley and Tony Benn: Berkley said, "...we are now operating a presidential system..."; and Benn more recently stated, "...the office of Prime Minister was as an absolute premiership which 'amounts to a system of personal rule'" (1966 in 1988, 50).

Doherty also made mention of Crossman's implication that a Prime Minister, who interpreted their powers in the most extreme manner, could become publicly validated in the role and potentially personify the Government (1988, 49). This was the way Mrs. Thatcher interpreted the role of Prime Minister, and was the way in which she became publicly accepted in the role of all-powerful political leader. The public did not seem to question Mrs. Thatcher's all-powerful political authority, instead developing what many political analysts, such as Jeremy Moon and others, termed the "Thatcher cult of personality ..." (1985, 261-263). This points will be extrapolated in a later chapter of

this thesis, which deals with Image and Substance: Mrs. Thatcher's leadership.

In their text Freedom Under Thatcher. Civil Liberties in Modern Britain, R. D. Ewing and C. A. Gearty put forward the standpoint that Mrs. Thatcher exploited the archaic flexibility , unwritten vagueness and democratically retarded British political system (1990, 2-4 and 264). Ewing and Gearty's discussion suggested that Mrs. Thatcher particularly blocked the vote and introduction of a European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on the basis that it could have reduced the enormous political powers she was able to exercise (1990, 2). Ewing and Gearty asserted the notion that Mrs. Thatcher "...wielded near-absolute political power as Prime Minister..." through the omnipotence of the role of the British Prime Minister (1990, 2 and 264). In comparison to the American President and West German Chancellor, Ewing and Gearty commented upon the undreamt and unparalleled powers of the British political system among other modern liberal democracies (1990, 2).

As part of their discussion Ewing and Gearty also made the link between Mrs. Thatcher's incredible powers as Prime Minister and her independent role in creating a harsh political image for herself (1990, 4). Ewing and Gearty took their debate a step further, implying that Mrs. Thatcher's control was transferred to the British political of the Eighties in the form of her political image (1990, 4). These authors cited a 27 November 1988 article of the Daily Telegraph to illustrate this view of injustice of the British political system (1988 in Ewing and Gearty, 1990, 4).

The fact that very few pieces of legislation had been lost in the Commons during Mrs. Thatcher's Prime Ministership was used by Ewing and Gearty as a major illustration of her control of the British parliament (1990, 6). Mrs. Thatcher's Parliamentary control was further born out through a series of laws which mirrored her political image, including: the abolition of the Greater London Council; the poll tax; identity cards for football supporters; among others (1990, 6). In addition to this show of strength Mrs. Thatcher also exercised control through the informal advisory bodies, her access to Secretaries of State, Cabinet committees and any other informal channels who could input the process behind the creation of future policies (Ewing and Gearty, 1990, 6).

Hence it would seem that Mrs. Thatcher was not pressured to adopt a political image by the system, as it may have seemed. Instead Mrs. Thatcher was able to become a free political agent in the British political system through her assumption of the role of Prime Minister. Mrs. Thatcher therefore made the choice to assume a new political image, which reflected her ruthless and powerful interpretation of the Prime Ministerial role.

b) Mrs. Thatcher and the Conservative Party

Did the British political system pressure Mrs. Thatcher assume the Conservative Party's image of how she should appear as a Prime Minister. It will first be suggested that Mrs. Thatcher did possess a very different political image prior to her Prime Ministership. From this point reasons why Mrs. Thatcher's unique pre-Prime Ministerial political role and how it may have changed, will be considered.

i) This theory seemed likely as Mrs. Thatcher had been well known for her unusual political image or style before she became Party leader and Prime Minister. Mrs. Thatcher's political uniqueness was grounded in many factors, her gender being one of the more obvious features of what was popularly described as a very individualistic, new political style and attitude. Mrs. Thatcher brought a surprising level of energy, air of youthfulness, fast-talking, ruthless and determined political image to British Conservative politics. The singularity of Mrs. Thatcher's political style was outstanding. Skidelsky noted Mrs. Thatcher's political style as the "...'new breed' of Tory leader..." who contributed a "...realism or radicalism..." to contemporary British Conservative politics (1988,134). Liddelow described Mrs. Thatcher's political image as "radical-conservatism" mirrored in her traditional, Victorian priorities (1989, 300). Mrs. Thatcher's political image was so unusual that political journals and media, such as the The Economist (1975, 13) predicted that it would irrevocably and dramatically change the British political landscape. Stephen McBride, in his article "Mrs. Thatcher and the Post-War Consensus: The Case of Trade Union Policy" (1986, 330-340), also assessed Mrs. Thatcher's political leadership image. McBride opened his article with a telling statement:

"Most interpretations of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership emphasis is its radical departure from the policies and style of her predecessor. In particular, her rejection of the Keynesian consensus is said to differentiate her from all previous post-war Prime Ministers. She herself has claimed, and many of her critics concede as fact, that with her election in 1979, 'everything changed'" (1986, 330).

McBride's article examined Mrs. Thatcher's leadership and described it as a "radical departure" adding that the radicalism of her leadership was

most apparent through her new political programme and policies (1986, 330).

i) Why and how was Mrs. Thatcher's pre-Prime Ministerial political image different? Mrs. Thatcher's very individual pre-Prime Ministerial political image was not welcomed by all members of the British political system, in-particular the Conservative Party. Many members of the system appeared to prefer that Mrs. Thatcher took on the more usual, team-player, political image of a Party leader and Prime Minister of Britain. The result was a reactive and marked change in Mrs. Thatcher's political image.

Young implied that these changes to Mrs. Thatcher's political image may have been the result of pressure from senior and long term members of the Conservative Party when he said: "When she had reached the top, a change came over the balance of her rhetoric. She became a lot more ready to praise the Conservative model..." of the British woman (1989, 305). Young's view appeared confirmed by the changes Mrs. Thatcher made to her political image, as they were exactly in-line with what the Conservative Party deemed desirable. Mrs. Thatcher assumed a new political image that made her appear as the type of woman (housewife and carer) and political leader the Conservative Party and the British electorate were accustomed. Thus, the fundamental alterations seen in Mrs. Thatcher's political image were the outcome of Conservative Party manipulation and desires.

Like any Minister or Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher was dependent upon the continued confidence of the system. If the Conservative Party did not feel she was expressing the Party will or indeed not projecting a

suitable political image, the Party Ministers could have pressured her to rectify her appearance and behaviour. Mrs. Thatcher could have been reminded that Party support was essential and could swiftly be withdrawn if she did not follow Party directives. This point was confirmed in 1986 by the way the Party, through the actions of senior Ministers Lord Whitelaw and the Chief Whip John Wakeham, initiated a group known as the A-Team to formulate the manifesto for the 1987 election without the knowledge or participation of Prime Minister Thatcher (Young, 1989, 45). Young explained that traditionally the leader has the ultimate say on policy; however, he added that the Party was flexing its muscle and informing Mrs. Thatcher that she could not wield any power without the support of others (1989, 45). She would be told that an undesired image of a Party leader and Prime Minister would not be allowed to damage or jeopardise the Party's popularity. Mrs. Thatcher would have known it would be prudent to accept Party advice and make any suggested alterations to any unseemly facets of her political image. Mrs. Thatcher would have also understood the implications of not following Party advice, alternatives such as pressured resignation and replacement or a leadership spill demonstrating a lack of Party confidence in favour of another leader.

A further point implying Mrs. Thatcher was forced to adopt a new political image, in-particular the feminine aspects of her political image, was her selection as Opposition leader and Prime Minister. The Conservative Party ranked Mrs. Thatcher as their best chance to win Government, because she was: not the failing Edward Heath; she had no political past to haunt the Party; she was new and brought with her a different political approach; as well as her gender, and the potential to secure the essential female vote. Norton also supported this point

adding that Mrs. Thatcher, "...was well placed to repudiate the ideological parasitism to which the Heaths and Macmillans had proved so fatally prone..."(1990, 42). While ever Mrs. Thatcher carried out the Party's will and was successful Party confidence would be forthcoming, immediately she diverted from the Party-line and became politically unsuccessful Party support would be promptly withdrawn. Phillip Norton concurred, suggesting that the pre-selection and promotion of Mrs. Thatcher as a candidate for the Conservative Party's leadership and Prime Ministership was a very weighty matter (1990, 42). Norton and other analysts were quick to verify this point. It was implied Mrs. Thatcher had been elected leader of her Party principally because she was not the unpopular Edward Heath, and also because of her lack of a scandalous political past such as her main leadership opponents (1990, 42). Whilst political journals such as The Economist also tuned into Mrs. Thatcher's political ascent, highlighting her gender as the key to success (1975, 15). The February 15 edition of the The Economist concluded that Mrs. Thatcher's pre-selection success had been largely dependent upon her gender and the likelihood of her better chances with particular segments of the electorate:

"If she could win over the cussed and capricious collection, the 275 other Tory members of the Commons might she not win over a cussed and capricious electorate? If Mrs. Thatcher cannot win women's votes, the Tory's bugbear for the last two elections, she will be blamed; if she cannot win lost votes..., she will be blamed; even if the female... voter is acting capriciously or chauvinistically or doesn't like her voice. The yardstick of party leadership today is, more than ever about capturing votes" (1975, 15).

