

Our Collective Vision (verbatim responses)

If you imagine that it is 2044 and you think about women in pipe bands/piping/drumming: what does that ideal future look like, in particular at the highest level? What makes you hopeful? What do you wish for?

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In an ideal future, women will be able to go to the pub and feel safe to be themselves, to dress how they want to dress, and to not feel like they have to be "one of the guys" to fit in. They will be able to go out and drink and feel safe and not have to worry about creepy groping or sexual advances or assault and rape like I have always had to worry about and have actually experienced. Also in the future I hope that pipe band "status" and the power of "social celebrity" will no longer be a justification for unjustifiable actions. Women will be free to make whatever decisions they want about their relationships (romantic, sexual, friendships, whatever) without fear of it inhibiting their ability to participate in this activity we love, just like the men can.

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One component that is really complicated for me is that because I love pipe bands and pipe band music, and my friends and family are heavily involved, so it is a community in which I would hope to find in a partner. However, times when I have chosen to be intimate with people in the community, gossip can spread like wildfire, and experiences I thought would be private are open to the world and I fear that this broadcasts me in a negative light. I worry about how this might impact how leaders in the pipe band world will view me, and how this could impact my opportunities in the future (when I don't believe the sexual escapades of men in my situation would ever be a consideration if, for example, they were hoping to play in a certain pipe band.) Conversely, there have been times in which I've declined the advances of pipe band men to then only be called other cruel names. Why is it that if I sleep with a man in pipe bands I am considered negatively, whereas the man is getting high fives?

It is upsetting how many times I experienced harassment and assault not only as an adult but also growing up in this world and having no idea that these situations were problematic or not simply my fault until my involvement in social movements and the feminist community have retrospectively made this so clear. I am often full of doubt and shame because of the messages these experiences have taught me about my worth and my potential. I constantly am deciding when to speak out and stand up at band practices, on social media, and in the community, versus when it is in best interest to remain silent and not cause "trouble." And of course, these problems go beyond sexism to include discrimination in so many forms: racism and homophobia are rampant and exclusionary in this community as well. It can be so exhausting.

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I hope that one day if I'm standing in the circle and there is bad blowing, I don't have to worry that everyone will assume it is me because I am a girl.

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I think one of the reasons we don't see many female pipers in the top-grade bands is because of a vicious cycle: probably the hardest thing about playing pipes at the top is blowing tone – and this is really a mental game more than anything. All pipers know that as soon as you start to doubt your own blowing it will become bad (it's a self-fulfilling prophecy). It is also true that people think women can't blow tone/play hard instruments etc. A good male piper in a top band blew my band chanter this summer and said "wow that is actually pretty big for a girl". People inherently doubt your ability because of their implicit bias against women. So, as a female you are already starting in a deficient because if everyone is doubting you, it is really hard not to doubt yourself. Essentially this means in order to make it at the top you have to believe in yourself so much that everyone else's disbelief doesn't creep in and start causing disbelief in your own ability. Maybe it is the fact that people THINK women can't blow tone that actually causes the bad tone in the first place? Because as soon as you start to wonder if it is you that is blowing badly – it will be you. Imagine if a woman joined a top band and everyone just believed they could do it from the get-go rather than having to prove yourself? When a young male joins the band everyone thinks they can do it until they prove they can't but it seems to be in the inverse for women. It was only after my second year in the band that it felt like the guys in the pipe corps actually believed in me and knew I was good. And even still, it feels like they think I'm the exception. And I'm not. There should be more of us. But we need to create a safer environment first. That is what I hope for.

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I hope that in 2044 women won't have to worry about being kicked out of pipe bands because they are women.

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I have encounter countless unacceptable situations throughout my time that cover a range from very small yet persistent microaggressions to physical aggression and sexual assault. It is strange to be so immersed in this pipe band world where it is so problematic in many ways and so rewarding in others. Maybe in the future we will be able to choose to play in pipe bands without feeling like in doing so we are lowering our tolerance or compromising our standards for how we want to be treated and respected.

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In 2044, I hope for greater female representation at higher levels with schools / juvenile bands etc encouraging more females into their music programmes to feed the top grades. At the moment I think there is still a long way to go with regards to the treatment of woman in bands, to have their voices heard at the top levels and throughout all corps. I hope for greater representation in a safe music industry where everyone can just enjoy the music and the great experience of playing in a pipe band and the opportunities that come along with it.

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In 2044, the ideal future for women in pipe bands would be a level playing field where gender is no longer a barrier to success. I envision a world where women are equally represented at the highest level of competing in top competitions to holding leadership positions within bands. What makes me hopeful is the increasing recognition and support for female pipers and drummers in recent years. I wish for a

future where women are no longer underestimated or marginalized in the piping and drumming community, but instead celebrated for their skill, passion, and dedication. Overall, I hope for a future where women in pipe bands are given equal opportunities and respect, leading to a more inclusive and diverse community that thrives on the talent and contributions of all its members, regardless of gender.

