

THE IMPACT OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE

GENDER AND POLICYMAKING

Studies of Women in Office

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS

Gender and Policymaking

Studies of women in office

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Edited by

Debra L. Dodson

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Preface

The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) has spent two decades charting and analyzing women's changing status as leaders in public office. Incremental progress has characterized a generation of change, with women slowly and steadily making gains as elected and appointed officials. As the numbers grew, so did interest in whether women's presence counted for more than numbers. The questions kept coming up: "Do women make a difference?" "What sorts of differences?" "Under what circumstances or conditions?" Interest focused especially on public policy — the substance of policy, the relative importance of various issues, the process of making policy, the institutions which develop public policy. Do women political leaders have a distinctive impact in the policymaking arena?

As it had done previously, the Charles H. Revson Foundation expressed the interest and provided the critical support which allowed CAWP to launch a new area of investigation about women's changing political participation. With a generous grant from Revson, CAWP designed *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, the first large-scale research project to ask and begin answering the early questions about the implications of women's presence in political leadership. A three-volume series presents the results of this research. Volume One, entitled *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures*, is the report from a large, systematic study of state legislators undertaken by CAWP. Volume Two, entitled *Gender and Policymaking: Studies of Women in Public Office*, presents the collected reports of eleven studies of women officials in a variety of offices; these small studies were conducted independently by scholars across the country working under grants awarded by CAWP. Volume Three summarizes the findings from the overall research project; it is entitled *The Impact of Women in Public Office: An Overview*.

CAWP is very grateful for the opportunity to continue building its knowledge and understanding of women's participation in U. S. electoral politics. We are especially proud to issue the first systematic, empirical evidence and scholarly assessments of women's distinctive impact in public office. As is always the case, questions beget more questions, and a little information whets the appetite for more knowledge and greater comprehension. Furthermore, since the nature and extent of women's political leadership remain dynamic — steadily changing, growing, evolving — today's inquiries can at best provide conditional answers. We at CAWP will consider this research project a success if it serves both to increase today's understanding of *and* tomorrow's curiosity for fuller and richer information about how women and men working together can improve the leadership of our public world.

The Charles H. Revson Foundation has sustained its singular encouragement and critical support for work about women and politics for over a decade. President Eli Evans and Vice President Lisa Goldberg have an unusually strong understanding of the centrality of questions and challenges surrounding women's changing political roles. They know that this is not a topic for a day, but rather a long-term test for the quality of the democracy. They also understand the importance of the relationship between research and activism. In addition to everything else, we are grateful for their flexibility and tolerance with the pace of scholarly research. Everyone at CAWP is very proud and gratified to have the Charles H. Revson Foundation's continuing interest and support.

Individual members of a distinguished advisory committee of political practitioners and scholars (names of advisory committee members are listed on page immediately following this preface) offered expert advice and enthusiastic interest throughout the project, especially in evaluating proposals and selecting grant recipients for the studies reported in Volume 2, *Gender and Policymaking*. Our team of colleagues at CAWP was invaluable in carrying out this project. Many and special thanks to Katherine Kleeman, Lucy Baruch, Debbie Walsh and Joan Crowley. We called on their expertise and diverse skills, and we counted on their steady willingness to pitch in at whatever level and for whatever tasks required attention — and we were never disappointed. A number of students helped in a variety of ways; we are grateful for their interest and for the very able assistance provided by Carrie Calvo and graduate students Deirdre Condit, Barbara Crow, Joe Cammarano and Patrick Murray. Karen Gronberg and Ella Taylor deserve special thanks as the graduate assistants who helped with the data analysis for the CAWP study. Our thanks to Eagleton Institute and CAWP staff members Martha Casisa, Pat Michaels and Edith Saks for contributing in many ways, from secretarial support to graphics design and layout to proofreading. Over the course of the project, we called on any number of people for technical assistance and advice; among them Kamala Brush, Bill Cibes, Kelly Griffin, Jeanne Kennedy, Roland King, Amy Melvin, Hannele Rubin, Mark Schulman and Kathy Stanwick were especially generous with their time and expertise. Finally, special thanks for their help and valuable insights at critical moments to Alan Rosenthal, Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and Cliff Zukin, Associate Professor at the Institute.

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About CAWP

The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

Before CAWP was founded in 1971, no organization or educational institution was compiling information about women in government and politics or studying and monitoring the status and prospects of those women. Today, CAWP has taken on the multiple roles of catalyst and resource, provider of data and analyses, interpreter and guide. CAWP raises and responds to emerging issues, working daily with women leaders as well as journalists, scholars, students, women's groups, governmental agencies, civic organizations and political parties.

Major CAWP Programs and Activities

- **Clearinghouse about Women in Politics and Government:** Responding to hundreds of calls and letters each year from people seeking information about women in politics, the Center not only answers factual questions, but also helps to frame and define issues. CAWP staff members often make public speeches and appear on television and radio; they are frequently cited in academic research and in the press.
- **Data Bank on Women in Public Office:** Since 1975 CAWP has collected data on women candidates and elected women serving in municipal, county, state legislative, statewide and federal offices. Information from the computerized data bank has been used to publish directories and fact sheets on women in elective and appointive office. In addition to current data — such as the number and percentage of women officeholders serving at each level, state-by-state rankings and party identification — the fact sheets include historical information about women in office. Mailing lists and labels from CAWP's data bank may be purchased.
- **Program for Women State Legislators:** Since its founding, the Center has maintained a special interest in women lawmakers, convening national meetings for them to discuss public policies

and political processes. Special programs have focused on women in legislative leadership and women's legislative caucuses. The program also undertakes research and collects and disseminates information about the backgrounds, issue interests, status and impact of women state legislators. CAWP collaborates regularly with women legislators' national and state organizations and networks.

- **Subscriber Information Service and Newsletter:** CAWP sends subscribers three packets every year; each contains the Center's newsletter, *CAWP News & Notes*, as well as fact sheets, reports, reprints of articles and other timely information.
- **Research about Women's Political Participation:** Several CAWP staff members are actively engaged in scholarly research and their work reaches the larger academic community through publications and presentations. In addition, CAWP is a leading source of information and assistance for researchers examining women's participation in politics. The Center acts both as a catalyst for research on certain important aspects of women's political participation and as a resource for scholars pursuing their own projects. The Center also initiates research on other questions of particular interest to women, such as the impact of the abortion issue on electoral politics.
- **National Surveys of Elected and Appointed Women:** CAWP's nationwide surveys have provided much-needed information for practitioners and scholars. Current research focuses on the impact of women in public office. Other studies have examined the factors that affect women's entry into elective and appointive office at various levels of government, career paths of women municipal managers, women as candidates and women appointed to state boards and commissions.
- **Liaison between Academic and Political Communities:** Through conferences, consultations, publications and presentations at meetings, CAWP fosters communication between scholars and political practitioners, helping each group to understand and utilize the work of the other.
- **Grants Program:** From time to time, CAWP requests proposals and offers awards to stimulate and support individual writing and research about women's participation in American politics. A group of research grant recipients selected in 1988 is studying "The Impact of Women in Public Office." Topics examined by scholars and writers in 1974 and 1976 grants programs were: "The Nature and Political Impact of Women's Voluntary Activities"; and "Women and Local Government."