An important part of Mrs. Thatcher's political image was the way it was so politically effective, particularly with female constituents. This point was confirmed by Mrs. Thatcher's almost instantaneous appeal with the majority of Britain's female electorate in the early 1980's. Mrs. Thatcher - or more accurately her image - entranced and seized most female voters through deliberate pandering. The Conservative Party had long identified the swinging votes of British women. The Party also realised among the groups of swinging voters the women's vote was desperately needed to secure the up-coming election. Mrs. Thatcher quickly became the Conservative's election hope. The Party intended to obtain women's votes by pairing Mrs. Thatcher with female voters through sublimation and more straightforward associations of gender. From this objective was born Mrs. Thatcher's new political image; a multifaceted, all-purpose image for almost every contingency. A political image that most certainly catered to capturing the support of the average, everyday British woman.

The Party offered Mrs. Thatcher its continued support if she was able to deliver the General Election of 1979. This unwritten contract was not an unusual relationship between the Conservative Party and leader. For Mrs. Thatcher to relate to the female electorate she had to re-invent her political image so as to project a more feminine impression. However, for Mrs. Thatcher to win the election she would have to secure a major percentage of the female vote. Mrs. Thatcher had not previously targeted the female electorate for political attention. For instance, Mrs. Thatcher had not particularly catered to the female electorate with her platform, through policy outlines nor her political programme. As an example, Mrs. Thatcher's programme meant women were not going to figure positively in her vision of Britain's new

workforce; instead they would bear many of the affects of Mrs. Thatcher's programme of political-economic cut backs. Young attempted to interpret Mrs. Thatcher's political image and comments to women, as compared with her proposed initiatives.

It thus seemed any efforts Mrs. Thatcher made to meet the needs of women were merely superficial and politically expedient image based gestures aimed at gaining good press and more favourable polls. Mrs. Thatcher reflected this view when she dismissively told the electorate, "The battle for women's rights has largely been won" (Faludi, 1992, 1). Further, Ms. Faludi made an extremely telling remark about Mrs. Thatcher's successful use of the feminine aspect of her political image, when she said: "Mrs. Thatcher's success was built on other women's failure... she had a vested interest in keeping them in their place" (1992, 290). A point that will be further deciphered in Chapter Five - "Image and Substance: Mrs. Thatcher and Feminism".

This estimation of Mrs. Thatcher's policies were also embraced by Barbara Castle, a 1960's vintage Labour M.P. and recent political diarist. Mrs. Castle implied Mrs. Thatcher was being less than perceptive about the problems of women:

"...particularly difficulties ordinary women faced... Her attitude to the social services showed that she had no compassion at all for the working woman struggling to deal with a home, earn a wage, deal with an elderly parent, perhaps a mentally handicapped child, and sickness in the family" (in Young, 1989, 306).

Therefore, it appeared Mrs. Thatcher may have been pressured by her Party to take on feminine characteristics as part of her new political image. Mrs. Thatcher did not have a free choice, as she faced the

alternatives of possible success with Party support or certain failure without Party support.

A further point in favour of this line of argument was the narrowness of the feminine perspective of Mrs. Thatcher's political image. Mrs. Thatcher's feminine image component was very tailored and restricted. It would seem she was not in control of this image facet. The feminine image was also very Conservative Party and traditional. This point was supported by Young, as he recognised that Mrs. Thatcher "...woman at the top" was a female politician with a new rhetoric (1989, 305) She fully embraced what Young saw as the "...Conservative Party's model of the housewife and mother" (1989, 305).

Mrs. Thatcher's political image was specifically aimed at most women in Britain, not all women. This limited focus did not include any feminist, women's group or multicultural elements in its scope. The exclusion of these women from Mrs. Thatcher's image was a telling comment, suggesting her lack of choice with her overall political image. It was well known that Mrs. Thatcher did exhibit gender interests in her early political career of the 1940's and 1950's. It would seem that if Mrs. Thatcher had had free choice with the development of the feminine component of her political image it surely would have been more sophisticated and less awkward. From all appearances the feminine aspect of Mrs. Thatcher's political image was very stereotypical, simplistic and rather flat. The engineering behind the feminine facet appeared rushed and unthoughtful; as if the Conservative Party had compiled a list of necessary feminine components and haphazardly arranged them to produce a mechanical image that perhaps only aging Conservative Party males would envisage as realistic. Not the political

image of a skilful, insightful and highly ambitious politician of Mrs. Thatcher's calibre would invent for herself.

This position also offered sound reasoning for the existence of some of the more obvious inconsistencies in Mrs. Thatcher's feminine political image. This perhaps explained a range of image flaws, such as: why Mrs. Thatcher apparently advocated the rights of British women to choose to remain as housewives, working solely in the home, whilst she practised an antithetical lifestyle. Again, the feminine changes to Mrs. Thatcher's political image appear to have been caused by pressure exerted from the Conservative Party.

The next point deals with the changes Mrs. Thatcher made to the ranks of the Shadow and Cabinet. Any changes Mrs. Thatcher's made to the members of the Opposition and Cabinet were the natural responses of any new leader. Mrs. Thatcher simply changed the ranks of her Cabinet to overcome the restrictions she met from a Cabinet more suited to the previous leader and his policy programme. These changes did not equate with political control. As Norton implied, these changes did not afford Mrs. Thatcher control of the Conservative Party, particularly the parliamentary party (1990, 45). Norton offered up empirical analysis of the parliamentary party as evidence of his claim.

Norton refuted the notion that Mrs. Thatcher's controlled the Cabinet. Norton qualified his attack, saying that although he acknowledged Mrs. Thatcher appeared as "a dominating figure in Cabinet"; he implied she did not possess real control of the Cabinet, as her position was clearly symbolic and only a part of her political image (1990, 45). In addition, Norton suggested Mrs. Thatcher's attempts to

re-shape the parliamentary party failed as the Cabinet she created was never as loyal as that of Edward Heath (1990, 45). It appeared that Mrs. Thatcher's supposedly attempted to create a "Thatcher Cabinet", were largely in vain. A point further suggesting Mrs. Thatcher's lack of control over the Conservative Parliamentary Party whilst demonstrating her new political image was a Conservative Party initiative.

Jessop, Bonnett and Bromley agreed saying, "Mrs. Thatcher's Cabinet re-shuffle of July 1989, the most extensive she made, was so poorly managed that it effectively undermined party morale by bringing more "wets" into the front line" (1990, 81). The closest Mrs. Thatcher came to achieving a "Thatcher Cabinet" was in her second parliament. This attempt was flawed by the absence of key Thatcher supporters (Leon Brittan, Sir Keith Joseph and Cecil Parkinson) which led to disasters such as the Westland Helicopter affair. These flaws effectively limited her political clout and made her vulnerable to her critics (1990, 45). Mrs. Thatcher's failure to fill a Cabinet with supporters also caused her other problems, such as an uncontrollable flow of damaging leaks, as well as the discontent and dissent of Members. Norton concluded his view that Mrs. Thatcher was not in charge of the Conservative Party and parliamentary party, let alone in control of her own political image through the comments of former Wet Cabinet Minister John Biffen:

"The limitations faced by the Prime Minister have been reflected in her tactics in Cabinet, as Stalinist; she hectors, manipulates discussion, uses feminine wiles, sums up discussions at the beginning rather than at the end and seeks to out-argue all opposition. This, though, constitutes a sign of weakness, not strength" (in Norton, 1990, 45).

