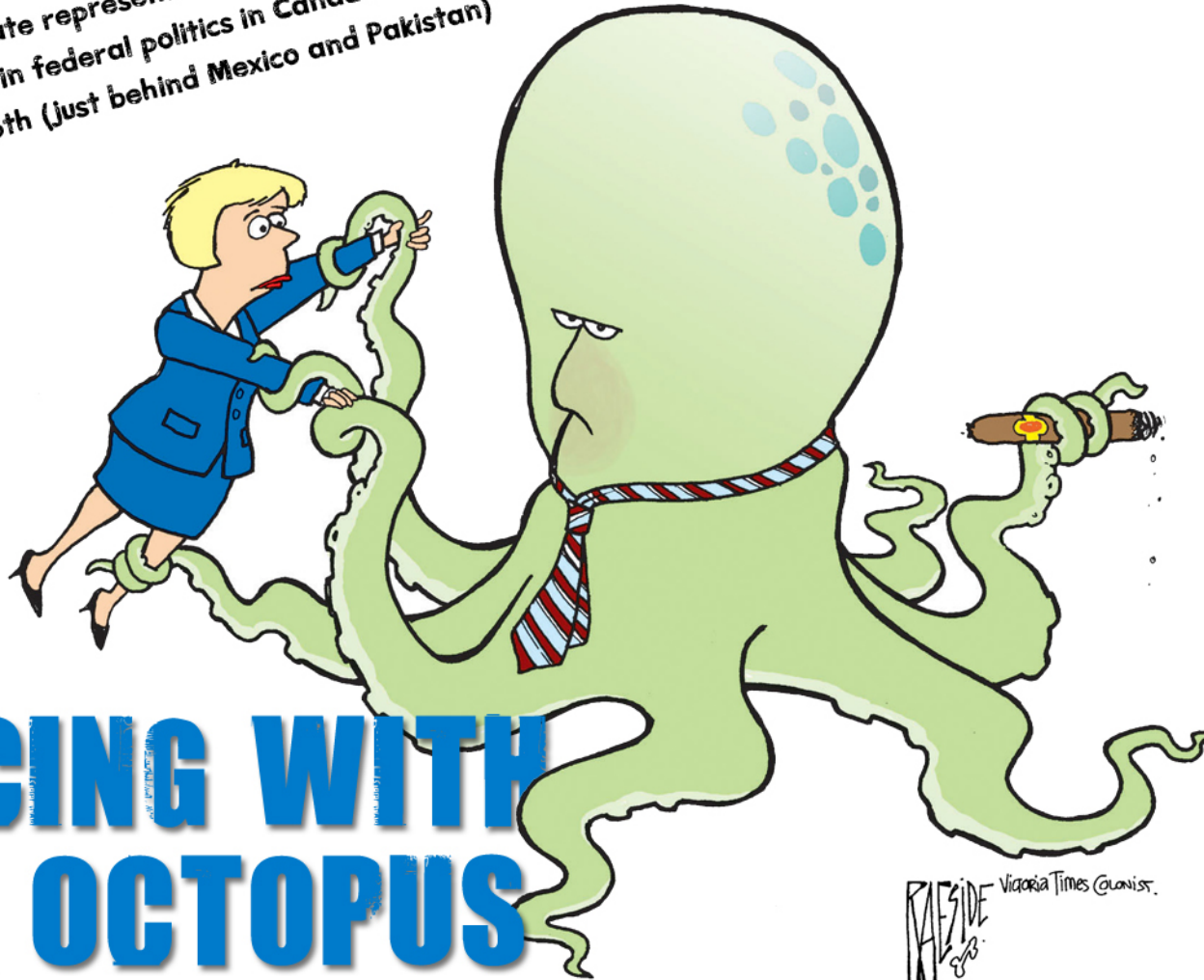


Proportion of women in the human race = 50%
Critical mass for adequate representation set by UN = 33%
Proportion of women in federal politics in Canada = 21%
Canada's ranking = 46th (just behind Mexico and Pakistan)



Dancing With The Octopus is an entertaining, passionate, feature-length documentary that takes a nonpartisan look at the systemic exclusion of women in politics in Canada and abroad. It asks, What needs to change, and how do we change it? And who'd want to do this?

We meet four spirited women brave enough to dance with the octopus – to enter an embrace with the writhing, groping, crushing beast that is the male-dominated political system. They're determined to make a difference, whatever the cost.

Executive Producer: Hilary Pryor
Producers: Sandy Mayzell, Erin Skillen,
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We follow four women as they wage political campaigns, see the lives they're leaving behind, and learn about the issues that so infuriated them that they had to put up or shut up. "Like being hit in the face with a pail of ice cubes" – that's how one veteran describes a woman's entry into public life. Are these four ready?

At the Women's Campaign School in BC they get a taste of the joys and terrors of the political game. They're tutored by the best – entertainers, politicians, trainers. Do they keep their sense of humour in *Deflection 101*, or in *Debating with Liars*? Can they take being skewered by political cartoonist Adrian Raeside, whose satirical cartoons provide the ongoing visual motif for the film?

The four perform a mock campaign, shadow a politician mentor on the job, and are whisked abroad to countries like Jordan and Iceland to compare issues of gender representation. Do the women secure their nominations? Do they stick with it when the money runs out, when that nude bungee-jumping photo shows up on the front page? Do they make an actual difference on the issues that drive them?

The stakes are high for all of us. Our world is in crisis, and the issues for which women tend to fight – peace, social justice, health, the environment – are at the boil. So why aren't more women in power? What's keeping them out?

Dancing With The Octopus kicks up its heels, gets up close and personal with women putting their lives on the line to make a change. It shows us a lopsided world awkwardly shuffling its way to a better balance.

DANCING WITH THE OCTOPUS

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