

Julia Gillard's speech, 2012 – first part - an impassioned speech against a motion by Tony Abbott. “Thank you very much Deputy Speaker and I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. And in so doing I say to the Leader of the Opposition I will not be lectured about sexism and misogyny by this man. I will not. And the Government will not be lectured about sexism and misogyny by this man. Not now, not ever. The Leader of the Opposition says that people who hold sexist views and who are misogynists are not appropriate for high office. Well I hope the Leader of the Opposition has got a piece of paper and he is writing out his resignation. Because if he wants to know what misogyny looks like in modern Australia, he doesn't need a motion in the House of Representatives, he needs a mirror. That's what he needs.

Let's go through the Opposition Leader's repulsive double standards, repulsive double standards when it comes to misogyny and sexism. We are now supposed to take seriously that the Leader of the Opposition is offended by Mr Slipper's text messages, when this is the Leader of the Opposition who has said, and this was when he was a minister under the last government – not when he was a student, not when he was in high school – when he was a minister under the last government. He has said, and I quote, in a discussion about women being under-represented in institutions of power in Australia, the interviewer was a man called Stavros. The Leader of the Opposition says “If it's true, Stavros, that men have more power generally speaking than women, is that a bad thing?” And then a discussion ensues, and another person says “I want my daughter to have as much opportunity as my son.” To which the Leader of the Opposition says “Yeah, I completely agree, but what if men are by physiology or temperament, more adapted to exercise authority or to issue command?” Then ensues another discussion about women's role in modern society, and the other person participating in the discussion says “I think it's very hard to deny that there is an underrepresentation of women,” to which the Leader of the Opposition says, “But now, there's an assumption that this is a bad thing.”

This is the man from whom we're supposed to take lectures about sexism. And then of course it goes on. I was very offended personally when the Leader of the Opposition, as Minister of Health, said, and I quote, "Abortion is the easy way out." I was very personally offended by those comments. You said that in March 2004, I suggest you check the records. I was also very offended on behalf of the women of Australia when in the course of this carbon pricing campaign, the Leader of the Opposition said "What the housewives of Australia need to understand as they do the ironing..." Thank you for that painting of women's roles in modern Australia. And then of course, I was offended too by the sexism, by the misogyny of the Leader of the Opposition catcalling across this table at me as I sit here as Prime Minister, "If the Prime Minister wants to, politically speaking, make an honest woman of herself...", something that would never have been said to any man sitting in this chair. I was offended when the Leader of the Opposition went outside in the front of Parliament and stood next to a sign that said "Ditch the witch." I was offended when the Leader of the Opposition stood next to a sign that described me as a man's bitch. I was offended by those things. Misogyny, sexism, every day from this Leader of the Opposition. Every day in every way, across the time the Leader of the Opposition has sat in that chair and I've sat in this chair.

The Leader of the Opposition wants to be taken seriously, apparently he's woken up after this track record and all of these statements, and he's woken up and he's gone "Oh dear, there's this thing called sexism, oh my lords, there's this thing called misogyny. Now who's one of them? Oh, the Speaker must be because that suits my political purpose." Doesn't turn a hair about any of his past statements, doesn't walk into this Parliament and apologise to the women of Australia or to me for the things that have come out of his mouth. But now seeks to use this as a battering ram against someone else. This motion should be rejected and the Leader of the Opposition should think seriously about the role of women in public life."