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In the ideal future, we won't hear 'She's the best woman piper I've ever heard' or 'She's really good for a girl'. That specification won't exist. Music is music. We're currently seeing an amazing representation of women excelling in top bands - supporting and celebrating each other - which is laying out a blueprint for the future of women and girls in pipe bands.

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I would say spontaneously that I envision as many women pipers as men at the highest level, and that there is a whole system designed specifically to achieve that. The ideal future has women pipe majors and judges, composers, etc. And that the system considers and relies on the brain power and qualities of women leaders. That the system is characterised by justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

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Women pipers in top grade bands aren't considered a novelty and when in drinking environments they feel safe to dress feminine without the fear of toxic masculinity.

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I can only think of one word to sum up the ideal future of piping and drumming - equal. Equality is what we should be striving for in all aspects of modern life and pipe bands are no different. I think there is a misconception that the women of pipe bands are the tenor drummers. We have seen women of the bass sections take the highest rewards for their incredible performances across the years (and rightly so!) but this isn't translated equally into the other sections of bands. The future of pipe bands will surely see an equal spread of women across the piping, snare and bass sections. I am hopeful that we will see more women rising through the ranks of pipe band competition scene, to produce bands in which see women equally to our male counterparts - appreciated for our work, celebrated for our contributions, filling roles in tuition to pave the way for future females in all sections of pipe bands, and overall providing hope and equality across the wider pipe band community.

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My initial thought was sort of Justin Trudeau-esque in his gender parity cabinet...wouldn't gender parity be nice? Obviously more women in leadership roles would be ideal and would then that would hopefully increase the amount of girls getting into pipes and drums at a younger age. This may sound a bit nutty, but if there's requirements for x amount of pipers and x amount of drummers, wouldn't it be interesting to have x amount of females? I can see how this could go horribly wrong and men would resent the mandated representation, but if it doesn't happen on its own, could making it part of the rules and regulations aid in this? I really think the key to this is get them why they're young, so if they see themselves represented

at the highest levels, girls will have role models to strive towards. So more female instruction in junior bands, school bands, etc perhaps?

I wonder if the unequal distribution of females in bands is due to them starting and leaving because of abusive or power situations? Like, how many women could've played at the highest level but couldn't deal with the misogyny? So many questions.

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- women of all ages, backgrounds, life phases, etc see themselves represented in their local piping community and have access to a female role model/mentor
 - Highland wear/pipe band uniforms develop a women's line to more inclusively fit the shapes of female bodies
 - Women can have full trust in the equity and fairness of all judging decisions / it's no longer a topic of discussion/question as to whether some judge perspectives are biased (consciously or unconsciously) against women
 - It becomes unheard of to be the the only female piper in a pipe band/contest/etc and more the norm to have 40%+ female pipers in all situations
 - The culture of piping organizations foster feelings of safety, belonging, and uncapped potential for the women who belong to them
 - The washrooms at Maxville (North American championships) update their bathroom signage to represent women as more than just Highland dancers
 - The general public isn't surprised to find out that you're a female piper

I hope to see more women in pipe bands at the highest level, particularly in the pipe section. Although women are still a minority in pipe bands as a whole, it seems there's even less representation in grade 1 pipe sections, with some bands having no women piping at all. Women and girls need to see other women and girls in piping to see what is possible! It makes me hopeful looking to youth bands and seeing the number of girls joining pipe bands, and my hope is that if they can see other women playing at the highest level, it will be an inspiration for them to continue their pipe band journey. Seeing women and girls in pipe band was an inspiration for myself to keep working. I also hope to see more women in leadership positions, whether it be PM, PS, or DS.

- the girls and women I grew up with are back competing in pipe bands again, and we're looking over at our 18-year-old daughters across the circle, during the 3rd part of the strathspey, in the grade 1 arena, and they're not freaking out because they know they're good enough

- people think it's normal to be taught by a woman

- men and boys call out bad behaviour from other men and boys (in public and in private) and the bad behaviour doesn't get the desired response of roaring laughter, or folk turning their heads the other way, so it falls flat and people get bored of being bad

