

CHAPTER ONE

Pink Pussy Hats vs. Patriarchy

The ground looks hard, with patches of snow under the tall northern trees. The salt-whitened rural road is empty of vehicles. Only a small band of walkers are heading toward an intersection, about a dozen people, some carrying posters, most wearing pink hats. It is January 21, 2017. This is the Women's March in the village (pop. 65) of Sandy Cove, Nova Scotia.¹

A seventeen-hour drive west that same wintry Saturday would have brought one to Toronto's Women's March. There one would have joined a contingent of an estimated 50,000 Canadian marchers.² On January 21, a total of 34 towns and cities across Canada held Women's Marches. Crossing the border to travel further south (if one were not stopped by US border officials), one could have joined still-larger marches: Boston, 175,000; New York, 500,000; and, largest of all, Washington, D.C., with estimates of march participants ranging from 500,000 to 680,000.³

The Washington Women's March initially was sparked by Teresa Shook, a retired Hawaiian woman, who, in the wake of the presidential election, posted a Facebook call to friends, urging

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them to travel to Washington with her in January to protest the election's outcome. She later explained to reporters that she was just trying to take action as a way to absorb Donald Trump's Electoral College win of the 2016 presidential election, and Hillary Clinton's loss despite her victory in the popular vote.⁴

Teresa Shook was part of a complex relationship between American women voters, contemporary patriarchy, and the 2016 presidential election's gendered and racial dynamics. In each of the recent twenty-first-century American elections, slim majorities of white women had voted for the Republican presidential candidate. In this sense, 2016 followed an established pattern. Those white women who were most likely to vote for the Democrats' presidential candidate were single and/or college-educated: 51 percent of college-educated white women voted for Clinton. Yet four years earlier, in the 2012 presidential balloting, the Republican candidate, Mitt Romney, running against Barack Obama, won an even higher proportion of these white college-educated women's votes.⁵

According to exit polls conducted on November 11, 2016, 54 percent of all American women voters voted for Clinton. The pro-Clinton electoral majorities were especially high among women of color (94 percent of African American women voters, according to exit polls, chose to vote for Hillary Clinton, and 86 percent of Latina voters). While a slim majority of white women voters cast their ballots for Trump, only 41 percent of all men voted for Clinton. Again, the racial differences were stark, as majorities of men of color voted for Clinton.⁶

That means that, even if patriarchal presumptions, preferences, and prejudices had an influence on the 2016 presidential election, we will not be able to get to the bottom of how patriarchy plays out in a country's crucial electoral outcomes until we explore the inter-workings of gender, race, class, education, and marriage in

the lives of women as voters (and non-voters) and men as voters (and non-voters).

“Women abandon Clinton” was a popular post-election claim. It was erroneous. A higher proportion of women of all major demographic categories voted for the 2016 Democratic nominee than had voted for male Democratic candidates in recently past presidential elections. That is, Donald Trump attracted a smaller proportion of women voters than had 2012 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. This misleading portrayal of 2016’s gendered dynamics, however, perpetuated two ideas that, if internalized by enough people, could serve to sustain contemporary American patriarchy. The first patriarchy-sustaining idea: there is no such thing as “American women,” since American women are not only diverse, but also deeply fractured, even mutually hostile to each other. Patriarchy is always sustained by the “cat fight” cartoon version of women’s relationships to each other. The second, and complementary, patriarchy-sustaining idea: most American women voters don’t like/trust/respect/approve of women as electoral candidates. In other words, the persistent marginalization of women in US political life is just fine with a majority of American women: most women are comfortable with the patriarchal system in which men run the country’s political system.

The evolution of the Women’s Marches of January 21, 2017, together with a fine-tooth-combed feminist investigation of 2016’s actual voting patterns, belie both of these patriarchy-sustaining ideas.