- **Conferences and Seminars:** Meetings and symposia convened by CAWP have included: national conferences for women state legislators; a conference for leaders of organizations of women public officials; consultations with leaders of women's political action committees and state organizations for elected women; workshops on lobbying and campaign skills; and seminars with women public leaders conducted in conjunction with CAWP's research programs. Special educational programs have been presented for Hispanic women moving into leadership and for young leaders, scholars and journalists from Canada and Europe. The Center also organized a seminar about women in international leadership in cooperation with Douglass College, the women's college at Rutgers University.
- **Programs for College and High School Students:** In 1991 CAWP launched a four-year series of summer institutes and campus-based projects about politics and public leadership for college women and their advisors. The Center has also been instrumental in founding, developing and administering the Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN), a consortium of women's colleges working together to prepare young women for public leadership. CAWP and PLEN are collaborating on the summer institutes and on research about public leadership programs for students around the country. CAWP also offers student internships at the Center and at CAWP conferences and seminars.
- **Consulting Services:** CAWP tailors programs to offer its expertise to groups with specialized needs and interests. Recent examples have included leadership training for Hispanic women and seminars about women in American leadership for international visitors.
- **Cooperative Activities with Other Units of Rutgers University:** CAWP and Douglass College frequently work jointly on programs of mutual interest. The Center also works in partnership with other Rutgers units including the Institute for Research on Women, the Women's Studies Program, the Associate Alumnae of Douglass College, the Center for Global Issues and Women's Leadership and the Department of Political Science.
- **Library — Specialized Collection about Women in Public Life:** CAWP's unique library on Women in American Politics, which is open to the public, includes several hundred volumes, as well as more than 100 periodicals and thousands of clippings, articles and unpublished papers.
- **Books, Monographs, Reports, Fact Sheets, Documentary Film:** CAWP's work has resulted in the publication of books, monographs, fact sheets, bibliographies and reports on women's

participation in American politics. Fact sheets containing current and historical information about women in public office are issued regularly. CAWP also produced *Not One of the Boys*, a 60-minute film examining the progress women are making and the obstacles they encounter after more than a decade of increased involvement in political life. The film appeared on the PBS series *Frontline* in 1984 and is available for sale or rental from CAWP.

Eggleton Institute of Politics

Since its founding in 1956, the Eggleton Institute has built a national reputation for its graduate fellowship program and for its research and public service activities in the field of American politics. The Institute houses three major centers (CAWP; the Center for Public Interest Polling; and the Center for Policy Research in Education) and a number of special programs about American public policy and the political process.

Introduction

Susan J. Carroll and Debra L. Dodson

For more than fifteen years the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) has conducted research aimed at understanding the status, problems and contributions of women public officials. CAWP's earliest work, conducted throughout the 1970s, attempted to document the existence among elective officeholders of "political women" — their numbers, their backgrounds and their perceptions of themselves within the political environment.¹ In the early 1980s, CAWP turned its research attention to the question of why so few women hold public office, expanding its focus to include political appointees at state and federal levels as well as elective officials. With funding provided by the Charles H. Revson Foundation, CAWP conducted the most comprehensive research ever undertaken on women's routes into public office, examining the factors that inhibit and facilitate their entry into elective and appointive positions.²

¹See, for example: Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Political Woman*, New York: Basic Books, 1974; Marilyn Johnson and Kathy A. Stanwick, *Profile of Women Holding Office*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1976; Marilyn Johnson and Susan Carroll, *Profile of Women Holding Office II*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1978.

²Kathy A. Stanwick and Katherine E. Kleeman, *Women Make a Difference*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Susan J. Carroll and Wendy S. Strimling, *Women's Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison with Men's*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Susan J. Carroll and Barbara Geiger-Parker, *Women Appointed to the Carter Administration: A Comparison with Men*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Susan J. Carroll and Barbara Geiger-Parker, *Women Appointed to State Government: A Comparison with All State Appointees*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Katherine E. Kleeman, *Women's PACs*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Kathy A. Stanwick, *Political Women Tell What It Takes*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983; Kathy A. Stanwick, *Getting Women Appointed: New Jersey's Bipartisan Coalition*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1984; Wendy S. Strimling, *Elected Women Organize: Statewide Associations*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1986.

Now, in new research, once again sponsored by the Charles H. Revson Foundation and reported in this series — *The Impact of Women in Public Office* — the Center for the American Woman and Politics begins to answer a frequently asked question about women public officials: *what difference does their presence in office make?* The research discussed in this series provides the first systematic and comprehensive analysis of the effects of gender differences on public policy and political institutions.

The significance of the question addressed by this research is abundantly clear. Proponents of increased representation for women can and do argue for the election or appointment of more women public officials as a matter of justice and equity. They assert that democratic principles require that all citizens regardless of gender should have an equal opportunity to participate in politics. Many question the quality of representation in a nation where women are half of the citizens, but a small minority of officeholders. However, their arguments become more compelling if, in fact, women officeholders bring to office important perspectives and priorities that are currently underrepresented in the policymaking process.

Moreover, the simple reality is that the numbers of women who serve in public office have increased and will continue to increase. Although women are still far from parity with men in officeholding, the numbers of women holding office at most levels of government have increased with each subsequent election during the past two decades.³ For example, while women still constitute only 18.3 percent of state legislators nationally, the number of women serving in state legislatures increased from 344 in 1971 to 908 in 1981 to 1365 in 1991.⁴ Barring major changes in our system of electoral politics, there is every reason to expect that this trend of

³ Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), "Women in Elective Office 1991," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1991. The major exception to this pattern is in Congress where the number of women serving as representatives and senators fluctuated between fifteen and twenty throughout the 1970s and seemed to remain stable at about twenty-three to twenty-five throughout most of the 1980s. However, the number of women serving in Congress reached an all-time high of thirty-one in the 101st Congress (1989-1991) and remained at thirty-one in 1991 (including one non-voting delegate from Washington, D.C.), and many observers expect the pattern of incremental increases in the number of women to be evident in Congress in coming years. See Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), "Women in the U.S. Congress 1991," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1991.

⁴Center for the American Woman and Politics, "Women in State Legislatures 1991," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1991.

incremental, but steady, increases will continue throughout the 1990s and into the next century. As more and more women move into public office, it is critically important that we understand what the consequences are likely to be both for public policy and the political process.

Just as the increasing numbers of women serving in public office have made questions about women's impact more important than ever before, so too has this increase made research focusing on these questions more possible than ever before. Prior to recent years there were too few women serving at most levels of government to provide a fair assessment of whether and how they might be making a difference. So long as women were mere tokens struggling for survival in institutions that were unaccustomed to their presence, it seemed unlikely that any except the most exceptional women would be able to have much of a distinctive impact. Now, however, women are present in sufficient numbers at various levels of office in various locales to expect that if, in fact, women are likely to have a distinctive impact on public policy or the political process, that impact might begin to be evident.

Why Expect Women Officeholders to Have a Distinctive Impact?

Previous research findings, contemporary theoretical work on differences between women and men and recent political trends and developments all point to the expectation that women public officials in the aggregate would have a distinctive impact on public policy and the political process.

Suggestive evidence that women in public office make a difference emerged from CAWP's research in the early 1980s on *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*. Research on elective officials at various levels of office, cabinet and subcabinet appointees in the Carter administration and appointed state cabinet-level officials suggested that women bring into office both new and different perspectives on public policy and a commitment to paving the way for still more women leaders.⁵ That research found that women officials have different attitudes from men on several important public policy issues. The gap between women and men in office was most pronounced on women's issues, although it was present on other types of issues as well. Within both parties and across various self-identified ideological groups (i.e., liberals, moderates and conservatives), women elective officeholders and political appointees were generally more liberal and more feminist than their male counterparts in

⁵See all reports in Note 2 above, but especially Kathy A. Stanwick and Katherine E. Kleeman, *Women Make a Difference*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983.

their views on public policy issues such as the role of the private sector in solving our economic problems, the death penalty, the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion. Moreover, the research found that women public officials made special efforts to insure that other women would follow in their footsteps. Women officeholders often spoke with groups of women to stress the importance of political involvement, made special efforts to hire women as staff, met with individual women to share their political knowledge, actively sought out and promoted women in making appointments and lent their names and prestige to efforts undertaken by others on behalf of women.

The writings of various contemporary American theorists in Women's Studies also point to the expectation that women public officials may have a distinctive impact. "Difference" theorists such as Nancy Chodorow, Carol Gilligan and Sara Ruddick identify varying aspects of women's and men's psycho-social development as the source of gender differences.⁶ Chodorow, for example, stresses psychodynamic processes of identity formation in early childhood, Gilligan analyzes women's moral development and reasoning, and Ruddick focuses on the social practice of mothering. Although there are important areas of disagreement among difference theorists, their work collectively suggests that women in comparison with men are more relational, have a greater sense of connection with others, are more empathic and caring and are less likely to think in terms of rights and more likely to think in terms of responsibilities.

Finally, contemporary political developments suggest that women in public office might have an impact distinctive from that of men. The influence of the women's movement on the consciousness of American women is one important development. Over the past two decades the women's movement has emphasized that women have interests, concerns and priorities that sometimes differ from those of men and that women's interests, concerns and priorities are equally as important as those of men.