- men in pipe bands treat everyone with kindness and encouragement so that it's a safe place for everyone to be, and to express themselves.
- parents explain to their sons what rape is and do everything they can to instil the fair, safe and consensual treatment of all women and girls they interact with from infancy
- piping mentors set examples to young men and boys by behaving appropriately at all times, because integrity is important to them - just like their reputations are as pipers/drummers - and they weed out micro-aggressions by challenging behaviour and or removing people who don't value integrity
- Everyone will have realised that excellent pipers who behave badly are like good expression spoiled by crossing noises - pretty disappointing and really quite offensive.
- no man in my own pipe corps will feel bold enough to slip his hand onto my thigh, under my kilt anymore
- young women won't be groped by men in their pipe corps at post-championship barbecues anymore
- I'll have found the courage to play in a pipe band again, without the fear of sexual predators and imposter syndrome
- 'I didn't know you got lady pipers' won't be a comment I hear anymore
- 'Do you actually play the real bagpipes?' won't be a question I'm asked anymore
- a woman might have won the Glenfiddich
- Sarah Muir will have won the Former Winners MSR (and a Gold Medal)
- women have been (and are) actively encouraged and enabled to stay in the arena - performing/competing/teaching
- praise and hope might have started to replace shame and fear as core teaching and leadership values
- Margaret Houlihan is a double gold medallist
- I send my kids to get lessons from some of the girls I taught 20 years ago.



In the future, I would hope to see more female representation in pipe bands in all levels. At lower levels, the ratio of girls to boys is usually very unbalanced and because of this society often associates pipebands with male musicians. If girls do not feel brave enough to break these assumptions, the opportunities to even reach the higher levels decrease. Music is something that can and should be played and

enjoyed by everyone. I am hopeful for the future having more female representation in many aspects of society, including music, and more specifically pipe bands.

I would hope that by 2044 there is more equality in pipe bands and that misogynistic comments and treatment will be at at least a minimum. That seeing women in a pipe band especially a piping roll won't be as much of a shock as some people see it as now. That opportunities for women to perform are more frequent. It would be great to see a woman in a leading role especially at the highest levels. I am hopeful for this through changing attitudes in work places etc that this will filter down into the piping community. It would also be nice to see more female judges/adjudicators

What I'd like to see in the future is more representation in adjudicating and teaching. I have never been judged by a woman in band drumming or solos, ever. More women in grade 1 bands and solos. When I was young in my area there were barely any females to watch or listen to. For young girls it's important for them to see women represented at the highest level. For me now I definitely feel pressure not to stop because I'm one of the few left in our area.. if I stop there would be no one for any young girls to see represent them at this level. I want to see more young girls involved, and encouraged to going because they know what's possible to achieve

I would wish to see coequality in the pipe corps. See women in the front rank and not be surprised to see them there. To have women who lead their bands stand with pride in the PM position and not hand the whole band worry about being marked down before they even hear a drone. Women in drumming have come a long way, at least in the East Coast. We stand together, support each other, and know that we belong there. I wish to see that joy for music return to the Gr 1 Circle. Also I think you're amazing. I'm so many ways you lead a path that makes others want to follow. I feel proud to know you when I see you on the jumbo screen up there holding your own for the world to see.

I'm finding now that I have kids it's extra hard for women to be honest. Especially to keep at a decent level. It's a struggle. Instead of napping when your kids are up all night you have to spend what little time you have practicing. It's exhausting. Then you hear things like "well you're not working" or "aren't you on maternity leave" from the men in the band to imply you have so much time. It has definitely made me realize why so many women have to step back. It's tough. Not only is it the men in the band, I get negative comments all the time from my in-laws. It is as though I shouldn't be allowed to do anything else because I go to pipe band sometimes, as if I am only allowed to have one thing.

I think overall my answer to that is an ideal future would be to see more women in leadership roles (pipe majors/lead drummers) in pipe bands, especially at the highest level. The current women in the top bands, especially those in leadership roles make me hopeful. Also the fact that I was pipe major for a band that also had a female lead

drummer was pretty empowering, felt badass. I wish for a female led band to one day win the grade one world pipe band championships.

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Here's what I want to see: Panel of female judges. Female to win the gold medal. Female pipe majors winning majors / championships. A female pipe major to win the world pipe band championships. A cohort of female adjudicators. An all female grade 1 pipe band of players all over the world similar to the spirit of Scotland pipe band style but with top class female players. More women in piping talks / webinars / discussions. More women in piping concerts. More women in piping commentators. More women in piping interviews and interviewee. Maybe even a women in piping weekly podcast that would be class!

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When I think of 2044, I see a much more equal distribution of women in pipe bands. I'm hopeful because women are still making firsts today and breaking down barriers. Today we have more women leaders and performers in pipes and drums which means, more role models for young women. I'm hopeful that this will promote piping and drumming in young girls. This also applies to military pipers and drummers across the world. Interestingly, in the Canadian armed forces, the percentage of women with the pipes and drums is higher than the average for the Canadian forces as a whole. These numbers have been steady for the last two decades so I'm hopeful this trend will continue and this will influence piping and drumming as a whole.