Teresa Shook’s modest Facebook post-election suggestion hit a common nerve. The Washington Women’s March rapidly became a galvanizing event across the country and the world. It quickly outgrew Teresa Shook’s own organizing capacities. The Washington Women’s March’s organizing baton was picked up

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by a quartet of young feminists, the majority of them women of color. By mid-January, that quartet grew to fourteen women. While none of the eventual organizing group had ever before organized such a rapidly evolving, multi-sited, large, and complex event, collectively they did possess what turned out to be the necessary toolkit of skills, perspectives, and experiences to make the Women's March and its multiplying "Sister Marches" a success: feminist intersectional analytical thinking, human rights advocacy experience, anti-racism organizing, fund-raising networks, alliance-building experience, Web design and merchandizing skills, and non-violent direct action training. They combined these with a shared conviction that the broadest mobilization would rise out of scores of grassroots initiatives. They were not obsessed with centralized control.⁷

Precisely because the Women's Marches were such decentralized, grassroots events, until the morning of January 21, the national organizers had little idea of how large the Washington March would become, or how many Sister Marches would be held across the country and around the globe. In Anchorage, Alaska, 3,500 women and men braved the cold to take part in their own local Women's March.⁸ In Albuquerque, New Mexico, there were an estimated 15,000 marchers; in Birmingham, Alabama, 1,000; in Black Mountain, North Carolina, 400; in Charleston, West Virginia, 3,000; in Madison, Wisconsin, 100,000; in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 3,300; and on the Midway Atoll (still an American colony in the Pacific) six people gathered to hold their own Women's March.

That is, Women's Marches were locally organized and boisterously attended not only in places often stereotyped as "Clinton territory." They also were held in regions whose residents have often been sweepingly characterized as stubbornly conservative in their views on the intertwined questions of gender and

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race. The very geography of the January 21 Women's Marches should make us more curious about the dynamic interplay of American racist sexism, on the one hand, and, on the other, regional cultures of voting and political activism. Sustaining American patriarchy turns out to be not a simple matter in regions away from the coasts.

It also was impossible to accurately forecast how many women and men outside the United States would see the rise of Donald Trump and of what might be called "trumpism"—a distinctive cluster of fears and aspirations propelling his political ascendancy—as engaging them in public expressions of resistance. The scores of Sister Marches that that engagement did inspire, from Antarctica to Fiji, took many observers by surprise. When reading the full list of 673 Women's Marches (with an estimated 4.9 million marchers), it helps to have an atlas at one's elbow.⁹ Some marches were large, some tiny. For instance, according to preliminary estimates of the number of marchers.¹⁰

- Accra, Ghana—28
- Auckland, New Zealand—2,000
- Beijing, China—50
- Bristol, UK—1,000
- Calgary, Canada—5,000
- Cape Town, South Africa—700
- Dublin, Ireland—6,000
- Erbil, Iraq—8
- Gdansk, Poland—40
- Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam—24
- Isle of Eigg, UK—30
- London, UK—100,000
- Melbourne, Australia—10,000

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Of course, one wants to know what exactly motivated each woman, each man (the marches drew both, as well as those who defied sexual binaries) to make the effort to come out on that Saturday in January 2017 to be seen and heard. The overarching commitments appeared to be for women's rights, for racial and ethnic inclusivity, and for transparent democratic processes. Yet each person who chose to take part had a personal motivating analysis. Reading the list of Sister Marches also prompts one to explore what feelings and understandings—perhaps quite new—about themselves in this world each marcher carried home with them from each event.

In some places, it required taking a personal risk to participate in such a public political demonstration.

The Sister Marches list goes on:¹¹

- Cairo, Egypt—4
- Manchester, UK—2,000
- Moscow, Russia—7
- Nairobi, Kenya—1,000
- Oaxaca, Mexico—3,000
- Phnom Penh, Cambodia—71
- Paris, France—12,000
- Reykjavik, Iceland—400
- Seoul, South Korea—2,000
- Stockholm, Sweden—4,000
- Tel Aviv, Israel—500
- Tokyo, Japan—648
- Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada—300

The American women organizers published a list of the Washington Women's March principles and commitments—for women's rights, against violence, against racism (institutional,

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political, and individual), for transgender rights, for reproductive rights, for affordable health care, for policies to address the causes and consequences of climate change.¹² One of the chief hallmarks of the marches, nonetheless, was the personal spontaneity and creativity that local participation inspired. The symbol of that was the “pussy hat.” The hat was a hand-knitted (usually by the wearer or someone the wearer personally knew) cap made of pink or magenta yarn. It was square in shape, and, when donned, two of its corners popped up to resemble cat’s ears. The message was feminist. “Pussy” was the crude term that Donald Trump had been caught on tape using in the company of other men while boasting of his sexual access to women, even when women attempted to reject his advances. The pink pussy hats were knitted and worn in irreverent defiance of that misogyny.