Thus, it appeared that Mrs. Thatcher was not creating a Shadow or Cabinet in her own image. In reality Mrs. Thatcher was no more in control of the Conservative Party (especially the parliamentary party), than she was in control of the political image she was forced to assume.

The next point suggesting how Mrs. Thatcher was forced to take on a new political image and was not in control of the Conservative Party examined how she became leader and Prime Minister. In fact Mrs. Thatcher was controlled by the Party, she was more dependent upon the parliamentary party than any of her Prime Ministerial predecessors.

The Conservative Party leadership was an Office steeped in tradition; Norton described the system of leadership as, "freehold not leasehold" (1990, 46). Norton explained that Mrs. Thatcher became Party leader by the bending of Party selection rules (1990, 46). She did not become leader through the traditional practice of 'emergence', she was elected by the parliamentary party. Norton believed;

"Under the old system, Margaret Thatcher would never have become leader of the Conservative Party; too many powerful figures in the party would have blocked her. Her power base - ensuring her election in 1975 and her continued tenure of the leadership - is the rank-and-file of Conservative backbenchers" (1990, 46). Norton intimated this was why Mrs. Thatcher always tried to remain in touch with backbenchers, through meetings and committees, contact she was not always able to satisfactorily maintain (1990, 46). Hence, Mrs. Thatcher was not in control the Conservative Party and the parliamentary party. Norton's intimations easily provided grounds for why Mrs. Thatcher was so readily controlled and remained open to all Party recommendations, including the appearance of her political image.

A major feature of the Party's domination of Mrs. Thatcher was the style and way her new political image was thrust upon her.

Although much evidence has been produced the argument has been less than successful in totally proving the absolutely controlling role of the Conservative Party in forcing Mrs. Thatcher to assume her new political image; however, this discussion did reveal that the Party played a more significant role than expected in the shaping and design of her political image. Conversely, Mrs. Thatcher chose to adopt her political image. A point of political power demonstrated in the way Mrs. Thatcher was not forced to assume a new political image by the Conservative Party, a point confirmed by her control of the Shadow and Cabinet structures and demonstrated through her re-shuffles.

One way Mrs. Thatcher directly expressed her superior position within the Conservative Party was through the membership of her immediate Party colleagues: the Opposition and Cabinet. Mrs. Thatcher won the February 11, 1975 ballot for the Conservative Party (Shadow Cabinet) leadership convincingly with a 146 vote majority. From the earliest days of Mrs. Thatcher's leadership she exercised total control; she set about casting the Opposition, later the Cabinet, in what was popularly viewed as being in her own image. The media questioned Mrs. Thatcher at length about her proposed Cabinet changes.

Mrs. Thatcher's Opposition shake-up gave rise to an entirely new image with new substance. That is to say Mrs. Thatcher filled the ranks of the Opposition and later the Cabinet with like-minded, young (in their thirties), "consultants or specialist advisers" (1975,1).

Mrs. Thatcher 's ballot victory was summed by The Times' political editor David Wood, "Her success means there will be a new style of

Opposition, new men eventually on the front bench, and new policies. In that sense, yesterday's ballot represented a Conservative watershed" (1975, 1). Norton similarly concluded that Mrs. Thatcher used her political position, power and the fear it inspired to "...craft a Cabinet congenial to her wishes" (1990, 44). Norton continued to add that Mrs. Thatcher's motivation for her sweeping changes to the Opposition and later the Cabinet was to overcome the constraints of a potentially unfriendly Cabinet (1990, 44). Norton also suggested that Mrs. Thatcher Cabinet's re-shuffles were carefully orchestrated plans to position her keenest allies in "key spending Ministries" thus creating a "Cabinet she wanted" (1990, 44).

At the same time Mrs. Thatcher was able to disempower her most threatening Shadow and Cabinet rivals by completely ousting them or by rendering them less harmful by moving them into unimportant Ministerial portfolios. This practice was confirmed by Mrs. Thatcher's Cabinet changes or the "weeding-out of 'wets'" which particularly occurred during the 1981-1983 period (Doherty, 1988, 49). Mrs. Thatcher's Ministerial re-shuffles were ruthless processes which Doherty described as "...weeding... sacrificing all in-question of dissent" (1988, 49). The Shadow and Cabinet shake-ups additionally served to help eliminate the threat of potential leadership rivals before they were able to erode Mrs. Thatcher's power base.

The Shadow and Cabinet control possessed by Mrs. Thatcher was aided by the power of patronage which rose from her snap re-shuffles. Mrs. Thatcher's efforts to re-shape her Ministries afforded her not just the power of appointment, but also the power over individual members and Ministers. Michael Doherty suggested, Minister's knew they had to

be totally subordinate, successful, loyal and always in Mrs. Thatcher's good favour to hope to retain their portfolio, as they were at the mercy of her power to appoint and dismiss (1988, 49). Mrs. Thatcher's Minister's were expected to function normally alongside the fear of uncertain re-appointment and the knowledge of being manipulated. These aggressive actions created a political climate of division rather than consensus, the usual foundation of British Shadow or Cabinet politics. From all appearances, Mrs. Thatcher promoted a high-pressure political situation which ultimately served to enhance Mrs. Thatcher's position of Shadow and Cabinet control. Mrs. Thatcher therefore appeared to be in a position of immense power over the Shadow and Cabinet Ministries. A point reinforced by her power of patronage.

Mrs. Thatcher was particularly questioned about whether she would create more posts for women, she was very expedient,

"I think we need a new look and a new sense of purpose and direction from time to time... The first thing we have to do is to get more women into Parliament, and then we shall be less conspicuous" (Wood, 1975, 2).

Although issue may have been taken with the fact that Mrs. Thatcher did not create an Opposition in her own (gender) image; the fact she created the Opposition in her own political image was a far more substantially valuable point. Mrs. Thatcher's Opposition and later Cabinet was not truly a creation cast in her own image. For instance, David Wood from The Times (1975, 1), predicted Mrs. Thatcher would bring a "new style... new men and new policies". However, Mrs. Thatcher's new-look Opposition possessed only one female Member, Mrs. Sally Oppenheim, Member for Gloucester, Shadow Minister for consumer affairs (Wood, 1975, 1-2). Mrs. Oppenheim's appointment

was what political observers termed “a token woman”. Young’s analysis supplied one possible solution to this question, suggesting “As a politician she was to be noticeably wary of letting competent women anywhere near her” (1989, 16).

Many political analysts were amazed with Mrs. Thatcher’s Opposition and Cabinet’s lack of greater female representation, as skilled female Conservatives were available. The media and other political sources believed Mrs. Thatcher would appoint women Members, including Janet Young, to a range of portfolios. The range of this portfolio was particularly emphasised by Mrs. Thatcher before her appointment to leader. In her pre-Ballot comments to The Times’ political editor David Wood, Mrs. Thatcher told of her “...resentment of Prime Ministers to bring women into the Cabinet only on the social services side...” (1975, 8).

In addition, to controlling the Shadow and Cabinet through the select appointment of members, Mrs. Thatcher was able to ensure and enhance her superiority through careful management. Michael Doherty’s essay “Prime Ministerial Power and Ministerial Responsibility in the Thatcher Era” (1988, 49), expounded the argument that Mrs. Thatcher was able to exercise complete control over the Cabinet through tight management. Doherty’s article made reference to the major themes of Richard Crossman’s study and “Introduction” to W. Bagehot’s The English Constitution (1963). With the aid of Crossman’s work, Doherty contended that Mrs. Thatcher was able to oversee every action of the Cabinet through her determination of all meeting times, agenda selection, Cabinet Committee membership and leading the policy decision-making process (1988, 49). Hence, through the utilisation of

strong management tactics Mrs. Thatcher was not only able to better exercise, but bolster her control over the Shadow and Cabinet Ministries.

Mrs. Thatcher was able to control and transform the membership of the Conservative Party, especially the parliamentary party by her use of her powers as leader. As leader it was Mrs. Thatcher's signature which sealed the appointment of Ministers, she possessed ultimate responsibility for the content of the parliamentary party. In addition to this position of advantage, Mrs. Thatcher was also chairman of the Cabinet. A position she exploited in the quest to create the most congenial Cabinet. This fact was demonstrated by the swelling ranks of Thatcher supporters amongst and the marginalised representation of 'Wets' particularly in the 1981-1983 period amongst the ranks of the parliamentary party. Mrs. Thatcher's 'Wet weeding' began with Norman St. John Stevas in January 1981, Francis Pym just prior to 1983 General election, included John Biffen and later Jim Prior, explained Young (1989, 44). Young continued saying that by her second term of Office, Mrs. Thatcher was in a position to produce the Cabinet she desired. This Prime Ministerial power of selection and appointment gave Mrs. Thatcher control over the Conservative Party and parliamentary party. Therefore, Mrs. Thatcher would seem to have been totally responsible for the assumption of her new political image.