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I think this is a really hard thing to do - as a wish list it is vast, but its many points on a theme of being equal, and having equity, to make participation possible. But things I'd like to see in 2044:

- female pipers making up a larger percentage of top grade bands, with women in pipe major and pipe sergeant positions in grade. And this be a normal thing - with everyone in the band taking on board the directions as given by the band leaders (male and female).
- the Glenfiddich has had a number of women competing for a successive number of years, and moving into the judging panels, with a few female winners (maybe one with multiple titles!)
- across solo piping there are many more women competing in junior piping events through to professional grades, with women making up a much larger percentage in the silver and gold medal and senior piping competitions.
- a change in culture that female pipers are just pipers. They are a full and equal part of pipe band teams, considered as equal in terms of playing and part of the social scene. This could also look like more family-oriented events, with support for families through teaching programmes (on site childcare etc) to ensure that family commitments and piping can sit side by side.

I think my main point would be just more. More at every level, across every facet, and respected as equals in terms of playing capabilities and in senior organising committees with more women involved in the CPA, at senior solo piping events,

rspba, piob society etc etc. I think this would bring so much to the community, enabling anyone to see themselves reflected across all piping and understand that they can achieve anything within it.

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It seems cliché, but I can see more women showing up in the ranks overall, but particularly in the pipe section. I can see more women in leadership roles, Pipe Major, Drum Sergeant, which in turn means more women showing up on judging panels and official music boards such as the RSPBA. I can also see more women competing at solo competitions and consistently hitting the prize list.

Women supporting women, especially through social media, and regardless of the level makes me hopeful. I'm in a Facebook group that shares photos past and present of women in pipe bands and it's inspiring to see the impact that women have in the community around the world, then and now.

We know that there's a natural tendency for women to fill the tenor ranks, and we're starting to see more women in the snare corps - take SFU last season as a great example. Being in a band now with some really great women is inspiring in itself - I'm hoping that the days of being the only girl in the snare drum corps are gone for good. I really want to see more support from the current leaders in the higher bands. We need to be comfortable with going to those leaders for concerns or pipe band cultural issues and know that it will be taken seriously. Some pipe bands have had a boys club/lads group mentality, which ranges from drinking culture, harsh feedback, and undertones of sexualizing others.

Women should feel comfortable to show up authentically as themselves in the community and not feel pressured to adapt to it, or stay silent through uncomfortable comments or situations for fear of repercussion.

We need to see more young girls playing, and playing past the university years. As a female instructor, I know being a higher-level player in the community can help to inspire others to join and show where they can go with their music career. It's even more important to be an instructor or mentor to be able to encourage on an individual or group level, and I wish more women would step into these roles now. Change can only happen if you make it.

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I'm hopeful that the sexist banter and sexism openly displayed is no longer an issue. That we live in a world that regardless of your gender that you are given a fair listen. That we look back to only say, "remember when..." and shake our heads in disbelief that what we used to put up with is absolutely no longer tolerated or done.

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- more females in leadership positions
- more females in pipe bands period
- teaching programs featuring more female instructors (very male dominated outside of tenor drumming)
- all above will foster a more encouraging/comfortable sense of community for new and old female members. Showing that women are and will be considered and

encouraged for higher level positions within the pipe band world. I hope for the future that women will be weighted the same worth as a male in their band/organization. To be considered just as much of a professional as her male counterparts. So other girl's mothers don't have to have the same conversation mine had with me around 15 years old about pipe bands and being a female.

I've been fortunate enough to be a part of pipe band organizations where I've felt very supported in my contributions – as a player and as a leader/instructor. I've rarely experienced situations where I felt my opinions or concerns were given anything but equal consideration to my fellow band mates.

My wish is that all women will get to experience a positive & supportive environment to learn & develop in piping & drumming. That they will have opportunities to progress and grow as pipers/drummers, but also to become leaders, instructors, and adjudicators.

An IDEAL future grade one pipe band would have at least a 50-50 split of male and female players, in all 3 sections. What makes me hopeful? Seeing strong Canadian women (You, Shaunna H, Jenny H) playing in excellent Scottish pipe bands. I recently started a youth pipe band in my hometown, and to date, I have a 40-60 female to male ratio. I'm hopeful they will persevere and make it their passion. I wish for...more encouragement for females to join pipe bands and to continue playing past age 18. And regarding the wish for future...that for pipers they don't assume that bad tone is from the female piper (s).

I once heard someone say when I was younger: "women have got more rights than men and they're still moaning for more." Although this must have been at least 20 years ago this has stuck with me because I just don't believe it's true – we don't want to be treated special, we just want to be treated equally.

What would I like to see in 20 years' time?