What became a global feminist knitting movement began when Krista Suh, a 29-year-old screenwriter in Los Angeles, started wondering how she could stay warm while walking in a march in Washington, DC in January. Then she asked herself: “How can I visually show someone what’s going on?” She posed the question to her local knitters group at LA’s Little Knittery. Together they created a simple knitting pattern in a vibrant color that would send a collective feminist message. To spread the word and keep their project grassroots in practice, they posted their simple pattern on Facebook and on global knitters’ websites. It went viral.¹³

The intersectional analysis underpinning the Women’s Marches suggested how far transnational feminist thinking had developed during the past four decades. Again, that thinking was expressed in spontaneous chanting and an array of home-made poster messages. Among the chants shouted by many marchers joyfully in unison:

“My Body, My Rights! My Body, My Rights!”

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“Black Lives Matter! Black Lives Matter!”

“No Hate. No Fear. Immigrants Are Welcome Here!”

During the massive Washington march, hundreds of thousands of women and men—racially and ethnically diverse, old and young (scores of mothers and daughters), those new to demonstration politics and veterans of Second Wave feminist activism, ambulatory and in wheelchairs—announced themselves as having come to the capital from every state in the union. They walked shoulder to shoulder along Pennsylvania Avenue (where, only twenty-four hours earlier, the smaller, official Inauguration parade had occurred). A call-and-response chant was taken up:

“Tell Me What Democracy Looks Like!”

“This Is What Democracy Looks Like!”

The signs women and men in the numerous marches carried (no poles or sticks allowed) were drawn in myriad colors and scripts. In Boston, one woman held her hand-painted sign over her head: “Indigenous Women Exist-Resist-Rise!” Next to her another woman displayed her own sign: “There WILL Be a Woman President!” At the same time, down in Washington, a pink-hatted woman wore her sign strapped to her back: “If You Are Not Outraged, You Are Not Paying Attention.” A middle-aged woman climbed atop a piece of street-cleaning equipment to display her sign: “Don’t Call Us Radicals. We Are Informed Citizens.” Another Washington marcher held a cardboard sign inspired by Eleanor Roosevelt: “A Woman Is Like a Tea-bag—You Can’t Tell How Strong She Is Until You Put Her in Hot Water.”

Several women in various cities came to their local Women’s March dressed as early 1900s Suffragettes, wearing green, white and purple sashes that read “Votes for Women.”¹⁴

The Canadian writer Margaret Atwood reported receiving multiple messages from marchers accompanied by photos, showing signs that were inspired by her best-selling dystopian novel,

The Handmaid's Tale, which told of a dark future in which a totalitarian state would take control of women's bodies. One marcher's sign declared: "Make Margaret Atwood Fiction Again!"¹⁵

Among the Washington March participants were feminists from other countries reporting back home what they were seeing. For example, Chinese feminist observers were there as journalists and translators to let their activist colleagues in China know what was transpiring. They said that this reporting was especially necessary because Chinese conservatives deliberately mistranslated and misrepresented the Women's March in order to discredit its principles and goals.¹⁶ For instance, one Chinese graduate student was there, she said, to send translations of signs and chants back home to her Chinese feminist colleagues: to feel the energy of the marchers, and also to ensure that sexist Chinese reporters and Tweeters did not succeed in distorting the portrayal of the march.¹⁷

In keeping with the transnational and open spirit of the January events, women's Sister Marches around the world brought marchers' global messages together with local concerns. While many marchers expressed anger and alarm at Donald Trump's election, they also were propelled by the intersection of their own local feminist concerns with those seemingly becoming entrenched in the United States. For instance, Lepa Mladjenović, one of the co-founders of the feminist anti-militarism group Belgrade Women in Black, noted that the January 21st Belgrade Women's March was led by five women who came to the capital from small Serbian towns to hold a broad purple banner that spelled out in bold white letters: "*Ženski Marš Protiv Fašizma*": "Women's March Against Fascism." While "fascism" is a term used only sparingly among American feminist activists, it has deeper and sharper resonance among many European feminists, connoting as it does the distinctive package of authoritarian rule,