(2c) Mrs. Thatcher and the Civil Service

The debate will now address Mrs. Thatcher's relationship with the Civil Service arm of the British political system. This instalment of the debate will consider whether Mrs. Thatcher assumed her political image as a result of pressure from the Civil Service.

Mrs. Thatcher's control of the British political system was particularly demonstrated through her changes to the Civil Service. The 1970's saw a series of radical changes sweep over the British political landscape. The decade ushered in Mrs. Thatcher, her ruthless New Right beliefs and a political atmosphere that was as supportive of the free market, as it was critical of the State and the Civil Service. During her first five years in Office, Mrs. Thatcher mirrored a programme of change by purging the ranks of the British Civil Service. A brazen political act for any British Prime Minister, considering the rather Conservative, traditional and almost institutional status of the Civil Service.

John Dearlove and Peter Saunders made an incredibly detailed analysis of the British Civil Service and the impact Mrs. Thatcher had upon the Service in their text Introduction to British Politics: Analysing a Capitalist Democracy (1989). They noticed in Mrs. Thatcher what they called "an intuitive grip", on the dynamics which contributed to the maintenance and perpetuation of the Civil Service (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 202-203). This heightened level of analysis enabled Mrs. Thatcher to bring the Civil Service, and matters related, under control from when she first entered Office, said Dearlove and Saunders (1989, 203). It was a generally known fact that Mrs. Thatcher encouraged an attitude of general distrust of the Civil Service, proliferating such discriminative opinions as:

"Top level civil servants were to be detested" and "All of them were the 'guilty men' who had helped to entrench the failed consensus at the same time as they constituted an obstacle to the creation of a more dynamic private enterprise culture" (1989, 203).

Mrs. Thatcher adopted a determined strategy to control the Civil Service rather than be controlled and disadvantaged by a strong and entrenched

Civil Service. Her goals were to: firstly cut the size of the whole Civil Service machine; increase the efficiency of the Civil Service, whilst also re-asserting effective political control; and de-privilege the Civil Service. These were hardly the goals of a leader who was under the close control of a political system. This was not the political profile of a leader so weak, as to have a political image of the political system they led imposed upon them.

(ii) On becoming Prime Minister in 1979, Mrs. Thatcher openly advertised the political message that her Government was well prepared to cut, even privatise the functions of the State and so need far fewer Civil Servants.

From the outset of her Prime Ministership Mrs. Thatcher sought outright control of all new promotions and appointments of senior level Civil Servants. When Mrs. Thatcher became Prime Minister Dearlove and Saunders calculated she inherited 732,000 Civil Servants (1989, 203-204). Mrs. Thatcher set to reduce the Civil Service to a total of 630,000 by April 1984; her goals were realised and exceeded, she managed to slash the Civil Service to 624,000 by the date imposed (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 203-204). The 1981-1984 period of Civil Service changes were so incredibly sweeping that they were reminiscent of the changes Mrs. Thatcher affected to the Cabinet. By 1986 Mrs. Thatcher's goals for a more manageable Civil Service machine were reached, with the Civil Service down to its smallest post-Second World War complement of a mere 594,000 members (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Thus, Mrs. Thatcher was very successful in creating a smaller more manageable Civil Service machine. Mrs. Thatcher's cuts

echoed her control and political clout over what could be termed the Civil Service.

(iii) As part of her programme of political control Mrs. Thatcher sought to improve the efficiency of the Civil Service. Her immediate action in 1979 was to appoint Sir Derek Rayner (a joint manager of Marks and Spencer) to advise her on methods of heightening efficiency and removing waste in central government (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Dearlove and Saunders reported that Rayner's advice sparked a number of efficiency "scrutinies" by young spy officials through radical questioning direct observations, proposals based on detailed evidence and a sense of urgency with the hope that a practical example would curb bureausis and reform the traditional culture of the whole Civil Service (1989, 204). By 1982 Rayner had been responsible for initiating 130 checks. These checks or scrutinies resulted in: improved human resource economics, which eliminated the expansion of some 16000 Civil Service positions per year; and included direct savings of 170 million Pounds, plus 39 million Pounds of what Rayner termed "once-and-for-all-savings" with a projection of an additional 104 million Pounds in possible savings (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Later, Mrs. Thatcher established the Efficiency Unit, in 1985, this Unit conducted a major scrutiny called "Making Things Happen" (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). "Making Things Happen" found that a total of 266 scrutinies had been carried out since 1979 with a cumulative savings in the vicinity of 750 million Pounds (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204).

Reducing the size and improving the efficiency of the Civil Service were major assertions of Mrs. Thatcher's political control. Mrs. Thatcher instilled these notions of control in all her Ministers, insisting they employed a controlling attitude in all their dealings with departments and civil servants, explained Dearlove and Saunders (1989, 204-205). Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers were mostly adept managers, a major feature employed by Mrs. Thatcher and the New Right in Ministerial selection criteria, who were able to utilise this ability to criticise Civil Servants lacking management skills, suggested the authors (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 205). Dearlove and Saunders added that Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers were able to use their management experience to go beyond their traditional policy-making role and assume control of the top level Civil Servants and their departments through the Management Information System for Ministers or MINIS (1989, 205). MINIS enabled the Ministers to implement their own departmental scrutinies and discover "who does what, why and at what cost", allowing them to keep track of departmental resources and more carefully monitor correct allocation (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 205). In addition, Dearlove and Saunders realised that Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers were encouraged to keep policy-making secret and restrict Civil Servants from presenting information to Parliament and to Commons' committees (1989, 205). The overall result afforded Mrs. Thatcher the tightest contemporary Prime Ministerial control of a more efficient British Civil Service machine.

(iv) Mrs. Thatcher's control of the Civil Service began with the direct influence over individual recruitments. Mrs. Thatcher was effectively de-privileging the Civil Service, as she sought to remove privileges such as the automatic promotion from career bureaucrats.

Hence, the expression Mrs. Thatcher was creating a Civil Service in her own image, a fact which unfolded from her inception as Prime Minister in 1979.

Up till Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative Government the British Civil Service possessed a reputation of: traditional independence; resistance to radical policy change; and maintained closed ranks through grooming and promotion of lower level bureaucrats to senior level positions to perpetuate its traditional image, explained Dearlove and Saunders (1989, 206). Mrs. Thatcher sought to exert her control of the Civil Service and not allow her Government's radical policy programme to be hampered by the traditional nature of the Civil Service machine through top echelon figures. To achieve this end Mrs. Thatcher accepted the findings of specialist adviser Sir John Hoskyns (Director-General of the Institute of Directors) who espoused, "...the present system of career politicians served by career officials (was) a failed one because the Civil Service was too 'passive' and hostile to change" (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 208). Hoskyns' advised Mrs. Thatcher to handle the employment of key Civil Servants, similar to her control over the appointment of Ministers, and recruit politically specialised outsiders on short-term contracts who would work with the required commitment to implement her Government's radical political objectives without reticence (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 208). Mrs. Thatcher's plan for Civil Service membership changes were bolstered by her role as Minister for the Civil Service, added Philip Norton (1990, 44). Simon Hoggart made the same point in an article published in The Bulletin (1984, 97). Hoggart's article recognised the way Civil Service took on a more Thatcher-like image through its across the board increase of a number of younger male bureaucrats (1984, 97). Michael Doherty concurred with Dearlove and

Saunders and Hoggart's article adding, that Mrs. Thatcher was able to exert a dominant political role and impose her own political image upon the Civil Service by dictating the new membership of the Service (1988, 49). Mrs. Thatcher's changes to the Civil Service publicly affirmed her political self-confidence and overall control of the system. Mrs. Thatcher's changes to the Civil Service additionally demonstrated her control over the creation and implementation of her own new political image.

