

Up for Debate panel on women's issues ^[1]

Author: Various

Source: Various

Format: Video

Publication Date: 21 Sep 2015

AVAILABILITY

Watch video of the full event ^[2] (1:26), courtesy of Ustream and the Toronto Star

Party leaders on violence against women ^[3] (6:17)

Look for 'Party leaders describe how to combat violence against women'

Clip from Convo with Francine Pelletier ^[4] (0:43)

Clip from Issue Panel discussion on sexual harassment ^[5] (2:41)

Clip from Issue Panel – the new feminism ^[6] (0:56)

Up for Debate panel on gender justice and equality ^[7]

Toronto Star, 21 Sept 2015

EXCERPTS:

Politicians who ignore women's voices do so at their own peril, said organizers of Up for Debate.

The event is the first time in 30 years that Canada's party leaders will discuss women's issues in an election.

"We've had a debate on the economy that failed to mention that women ... Work for different hours and different rates of pay," said organizer Kate McInturff, of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Yet in light of the allegations against Jian Ghomeshi, and the issue of sexual harassment within Parliament itself, violence against women, especially sexual violence, is front and centre in the public eye.

"We're in a unique window of opportunity...We're no longer focusing on why was that victim there, what was she wearing," said Bonnie Brayton, one of the event's organizers.

More than 500,000 women voted in the last election, and violence against women and gender inequality remain touchy subjects for Canadian political parties.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair, Green Leader Elizabeth May and Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe will each have a chance to tell the country how their parties will support women's rights, laying out their positions in pre-recorded interviews that will become fodder for the debate.

Conservative party Leader Stephen Harper declined to participate.

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"This debate — and these questions — matter not only to women but to all Canadians. The Star is pleased to be working with our partners to advance and promote the discussion," said Jane Davenport, managing editor at the Toronto Star.

Hosted by comedian and writer Jess Beaulieu, a panel of experts in the fields of media and social justice will debate the platforms of the four party leaders. The leaders discussed their positions in exclusive interviews with esteemed journalist and documentary filmmaker Francine Pelletier — covering violence against women, gender-based economic inequality and women's leadership.

"Women make up half of the population but they remain under-represented in Parliament and in decision-making roles in business," said the Star's social justice reporter Laurie Monsebraaten, who will be participating in the panel. "Despite the fact that more women than men are now graduating from university and college and more of them are moving into senior management positions at work, they still earn 33 per cent less than men. As a result, they are more likely to be poor in old age."

Region: Canada ^[8]

Tags: election ^[9]

women ^[10]

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