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racism, militarism, and contempt for women's physical, intellectual and political autonomy. In the minds of the Belgrade Women's March participants, trumpist ideas were fascist ideas, and those ideas were already, even before Donald Trump's presidency, gaining prominence in Serbia and other regions of the former Yugoslavia.¹⁸

Any movement that sparks widespread participation in diverse societies occurs in the midst not only of global conversations and mobilizations, but also at particular times in the ongoing evolution of local political worries, debates, and actions. In Dublin, the January 2017 Women's March occurred during the throes of a national campaign to repeal the Irish constitution's eighth amendment, the clause prohibiting abortions. Consequently, according to the prominent Irish feminist Ailbhe Smyth, the Dublin Women's March, while consciously part of a "world-wide resistance" and in "solidarity" with American feminists, featured among its diverse posters a long green and blue banner carried by seven women and one man. It read: "Coalition to Repeal the Eighth."¹⁹

In Stockholm, as already listed above, the Women's March drew an estimated 4,000 participants. Among them was Elin Liss, a feminist activist in the Swedish branch of the transnational anti-militarist Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF; ikff, in Swedish).²⁰ Just seven months earlier, Swedish feminists from many local groups had joined together with an array of Swedish human rights organizations to meet in the southern city of Malmö. Their agenda: to discuss the rights and needs of newcomers to Sweden, many of them fleeing war zones in Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, and Afghanistan. Sweden was on a journey to becoming a multi-racial, culturally diverse society. The path was proving rocky. The country also had a minister of foreign affairs, Margot Wallström, who for the first

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time declared (in 2015) that Sweden would pursue a “feminist foreign policy.” Wallström explained that a feminist foreign policy was one which prioritized the fostering of women’s and girls’ rights, which implemented its national commitment to human rights everywhere, and which prioritized diplomacy over military responses.²¹ Swedish feminists such as Liss were heartened, seeing Wallström’s announcement as confirming what so many of them had been working toward for decades, both at home and internationally. By contrast, those Swedes who had stakes in Sweden’s arms export companies, such as Saab, the maker not only of automobiles but also of jet fighter planes, voiced alarm. Sweden is not one of the world’s top ten arms exporters, but arms exports to countries such as Saudi Arabia have played a significant role in Swedish economic growth.²² On January 21, consequently, Stockholm’s marchers voiced their belief in an intersectional form of transnational feminism, one that combined opposition to Trump’s political agenda with support for global abortion rights and climate change prevention, coupled with voicing resistance to Sweden’s rapidly rising anti-immigrant nationalist party, the Sweden Democrats.²³

The January 2017 marches were thus not just the culmination of multiple US electoral campaigns; they came in the middle of other countries’ electoral campaigns. On many marchers’ minds was the rise of local nationalist parties, most of whose leaders wove the fear of foreign men as rapists and the defense of what they imagined to be the traditional patriarchal family into the fabric of their anti-immigrant, anti-refugee campaigns. As French marchers cast a wary eye on the anti-immigrant Front National, whose leader, Marine Le Pen, was one of the two contenders for France’s presidency in the final run-off election in May 2017, next door many German Women’s March participants were thinking ahead to their own country’s upcoming elections in September

2017. Their marches expressed concern about the increasing popularity of their own anti-immigrant, pro-natalist nationalist right-wing party, Alternative for Germany. With the iconic Brandenburg Gate in the background, many Berlin marchers held up signs picturing Hitler next to Donald Trump. Others carried signs portraying a woman wearing a hijab decorated in red, white, and blue, with the caption: “We The People Are Greater Than Fear.” Next to them were other women holding their own hand-made signs aloft: “Our Bodies, Our Minds, Our POWER” and “Make Racists Afraid Again.”