During the 1970's and 1980's Mrs. Thatcher nearly halved the yearly appointment rate of trainee Civil Servants or AT's, but she was responsible for one half of all new senior level Civil Servants being external recruits (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 208). These authors intimated that although Mrs. Thatcher claimed not to be preoccupied with the personal politics of her top level Civil Servants - whether they were "one of us?" - she did display a strong preference for, "...the Civil Servant who embodied the 'can do' approach and who was willing to enthusiastically implement the Minister's policies" (1989, 209). The authors added, notwithstanding her role in the changes to Civil Service recruitment, Mrs. Thatcher's political arrival signalled the growing politicisation of the Civil Service (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 209). Mrs. Thatcher's controlling grasp on the British Civil Service was a significant part of her controlling political image and preoccupation, as it helped afford her control of the wider British political system. At the same time, Mrs. Thatcher's obvious control of the Civil Service highlighted the political inabilities of this arm of the British political system, especially the Civil Services' political inability to hamper and effectively impose a political image of submissiveness and no control upon Mrs. Thatcher.

In answer to the above standpoint - that Mrs. Thatcher chose to adopt her new political image through her control of the British political system, particularly through her domination of the Civil Service - is a compelling defence showing her less than controlling position. This argument will vigorously pursue the same line of debate: firstly, considering the cuts to the Civil Service; the supposed efficiency strategies; and the changes to individual membership of the Civil Service.

(i) First to be considered is the implied cuts Mrs. Thatcher initiated within the British Civil Service. It seemed Mrs. Thatcher's attempts to cut the size of the Civil Service were only achieved on paper and that the whole exercise was purely academic. Although Mrs. Thatcher claimed to have slashed Civil Service ranks and made significant revenue savings as a result, in reality it seemed she "fudged" the counting of individuals through hazy descriptions defining what a Civil Servant is, explained Dearlove and Saunders (1989, 204). For instance, Post Office workers and staff at Kew Gardens were Civil Servants, but their employment status was changed to public sector employees and they ceased to be Civil Servants in title, pay and counted as such (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Another untruth declared by Mrs. Thatcher was that the cuts in the Civil Service did not automatically mean cuts in public expenditure. For example, 43% of all reductions between 1980-1984 were made by the Ministry of Defence or MOD, but none of these cuts contributed to expenditure savings because the MOD had its own budget, thus any Civil Service cuts did not produce savings as any extra funds were diverted elsewhere in the MOD budget (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Hence, Mrs. Thatcher's Civil Service successes were metered by flimsy definitions of terminology and the

fact that Civil Service reductions were not made in over-staffed areas. Mrs. Thatcher did not thus appear in control of the British Civil Service, but more over the image of a Civil Service manipulated and controlled politician.

(ii) Mrs. Thatcher's efforts to install new methods of efficiency within the Civil Service were similarly open to interpretation. The 750 million Pounds in savings Mrs. Thatcher supposedly reaped from her 1979 scrutiny was not as smoothly or swiftly achieved, instead the programme ran over at least two years and sometimes extended to five years to implement the savings (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204). Senior level Civil Servant Clive Ponting (famed for his involvement with Westland Helicopter affair) criticised Rayner's efficiency scrutinies suggesting that "Whitehall absorbed and failed to implement reports that were disliked (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 204-205). The writers also injected another aspect of criticism into Mrs. Thatcher's neglect of the human side of the Civil Service which they declared as "...anything but a success story..." (Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 205). It again seemed Mrs. Thatcher was projecting a political image forced upon her, or at least favoured, by the Civil Service to cover up their power and Mrs. Thatcher's lack of political control.

(iii) Finally, Mrs. Thatcher's plan to control the recruitment of senior level Civil Servants was open to criticism. For instance, the MINIS system should have been a powerful political tool for Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers to realise the control of the Civil Service she desperately craved. In reality there was little Ministerial interest in MINIS, departmental management and even the Financial Management Initiative or FMI did not appeal to her Ministers (Dearlove and

Saunders, 1989, 205). [The FMI emphasised the need for a general and co-ordinated drive to improve financial management in departments.] Dearlove and Saunders' appreciation of the situation suggested that Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers lacked the time, competence and necessary experience with the details of their departments to monitor and control the Civil Service (1989, 205). Mrs. Thatcher's Ministers thus remained limited managers of their departments in comparison to the permanent Civil Servant heads of departments. Dearlove and Saunders' concluded:

“Ministers and elected politician do matter (and they have probably mattered more under Thatcher than they have under many of the less-committed consensus governments of the post-war period) but ministers cannot govern alone and the fact that they have always found it hard to transform the Civil Service and bend it to their will highlights the continuing power of bureaucratic organisation” (1989, 209).

Hennessy added an interesting comment to this debate saying:

“...it is right to suggest that she dominated Whitehall but she did not... transform it and much change has been made a matter of style than substance” (Hennessy in Dearlove and Saunders, 1989, 209).

It therefore seemed Mrs. Thatcher tried to effect a variety of alternatives to the British Civil Service, it could never really be said that she had total control over the whole Civil Service. Dearlove and Saunders made this point when they said: “In fact, it is a sterile debate to argue about who has 'real' power because Minister and civil servants are locked together within a system of government” (1989, 202).

Thence Mrs. Thatcher was again shown to be not in control of the Civil Service and so the image of control which was propounded simply served to highlight her lack of political power.

(3) Although Mrs. Thatcher was inclined by the British political system, she chose to take on a political image in favour of maintaining her own self-image.

The final segment of this chapter deals with the notion that although Mrs. Thatcher may have been inclined by the British political system to assume her new political image, she chose to adopt her political image in preference to standing the tougher middle political ground and retaining her own self image. This discussion will be based on Mrs. Thatcher's policy making abilities with examples of her policies being drawn from the gender related issues raised in the overall thesis debate. This debate will consider, as earlier foreshadowed in this chapter, whether Mrs. Thatcher purposely cultivated a feminine, not feminist aspect to her new political image. This part of the discussion will also consider the possibility of a connection between Mrs. Thatcher's political image not being sympathetic with the cause of gender issue promotion and her subsequent policies. Both standpoints will be substantiated through references to the gender related policies Mrs. Thatcher made.

The second part of this debate focuses upon examples of gender related policies from the areas of equal employment and individual economic equality, health and equality of educational opportunity and provision. Debating Mrs. Thatcher's policies will enable the clearest view of her both sides of her policy making intentions, in regard to the question of her feminine political image. Debate will also consider whether Mrs. Thatcher's gender related policies effectively disadvantaged the majority (average) of British women. The final part of this discussion will only make brief reference to the details of Mrs. Thatcher's gender related policies, as these policies feature in the next

chapter (Image and Substance: Mrs. Thatcher and Thatcherism) of the thesis. Thus, the clearest expression of Mrs. Thatcher's high level of choice in determining the incorporation of a distinctly feminine, yet not feminist facet in her political image, was through the gender related policies she made.

(i) It has already been foreshadowed that Mrs. Thatcher did not decide to take on a new political image. As earlier implied, Mrs. Thatcher did not appear to possess a great deal of control over the invention and acceptance of her political image. A case echoed by the awkward, narrow and often uneasy fit of the feminine aspect of Mrs. Thatcher's political image. As it has already been espoused, Mrs. Thatcher appeared to be under pressure from a number of arms of the British political system to conform and accept a new political image.

Mrs. Thatcher was, after all, just a politician. A career choice that was not reliant upon the individual's gender. It has to be added, that Mrs. Thatcher's new political image and policies were unrelated to her gender. It also seemed that Mrs. Thatcher's choice of politics was also not gender related. Robert Skidelsky complied with this view in his book Thatcherism (1988). Skidelsky's book revolved about the fact that being a woman does not mean she is a feminist, refuting the popular premise that these points are politically related (1988, 134). Bernard Levin (a Times journalist) agreed with the view saying;

“...While it might seem an enormous leap ...to choose a woman - the first woman to lead a Western political Party once they had done it, the Conservatives might well find that it had been a natural thing to do, and would almost certainly find the experience of being led by a woman

who was no different from being a man with similar qualities" (Levin in Cosgrave, 1975, 13-14).

Skidelsky's study responded to popular, but mostly unfounded beliefs such as that of British women who felt Mrs. Thatcher would possess not only a better understanding, but also an empathy for gender issues.

Cosgrave's book concurred with the premise that Mrs. Thatcher was not what most people, especially most women, anticipated a female leader would be.

Skidelsky further supported this view, as he spoke of how Mrs. Thatcher was "Disinclined to play the feminist game, she was impervious to its being played against her. Indeed, the feminists dislike Mrs. Thatcher..." (1988, 134). From this perspective Mrs. Thatcher did not seem to be in possession of a political image. A point best illustrated through her policy making.

