



HISTORY DETECTIVE PODCAST



Ladies in the House: Case 3: Janine Haines

Intro

Hi, this is Kelly Chase and you are listening to a Museum of Australian **Democracy** and History Detective Collaboration: Ladies in the House. In this 3-part series we are going to celebrate the lives of three incredible women who worked in Old Parliament House- the building that now houses the Museum of Australian Democracy- and we will explore how these significant women contributed to Australian democracy.

In this episode I would like to introduce you to Janine Haines who was the first woman ever to be elected the leader of an Australian political party.

Janine Haines grew up in South Australia, and after studying mathematics at university she became a teacher and taught in Adelaide for around 10 years. In the mid 1970s she decided to get into politics because she believed that the mostly male politicians of the day did not represent the true needs of the community. In her words, “it seemed to me that Australia was being governed by middle-aged, middle-class men... These men were probably well-intentioned, but they were removed from the real world—the world of **mortgages**, education costs and child rearing.”

She was only 32 when she first became a Senator, and it was difficult for her to be taken seriously as a young, female politician. At her first press conference in 1977, only 6 journalists turned up with the “general opinion being that she was a pretty young thing whose presence... would at least provide a bit of decoration.” It was not easy being a woman in a man’s world. She was quickly fed up with being treated “as a decorative addition to ...Parliament.” She believed that there was a **double standard**, and that no-one would ever tell a male Member of Parliament that he was just a decoration. However, within 10 years she had become the leader of the Australian Democrat Party. This was the first time in Australian history that a woman had led a political party.

Janine was a woman ahead of her times, when the other political parties were concerned with economic policies, she was bringing up issues about environmental **sustainability**. In a 1990 speech she made to the Press Club she criticised the government for having a, “Disastrously short term attitude, we have a dig it up, chop it down, shoot it and sell it mentality in this country that says we use our raw resources as fast as we can.” She believed that that politicians needed to think beyond the short election cycles and have long term **sustainable** solutions. In her words, “Unless we protect our environment, we are in deadly danger of leaving no future for our children.”

But it was not just the environment that she **advocated** for, she also fought for the rights of the people; Indigenous Australians, women, low income earners, and children. In 1983 she was astounded when the Commonwealth Public Service Board put nurses in the same pay classification as cleaners and parking inspectors. She argued that registered nurses were trained with university level degrees and were highly skilled professionals and deserved a pay rate that reflected this.

Her concerns about the community health sector continued as she headed a committee to improve the standard of care that was given to the elderly in nursing homes. On the other end of the spectrum she also pushed for affordable childcare for working mothers.

Janine also wanted to improve the education system and she was a huge **advocate** for girls studying maths and science. Additionally, she was concerned because Australia had a compulsory voting system, but schools did not teach about how the government worked. She strongly believed that children should learn about democracy so that when they became old enough to vote they could make informed decisions.

Janine Haines was a strong willed, quick witted and incredibly well-read politician who challenged the policies of the other Senators and always looked out for the best interests of both the people and the environment.

In 2001, 3 years before her death, she was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia, which is an award recognising outstanding service to the country. Upon her death, her former colleague in the Democratic party said about her, “she was a very determined lady, [with] a tremendous sense of humour... I think the major legacy that Janine leaves behind is as a role model for women.”

Call to action 🎵

Janine was an avid supporter of sustainability and environmental issues. What are some of the current environmental issues we face? And what are some things you can do to help make a more sustainable world for the future?

This is Kelly Chase on the Case

LESSON PLAN (Year 9-10 level)

Learning Intention: Understand the challenges face by pioneering female politicians.

Success Criteria: Reflect on the current issues of sustainability and create an action plan for your school.

Before Listening

Activity One

Pre-Listening
Vocabulary.

Write up or project the following words on the board.

- **democracy**
- **mortgages**
- **double standard**
- **sustainable**
- **advocate**

In groups ask the students if they can put the words into one of the 4 categories.

- Don't know it at all
- Have seen or heard, but don't know the meaning
- I think I know the meaning
- I know the meaning and can explain it

If any of the students are in the 3rd or 4th category, see if they can explain it to the people in your group or to the class.

Share the following definitions for the vocabulary.

Definitions:

- **Democracy** is a system of government in which people choose their rulers by voting for them in elections.
- A **mortgage** is a loan of money which you get from a bank in order to buy a house.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you accuse a person or institution of having a double standard in their treatment of different groups of people, you mean that they unfairly allow more freedom of behaviour to one group than to another. You use sustainable to describe the use of natural resources when this use is kept at a steady level that is not likely to damage the environment. An advocate for a particular group is a person who works for the interests of that group.
Activity 2: Before listening discussion questions.	<p>Currently in the Senate women make up around 50% of the politicians, however in the House of Representatives it is only around 30%.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of laws do the politicians in parliament make? Why do you think it is important to have equal gender representation in parliament? Have you ever been in a situation where you are the odd one out? How did this make you feel? Did you want to disappear so nobody would notice you, or did you want to step forward and make people pay attention?
After listening	
Activity 3: After listening reflection questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are some of the issues that Janine Haines advocated for? What do you think that Janine Haines meant when she said that the politician had a double standard for women in parliament?
Activity 4:	<p>Step 1: Brainstorm some of the current environmental issues that the world is facing. Choose one issue that you are most interested in.</p> <p>Step 2: Research some of the sustainable solutions that are being implemented in different countries and by different companies to help combat this issue.</p> <p>Step 3: Choose 2-3 of these solutions and create an infographic using Canva or Piktochart (or a poster) that brings awareness to the problem and highlights the current solutions that are in place.</p> <p>Reflect: We often don't have the resources that governments and companies have to make big changes, but can you think of any small changes that you can make in your life. Can you take small steps to help make a big difference?</p>

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