Electoral politics, anti-nationalist and pro-immigrant rights politics, anti-racism, pro-reproductive rights, anti-misogyny, pro-democracy commitments—their intersections in contemporary feminism were made physically visible in the 2017 Women’s Marches. Each, however, was marked by its own particular local resonances. Interestingly, however, militarism was not an explicit concern voiced by most of the Women’s March participants around the world. It could have been that the withdrawal of most of their own countries’ NATO-commanded troops from Iraq and Afghanistan had somewhat dulled protestors’ awareness of militarism in its most immediately bloody forms. By January 2017, few flag-draped soldiers’ coffins were being flown home to Canada, the United States, Denmark, Sweden, or Britain. On the other hand, many women who had been long active in such transnational feminist anti-war groups as WILPF and Women in Black saw the marches as reinforcing their own analyses and activism. Moreover, the plight of women and men who had become refugees as they fled current war zones—in Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Congo—were on the minds of many January marchers. Rather than signs and speeches declaring opposition to war and militarism, many marchers in different countries seemed to challenge what feminists have pointed to as the gendered

seeds of war and militarism: that is, masculinization; nationalism; racism; xenophobia; and misogyny.²⁴

The British Women's March participants were the marchers whose current concerns were most widely compared to those preoccupying American marchers. In June 2016, seven months before the Women's March, Britain had held a national referendum posing a stark question: should Britain remain within the 28-nation European Union or leave it? The so-called "Brexit" campaign featured many of the same contentious social issues that exercised presidential-campaign American voters: immigration, globalization, jobs, and national sovereignty. Ultimately, a majority of British voters, 52 percent, cast their ballots for "Leave."

Some commentators viewed this victory for "Britain First" nationalists as a boost for Donald Trump's own electoral chances. Brexit seemed to make his nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric appear, if not more legitimate, then at least more "normal." After Brexit, it was harder to portray Donald Trump and his ideas as beyond the political pale.

Analyzing Britain's EU referendum balloting, the demographic voting differences that stood out were by age and region: a wide majority of younger voters chose "Remain," while a majority of older voters chose "Leave"; at the same time, majorities of voters in Scotland, Northern Ireland, and metropolitan London cast their ballots to "Remain," while most Britons living in Wales and in other parts of England opted for "Leave." The referendum's gender patterns were quite different. In contrast to recent parliamentary elections, when a higher proportion of British women than men voted Labour, Britain's 2016 Brexit vote seemed to have produced a negligible gender gap.²⁵

This apparent lack of a gender voting gap did not mean, though, that the Brexit campaign had no gendered causes or consequences. For instance, Loughborough University researchers

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tracking whose voices were being heard and whose were not, in the weeks of heated debate leading up to the June vote, found that, of all the television appearances devoted to the EU issue, only 16 percent were by women. Eighty-four percent of television appearances that shaped the public's understanding of the issues at stake were by men.²⁶

During the spring 2016 campaign, British feminists tried to raise a warning flag: leaving the EU would have negative consequences for many British women. At the time of Brexit there still existed a stubborn pay gap between British women and men: on average, over their entire working careers, British men earned 13.9 percent more than did British women. It was forty-six years since the enactment of Britain's historic Equal Pay Act. Nonetheless, owing to a lack of meaningful maternity leave and affordable childcare, together with persistent channeling of women into the lowest-paid caring professions and practices of outright sex discrimination in work, the gender pay gap actually was widening.²⁷ British feminist supporters of a "Remain" vote noted that the British policy-making establishment was still, on the eve of the Brexit vote, largely white and predominantly not just male but masculinist in its collective outlook. This made it unlikely that most members of the national political elite knew first-hand or genuinely cared about diverse women's lived realities. In parliament, only 29.6 percent of members of the House of Commons were women. A mere 3 percent were women of color. It was, these feminists argued, Brussels-issued EU directives that pushed reluctant British elites to strengthen and expand their country's gender equality actions.²⁸ Yet, with the loudest voices heard during the campaign focusing on immigration, these facts did not get much air time.

In the wake of the June 2016 "Leave" victory, and while Britain's way forward was still murky, the Fawcett Society called

on the nation's policy-makers not to "turn back the clock on women's rights."²⁹ In fourteen towns and cities Britons took to the streets on January 21, 2017 to join the Sister Marches: Barnstable, Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, the Isle of Eigg, Lancaster, Leeds, Lerwick, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Shipley, and St. Austell. Many marchers were motivated by a sense that sexism, both institutional and everyday, was alive and well in contemporary Britain.³⁰ Many saw it as fueled by Brexit and the Trump presidency, which together represented an unrealistic and dangerous shrunken form of nationalist identity, a pulling-up of the proverbial drawbridge.

