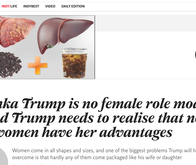

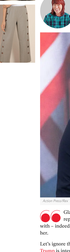

Voices

Ivanka Trump is no female role model – and Trump needs to realise that not all women have her advantages

Women come in all shapes and sizes, and one of the biggest problems Trump will have to overcome is that hardly any of them come packaged like his wife or daughter

Janet Street-Porter
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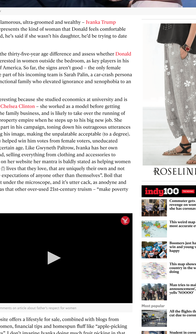

Ivanka Trump

Glamorous, ultra-groomed and wealthy – Ivanka Trump represents the kind of woman that Donald feels comfortable with – indeed, he's said if she wasn't his daughter, he'd be trying to date her.

Let's ignore the thirty-five-year age difference and assess whether Donald Trump is interested in women outside the bedroom, as key players in his new vision of America. So far, the signs aren't good – the only female mooted to be part of his incoming team is Sarah Palin, a car-crash persona with a dysfunctional family who elevated ignorance and xenophobia to an art form.

Ivanka is interesting because she studied economics at university and is friends with Chelsea Clinton – she worked as a model before getting drawn into the family business, and is likely to take over the running of her father's property empire when he steps up to his big new job. She played a key part in his campaign, toning down his outrageous utterances and softening his image, making the unpalatable acceptable in a degree. She certainly helped win him votes from female voters, uneducated women of a certain age. Like Gwyneth Paltrow, Ivanka has her own lifestyle brand, selling everything from clothing and accessories to homeware – on her website her mantra is boldly stated as helping women "to architect [] lives that they love, that are uniquely their own and not based on the expectations of anyone other than themselves". Bid that down, stick it under the microscope, and it's utter cack, as anodyne and self-evident as that other over-used 21st-century truism – "make poverty history".

Ivanka Trump comments on article about father's respect for women

Ivanka's website offers a lifestyle for sale, combined with blogs from successful women, financial tips and homepage fluff like "apple-picking picnic recipes"! I don't imagine Ivanka doing much fruit picking in that outfit she wores on stage when dad appeared to celebrate his victory. Her dress – what a chance to sell her own brand – was ultra-short, more suitable for a teenager than a mother of three. here, she looked great, and can wear what she likes, but the message the Trump women uniformly send out is that glamour rules the day, and that the women the Patriarch feels comfortable with need to once sex appeal in the most old-fashioned way.

Trump once said that putting a wife to work "is a very dangerous thing,... unfortunately, after they've a star, the fun is over for me". Ivanka is clever and successful, but she offers no hope for nine out of ten women who haven't been born into a wealthy family, been blessed with good looks and a skinny body. Easy to tell women they need to "architect" their own lives, if you're married to a man from a wealthy background and you are sitting on a fortune.

Women come in all shapes and sizes, and one of the biggest problems Trump will have to overcome is that hardly any of them come packaged like his wife or daughter. The danger signs are already apparent – listening to Nigel Farage on the radio last week, I felt a sense of revulsion as he joked about making sure Donald "didn't try and grope" the Prime Minister when he came to "schmooze" Theresa May for a trade deal, adding: "Don't touch her for goodness' sake."

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Trump has admitted he groped women in the past (and dozens have come forward to confirm that) but says that remarks like "grab them by the pussy" don't reflect his true character. I don't believe he's undergone a mental transformation – how many sexist old men do?

As Farage feels comfortable making a tasteless joke about sexually harassing a female politician, we can assume that equality has taken a giant step backwards. In Trump's brave new America, only certain sorts of women need apply to be on the team. Women that reinforce his brand of "d*ck-on-table" politics.

I've got over the result, I'm not one of the mopers on Twitter who think the world will come to an end. It's time to toughen up and move on. I'm not one of the people who thought that Hillary represented a great role model for women either – who could, after all she tolerated from that cheating husband? And her daughter, like Ivanka, is another product of a powerful dynasty, using her blood line to secure influence. I'm rooting for women who have come up from nothing, who have "architected" their own lives and not used their dad's cash or connections. I don't see many signs of those women around Trump.

Theresa May and Angela Merkel are not politicians who I endorse, but what's undeniable is that they fought their own way to the top and that their sexuality is irrelevant. The huge gap in US politics is not just the disaffected working class, but the normal women.

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