More equal representation and a more professional environment in pipe bands. Pipe bands are better today than in the past, but they are still an overwhelmingly masculine environment, and the worst thing there is that men are completely oblivious to it because they're used to it. Even the bands who try to make themselves open to all, act like they're doing you a favour if they try and restrain the amount of swearing (for example). There are still bands (including in grade 1) that I would not join because I see the culture of the band as too masculine and laddish. They're not doing anything bad – but it's not a comfortable or professional environment for a woman or indeed a young person to thrive, and possibly one large contributing factor to the very stark ratio of males to females in bands. I've never been in a pipe corps with more than 3 females (including me), and even that has only happened over one season – most of my life, and once again, I am the sole female in the pipe corps.

More equal representation in the top level of solo piping. We 100% have to earn it of course – but there are some fantastic women competing in the solos, and we should be encouraging more to start, and giving more encouragement on the way up. When we are truly equal surely the Glenfiddich will be half women, half men each year, not "when was the last time a woman made it to the Glenfiddich?".

What makes me hopeful – I feel women at the top level are really supportive of each other which is wonderful – keep it up ladies!

There is the obviously question of 'where are the female players?' A question I hope we don't always have to hear in the future. I think of big part of that stems from supporting women in their life outside pipe band and to encourage them to continue. Especially when having a family, it really takes the women. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to support not only the dads but also the Mums. It would be great to see options for some kind of childcare to encourage families to stay in the band and women to still keep her identity as a high-level player and be a parent.

I'm also hopeful for change in the future on how we deal with and support women who are being harassed. It starts with men supporting women on their experience and them backing them but also believing them. We should have in place more for the community and players. It just would be a wonderful world if women could feel safe and able to come forward in a hobby we love. Here's to hoping.

Some of my ideal hopes and wishes for our community, however 2044 would be extremely ambitious in my opinion but ideal worlds here; not that I don't think there has been progress but you know!

Hopeful/Wish for:

- more representation and opportunity on judging panels, giving seminars/workshops, teaching of the next piping/drumming generation
- Making bands accessible to women - in terms of chances/opportunities
- Youth/school band - giving equal opportunity and encouraging all to take up the instruments and be a part of the community and offer them support where they can feel alone/the only female in their section

Highest level -

- opportunity to play and compete at the highest level and feel safe/welcome/comfortable - especially where historically there has not perhaps been a female contingent before/not many/belief and perception has maybe been that females can't perform at this elite level and stigma that surrounds women especially of certain instruments (wives and girls club especially in tenor drumming but strangely not at the highest level - still very male dominated somehow despite the majority being female)

– Seems trivial but uniform. Look good feel good builds confidence and self belief. Doesn't need to change but let there be waistcoat somewhere that fits a person with a chest!

- I'd love to see more gender representation in all ranks and all sections
 - at the higher levels, it appears that less and less females are willing to commit to the intensity of the competition
 - years from now I'd love to see more consideration for playing female members who are juggling the daily expectation of work, family, social life, and pipeband
 - this doesn't mean conceding to lesser playing to meet quotas, this means leaning into the female talent that exists but might be held hostage due to family responsibilities that men don't have
 - women have so much talent to offer but don't always have the same time or willingness to commit to the craft. It would be nice to see more emphasis placed on pumping up women and giving them the support and encouragement to take the leap into grade 1/2 competition spaces
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In 2044, I would hope to see more women as Pipe Majors and Lead Drummers. Over the years I have seen many talented women who could run their own band and manage it successfully. As a reservist in the Canadian Army who works with the youth of this country, I have taught and witnessed very skilled and eager young ladies, who take their piping journey seriously because they enjoy it and have been encouraged to pursue elevated instruction. I know there is a lot of expertise out there and I would welcome more female pipe band musical instrument manufacturers. I wish for overwhelming acceptance from men so that they are honoured to be taught by women pipe band musicians and elated to play on instruments created and revered by them.

I would say it would be good to see a lot more women in leading roles - pipe majors, drum majors etc, particularly women leading school bands, both as teachers but also student roles, girls being pipe majors of their school bands, as that's where a lot of the seeds of inspiration and confidence begin. Also would of course like to see a lot more women on the judging panels in Scotland (I don't think there's a lack of options). And definitely at least 50% women on judging panels for solo pipers as well.