Despite historically widespread expressions of resistance to so many interlocking forms of gendered abuse, exclusion, and inequity, almost none of the marchers named patriarchy as the villain. Yet patriarchy served as both the glue for holding the separate parts of patriarchy together in a coherent whole, and as the fuel to propel it forward, even in times of extraordinary resistance.

Patriarchy. How passé. How "yesterday."

Patriarchy evokes either the hypocritically strait-laced Victorians or, more recently, the adulterous, martini-drinking "Mad Men." It doesn't seem to evoke the lives we live today. Rather, one thinks of patriarchy as a rather heavy-handed term that a generation ago Second Wave feminists painted on their protest signs.

Think again.

Patriarchy is as current as Brexit, Donald Trump, and nationalist political parties. It is as *au courant* as Twitter, hedge funds, and weaponized drones. Patriarchy is not old-fashioned; it is as hip as football millionaires and Silicon Valley start-ups.

The fact that patriarchy is a term so many people shy away from using is one of the things that enables it to survive.

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Patriarchy is everyday sexism, but it is more than everyday sexism. Patriarchy embraces misogyny, but relies on more than misogyny. Patriarchy produces gender inequality, but its consequences run deeper than gender inequality.

Patriarchy is a system—a dynamic web—of particular ideas and relationships. That system of interwoven ideas and relationships is not brittle; it is not static. Patriarchy can be updated and modernized. It is stunningly adaptable. That is the sense in which it is useful, I think, to talk about patriarchy as “sustainable.”

Today, we think of “sustainability” as a positive thing, as a reference point with which to measure whether any practice or policy is worthy of our support. Thus the newest United Nations goals for international development are called the Sustainable Development Goals (“SDGs” to UN insiders). To be positively sustainable, a project should meet more than short-term objectives; it should be designed for the long term. To be sustainable, an undertaking should eschew narrow self-interests, instead providing benefits for the widest possible constituency. To be sustainable, a policy should be earth-centric, not merely human-centric.

- Planting cash crops dependent on soil-degrading chemicals is not sustainable.
- Designing a transport system that continues to rely on fossil-fuel-guzzling automobiles and trucks is not sustainable.
- Crafting a national development plan that raises the Gross National Product while widening the gap between the rich minority and the poor majority is not sustainable.
- Negotiating a formula for ending a war that satisfies only the armed men at the table will not create a sustainable peace.

Sustainability, however, is only as positive as the thing we choose to perpetuate. “Sustainable patriarchy” sounds odd, but it

is not a contradiction in terms. It simply describes how a system of ideas and relationships that so many women have risked their reputations and lives to challenge has, nonetheless, managed to survive.

Describing patriarchy's stubborn survival and its remarkable adaptability is not to drape it in a mantle of unassailability. The concept of "sustainable patriarchy" is not intended to deepen despair or feed resignation. Quite the opposite. Exposing the ways patriarchal systems are being perpetuated today will enable us to more effectively challenge and dismantle them. The ideas and relationships that comprise any patriarchal system are multiple, but knowable. They are not mysterious. They are not abstracted from daily life. Patriarchy is what we live.

Patriarchal ideas include both beliefs (that is, how we explain how the world works) and values (what we deem is worthy, good, attractive, as well as what we find unworthy, bad, distasteful). Both can be appealing—and in fact are appealing, not only to most men, but to a lot of women. That appeal is one of the things that sustains it. When we explore what persuaded so many American women to vote for Trump in the 2016 presidential election—or to support conservative parties in Britain, Poland, Chile, Japan, or Australia—we should think seriously about the appeals and rewards of patriarchy for diverse women.

Patriarchal beliefs include understandings about whether sex is fixed at birth, whether gender is synonymous with sex, whether women and men are "naturally" different, whether maleness is inherently rational, while femaleness is inherently emotional. Patriarchal beliefs also include understandings about whether humans of different races are "naturally" ranked in a hierarchy, whether the core elements of human societies are biological families, and whether the world is a dangerous place that necessitates men acting as the protectors of women. Patriarchal beliefs

include, as well, potent notions of fate and inevitability. A shrug of one's shoulders can express a belief.

