Anne Summers is a journalist, author, editor and publisher who has long been involved in the Australian women’s movement. She has advised politicians and writes extensively about the role of women in political and economic life. *The Misogyny Factor* is based on two speeches that Summers delivered in 2012: the Fraser Oration in Canberra, and the University of Newcastle Human Rights and Social Justice Lecture. This text summarises her feminist endeavours over the past three decades but is also firmly planted in the here-and-now of Australian politics, economics and public life.

In many ways *The Misogyny Factor* can be read as a companion text to two other recent Australian publications - *Destroying the joint: why women have to change the world* (Caro, 2013) and Edition 40 of the *Griffith Review* on Women and Power. All three describe how women are faring in the current Australian landscape, however *The Misogyny Factor* is authored solely by Summers, whereas the other texts are compilations by numerous authors.

Despite the provocative title, this book is not a rant about men’s hatred of women. Summers hopes that men will read the book and states that “men, more than women, are the gatekeepers and we won’t change the world without you. Indeed, we’d like your help” (p. 9). She defines the misogyny factor as an obstacle or “a set of attitudes and entrenched practices that are embedded in most of our major institutions…that stand in the way of women being included, treated equally and accorded respect” (p. 7). She also states that there are three indicators of success that women have yet to achieve: “inclusion, equality and respect. Until women are included in all areas of our society, until we are treated equally and with respect once we are there, we will not have succeeded in what I call the equality project” (p. 7).

*The Misogyny Factor* is chocked full of statistics about gender inequality. The weight of data is counterbalanced by personal anecdotes and commentary which make the text very readable. The chapter titled *The Prime Minister’s Rights at Work* is articulate, enlightening and shocking. Summers sequentially lays out the case about the ongoing abuse, disrespect and filth that the Julia Gillard faced daily in her role as former Prime Minister. Summers unpacks the ‘misogyny speech’ in great detail, highlighting events preceding Gillard’s speech and explaining the overwhelming public response. It is a helpful account of this momentous speech which was captured by media all over the world.

Anne Summers also looks back briefly at the gains that women in Australia have made and lost. She asks “Why have we Australians denied ourselves the benefits of equality?” (p. 15). There are some compelling arguments and warnings in response to this question. The most basic answer is that “we failed to take into account that it was not just a matter of legislating to prevent discrimination against women….we failed to fully understand the misogyny factor” (pp. 16 & 17). At just 160 pages, it is well worth reading this book to understand the full gamut of Summers’ informed answers, suggestions and solutions.

For educators at girls’ schools *The Misogyny Factor* is a timely tool for understanding how women need to continue to fight back against the sexism and misogyny that denies them inclusion, equality and respect. This text would probably be too ambitious for secondary
school students to read on their own but the topics that it raises are absolutely worth pursuing and discussing with the girls in our schools. It is a fresh and bold text which can be read in a matter of hours and which is too important to ignore.