(i) Conversely, it seemed by not opting to incorporate a feminist aspect in what can only be analysed as her new political image, Mrs. Thatcher was actually demonstrating the high level of free choice she possessed concerning her political image and the extensive political control she must have wielded. This choice reflected Mrs. Thatcher's over-riding ability to freely determine the design and assumption of her new political image. Mrs. Thatcher's position was exemplified through her policy making.

(ii) As Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher possessed the ultimate say on making Conservative Party policy. No other organ within the Conservative Party is endowed with policy-making abilities. The Cabinet or Shadow, Conservative Research Department, the Party's

Advisory Committee on Policy, ad hoc groups and the parliamentary party are all at the Prime Minister's disposal as advisory bodies. Mrs. Thatcher even founded a new advisory body - the Centre for Policy Studies - to assist her policy making (Norton, 1990, 43). Without real political power Mrs. Thatcher would have never been able to found the Centre for Political Studies, nor object to already established advisory bodies. By creating the Centre for Political Studies Mrs. Thatcher was effectively giving herself more political control - the new advisory body would very probably offer only desired policy advice - through unopposed creative input in policy formulation. The findings of the Maxwell-Fyfe Report of 1948 outlined the role of the Prime Minister as "...the main fount and interpreter of policy..." (Norton, 1990, 43). And the Party's 1977 Campaign Guide put it even more succinctly, saying of Mrs. Thatcher: "...she formulates party policy..." (Norton, 1990, 43). Mrs. Thatcher very uniquely dealt with her position of Prime Minister: a point particularly demonstrated through her interpretation of the Conservative Party's future, overall policy programme and individual gender related policies.

Mrs. Thatcher was thus responsible for the creation of gender related policies. Mrs. Thatcher, as previously explained in this chapter, did not accept the need for making special policies and gender allowances to benefit women, as The Economist stated: "...she has no time for special pleading for women..." (1987, 52). Mrs. Thatcher made clear her anti-gender view when she retorted: "It is the men who need a ministry of their own..." to the Labour Party's proposal for a ministry for women (M. Thatcher in The Economist, 1987, 52).

Norton concluded that Mrs. Thatcher had:

“...adopted different practices in drawing up the party manifesto its contents rests with her, and it is her signature that has appeared on each one...” (1990, 43).

(ii) The focal issue of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making powers will be challenged. It will be suggested that Mrs. Thatcher's policy making abilities and the gender related policies which resulted were not caused by Mrs. Thatcher.

As it has previously been explained the leader of the Party or Government has the final say on policy making, however when this generalised statement was investigated, the policy making powers of the leader were found to be far less reaching. In actual fact the leader's role in the process of policy formulation was quite limited. As usual, the leader was dependent upon the support of a number of other elements within the system and a majority of the Party - to create policy.

Norton implied, that whilst still leader of the Opposition Mrs. Thatcher developed an awareness of the potential difficulties she would encounter with her supposedly subordinate advisory body, the Conservative Research Department (1990, 45). Norton suggested that the Department was not allowing Mrs. Thatcher sufficient creative say on policy making and that she turned to her own creation - the Centre for Policy Studies - for better assistance (1990, 45). Hence, it cannot be implied that Mrs. Thatcher was absolutely free from restrictions to make policies as she chose.

The gender related policies of Mrs. Thatcher's Government were thence the collaborative creation of the Conservative Party, rather than the products of only Mrs. Thatcher's efforts. Mrs. Thatcher also faced continuous battles with other Party members in her attempts to realign Party policy to a direction she aspired; and even then her efforts were not always successful, added Norton (Norton,1990). Thus the gender policies of Mrs. Thatcher's Government were not solely her own products, but rather the combined results of the Party's agenda and that of its various advisory bodies.

Another point which demonstrated that Mrs. Thatcher did not control Party policy making was seen through the direction taken by the economic policy manifesto, The Right Approach to the Economy (Norton, 1990, 45). Norton explained that The Right Approach to the Economy was the most significant policy document of the period, yet as leader Mrs. Thatcher did not have the final say on policy formulation (1990, 45). Instead, Norton told how critics within the Shadow Cabinet showed their power by initiating programme amendments which led to the development of a new policy document, The Right Approach to the Economy (1990, 45). This example suggested how Mrs. Thatcher did not possess controlling policy making powers and thus lends credence to the opinion that she may not have been responsible for the formulation of the gender policies referred.

Finally, Mrs. Thatcher's policy making role was even more restricted when Prime Minister, than it was when she was leader of the Opposition. As once in Government, Mrs. Thatcher had much less time to devote to Party policy programming and individual policy formulation than she had ever had, stated Norton (1990, 45). It would

thus seem that Mrs. Thatcher was not wholly responsible for policy making and the gender related policies which her Government imposed.

Equal Employment Policies

In the area of employment policy making, Mrs. Thatcher initiated the new law of Equal Retirement Age for all employees. British women saw this law as another gesture of positive legislation and a step towards the improvement of their employment conditions. Mrs. Thatcher then declared a second law aimed at improving the rights of women by taxing them separately as individuals, rather than jointly with their spouse as "chattels" (Burchill, 1990, 16). Women were at last going to be legally recognised as individuals, and also identified as economically independent individuals with their own incomes. Mrs. Thatcher's new Equal Retirement Age legislation would afford women the choice of an extended, more equal working life, as well as the ability to improve the financial position of their household and accumulate increased wealth from their labour. Mrs. Thatcher was publicly commended for her recognition of women as individuals and workers with personal incomes and wealth, as well as legal rights and status through her changes to Britain's archaic legislative system. Thus Mrs. Thatcher's new employment policies made some gender related employment improvements.

(i) However, the reality of Mrs. Thatcher's amendments to Britain's Retirement Age laws were far less advantageous for the majority of British women. The new Retirement Age law meant women would not only have to work longer years until legal retirement was reached, particularly if they hoped to receive superannuation, but they would also have to pay a great deal more income tax to Mrs. Thatcher's

Government. Once retired most women would then be older and draw the aged pension and other welfare benefits for fewer years until death. Mrs. Thatcher's Government would reap great economic advantage from these new employment related laws, in the form of: increased income tax revenue; out-laying less aged pension benefits, less health benefits and other less welfare support for fewer years. The overall economic savings for Mrs. Thatcher's Government would be in the millions of Pounds.

The language selected by Mrs. Thatcher to expound the new laws served to raise women's passion and ensure their almost unquestioning advocacy of the Prime Minister's actions and policies. In effect, women were making the desired interpretation of laws expressly designed to ensure maximum income tax revenue collection for Mrs. Thatcher's Government. At this point women seemed to be almost prepared to automatically accept Mrs. Thatcher's legislative amendments without any detailed explanation or analysis. They seemingly felt Mrs. Thatcher was helping them as individuals, whilst simultaneously acknowledging burning gender concerns. This point was exemplified by the swift female embrace of Mrs. Thatcher's new rape, retirement and income taxation legislation.

Women were apparently unaware that their trust aided Mrs. Thatcher with the most crucial step in her process of legislative change. Mrs. Thatcher next introduced her most revolutionary alteration to the British taxation system. Mrs. Thatcher sought to change the taxation system from being property and income based to the more efficient and abrasive mode of individual or poll taxation. Mrs. Thatcher was once again going to use Britain's underclasses as those first to experience yet

another of her draconian political-economic policy experiments. As one of the largest groupings constituting the British underclass, women would be the first to bear the brunt of the adversities resulting from Mrs. Thatcher's newest legislative reform.

The Community Charge, poll or head tax was to be first implemented in Scotland in April 1989, then later in England and Wales in April 1990. [Scotland was very likely selected for trial implementation because of the pre-election attention Mrs. Thatcher had focused upon the swinging Scottish electorate. The Scottish electorate was probably believed to be most receptive to Mrs. Thatcher's newest taxation policy because of the pre-election work she had done with the electorate.] This new insidious form of individual taxation, would effectively penalise those just above the very bottom of the income tax scale, explained Riddell (1989, 157). The poll tax was of extreme concern to the majority of the British electorate. However, it also rated high on the list of chief gender issues because of the devastating impact this policy would have had upon disadvantaged social groups, such as women. As already highlighted, women comprised the majority of Britain's low income earners. These women had previously been exempt from hefty annual taxes because they did not earn high incomes, own their home or any other real estate. These were the people Mrs. Thatcher intended to legally encompass in her wider taxation net, for the absolute maximisation of Government revenue collection, through her new poll tax.