In other words, our beliefs are how we go about making sense of our complex surroundings and the wider universe in which we live. For instance, current arguments about transgender people and about climate change have starkly exposed deeply held conflicting beliefs. Likewise, learning only now, fifty years after their achievements, that African American women mathematicians were crucial players in the creation of the US space program can be unnerving to many people.³¹ Perhaps our surprise when we learn this history reveals that, until now, we had believed that Black women did not have the capabilities to master advanced mathematics.

Patriarchal values are supported by patriarchal beliefs, but are intended more explicitly to steer behavior. Thus we tend to make *values* the topics of our debates among friends, families, and political parties, even if it is our differing *beliefs* that ignite the deepest conflicts with each other. Among the patriarchal values that have been most contentious are those assigning more worth to reason than to emotion, those which bestow inherent worth on traditions, and those which prioritize family loyalty over all other sorts of commitment.

To rank governments on the basis of whether they are militarily sophisticated and paternalistically authoritarian towards their citizens also demonstrates our absorption of patriarchal values. Patriarchal values often include admiration for what are imagined to be manly forms of leadership, and, as a patriarchal complement, admiration chiefly for women who devote themselves first and foremost to mothering. Thus, to anyone embracing such patriarchal values, hearing Liberian Leymah Gbowee praised for her successful mobilization of the Liberian women's peace movement, without any reference to her behavior as a wife

or a mother, can feel uncomfortable. Authoritarian values are commonly thought to characterize leaders who themselves aspire to be authoritarian in their own wielding of power. Across many cultures, leaders' authoritarian inclinations are intertwined with their presumed manliness. Contempt for femininity—even while showing off one's "winning way with women"—is often coupled with masculinized authoritarian leadership. This insight is notable in feminist explorations of authoritarianism.

No continent or culture has a monopoly on authoritarian leaders. Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, has often been described as a proto-typical authoritarian ruler. Egypt's former general and current president, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and China's president, Xi Jinping, may sit on top of quite dissimilar state systems, but both exhibit distinctly authoritarian modes of leadership. So too does Russian president Vladimir Putin and his Middle East ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.³² In 2017, Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, held a national referendum which narrowly passed a constitutional amendment that in effect enabled him to wield state power in a more authoritarian manner.

Of course, women who become leaders can absorb and advocate for authoritarian values, though the gendered credentials are distinctive. One thinks of Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi. Both women were admired for their allegedly masculinized skills. "The only man in the room," according to each of their male admirers.

Many American Women's March participants voiced alarm at Donald Trump's apparent efforts to transform the US presidency into an authoritarian post. They saw evidence of his valuing a sort of leadership that was dismissive of the presidency's relationships with co-equal legislative and court branches. He appeared to value a sort of masculinized authority that would not be

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constrained by the deliberately complex system of American constitutionalism. To accept such structural constraints, in his mind, it seemed, bordered on becoming feminized.

It is a mistake, however, to think of authoritarian values as adhering just to a certain kind of leader. Authoritarian values are embraced by those men and women far from the centers of power who, nonetheless, admire the type of manly leader who presents himself as “strong.” That is, among its followers, authoritarianism can take the form of submissiveness. The iconic version of masculinized submission to an authoritarian leader is the “loyal lieutenant.” But there are other masculinized versions as well: the fawning courtier, the self-interested crony, the aspiring wannabe, the proverbial “foot soldier.” To be an authoritarian voter is to be someone—of any gender—who yearns for a manly man (or a suitably masculinized woman) to take firm hold on the reins of power and sweep away all the frustrating complexities of constitutional checks and balances. Such a voter hopes that this leader will eschew the time-consuming give-and-take of democratic debate and compromise. To absorb authoritarian values in one’s role as citizen fosters admiration for a leader who dismisses the constraints of law and the messiness that is the characteristic of a genuinely open public arena. Vladimir Putin, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Donald Trump have each had their fervent admirers, even when those admirers do not garner direct benefits from that leader’s rule. Though they might imagine themselves to be defiantly individualistic, these admirers are authoritarian in both the values they espouse and the relationships in which they take comfort.