⁶Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*, Berkeley: University of California, 1978; Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982; Sara Ruddick, "Maternal Thinking," *Feminist Studies* 6 (1980): 342-367. See also Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminist Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984; Mary O'Brien, *The Politics of Reproduction*, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981; Joan C. Tronto, "Beyond Gender Difference to a Theory of Care," *Signs* 12 (1987): 644-663. Difference theorists have been criticized as insufficiently attentive to the diversity that exists among women of different cultures, classes, races, ethnicities and sexual orientations both in American society and cross-culturally. Women officeholders, who tend disproportionately to be middle-class or upper middle-class and white, are less diverse than the American population as a whole and probably more closely resemble the women upon whose experience these theories are based. Nevertheless, one should not expect the tendencies described by difference theorists to be true of all women officeholders.

While many American women still shy away from the label "feminist," and while many women disagree with parts of the feminist agenda, women's recognition of the fact that their interests are not identical to those of men is far greater now than it was two decades ago, largely as a result of the influence of the women's movement.

The fact that women have increasingly come to see their political interests as distinct from those of men is evident in the development of the so-called "gender gap" in public opinion and voting behavior over the past decade. In each of the three presidential elections held in the 1980s, 6 to 9 percent fewer women than men voted for the Republican candidate. In addition, the gender gap was also evident in many statewide races throughout the 1980s, with women usually casting their votes disproportionately for Democratic candidates but sometimes giving their votes disproportionately to Republican candidates who appealed to women voters on the issues. Recent public opinion polls have also shown a gender gap on a variety of public policy issues. Compared with men, women in the general population are: less militaristic on issues of war and peace; more often opposed to the death penalty; more likely to favor gun control; more likely to favor measures to protect the environment; more supportive of programs to help the economically disadvantaged; more supportive of efforts to achieve racial equality; and more likely to favor laws to regulate and control various social vices (e.g., drugs, gambling, pornography).⁷ Given the existence of a gender gap in political preferences among the general public, one might well expect to find a similar gender gap in the policy-related behavior, priorities and initiatives of officeholders.

Factors That May Affect the Extent to Which Women Have a Distinctive Impact

Despite the above reasons for expecting women officeholders in the aggregate to have a distinctive impact, there are reasons to expect that women's impact will not be evident among all women or in all situations. Skeptics often point to examples of political women whom they perceive as *not* having had a distinctive gender-related impact — women who, they argue, have acted "just like men." Perhaps the most visible and commonly cited examples are Margaret Thatcher and Indira Ghandi. The existence of women leaders both abroad and in the United States whose actions seem unaffected by gender calls our attention to the possible role of both

⁷Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), "The Gender Gap in Presidential Voting: 1980-1988," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1989.

individual characteristics and situational constraints in influencing the extent to which women public officials might make a difference.

As past research by CAWP and by others has demonstrated, women who hold public office are not monolithic. They differ not only from men but also among themselves in their backgrounds, their political ideologies and their perceptions of their roles as public officeholders. These individual differences among officeholders are likely to affect the extent to which they have a distinctive gender-related impact on public policy and the political process. Consequently, while one might expect to find evidence of women making a difference in the aggregate, it would be unrealistic to expect gender to influence the behavior of every woman officeholder. Variation among women in impact is to be expected.

Similarly, certain types of political situations are likely to be more or less conducive to the expression of gender differences in impact. Variation in impact can be expected, for example, to be affected by the extent to which the process for selecting officeholders is centralized or decentralized as well as by the values of those who do the selecting. Many people, including party influentials, funders and voters, are involved in the selection of elected officials. In contrast, the selection of political appointees is more centralized. This gives those who select political appointees more potential for control over the types of women who become appointed officials; their values may lead them to choose women who will make no attempt to make a difference or, perhaps in some cases, to select women who are likely to try to have a gender-related impact.

Even though the values of selectors are less important in electoral politics because of the decentralized nature of the selection process, their values, nevertheless, may still affect impact. For example, compared to those women representing liberal constituencies, women who are elected by and represent conservative constituencies might differ in their impact, both in terms of what they might choose to do and in terms of what their constituents might permit them to do.

Characteristics of the institutions in which public officials serve also may affect the extent to which women in those institutions make a difference. Where institutional pressures, norms or leadership discourage women from behaving differently from their male colleagues, women may be less likely to have a distinctive impact. Where women officeholders are able to work together informally or are organized into a formal caucus, women may be more likely to make a difference.

Thus, while there are good reasons to expect to find that women public officials in the aggregate will have a distinctive impact, there also are good reasons to expect variations in impact both among women and across different officeholding situations.

The Reports

To assess whether and how women officeholders are making a distinctive gender-related impact on public policy and political processes, the Center for the American Woman and Politics pursued a dual research strategy. First, CAWP undertook its own project to study whether women make a difference — a systematic, broad overview of gender differences in the impact of state legislators on public policy and legislative institutions. The results of CAWP's research are compiled in *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures*, a separate volume in this series.

Second, CAWP awarded a series of small grants to scholars who wished to examine women's impact in public office. They studied various elected and appointed women at the local, state and national levels of government and in the legislative, executive and judicial branches. The grant recipients' reports are collected in this volume.

In many cases the scholars' conclusions mirror those of CAWP's study. Most share the theme that women in public office are having a distinctive impact on public policy and on the political process. For example, Susan Welch and Sue Thomas demonstrate very clearly that women state lawmakers in twelve states are reshaping the policy agenda. They find that women give greater priority than their male colleagues to bills dealing specifically with women and to bills addressing the problems of families and children. Furthermore, they conclude that increasing the proportions of women in public office increases the probability that these proposed bills are passed by legislatures.

In a similar vein, Catherine Havens and Lynne Healy provide evidence of women's impact as cabinet-level appointees in state government. They find that women holding high-ranking positions in Connecticut's executive branch were more likely than their male colleagues to give priority to shaping a work environment sensitive to the needs of working parents and children and supportive of gender equity for all. A number of women executives they interviewed were acutely and personally aware of sex discrimination and many felt isolated as high-level appointees. This awareness seemed to deepen their commitment to equal opportunity in the workplace. The discussion group conducted by Havens and Healy at the end of the project appeared to provide these women appointees with a foundation for future interaction with one another — an unintended consequence of the research.

Lyn Kathlene, Susan Clarke and Barbara Fox go beyond the question of differences between women's and men's policy agendas. Focusing on the Colorado State House of Representatives, they find that even though women and men were equally successful in getting their bills passed, women's bills overcame more obstacles on the way to passage. Women and men dealt differently with policy priorities that had failed to pass

during a session. Women were much more likely than men to continue to pursue policy innovations that had not passed, whereas most men interviewed felt it was important not to be too attached to a bill. Furthermore, women were more likely than men to propose innovative bills in the areas of children and family policy and education. The authors suggest that these and the other gender differences they find may be linked to gender differences in socialization and life experiences.

The potential for women to make a difference as policymakers is not confined to the state level. Janet Boles concludes in her study of elected officials in Milwaukee that local councilwomen have taken the lead in placing "women's issues" on the agenda and that they have successfully raised their male colleagues' awareness of women's issues. As a result, these women were successful in getting greater support for policies such as day care, domestic violence and sexual assault. As our urban areas face increasing federal cut backs and increased responsibility to address social problems, the fact that women can make a difference at this level matters greatly.

While the general theme of the reports in this volume is that political women do have a distinctive gender-related impact, women are not monolithic. Some women are more inclined to take a different course than others, and this diversity among women often reflects differences in ideology or life experiences. While demonstrating that women do have a distinctive impact, three scholars take a closer look at these factors.

Elaine Martin's analysis of state court judges directly addresses the question of ideological diversity among women. She compares feminist women, feminist men, non-feminist women and non-feminist men on a variety of questions. In "decisions" in hypothetical cases dealing with women's rights policies, gender *and* feminism both affected the probability of the judge making a pro-woman decision. Female judges were consistently more likely than men to say they would act in a manner supportive of women's rights. Feminist women were by far the most likely to arrive at pro-woman "decisions" in the hypothetical cases. Feminist men and non-feminist women reached similar decisions. Non-feminist men — the bulk of judges — were the least supportive of women's rights in these cases. Martin concludes that although women are not monolithic or uniformly feminist, women (feminist or non-feminist) on average make a difference in court enforcement of women's rights policies relative to their like-minded male counterparts.

