

**L'Exclusion des femmes de la vie politique :  
la représentation des femmes politiques en tant que  
candidates à la magistrature suprême dans la  
Cinquième République**

**The Exclusion of Women from the World of Politics:  
The Representation of Female Politicians Running  
for the Highest Office in the Fifth French Republic**

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**French Studies**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The concept of Double Binds as applicable to women, particularly those in politics, was first raised in 1995 by Kathleen Hall Jamieson in *Beyond the Double Bind*. Work has continued in this area and, in 2010, *Cracking the Highest Glass Ceiling*, edited by Rainbow Murray, was published. This work expanded on the issues raised by Jamieson and focussed on a range of female leaders around the world, including Angela Merkel and Hillary Rodham Clinton. It nominated six double binds that were considered to impact on women who sought high political office.

Due to restraints on the length of the thesis, only three of the double binds proposed have been examined. These have been selected by virtue of their perceived importance in relation to the female political figures examined. The double binds examined in the thesis are: Too masculine or too feminine; Experienced or a symbol of change; and Associated with or independent of a prominent male.

The six females who are examined in this thesis are: Edith Cresson, Simone Veil, Michèle Alliot-Marie, Ségolène Royal, Martine Aubry and Marine Le Pen. Each of these women has featured prominently in the French political system, with Royal, Aubry and Le Pen all having sought to contest the 2012 French Presidential election.

The approach undertaken has been to examine a wide range of books, journal articles and newspaper articles to determine how each of the three double binds has impacted on the six females. While each female has been individually assessed, conclusions relating to the six women as a whole have also been made.

The objective of this thesis has been to examine the private and political lives of the six women to determine if existing theory on double binds is applicable to each of them. Of particular interest is the role that a prominent male, be they husband, father or mentor, has in the advancement of their careers as this is an area where little research has been done to date.

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