Values and beliefs often capture our attention more readily than *patriarchal relationships*. Patriarchal relationships have to be minutely observed over time. That calls for stamina, patience, and attentiveness. Patriarchal relationships are hard to reveal in a

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snapshot and only occasionally appear on a formal organizational chart—X reports to Y, while Z has the power to promote or fire Y. Most lived relationships are nuanced. They are made visible not just through speeches, memos, minutes, punches, gunshots, or exchanges of cash—though tracking each of these can be revealing. Relationships are charted by taking careful note of small gestures, unrecorded silences, and little-noticed absences. The artful rendition of relationships has drawn thousands of readers to the novels of Jane Austen and Elena Ferrante. That is why we binge-watch *House of Cards* and *The Crown*.

To say that patriarchy has proved remarkably adaptable is not to argue that there have been no significant successes in challenging it. Patriarchy would not *need* to constantly adapt if those anti-patriarchal successes had not been achieved. The forcing of men by women to accept their casting ballots on equal terms with men, in countries as different as Sweden, South Africa, and Brazil, has compelled patriarchal men and women to find new ways to ensure the privileging of masculinity in governance. Similarly, women in countries as disparate as Samoa, Turkey, and Britain who have managed to drag the practice of wife-beating out of the domestic shadows, and compel reluctant governments to treat it as a crime, have motivated patriarchy's adherents to craft new strategies for intimidating women.

It has been this combination of feminist achievement and patriarchy's adaptability that has required women's movements across the world to keep reinventing themselves. To grapple with an adaptable patriarchy takes time, energy, and ever more diverse alliances. Patriarchy's beneficiaries count on us getting tired.

Patriarchal systems—those dynamic webs of beliefs, values, and relationships—have to be able to adapt in ways that make them look new, reformed, “up-to-date,” occasionally even revolutionary. Their advocates have to perform these repeated facelifts

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while sustaining patriarchy's essential core: the privileging of particular forms of masculinity over despised masculinities and over all forms of femininity. A few select women can be let into the boardroom—or onto the television sportscast or into the law school—but on (usually unwritten and denied) conditions: that those few women do not insist that many more women of diverse races join them; that those allowed inside internalize masculinized ways of thinking (about profits, war, sexuality, inequality); or, by contrast, that those few selected women act out a form of patriarchal femininity that complements but does not supplant masculinized privilege.

There is an alternative process for perpetuating patriarchal beliefs, values, and relationships, which is to turn what used to be a site of masculinized privilege into a site of feminized marginalization. The classic example is bank clerking. In Dickens's time, to be a bank clerk was to be a respectable manly man with a foot on the lower rung of the patriarchal ladder; by the early twenty-first century, bank clerking has become feminized and the ladder leads nowhere.³³ Similarly, the anchoring of television news programs used to be an exclusively male job. It, too, has been feminized in many countries in ways that have sucked much of the authority out of the position. Likewise, military male commanders deciding that certain once-masculinized roles could be feminized, without risking the reputation of the military as a site for men to prove their manliness, is as old as uniformed female soldiers serving as secretaries for male officers. Recently, for example, the US military has taken steps to replace male soldiers with female soldiers at war zone checkpoints.

Women are under-represented in all but two of the world's national legislatures, those of Bolivia and Rwanda.³⁴ They are making gains, however, at the same time as many governments, in the name of "anti-terrorism," are investing more power in their

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security officials. It may not be fantastical, then, to wonder if one day elected legislators will become so powerless that patriarchs will encourage the feminization of legislatures, while real power will be wielded by men (and a few select women) occupying masculinized posts atop the treasury, the military, and the security and intelligence agencies.

Updating patriarchy requires more than perpetuating domination, intimidation, and submission. It also requires reproducing certain relationships that on the surface look benign: gratitude, attachment, dependence, competition, suspicion, trust, loyalty, and even compassion. That can make it easy to slip into patriarchal complicity without intending to or even realizing the implications of one's feelings and actions. Marching in creative, energizing, inclusive protests matters. The experience can remind participants who are trying to resist patriarchy in all its guises that they are not alone. If such public demonstrations against patriarchy stem from authentically grassroots initiatives, they can also simultaneously remind participants of the full array of issues, fears, identities, and aspirations that have to be acknowledged in order to effectively stymie the updating of patriarchy. Everyone has to join in everyone else's chants.

At the same time, however, feminist investigations of contemporary patriarchy reveal that it will take more than public demonstrations to stop patriarchy in its tracks. It will take humble, clear-eyed reflections on one's own possible complicities in its perpetuation.