The importance of assessing women's impact in the context of ideology and the institutional situation is a strong theme in Janann Sherman's essay on Margaret Chase Smith. A conservative woman serving in a conservative institution, Smith was a pioneer for women. She rejected feminism as an ideology, yet she cosponsored the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and played a critical role in some sex discrimination

legislation. Although she made a difference for women, her agenda and her ideology did not parallel those of feminists who led the reemerging women's movement of the 1960s.

With Jeanette Jennings' study, we move from a discussion of ideological diversity to an assessment of racial diversity among women. Jennings' essay provides suggestive evidence about the impact of African-American women mayors. These women confronted and overcame both race and sex discrimination in their political lives. Jennings' analysis reinforces the notion that differences in life experiences have a profound effect on what women do once they hold public office. The study shows the importance of, and need for, further research comparing the impact of women officeholders from different racial and cultural backgrounds.

Not all the scholars found convincing and consistent evidence that women have a distinctive impact in public office. Many factors influence women's impact as officeholders: the selection process; constraints posed by the nature of the position; and institutional norms.

Nancy McGlen and Meredith Sarkees examine women and men serving in appointed and high-level career civil service positions in the United States Department of State and the Department of Defense. Finding few differences in the foreign policy views of women and men, they suggest that the selection process and/or pressures to conform to institutional norms can determine whether women will make a difference in policy. Perhaps women who might challenge institutional norms do not choose to enter or are not selected for positions in these departments. Or perhaps women who obtain positions in these departments attempt to conform to institutional expectations. Regardless, their research illustrates that in a conservative administration or in a department where the ethos is hostile to women, the chances are lower that the women will have a distinctive impact.

Sue Tolleson Rinehart's study of women and men mayors of large cities and Susan Beck's study of members of local councils both suggest that women's impact in office will be conditioned by the environment. Each finds some evidence of gender differences in impact on institutional processes, but neither finds strong or consistent evidence of a gender difference in policy impact. Both Tolleson Rinehart and Beck find that women seem to exercise a different type of leadership style. Tolleson Rinehart concludes that women employ a more collegial style of leadership, and Beck reports that women officeholders are markedly more open to citizen participation.

Unlike Boles (who focused specifically on local legislators' gender differences in actions on six "women's issues"), neither Tolleson Rinehart nor Beck finds a difference in the overall policy agendas of women and men in local government. Both attribute this finding to the constraints of the job, yet their analyses differ. Tolleson Rinehart attributes the lack of

policy-related gender differences among the larger city mayors to two factors: 1) men becoming more comfortable pursuing an agenda which emphasizes social welfare policies; and 2) the increased severity of human services needs in urban areas since the early 1980s. Beck, in contrast, sees the nature of citizen demands on suburban local councils as limiting the ability of women to reshape an agenda where the principal demands are to keep taxes low and property values high.

Jeanie Stanley and Diane Blair's study of power in the Arkansas and Texas state legislatures suggests that when women legislators are a very small minority of lawmakers, when the professionalism of legislatures is low and when politics rely heavily on the old boy network, women may have difficulty being seen as effective players in the political game. While the women lawmakers accomplished many of their own policy goals, their issues were not the "power issues" (for example, business, insurance and banking). Entrenched views about the relative unimportance of issues that concerned many of these women were difficult to change with such small numbers of female legislators. As a result, male legislators did not consider their female colleagues to be very effective even though numerous women legislators saw themselves as effective on the issues of concern to them.

The cumulative picture emerging from these studies depicts women's increased presence in public office as distinctly influencing institutional processes as well as governmental policies considered and enacted (e.g., women's rights and children and family policies). Regardless of the level of office or the branch of government, and despite the fact that women are neither monolithic nor operate in environments that are equally amenable to a distinctive impact on policy, in most cases women are making a difference. Feminists are more likely than non-feminists to have a gender-related impact on policymaking; but among like-minded officeholders, a gender gap appears which frequently results in feminist men and non-feminist women acting similarly. Conservative women and liberal women may have different perspectives about policy, but conservative women in their own way have often pressed for gender equity, and this is particularly notable where they might be one of the few in a position that allows them to do so. Furthermore, racial and cultural differences in life experiences of women mean that women may differ in their views about which issues should be placed at the top of the policy agenda. African-American women officeholders who represent poorer constituencies may choose to pursue different priorities than those white women who happen to represent affluent constituents.

But the possibility that women can have a distinctive impact is influenced as well by the nature of the institution. First, the task of getting policies dealing with women, children and families passed is more difficult where there are only small numbers of women. Second, the selection

process can limit the potential for women to make a difference. If a selection process is centralized and employs a litmus test which promotes homogeneity of views among the women and men selected, the chances that women will have a distinctive impact on policy are reduced. Third, the norms of the institution — the kinds of issues it typically addresses, the issues considered "important," the pressure exerted by the constituents or colleagues and the extent to which precedent is firmly set (for example, in the case of judges) — may affect the ability of women to have a distinctive gender-related impact or the willingness/ability of their colleagues to recognize such an impact.

Most of these essays focus on the difference women make in public policy. However, the evidence regarding women's impact on process is provocative, and the implications make a strong case for increasing women's presence in public office in an era of low trust in government and low citizen participation in government. Some scholars find evidence that women attempt to bring citizens into the policymaking process, some report that many constituents felt more comfortable talking to women officeholders than to male officials, and others find that women exercised a leadership style more open to input from constituents and staff. Furthermore, personal experiences with sex discrimination had sensitized and enhanced women's commitment to gender equality in the workplace.

Viewed as a whole, the studies in *Gender and Policymaking* provide considerable evidence that women in office are having a distinctive impact on public policy and political processes. Some women may be more likely than other women to make a difference, and some political environments provide more opportunity for women to make a difference. Nevertheless, gender influences the actions of officeholders in most institutional situations examined. The cumulative message of these studies seems unavoidable: the under-representation of women in public office has profound consequences for society because it affects both the nature of the policies that are considered and enacted and the voices that are heard in the policymaking process.

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*Do Women in Public Office Make a Difference?**

Susan Welch and Sue Thomas

Surveys of women and men legislators in twelve state houses, along with in-depth interviews in six of these, suggest that women legislators are more likely to list among their priority bills legislation relating to children, the family or women. Furthermore, many women are in a position to act on these issues because women are more likely than men to serve on committees dealing with health, welfare and other human services. In these states, having more women in the legislature seemed to make it easier to pass legislation dealing with children, families or women.

Do women officeholders make a difference? Our research on state legislators suggests that they do. These conclusions are based on the results of surveys conducted in 1988 with men and women legislators in twelve states and interviews in 1988 and 1989 with women legislators in six of those states. These states include Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont and Washington. (Nebraska has a one house legislature; in the other states, legislators in the lower houses were surveyed.)

At the time the study was done, the proportion of women in the chambers surveyed ranged from slightly over 3 percent in Mississippi to nearly 31 percent in Washington.¹ All 226 women legislators were surveyed along with 371 males — thirty male legislators in each state, except in Vermont, where we sampled forty-one males.² The mail questionnaire provided us with comparative data about male and female legislators.

Sixty-three percent of the women and 46 percent of the male legislators responded. The in-person interviews were used to delve deeper into women's experiences in the legislature and the constraints they felt on

*Support for the project was received from the Center for the American Woman and Politics and from the National Science Foundation.

¹In 1988, the year the survey was administered, the proportion of women members in each house surveyed was as follows: Washington, 31 percent; Vermont, 27 percent; Arizona, 25 percent; South Dakota, 19 percent; Nebraska, 18 percent; Iowa, 18 percent; Illinois, 17 percent; North Carolina, 17 percent; California, 15 percent; Georgia, 13 percent; Pennsylvania, 7 percent; and Mississippi, 3 percent.

²Thirty was chosen somewhat arbitrarily. We planned to match the number of women in each state with an equal number of men, but decided to sample at least thirty men in each state. Only Vermont had over thirty women in its lower house, which is why it is the only state with a sample of men greater than thirty.

Women are more likely than men to list among their top five priority bills in the last session legislation regarding children and families and bills aimed specifically at women.