And with the new poll tax also came other losses. If an individual refused or could not afford to pay their poll tax they would incur steep financial and criminal penalties, as well the loss of voting privileges.

The poor were going to be treated as criminals, because they could ill-afford their poll tax. Voting was once a privilege boasted by free British citizens. Before Mrs. Thatcher's new poll tax was initiated, voting did not economically, socially or sexually discriminate, it did not have to be purchased and was protected under the Britain's legislative system. The very people who could least afford to pay more tax to the Government had to pay more to ensure their rights of franchise and liberty. Thence, the prevailing motive of Mrs. Thatcher's new poll tax was obviously not aimed at assisting the equality of income or betterment of working conditions for British women. An implication Mrs. Thatcher certainly made from the outset. Mrs. Thatcher suggested through her image and more actively by her previous legislative repeals, that women would truly benefit from her revolutionary changes to Britain's legislative system; beginning with her legislative motions to give women separate economic status with the repeal to rape within marriage laws, taxing women as individuals and making retirement age uniform for all workers. It therefore seemed Mrs. Thatcher's gender related employment policies definitely disadvantaged women and exploited their faith in what could only be a political image of Mrs. Thatcher's sincerity.

(i) When first it occurred, Mrs. Thatcher's image was bolstered by her Government's initiation to repeal a number of laws concerning the status of British women. Mrs. Thatcher's Government repealed a British law making rape within marriage a criminal offence. This new law would change part of traditional British legislation, which implied that women were only of chattel status and had no legal rights or position as an individual, as if they were the possessions of their husband or father.

Women interpreted Mrs. Thatcher's legislative change as an acknowledgment of their special legislative requirements.

It also appeared Mrs. Thatcher was additionally addressing a less politicised, but incredibly urgent gender concern.

The announcement of Mrs. Thatcher's new legislation was both politically expedient and well timed. The repeal of the old rape laws certainly bolstered Mrs. Thatcher's political and public appearance with the female electorate. Mrs. Thatcher's new rape legislation only aided the legal rights of and political status of British women.

Economic Equality Policies

(i) From the time Mrs. Thatcher became Prime Minister she showed how she truly appreciated women's economic equality through her policy making. Mrs. Thatcher set about improving the economic circumstances of a great many women through policy making that initiated the creation of new jobs specifically for women. Mrs. Thatcher declared she would do all she could through policy making to help defeat women's economic inequality. Through her policy making Mrs. Thatcher was able to claim women had "...made gains under her Government..." (Faludi, 1992, 90). During the late 1980's Mrs. Thatcher improved the economic status of women through her creation of a great many new jobs especially for women (Faludi, 1992, 90). In real terms Mrs. Thatcher's policies represented a 25% rise in jobs for women over the previous decade (Faludi, 1992, 90). Therefore, Mrs. Thatcher's policy making efforts apparently improved the economic status of more individual females through the economic benefits they derived from Mrs. Thatcher's new jobs programme.

(i) Through in-depth analysis Mrs. Thatcher's claim that she had directly improved the economic equality of women through her policies was false. In the long term women certainly did not gain from Mrs. Thatcher's new policies, as poor employment situations were not changed and economic benefits were not improved (Faludi, 1992, 90). As for the great many new jobs Mrs. Thatcher supposedly created especially for women the actual number was never stated. Faludi analysed Mrs. Thatcher's new jobs policy of the late 1980's, she concluded that: "about one third" the jobs were "at or below the poverty level" and of these positions, "77% were lowly 'female' service positions in the retail and service industry..." (1992, 90). Faludi elaborated upon her statistical data, detailing the origin of Mrs. Thatcher's new jobs as, "sweat shop labour, home-based work with below-minimum wages, sales-clerk and fast-food career tracks of no security and no benefits..." (1992, 90). Faludi added that Mrs. Thatcher's 25% job rise for women was only token in real terms, as the jobs were all in the lowest pay areas (service industry) and were neither full-time nor permanent (1992, 90). Faludi concluded Mrs. Thatcher promoted the economic inequality of women through her new jobs policy (1992, 11). As her new jobs were exploitative and "bottom-of-the-barrel tasks" that "...over one-million women" were forced to take as "single, separated, divorced or widowed women bringing up children on their own" (Faludi, 1992, 11). Hence, in real and long terms Mrs. Thatcher did not assist the economic status of women. Instead she changed the appearance of usually exploitative jobs, in order to be seen to be improving women's economic status; just as she changed her own political image for her own ends.

Health Policies

(i) On assuming the leadership again in 1985, Mrs. Thatcher proposed a series of NHS reforms based upon the findings of the 1983 Griffith Report (The Economist, 1989, 19). Mrs. Thatcher had assured women and the electorate that the NHS would be "...safe in their hands..."(Jones, 1984, 172). Mrs. Thatcher's reforms constituted a number of essential and positive changes to the health care services of the NHS. For example, essential improvements - such as the increase of efficiency in processing patients, the clarification of duties and improved communication and co-ordination - were made in managerial service areas (The Economist, 1989, 19).

(ii) Just prior to the 1983 general election Mrs. Thatcher received a clear message of disapproval about her latest NHS programme. She replied by making swift retractions to her NHS programme. Women and other swinging voters seemed to be satisfied with Mrs. Thatcher's amended health programme, the new health policies apparently reassuring these voters of Mrs. Thatcher's political mandate. It thus seemed women were satisfied with Mrs. Thatcher's leadership and health policies by their on-going support of her even after her first draft of a new health programme was released.

(i) On retaining the leadership Mrs. Thatcher made a series of NHS policy reforms in 1985, based upon the findings of the 1983 Griffith Report. Although Mrs. Thatcher made administrative improvements to the NHS, no reforms were made to any of a number of needy service areas (The Economist, 1989, 19). The policy benefits derived by women from Mrs. Thatcher's health reforms were minimal and not in health service areas where improvements were essential.

(ii) Jones suggested that women had reason for their concern. Mrs. Thatcher had conveyed so many falsehoods about her plans for improving the NHS by actually “lopping away” at its budget (Jones, 1984, 170). Mrs. Thatcher confirmed women’s worst fears when her proposal to slash the NHS budget was leaked to The Economist just prior to the 1983 election (The Economist in Jones, 1984, 172). Public response was so unfavourable that Mrs. Thatcher’s new health programme was hastily disclaimed before the 1983 election (Jones, 1984, 172). Jones summed up Mrs. Thatcher’s health policy changes by re-arranging Mrs. Thatcher’s promise to question “...what wasn’t safe...” as the NHS was suffering tremendously from Mrs. Thatcher’s reforms and planned funding cut backs (1984, 172). Thus Mrs. Thatcher’s new health policies were clearly against the interest of women.

(iii) The new rape legislation initiated by Mrs. Thatcher was not entirely to the advantage of women as it first superficially appeared. This new rape law was like as a baited hook. Mrs. Thatcher’s new legislation aimed to secure political and media attention, as well as the support of British women. For around the same time this new law was being passed and openly welcomed by many women another set of seemingly desirable employment-related laws were being introduced. These other new laws were not so liberating for most British women.

Mrs. Thatcher’s references to health services and the NHS were always indirect. Although she never blatantly told women to take out private health scheme insurance and not depend upon the NHS as a health service safety net, she made countless gestures and sublime comments about women adopting more responsible and traditional female approaches to their own and their families overall care. These

subtle actions strongly implied Mrs. Thatcher's preference and reliance on private health insurance, and her disdain for those who were irresponsible enough to depend upon the NHS. Through her image, Mrs. Thatcher was virtually telling British women it was up to them to properly budget the housekeeping and be able to afford private health insurance. It was as though women were failures as carers and mothers if they had to depend upon the NHS. This point was backed-up by Mrs. Thatcher's use of private health insurance to accommodate her need for minor eye surgery.

Mrs. Thatcher used the feminine facet of her political image to try and sway many average British women's dependence from the NHS, to private health insurance; for her own political purposes and as part of her programme to eliminate State subsidised health services.

Education Policies

(i) Mrs. Thatcher was not using any form of a political image to influence the support of the female electorate, particularly in the gender related area of education where she made a number of positive changes. For over three decades Mrs. Thatcher had become well known to the British public, in particular the female electorate, for her attention to education. Mrs. Thatcher made copious references to education whilst Prime Minister. The content and frequent nature of these references immediately drew female attention to her obvious commitment to the promotion of education as a gender issue.