Education: we need to educate those in schools about pipe bands and how they can shape who you are as a person. Educate the children that being the best you can be at an instrument is desirable in many highly sought of careers. This gender stereotypical barrier of tenor drummers being 'silly pretty girls only caring about their hair and nail colour' needs to be broken. If you look at it – the majority of tenor sections, which by the by are normally outnumbering boys in, has a lot of successful women who have got other careers outside of pipe bands. We need to relay this to girls in schools, otherwise the pipe band world is going to end up with less and less

tenor drummers. To add to this, educate – yes, but also the RSPBA in correlation with the SQA need to recognise tenor drumming as an instrument and one which children can sit their Nat 4/5's, Higher, Advanced Highers with. You can see how school children, namely girls, look at tenor drumming when very few females have a career out of solely practising their instrument. We need to provide a space for this to be an option so gender equality persists. And to add to this, RSPBA need to include tenor drummers as a requirement for major championships – currently there is no need to have a tenor drummer to compete.

Educate the leaders: being leading drummers and pipe majors take no qualifications. Of course, skill, experience comes into play. But many of these 'leaders' have no education in how to be a leader, how to manage people, how to conduct oneself as a leader, and with this becomes problems. A suggestion would be by 2044, the RSPBA would have a board member who's sole role is to ensure the leaders of the pipe band world are up to scratch, and I would suggest simple online modules to be taken to do so – simple leadership modules and also, an online module on equality and diversity.

This brings me onto my next point – Equality and diversity throughout the pipe band world. Unfortunately, male lead pipe bands have taken matters into their own hands when it comes to deciding if females in their pipe band should continue playing with them or not, based on their 'fertile age' or their 'stage in life'. A Leading drummer bringing in a 'buffer' tenor drummer in because someone who in their eyes 'is at that age you know, where they will be going off and having a family'. Absolutely cynical. It is never ok for anyone - male or female - to assume ones want or desire to have children. Why don't the men in pipe band world face this scrutiny? They take time off when their child is unwell but why is it always women have questions before they've even decided if having children is for them? At the end of the day, women – both pregnant and who have recently gave birth – have went on to win world championships, no matter what trimester they are. To add to this, the gender pay gap does exist in pipe bands! Would you believe? A leading snare drummer and a pipe major get paid for a role by a renowned organisation, but a female tenor drummer doesn't, and you know, it's not even seen as an issue. A simple online module and education of the male leaders who may not be aware of appropriateness of comments. And to add to this – consequences for when they do overstep the mark. Currently, committees are full of males, very few females, so it means disciplining these males doesn't happen – they get away with it and able to do it all over again. I'm not sure what they best way to do this, but having the RSPBA oversee any pipe band committees may give females that extra reassurance that if a male leader, on the committee (like how many of the leading drummers and pipe majors are), behave in an inappropriate way, they know that they will be disciplined for their actions. I honestly cannot believe in 2024 I am writing this, one can only hope that this particular issue is sorted by 2044, for our daughters' sake (if we want to have them that is..)

Uniform: other organisations (the army, RAF, etc) have different smart wear for their females – why is it pipe bands all females are just supposed to wear what the men wear? The pipe band uniform was not made for women's hips or a women's bust. Constantly looking like the uniform doesn't fit properly because we have to wear men's shirts 'so we all look the same'. There should be some leeway.

To conclude: we need to start educating the young ones now. However, the way things are going, given by the way females are treated in pipe bands, there will be no female role models left to look up to in 2034, never mind 2044. The RSPBA need to get on board with education and in my opinion, tenor drummers should be valued more as professional musicians, as herein lies most of the female representation of the pipe band world at present, and the lack of respect currently, is truly criminal.

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I hope that at least a third of female pipers and snare drummers make up the playing numbers in Grade 1 pipe bands and at the top level of solo piping. I hope for a major shift in mindset and the assumption that if you are female and playing in a grade 1 band that you must be a tenor drummer or even sometimes a dancer!

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- A higher number of females represented at the highest levels of piping/drumming, both in band circles and in solo contests (particularly gold medal). This includes a more diverse group of females as well (different backgrounds, races, ages, etc.). I would love for players (especially young girls) to consistently see many women mentioned in the results, competing lists, and band rosters. No more of the "token female" talk.
- More females teaching other high-level players, including more female teachers on staff at summer schools and at colleges/universities that have piping/drumming courses.
- The piping and drumming community to openly and readily hear women's perspectives of their experiences and fully respect their talents and expertise.
- Internally females feeling they belong inside any band circle and at any band/solo competition; not feeling the hypothetical chip on their shoulder.
- A female being able to join a band and know the band wanted her on their roster solely for her skill and talents. Never having to second guess or wonder if there was an another reason behind a band recruiting her.
- Females never having to second guess where they placed in a contest.
- Young girls especially, but all females feeling psychologically safe in the piping/drumming world and not experiencing any form of harassment.
- The uniform requirements need to be expanded to be more comfortable and practical for women to play in.