"[With] more women, the legislature would focus more on child care and other domestic issues such as education. You might even see more women interested in the same issues as men, but they will look at them in a different way."

Women not only give greater priority to issues relating to women and children, but they are in a better position to act on them. Women surveyed are more likely than men to serve on committees dealing with health and welfare.

their legislative behavior. In-person interviews were conducted in California, Nebraska, Mississippi, Georgia, Pennsylvania and Washington. A total of fifty-seven women legislators were interviewed between August 1988 and May 1989.³

We focused our study on three questions: Do women make a difference? Under what circumstances are they most likely to make a difference? And why do women make a difference?

How Do Women Make a Difference?

One of the ways women legislators make a difference is through their different policy priorities than male legislators. Women are more likely than men to list among their top five priority bills in the last session legislation regarding children and families. Thirty-eight percent of women had at least one bill dealing with these issues compared to only 13 percent of men. In addition, 10 percent of women had at least one bill on women's issues among their priorities compared to just 3 percent of men.⁴ Women, however, are somewhat less likely than men to give priority to bills primarily concerning business (43 percent vs. 59 percent).

One southern legislator we interviewed noted:

[With] more women, the legislature would focus more on child care and other domestic issues such as education. You might even see more women interested in the same issues as men, but they will look at them in a different way.

Another southern legislator speculated that if her legislature had a majority of women, there would be "the same problems in the state to deal with, but the legislature would also address child care, health and retirement more." A northeastern legislator echoed this by noting "there would be a shift in emphasis to human services in all areas." Said another from that region, "Social funding would go up and there would be more focus on environmental issues and less focus on business."

Women not only give greater priority to issues relating to women and children, but they are in a better position to act on them. Women surveyed are more likely than men to serve on committees dealing with

³Limited funds prevented us from conducting in-person interviews in all twelve states. However, we selected the six states where we conducted interviews to give the greatest diversity possible.

⁴Example of bills aimed specifically at women include: comparable worth, sexual harassment and domestic violence. Examples of children and family issues are day care, elder care, latch key programs, family leave and teen pregnancy prevention.

health and welfare (39 percent vs. 22 percent).⁵ In addition, proportionately, women sampled are more likely than men to be chairs of these particular committees (10 percent vs. 2 percent).

Women legislators' participation in legislative tasks helps determine whether they can be successful in enacting their priority bills into law. Research two decades ago found women legislators were less likely to speak on the floor and in committee, to engage in bargaining and to interact with lobbyists.⁶ Today, however, women are as likely as men to take part in all of these activities. They report speaking on the floor, participating fully in committees and engaging in bargaining and negotiating as often as the men legislators do. While these are neither direct measures of women's success in getting their priority bills passed, nor even measures of legislative skill, they do indicate that women no longer take a back seat in terms of the legislative activity necessary to get bills passed.

Under What Circumstances Are Women Likely to Make a Distinctive Contribution?

We tested the idea that the percentage of women in the legislature would affect women legislators' effectiveness in dealing with issues related to women and to children and families. We believed that as the proportion of women in the legislature increased, the attention given to these issues particularly relevant to women's lives would also increase. This is not just because the women themselves are more likely to think such issues are important, but also because, in the presence of other supportive women, women may be more likely to work on these issues and to make sure they are placed on the policy agenda. Moreover, in the presence of more than a token group of women, male legislators may be more attentive to women's issues as well. We also expected that in legislatures where women were a significant number, women would be more likely to join together formally or informally in women's caucus groups, thus increasing their legislative visibility and effectiveness.

Conversely, several impediments to acting on behalf of women's interests might exist where women are only a small proportion of the legislature. Women might be more hesitant about pushing so-called "women's issues" because these issues might not be seen as legitimate by male members or it might be difficult for women to organize to push

⁵This was also true in the 1960s and 1970s. See Irene Diamond, *Sex Roles in the Statehouse*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977.

⁶*Ibid.*; also see Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Political Woman*, New York: Basic Books, 1974.

"Sometimes women are more oriented toward social issues because of their background and training. But they are fearful of being labeled outside the mainstream if they pursue these."

"More women in the legislature will make a difference because on the women's issues I have dealt with, I had a core of support from women. Almost all of the women sign on and drag some men along. So, not only will there be more support for bills from women, there will be more male awareness."

"Fewer women would mean no comparable worth, no abortion initiatives and no state ERA. Compare our state with [those with] few women legislators. There are altogether different attitudes and legislation."

issues that may be perceived as narrow or related to a "special interest." As one northeastern legislator said:

Women's priorities are different from men's. Although women try to minimize their own interests, sometimes women are more oriented toward social issues because of their background and training. But they are fearful of being labeled outside the mainstream if they pursue these.

Prior research has indicated that when racial or gender minorities are less than about 15 percent of an organization, they are perceived as tokens and tend to be constrained in their behavior.⁷ Indeed, as we have already noted, in the days when women were a much smaller minority of most legislatures, their activities were much more limited than those of their male counterparts.

Several comments of those we interviewed supported the idea that increasing the number of women would make a difference for issues of concern to women because of the increased likelihood that men would support women's issues.

More women in the legislature will make a difference because on the women's issues I have dealt with, I had a core of support from women. Almost all of the women sign on and drag some men along. So, not only will there be more support for bills from women, there will be more male awareness.

One western legislator commented, "Men are more sensitive to women's issues because of the presence of women — we've had years of educating these guys." Others concurred in the importance of numbers:

If there were 2 percent women in the legislature, you might not see some quality of life issues such as the environment and children's issues get raised. If there were 50 percent women, there would be an emphasis on issues that women are likely to champion.

Fewer women would mean no comparable worth, no abortion initiatives and no state ERA. Compare our state with [those with] few women legislators. There are altogether different attitudes and legislation.

⁷Rosabeth Kanter, "Some Effects of Proportion on Group Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977): 965-990.

An important measure of the impact of women legislators is whether legislatures with more women pass more legislation relating to women. In other words, women could have quite different priorities than men but not be successful in getting their priority bills passed. Consequently, we examined the relationship between the proportion of women in these legislatures and the success of legislators in getting bills relating to women, children and families passed. Success was measured by whether the legislator reported that each of his or her priority bills had passed both chambers of the legislature (Table 1).

Table 1
Proportion of Priority Women, Children and Family Bills Passed

<u>Proportion of Women Members</u>	<u>Men's Bills</u>	<u>Women's Bills</u>
Less than 20%		
Washington	11%	30%
Vermont	0%	11%
Arizona	18%	13%
More than 10%, but less than 20%		
South Dakota	12%	23%
Nebraska	7%	30%
Iowa	15%	62%
Illinois	23%	37%
North Carolina	17%	24%
California	52%	38%
Georgia	8%	25%
Less than 10%		
Pennsylvania	0%	20%
Mississippi	0%	0%
Total Passed	13%	29%

Women's priority bills concerning women, children and families were much more likely to be passed than men's priority bills on similar topics. This was true in almost all of the twelve states.

We first found that women's priority bills concerning women, children and families were much more likely to be passed than men's priority bills on similar topics (29 percent vs. 13 percent). This was true in almost all of the twelve states. Perhaps this is because women put more energy and effort into passage of these bills than do men, or perhaps it is due to women having greater credibility on these matters. Thus, women seem to make a difference not only in giving greater priority to bills relating to women's concerns, but also working to get them passed.

Having less than 10 percent women's membership seems to be a deterrent to successful passage of these bills.

It appears that either a formal caucus or a high proportion of women members can help women in particular achieve success in passing their priority legislation.

"The caucus is very effective in the legislature. When the bills go before committee, the legislators are afraid to vote against a power block."

Looking more specifically at the rate at which priority bills on women, children and the family were passed, regardless of whether they were male or female legislators' priority bills, the two states with the lowest proportions of women also had the lowest proportion of these bills that passed. Thus, having less than 10 percent women's membership seems to be a deterrent to successful passage of these bills.

An important predictor of success in passing women's legislation also appears to be the extent to which women work together toward specific goals. The top five states in the production of legislation on women, children and the family include California, Iowa, Illinois, Washington and North Carolina. Except for Washington, these are the only states of the twelve that had formal women's legislative caucuses. However, at the time of the survey Washington had the highest percentage of women legislators among the states we examined. Thus, it appears that either a formal caucus or a high proportion of women members can help women in particular achieve success in passing their priority legislation.