One such gender related education policy made by Mrs. Thatcher was the increase of university graduate employment and the reduction of university overcrowding, implied Jones (1984, 173). Jones explained another gender related area of education Mrs. Thatcher made policy improvements was in education development and research (1984, 173). For the first time a special “thinktank” to debate Britain's education system and formulate future education system strategies was established, as a result of Mrs. Thatcher's policy making (Jones, 1984, 173).

This was why Mrs. Thatcher's supporters often referred to her as “intellectually based” because of her educational references and her Oxford education (Young and Slomon, 1986, 58). The majority of Britain's female electorate believed Mrs. Thatcher was using her special female appreciation to overhaul the entrenched problems of Britain's Archaean education system through her policy making role as Prime Minister (Young, 1989, 16). Many British women seemed to conclude that Mrs. Thatcher was going to improve the education system for all other female candidates.

(ii) In response, Mrs. Thatcher's experience as a tertiary student and as Secretary of Education did not positively influence her promotion of gender related education policies. In reality, it must be mentioned that at the time Mrs. Thatcher was first a student (during the 1940's) and later when she took her Bar exams (1952-1954) as a mature-aged student with children she was very special exception to the female student norm. Mrs. Thatcher had initially won full scholarships for her study and later she was very comfortably married and fully supported by her husbands wealth. For example amidst her many 1950's

speeches Mrs. Thatcher made clear the need for a good education in the pursuit of a career. Mrs. Thatcher became almost renowned for her education comments at "Ladies Luncheons", where she emphasised the clear advantage an education afforded for success in all fields, adding education was the first step on her own successful career path.

(i) Once again it seemed Mrs. Thatcher's feminine political image was used by her and the Party to promote her supposed support of the gender issue of equality of educational opportunity and provision. In this instance, Mrs. Thatcher's background was used to court and pacify the on-going bids of women to receive equal educational opportunity and provision. Particularly through the feminine aspect of her political image, Mrs. Thatcher was telling the majority of Britain's women a comforting fiction. Mrs. Thatcher told women that every woman could get an education and that any woman could become as successful as she had in their chosen field. In effect Mrs. Thatcher's rhetoric attempted to endear her overall political image with British women.

Mrs. Thatcher's education policy making supposedly reduced university graduate unemployment and university overcrowding, in actual fact her policies achieved these figures through the introduction of extensive funding cuts and rises in fees which precluded most women and other under-privileged candidates (Jones, 1984, 173). Jones broke down these funding cuts and fee rises to divulge: scholarships earmarked for women and other disadvantaged candidates were dissolved; and at the same time tertiary costs were increased by some 4000 Pounds in fees, books and associated costs per year (1984, 173). Mrs. Thatcher's education policy making certainly did not improve the poor educational opportunity or provision experienced by women.

In specific response to Mrs. Thatcher's claim to create a "thinktank" for education system research and development, was actually a tool she would use to aid her creation of new education policies for the Party from 1982 onwards (Jones, 1984, 173). Jones implied the extent of education policy benefits for women from the new "thinktank" were vastly reduced (1984, 173). As a result of the research from her education policy "thinktank" Mrs. Thatcher created the policy to abolish State provided education at primary and secondary school levels (Jones, 1984, 173).

Mrs. Thatcher's education story grew more fantastic over the years, despite the reality that she actually knew very little about this gender issue. Young added, Mrs. Thatcher liked to frequently remind how she was the first British Prime Minister with a Science Degree (1989, 16). This point was made plain through numerous references to her academic achievements; as she recurrently stated she was a chemist and constantly used scientific jargon in her speeches, interviews and at meetings (Young, 1989, 16). The aim of this repetitive vocal re-enforcement seemed to be to try and impress upon women her own education as well as her appreciation of education as a gender issue (Young, 1989, 16-17).

(ii) Mrs. Thatcher's educational experiences, as a student and politician, placed her in a unique position to answer the education policy concerns of British women. British women accepted that Mrs. Thatcher was behind their educational goals and was suitably informed about British education, from her first-hand knowledge as a young, then mature-aged female student and as Secretary of Education. Women believed Mrs. Thatcher's first-hand experiences served to enrich her

understanding of their political dilemma in trying to obtain education for themselves and their families. Mrs. Thatcher suggested she had a realistic appreciation of the hardships economically disadvantaged females - some married with children and others single parents - met in trying to obtain education, from her own background as a young and mature-aged female student with two small children. Further explaining how she was part of only 2% of the university population as a woman, when she attended Oxford during the 1950's (Jones, 1984, 173).

(ii) In answer to Mrs. Thatcher's alleged special knowledge of education and gender related education needs were the not so well advertised facts. On the advice of her Oxford tutors Janet Vaughan and Professor Hodgkin, it seemed Mrs. Thatcher's intellectual prowess was not so impressive (Young 1989, 16 and Young and Slomon, 1986, 51). Mrs. Thatcher only attained a second-class academic qualification and only the level of research assistant in her professional work as an industrial chemist. Mrs. Thatcher's habit of trying to intimidate political opponents with her intellectual superiority was quite underwhelming; as she was ignorant on most subject matters she ventured opinions (Young, 1989, 16 and Young and Slomon, 1986, 51). An instance caught by Young saw Mrs. Thatcher trying to shore up her political image through superficial lines, such as "But I'm a chemist. I know it won't work..." concerning Strategic Defence Initiative plans, in an area which she knew very little about (1989, 16-17). Another example of Mrs. Thatcher's less than impressive educational experience was noted in her numerous uses of jargon terms, which showed the truly hollow nature of her scientific familiarity suggested Young (1989, 16-17). Biddiss similarly noted this point suggesting that Mrs. Thatcher's constant references to her education mostly served to help pad her

political image, as the references actually bore very little scientific substance (1987, 2). Biddiss implied the chief reason behind Mrs. Thatcher's education references and the feminine aspect of her political image was to gain the confidence of the female electorate (1987, 2). Biddiss added that Mrs. Thatcher knew her feminine political image was very successful with the British female electorate, yet she apparently had little concern for the fact that the substance of her education policies were funding cuts which would sacrifice the hopes of many average British women and their families (1987, 2). Hence, Mrs. Thatcher used the feminine aspects of her political image to gain the support of the majority of the female electorate, particularly in the field of education policies. In conclusion, Mrs. Thatcher possessed extensive political power in policy making and in her decision to assume the kind of political image she selected. Mrs. Thatcher demonstrated this assumption through the use of the feminine facet of new her political image in gaining the confidence of a great many British women.

Conclusion

This chapter proffered vigorous arguments in support of and against the opening topics and issues raised in "Image and Substance: Margaret Thatcher". The overwhelming weight of evidence, however, appears to have tipped the balance in favour of Mrs. Thatcher's extensive degree of free choice and her overwhelming control of the British political system. In terms of the initial debate of the first chapter - "Did Mrs. Thatcher choose to assume a political image?" - the material put forward was fairly evenly balanced. However, the motivations expressed for Mrs. Thatcher's choice to assume a new political image were very compelling. In the second part of the chapter - "Was Mrs. Thatcher forced to assume a political image by the British

political system?" - the evidence amassed suggested she chose to assume a new political image by way of her control of the system. The evidence strongly implied that Mrs. Thatcher was able to project a powerful political force in the British political system: by her interpretation of the role of Prime Minister; through her domination of the ranks of the Conservative Party, particularly the parliamentary party; and through her similar control of the Civil Service. The final investigation of the first chapter - "Whether Mrs. Thatcher although inclined by the system, chose to adopt a new political image in favour of being more faithful to her own self-image?" - was examined through her policy making abilities and four briefly discussed gender policy examples. The analysis firstly argued that Mrs. Thatcher had total control of the assumption and creation of her new political image. A view very convincingly espoused through Mrs. Thatcher's decision to not include a feminist or gender supporting perspective in the feminine aspect of her new political image. The investigation then studied Mrs. Thatcher's Prime Ministerial policy making powers, this debate revealed that she wielded enormous policy making powers. Powers which suggested the extensive degree of her free choice. The policies she made in the four gender areas firmly demonstrated the feminine not feminist aspect of the political image she freely engineered. Thus, Mrs. Thatcher was one of the most powerful contemporary, British Prime Ministers. A position she bolstered through her creation of a political image.

CHAPTER TWO

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