What makes me hopeful:

- These types of conversations are happening now!
 - The number of people (men and women) who are so supportive of female players. Another thought - no more "firsts" for women because women would have already done it before. You never hear "first male to win XYZ" or "first US male to win". I'd love for women to have accomplished so much by 2044 that those sorts of firsts are no longer possible.
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Ideally, I'd love for women to make up half of the contributors to our community. I think the piping/drumming/band scene would benefit from more women providing

input and making decisions, and I would like to see more women in leadership positions in bands & associations, playing solos, and judging, across all disciplines.

I would love to see and to normalize supporting mothers continuing to play at the highest level after starting families, should they want to.

20 years from now, I hope that if my daughter has chosen to pipe or drum, that she'd be given every opportunity and community support that a young man would be, so that she has the confidence to make meaningful and innovative contributions to our piping & drumming community.

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The underrepresentation of women in pipe bands reinforces gender stereotypes. Mentoring talented women has to happen in all bands. From outside the circle it is a male dominated space. To attract women you have to have more women playing at a high level.

In 2044 my hope is that women are no longer expected to limit their personal opportunities due to raising a family or because it's considered time to put the pipes away because it was a childhood hobby. For many years the social pressure was that the woman would stay at home and take care of the children. By 2044 high level bands that want to be inclusive will have childcare facilities available during band practice to help attract and retain women who in pipe bands. Families will step up to help support a talented woman to continue to play in bands the same way men are supported and not assume that it's time to put the pipes away. Women are great multi-taskers, with support they will participate and lead bands.

Many pipers and drummers today can say they received encouragement or were impacted by their mother's musicality. I think most Moms sing to their babies.

Outside the circle there will be many women in kilts and trews facing the circle and providing an educated feedback to bands.

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I mean... I would say pipe bands are for sure moving in the right direction and there are more females but I think that has been pushed a lot and progressed by the tenor drumming movement of the last 20 odd years. And so it has attracted more females, particularly with the significant rise in pipe band education within both private and state schools. In fact if anything I would love to see more male tenor drummers so it's not seen as a girly thing.

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I had lots of thoughts about the future at first - things like getting away from some of the pseudo military behaviours & uniform to allow for more personal expression. Then I wonder if maybe that's more of a personal gripe than something that affects women in pipe bands generally. I wish for more exploration on how to make the instrument more comfortable for different shaped bodies. It makes me really hopeful seeing people like you, Dani, Margaret, etc. playing in top level bands and supporting each other. It made me hopeful to see (I think it was Kylie's post) about

the gross comments she received on crit sheets as a kid and how that would no longer be acceptable, so things are changing.

I have so many thoughts about women in piping that it's hard for me to put it into words. I'm gonna speak mostly in terms of piping as that is what is closest to me, but it goes the same for drumming as well.

I remember a couple of years ago I was looking at the Glenfiddich Piping Championship group photos and was shocked at the lack of diversity. It opened my eyes to the history and how unfairly the system was built. It is so crazy that, within a generation to us, women were not allowed to compete with men. To build a name and a reputation has began for women after men were already considered credible. My vision for the future is for a more level playing field with more years and more history under our belts. I feel so much excitement and so much hope when I see another woman piper or a young girl with so much future ahead of her. I just want to wrap them up and make sure no one crushes their dreams.

During this prior competition season (2023), I heard the words among some younger boys "you seriously let a girl beat you?" And I shudder to think it's not just younger boys feeling that way. It's been conditioned into boys from a young age and it's just plain old. We're tired of it. It's not a funny joke. In the time of the "Barbie movement", as some would call it, it is a great time to bring awareness to what is going on. Women are empowered. Women are speaking up. By 2044, this narrative should be totally erased from the competition setting. Men and women compete against each other, and men and women are both capable of being the best. All it takes is holding each other accountable and the willingness to grow together, all genders included.

Something I have always thought would be an interesting idea, and perhaps this could be a goal to implemented somehow in the future, is a sort of "blind" competition. The judges don't see who the player is, they just listen. There are all these big names in piping and so many talented "no names" and I wonder if the vision aspect is taken away, would this remove any predetermined biases from the competition? This blends with women pipers as well, because sometimes I feel like looks get judged before sound. If you're not this clean cut, typical looking piper (man), you might be predisposed to these biases.

The number of times I felt respected by a piper I looked up to and then they made a comment that objectified me and suddenly I wondered if all their compliments about my piping were genuine or just said to entice me. It crushes you. As a young woman surrounded by mostly males in the piping world, it is hard not to let it get you down. That's why I find it so important to surround myself with so many amazing women in the band community.

I feel so hopeful both piping alongside and cheering on women crushing it in both piping and drumming. The thing that is going to make this future a reality is the power of us. I am so proud to be a woman.

It would be great to imagine more female pipe majors of grade 1 pipe bands - and with that, far more competing female pipers in grade 1 bands.