Comments from women legislators in states with caucuses indicate they are having an impact. For example, one woman legislator observed:

The caucus is very effective in the legislature. When the bills go before committee, the legislators are afraid to vote against a power block.

Said another about the success of the caucus in her state, "The caucus can make an impact.... Women work harder, they want good policy and are less egomaniacal."

This discussion begs the chicken and egg question, however. Perhaps women's caucuses are organized in states where the women legislators are strongly committed to promoting legislation of importance to women. A woman from a state without a caucus, for example, noted that "women in the legislature work together quite well," indicating that a formal caucus might be mostly a byproduct of strong legislative activity rather than a cause of it. Nonetheless, it is important to note that caucus activity is linked with legislative success of priority legislation dealing with women, children and families.

Why Do Women Make a Difference?

Women could be making a difference for a number of reasons. Women in legislatures, like women in the mass public, have slightly more liberal public policy attitudes, and women legislators, compared to their men counterparts, give a higher priority to women's children and family issues. Moreover, women disproportionately serve on human service

committees that handle issues dealing with women and families. These are preconditions for women to have a distinctive influence.

Furthermore, women are no longer a small minority in most legislatures. Where they have become a more sizeable minority, they appear better able to place on the legislative agenda issues of importance to them and other women. Compared to earlier research, women now may be more willing to give higher priority to women's issues and family issues than they did in earlier eras and, where they are no longer a small minority, they are better able to organize either formally or informally. For example, the existence of a woman's caucus or high proportions of women officeholders appear to be related to the successful passage of women's legislation.

Another change that has made women more effective is their increased legislative activity. Women work just as hard as men, or harder, to get their priority legislation passed.

Women are not hesitant about working on issues important to women, children and families. Perhaps this is a reflection of the greater legitimacy of issues relating to women and children compared to previous decades, which in turn might be due to the impact of the women's movement. The increased confidence of women policymakers in their own legitimacy and the support they receive from the like-minded others must play a role here too.

In sum, women are making a distinct contribution in U.S. state legislatures. Their contribution appears to be most distinct when they are not tokens and when they organize to work together on mutual goals.

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Cabinet-Level Appointees in Connecticut: Women Making a Difference

Catherine M. Havens and Lynne M. Healy

Based on interviews with all eighteen women appointees to executive positions (commissioners and deputy commissioners) in the state of Connecticut and with a random sample of eighteen of their male colleagues, women appointees are making a difference in public policy and in leadership. Although only seven of the eighteen considered themselves feminist, women appointees were more supportive than men were of feminist policies on abortion, child care and gay rights. Family leave was a more important priority for the women than for the men. Both women and men believed that women had had an impact on policies by making the policy agenda more sensitive to children and family issues, by increasing equality of opportunity in employment practices and by increasing sensitivity to the impact of policies on women. Women believed they must overcome obstacles their male colleagues do not face as leaders and they felt isolated from other women officeholders; yet they appeared to exercise leadership in a manner that was less hierarchical, more consensual, more open and more responsive to the concerns and suggestions of their subordinates.

Introduction

Much of the research to date on women in politics has focused on women's career patterns, on numerical representation and on discrimination issues. However, in recent years the number of women in state government has increased, and in some states at some levels of office, women officeholders are no longer present at token levels. The implications of women's increased presence in these once virtually exclusively male institutions are unclear.

On the one hand, some would argue that women officeholders will conform to the preexisting norms that have been established by men. No shifts in policy or program would be expected from the infusion of women into the leadership ranks. That does not mean increasing women's presence in government is unimportant — fairness requires equal access as a right, and that access should be open to ensure election of the very best talent from the whole population for the greater social good. Women's impact in public office would simply be the same as men's impact.

On the other hand, some believe women will bring unique perspectives which will make a difference in policymaking decisions and in the way leadership is exercised. These observers vary in their explanations of why women and men will behave differently, and their explanations range from unique contributions emanating from different life

experiences and socialization to a view of women as holders of radically different values which will force changes in organizations.

To explore whether women officeholders actually are making a difference in public policy and leadership, we studied women appointed to executive offices in Connecticut. Our purposes were: 1) to compare women appointees with their male counterparts in their approaches to, and impact on, public policies; 2) to examine women executives' perspectives, values, priorities and level of feminist identification; and 3) to analyze personal and environmental factors which facilitate or impede the ability of women executives to affect policy outcomes and processes.

We chose Connecticut for several reasons. First, compared to other states, it had an adequate pool of women in commissioner and deputy commissioner positions in state agencies. In 1989, when the study was done, eighteen women held these positions in the state, representing 29 percent of all such appointees. Second, Connecticut has a tradition of women holding high public office. Ella Grasso was elected governor in 1974, the first woman in the nation elected in her own right to head a state government. In 1989, two of the state's six members of the U.S. House of Representatives were women, as was the state's chief justice. Of the eighteen women who were high-level appointees, a number were not only the first women to hold their positions in the state, but were among the few nationally to hold such positions. These included the acting attorney general, the commissioner of environmental protection, the commissioner of labor and the commissioner of higher education. Third, at the time the study was proposed, the state was experiencing a favorable economic climate, with a significant surplus in the state budget. Policymakers were enthusiastic about new initiatives to solve the state's problems, so it seemed a good time to evaluate the ability of executives to affect policy priorities. Unfortunately, before the study began, the state's economic picture worsened, so our design had to be refocused on the ability of executives to influence policy despite constraints on spending.

Our research design had three stages. First, we conducted baseline structured interviews with all of the top-level women, nine female commissioners and nine deputy commissioners. We also interviewed a random sample of their male counterparts, including fourteen deputy commissioners and four commissioners. All thirty-six officials contacted participated in the study. The interviews focused on the impact these individuals had on public policy, political processes and governing institutions. Second, we asked women appointees additional questions at the end of the structured interviews. This semi-structured segment focused on their perspectives about their jobs, their priorities and the conditions which affected their performance. Finally, the women participated in a focus group to amplify the individual findings.

We found a difference in the types of agencies represented by the men and women in our sample, but we did not find differences in their responsibilities.

We found a difference in the types of agencies represented by the men and women in our sample, but we did not find differences in their responsibilities. Women were more likely to be concentrated in the human services departments. Thirteen of the eighteen women, but only eight of the men, identified themselves as being part of the state's human services cabinet (a special committee comprised of agencies dealing with human services issues broadly defined). However, the men and women described in similar fashion the types of responsibilities they had. Generally their work was evenly divided among making policy, implementing policy and managing their departments.

As might be expected in a Democratic administration, 91 percent of our respondents were Democrats. Among them, 94 percent of the women, compared to 76 percent of the men, identified themselves as moderate, somewhat liberal or very liberal. One-third of the women, but only 6 percent of the men, called themselves very liberal. The women's sample included one African-American. The sample of men included two African-Americans and one Latino.

The majority of the men and women in our sample had been in their appointed positions for four years or less, coinciding with the term of the governor. Five of the women, but none of the men, served more than seven years in their positions; all of those had been appointed by the late Governor Ella Grasso.

Views on Politics and Policies

As a group, the women commissioners and deputy commissioners were strongly supportive of feminist positions on issues. Large majorities supported government provision of child care (94 percent), ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (94 percent), a guaranteed right to abortion for adult women (89 percent) and strong enforcement of sexual harassment laws (94 percent). A smaller majority, but still two-thirds, believe minors should have the right to abortion without parental consent.

Women and men differed most sharply on four of the fifteen policy questions. Women appointees were much more likely than the men to agree that a gay rights bill should be passed (with 63 percent of the women, but only 12 percent of the men, strongly agreeing); to support minors' right to abortion without parental consent (67 percent of the women strongly agreeing but only 41 percent of the men); and to support adult women's abortion rights (72 percent of the women, but only 44 percent of the men, strongly agreeing). Women were also substantially less likely than men to fear that a family leave policy would hurt business and government (76 percent of women strongly disagreeing it would, compared with 21 percent of men). The women appointees' greater

Five of the women, but none of the men, served more than seven years in their positions; all of those had been appointed by the late Governor Ella Grasso.

Women appointees were much more likely than the men to agree that a gay rights bill should be passed; to support minors' right to abortion without parental consent; and to support adult women's abortion rights. Women were also substantially less likely than men to fear that a family leave policy would hurt business and government.

Appointees' priorities for management of their departments also suggested that women could make a difference in public office because they may be more concerned with making their workplaces responsive to the needs of working parents.

support of feminist policies certainly suggests the potential that women can make a difference.

Appointees' priorities for management of their departments also suggested that women could make a difference in public office because they may be more concerned with making their workplaces responsive to the needs of working parents. We asked the appointees to rank the relative importance of four possible priorities for their offices: maintaining current hours and levels of service; maintaining current staffing levels; maintaining current office procedures; and providing unpaid family leave for employees. While both men and women ranked maintaining current hours and levels of service at the top, men gave the least value to family leave. Eight women, but only one man, ranked family leave as one of the top two priorities.

Identification with Feminism

A number of the women appointees rejected the feminist label, yet expressed support for policies included in a feminist agenda. All women respondents were asked to define feminism and to say, within their own definitions, whether they considered themselves feminists. Eleven women said they did not consider themselves feminists, while seven said they did. Several offered more than one definition of feminism, and twelve of those definitions can be categorized as negative; these involved language such as "considering women only," "a battle between the sexes," "a win/lose situation" and "concerned with women only." Nine responses can be categorized as positive. These employed descriptions such as "fairness and equality," "self-respect and pride," "talent and important contributions" and "concern with how policy issues and workplace issues affect women."

Although the women often shunned self-identification as feminists, most of them related "war stories" of experiences where they had been confronted with sexism or sexist behavior. Several had signs or posters in their offices with feminist sayings. Their awareness of, and empathy for, the unique problems that women face certainly bode well for making a difference in the lives of their department staff members and for public policy more generally. An important question is whether they *act* in a manner that will make a difference.

Although the women often shunned self-identification as feminists, most of them related "war stories" of experiences where they had been confronted with sexism or sexist behavior.

Impact of the Women Appointees

To assess the actual impact of women appointees on state government, we investigated a number of areas where gender difference might be observed. We looked at women's impact on programs and

policies, managerial and leadership styles, workplace behavior, attitudes and morale, external relationships and image. We also examined how women and men analyze and approach power and whether women have a special commitment to the advancement of other women.

Respondents were asked to assess the effect of increased numbers of women in executive and policy positions on several areas of activity, including: the extent to which leaders consider how policies or programs will affect women as a group; the way managers conduct themselves in settings such as cabinet meetings; the extent to which business is conducted in formal, rather than informal or social settings; and priorities for state expenditures.

In two of these areas, at least half of both the male and female samples agreed that women were making a difference, but the men perceived women as having a greater impact than the women did. More men (88 percent) than women (56 percent) said that the presence of women has had an influence on the extent to which leaders consider the impact of policies on women as a group. More men also said that the presence of women has changed the ways that managers conduct themselves in meetings (72 percent of the men, compared to 50 percent of the women). On the other hand, women were more likely to agree that the presence of women has changed the extent to which business is conducted in informal settings (50 percent of the women, 29 percent of the men) and to agree that the presence of women has had an effect on state expenditure priorities (53 percent of the women, 37 percent of the men).

Many men and women appointees believe that women have had an impact on policies, often shaping the policy agenda. Examples volunteered most often were: issues affecting families and children, child care and other work issues for women; equal employment policies; and an increased tendency in each department to approach policy analysis, development and implementation with a special sensitivity to the potential impact on women workers, women clients or communities.

Impact on the Work Environment

In our interviews with the eighteen women appointees, two-thirds of them believed that the work environment has changed because of the influx of women in middle and upper ranges of agencies. Among those changes cited were: greater sensitivity to family issues, such as concern for children (ten responses); greater flexibility in the work environment and work schedule, such as parental and maternity leave, flextime, day care, bringing children to the office and job-sharing (ten responses); and an improved and more humane work atmosphere because people acted

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more civilized, more emotions were expressed and there was higher morale among female workers (six responses).

A large proportion of women interviewed indicated that they were committed to helping other women advance, both within and outside their agencies. Sixteen said they had helped other women move up. Eleven said they had brought other women into executive positions in their agencies. Nine indicated that they helped bring women into executive positions in other agencies, and eight indicated that they encouraged women to prepare for and seek executive positions. (A number expressed frustration with the civil service system, which traditionally favors male longevity in hiring for senior positions just below the executive level.) In describing other ways they assisted women to move up, five mentioned mentoring or being a role model and ten cited encouraging women to seek training, education and promotion within or outside their state agencies.

Not surprisingly, when asked why they thought it was important for women to be represented in leadership positions, majorities of both groups agreed that it was important to have women in executive positions in state government because different policies may result from their perspectives (89 percent of the women and 78 percent of the men). However, only 39 percent of the women and 17 percent of the men were willing to go so far as to agree that women should be encouraged to seek leadership positions because their radically different values would force new ways of looking at and doing things. The majority of both genders strongly agreed that women should be encouraged to seek leadership positions so that the very best talent could be selected from the whole population. However, men were more likely than women to agree that women should be encouraged to seek leadership positions for reasons of fairness and equity (61 percent of the men, compared to 39 percent of the women).

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Power and Leadership

Both men and women were asked to assess how much power they felt they had, based on two different definitions. "Position power" goes with the title or position and is often described as the ability to get things done because of the position held. "Personal power" is inherent to the individual and is defined as the ability to influence others because of who one is, what qualities one possesses and what one does.

There was little gender difference in assessing the degree of position power — the ability to get things done through use of their positions. Men were only slightly more likely than women to give themselves a rating at the upper end of the scale. There was, however, a significant difference between women's and men's ratings of personal power. Fifty-six percent of the women, compared to 17 percent of the men, rated themselves at the

upper end of the scale for personal power — their ability to get things done through use of themselves, independent of their positions. These results, in combination with the stories women and men told us about their experiences in office, suggest that women were more likely than men to rely on personal influence as a way of doing business.

In the section of the questionnaire administered to women only, we asked whether respondents believed that men and women approach power differently. Fifteen of the eighteen women said yes. When asked how women and men approached power differently, they often offered more than one description. They sometimes offered multiple examples and their descriptions of this phenomenon, given in response to our open-ended questions, fell into several clusters. Nine women felt that men have a need for, and are more concerned about, external manifestations of power. Five stated that men are more likely to use power for personal gain or personal motives. Three responded that women are more likely to use power to accomplish public policy goals or to carry out an agenda connected to values. Three believed that men enjoy power more and three responded that women are more uncomfortable with power. These different approaches to power were underscored in the focus group discussion, where a particularly strong theme was that women do not need power to feel good about themselves because of the way they are socialized.

Women also saw themselves as facing obstacles with which their male colleagues did not have to contend. Twelve agreed with the statement that women have to work harder than men to have their contributions taken seriously. Thirteen agreed that women tend to employ different tactics than men to get their contributions to decisions accepted. In expanding on their responses to these two questions, several women mentioned that: women must be more prepared and not make mistakes; women must avoid being emotional; women must be more aggressive and persistent; and women must be less confrontational, less visible, more persuasive and strategic.

As a way of assessing what might be different about leadership styles in a specific situation, both male and female executives were asked how they would respond to a gubernatorial directive to cut the departmental budget by 3 percent within a month. Appointees were asked to discuss who would be involved in the decision, describe what structure would be used and the role they would assume in the process. While intended as a hypothetical situation, this was, in fact, quite close to what was going on, and responses may well have been based on what actually happened.

Some gender similarities did emerge from the responses of the fifteen women and thirteen men who answered this question. Both men and women identified themselves as the ultimate or final decision-makers within the scope of their authority. There was little gender difference in preference for formal as opposed to informal communication with staff on

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the issue. Both men and women indicated a preference for group meetings, with women slightly more likely to supplement this interaction with written materials and proposals.