I'd hope that the number of female solo pipers would be almost equal to male. At the moment it's very much 1 out of 25 are female - balancing up that ratio would be an incredible feat for diversity in the circuit.

I can see so many young girls coming up through the solo circuit and in the juvenile bands, and it brings a lot of hope. The support from the male competitors is great to see too, but it would be great to see encouragement for young girls to keep up the skill - so many drop off in the teen level.

There's also a very small number of female tutors in schools - both public and private - which will have a huge impact on young girls keeping up with the instrument through a lack of female role models in their immediate context.

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- more female drummers in the snare line
- Seeing female lead drummers in gr 1 (it would be nice to see this more as a "norm" for pipe bands in general, and not such a shock value, that a female is in such a high leadership position...)

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I think by 2044 there will be more female dominance in the pipe band world, maybe things like:

- tenor drummers not being looked at as a females instrument
- female LDs
- Judges as well are particularly male as well so it would be nice to see a switch up in that case
- hopefully more females in the hobby as a whole, along the lines of teaching, judges, drummers, pipers etc
- I honestly wish for females to not be asked "what are you wearing underneath your kilt?"

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2044: A new top 3 contender at "The World's" has emerged over the past twenty years, and they are fierce group of talented mature women. Sponsored by Amazon, "The Ladies from Hell" are a Grade 1 Pipe Band originally formed for a one time challenge similar to the "Spirit Of Scotland" band, but the members decided to make it a yearly goal to challenge for the coveted Worlds title. The members are top female pipers and drummers from around the world who have spent time in top bands, usually as one of few women, and have proven themselves not only to be "as good as the guys" but often better. Many were top soloists in their day, and a few of them that have the time to devote to it continue in the quest for the "big prizes". Others are active composers, performers, recording artists, judges, teachers, or involved supporting their local piping and drumming programs and organizations in other ways. The band uses online technology to allow members world-wide to be committed on their own terms and their own time allowances virtually, organised and run by women they make very efficient use of time. They focus on promoting music

composed by women throughout history, and especially by their own members. They all have busy lives outside the band, but once a year (and for an occasional recording or concert), they gather in Glasgow for a week and intensely focus on their goal - to win the Worlds and inspire young girls coming up through the bands to not only take up piping/drumming but to continue playing. You must earn your spot in this band through an audition and probationary period process, and everyone knows those who are playing with this high-level group are not there because of who they are related to or dating. Due to their success and proven skill and knowledge many from the band are among the increasing number of female RSPBA qualified judges. Unlike the female bands in the past which were often created due to male bands not allowing the opposite sex...and often being run by men.... This group of feminists has taken control of the trajectory of women in piping/drumming and created the ultimate group of role models that show you don't have to retire from the art to be a wife, a mother, a career woman.... You can continue your passion lifelong.

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Once we had a comment on a video of our band that said: 'needs prettier tenor drummers'. Obviously didn't bother us, because I don't really care if a random weirdo thinks we're pretty or not, would just rather they comment on the band's performance!!

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Something I wish to see more of in the future of pipe bands would be more females in positions of leadership. As a female who previously was in a position of leadership in a pipe band, I feel that it is so important for women to get involved in any opportunities like this that comes their way. This way we can create a positive and supportive environment within women in pipe bands, something that the pipe band world needs. I strongly believe that women should be more involved in the roles of leadership, but I believe this should be earned rather than given. Women should be recognized for their hard work and talent, rather than just for equality's sake.

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- At least 50% of the competing pipers are women. In solos especially, I feel amazing when a young girl or woman win a prize or get recognised in solo competitions.
 - Drumming I'd say woman are normally assigned to tenor drumming, if you play snare, I'd say it's still seen as a manly percussion instrument to play.
 - I would like at least 50% woman in the pipe core for Pipe Bands, it is a bit isolating, especially since more bands have friend in their own drum or pipe core.
 - In solos, I'd also say judges are still gender picking when it comes to prizes for woman, if a young boy loses to a young girl, he becomes embarrassed losing to a girl. That stereotype needs to go and hope it will.
 - I hope more woman feel seen and feel accomplished as a musician in piping/drumming!
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The ideal future (hopefully sooner than 2044) looks like a more inclusive environment where women are taken as seriously as men in both piping and drumming, there are more female judges/board members and band leaders. Having said that, the uptake in schools for piping and drumming for young girls is apparently at the highest it has ever been. I feel at the highest level right now there are more women coming through, which is great, however there are no female P-Ms or L-Ds so that would be amazing to see in the future! What makes me hopeful is that season upon season we are seeing more females coming through the ranks, which is hopefully a path we have created for many more females after us. I wish for everyone to feel included in pipe bands & girls not being put off by a male dominated environment & for it not to be a male dominated environment.