However, comparisons of women's and men's discussions of how they handle the cutback situation also pointed to gender differences. The biggest occurred in three areas. First, men and women differed in views about the ideal working group. Most men preferred a small executive group of two or three top staff as their working group (ten out of thirteen), while most women would ideally expand their working group beyond the executive staff level to include department heads and sometimes actual line staff (eleven out of fifteen). Second, they differed in the function they would assign such a working group. Women were more likely than men to see the purpose of their working group as reaching consensus on what should be done (seven out of fifteen women appointees), whereas men preferred that the working group be a place where information was exchanged (eleven out of thirteen). Finally, women and men would involve their staffs to different degrees in decisions about cuts. All the men indicated that they would inform the staff of the final decision, while nearly half of the women indicated that staff would be engaged in making the final decision.

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Networks and Support Systems

We wanted to know whether women use different networks than men in accomplishing their work. While the responses provided little or no information on this question, they did show some interesting gender differences.

Men and women were asked whether they had informal or quasi-formal work-related networks within their agencies, across other state agencies or within other branches of state government. If they did, they were asked to describe who made up those networks, with particular emphasis on gender composition. Eleven of the eighteen men indicated that they had informal work-related networks within their agencies, compared with six out of eighteen women. Fifteen out of eighteen men had such networks outside of their agencies but within state government, compared to eight out of seventeen women. In describing their networks, women consistently said they were mixed in gender and usually based on past working relationships. Ten out of the eighteen men said their networks were all or mostly male.

Both within and outside their agencies, women most often preferred to use the formal structure to accomplish their work. In discussing this in more detail in the focus group, several themes emerged. The women executives felt isolated from other women in government, often describing

the loneliness at the top. They were concerned with being accused of favoritism, especially within their agencies. They felt that the informal system was being used to bypass them, and they did not want to engage in any behavior that would set them apart.

In the questions about networks, women did not identify any particular networks of women or support system they employed. However, a theme we heard often during the interviews was a sense of isolation from other women in comparable positions. Although almost all the women appointees said they had thought before about the questions asked during the interview, they had not discussed them with female colleagues. In fact, a major theme of the focus group was how important and unique it was to be able to discuss these issues with one another. The women expressed a desire to have a network of women in executive office in the state, and they were pleased that the research project had brought them together to discuss these issues.

The women executives felt isolated from other women in government, often describing the loneliness at the top. They were concerned with being accused of favoritism, especially within their agencies.

Conclusion

In ending our interviews with women appointees, we asked the central question of this research project: Do women in appointed public office make a difference? The answer delivered by each respondent was yes, and we reached the same conclusion in analyzing our findings.

The Connecticut women appointees were more liberal in their political philosophies than their male counterparts and more supportive of feminist viewpoints as well as positions related to individual civil rights. They valued public policies that enhance family life and were more flexible in allowing the workplace to accommodate the needs of families.

Both women and men believed that it was important for women to be represented in leadership positions because their perspectives would result in different policies. Both believed that women had an influence on leaders considering the impact of policies on women as a group and on the expenditure priorities of the state. Our findings supported the conclusion that women in appointed positions have an impact on public policy and that they often shape the agenda. Policies affecting women, families and children were often their priorities. They could be particularly effective in accomplishing these policy objectives because of their heavy representation in human service agencies.

The women we studied believed they had something unique to contribute because they were women, and some felt that their radically different values would force new ways of looking at and doing things. They saw the power resulting from their positions as a means of accomplishing goals for the common good. They did not value power for personal gain. They seemed to value a leadership style that combined

The women...saw the power resulting from their positions as a means of accomplishing goals for the common good. They did not value power for personal gain.

strength and responsibility with consensus building and participatory decision-making. They preferred including people as part of the decision process. They also voiced the desire to help other individuals. Women do indeed make a difference. With growing awareness and support, they can continue to make these contributions.

Ways Women Politicians are Making a Difference

Lyn Kathlene, Susan E. Clarke and Barbara A. Fox

Although women and men members of the Colorado State House of Representatives in 1989 were equally successful in getting their legislation passed and signed into law, legislation introduced by women was treated differently in committee from that proposed by their male colleagues. In addition, there were five important differences between the women's and men's bills:

- 1) Women brought new ideas to the legislature. While the topics addressed by women's and men's bills in general were similar, the innovative bills women introduced were more likely than those of men to address education or family/children issues.
- 2) If the innovations proposed by female representatives were not readily accepted, the women pursued them over the course of several years.
- 3) Women more often proposed spending state monies for direct services to help people, rather than for government commissions and regulatory bodies.
- 4) Women more frequently than men proposed legislation to protect public interests and produced regulatory bills which were designed with no direct costs to the state.
- 5) Women more often designed legislation that utilized government agencies.

These gender differences among lawmakers may be linked to differences in the socialization and life experiences of men and women — to women's greater concern with interpersonal relationships and caring, in contrast with men's greater concern with objectivity.

Introduction

In this research, we focus on the public policy impact of women's and men's differing socialization experiences. Our approach does not assume that women will pursue different policy interests from men once in office; nor does it assume that elected women are more capable or more inclined to pursue feminist or other issues that affect women more than men. Rather, we believe that women's and men's differing world experiences mold their political attitudes and, ultimately, shape their responses to a broad range of policy issues. Consequently, we would expect these differences to be reflected both in the methods employed in implementing policy and in legislators' views about policymaking.

In 1989, the state of Colorado ranked fifth among the fifty states in the number of women elected to the legislature. As is the case in most bicameral legislatures, the Colorado House representation of women exceeded that in the Senate. The twenty-two women in the House comprised 33 percent of House members, while the Senate had seven

women, 20 percent of all members. This project focused exclusively on the Colorado House due to the greater number of women.

Of the 360 bills introduced in the Colorado House in 1989, a sample of sixty-eight were selected. We taped and transcribed bill discussions, beginning with the sponsor's introduction in the first committee hearing and continuing through the final floor debate in the House. A large variety of issue areas were included among the bills sampled, thus enabling us to test the hypothesis that women were making an impact on more than just "women's issues." In addition, sixty-one of the sixty-five members of the House were interviewed for approximately forty-five minutes each. The interviews covered questions about personal political motivations, views of the legislative process, priority bills in the 1989 session and specific background questions relating to the bills they had proposed that were included in our data base. We analyzed committee discussions and interactions, categorized bills (as initially introduced) in various ways and (when House members had sponsored one of the sixty-eight bills we selected) linked personal attitudes and views of lawmakers to the legislation they sponsored.

Many of our findings point to a gendered approach to policymaking.

Many of our findings point to a gendered approach to policymaking. Other possible factors, such as party affiliation, age or tenure in the legislature, proved to be only weakly or not at all related to policymaking.¹

Women and Policy: Approaching Problems Differently

As we expected, women were interested in a broad range of issue areas. Looking at all bills introduced in the House, we did not find any substantial differences in sponsorship of bills focusing on different issue areas, although men tended to sponsor slightly more business legislation while women tended to sponsor somewhat more health care legislation. Table 1 shows the types of bills sponsored by men and women.

Additionally, we did not find any gender differences in bill success rates. Overall, 196 bills (54 percent) of the original 360 bills became law. Fifty-two percent of the female-sponsored bills and 55 percent of the male-sponsored bills became law.

Women's bills received fundamentally different treatment in the legislative process than did the men's bills.

However, this simple indicator is somewhat misleading. Women's bills received fundamentally different treatment in the legislative process than did the men's bills, partly due to women's sponsorship of complex innovative bills, to women's propensity to sponsor bills with fiscal impact

¹Analysis of race could not be conducted because the vast majority of lawmakers serving are white and too few lawmakers in our sample are members of minority groups.

Table 1: Percentage Breakdown of Bill Issue Area by Sex of Sponsor

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Business	15%	8%	13%
Civil Liberties	1	4	2
Crime	7	8	7
Education	4	4	4
Environment	7	5	6
Family/Children	6	8	7
Health Care	5	10	7
Legal	16	17	16
Public Sector	22	19	20
Social Services	2	5	3
Tax	10	8	10
Transportation	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	100%	100%	100%
Total Number of Bills	(227)	(133)	(360)

and to women's use of less conventional and less politically acceptable problem solving methods. Among gendered legislative treatment patterns of particular interest:

- female-sponsored bills were more likely to be assigned to more than one House committee hearing (39 percent) than male-sponsored bills (27 percent), thus making bill passage more time-consuming and difficult;
- female-sponsored bills were subject to somewhat longer discussions in the first committee hearing (an average of sixty-seven minutes) than male-sponsored bills (an average of fifty-four minutes); and
- female-sponsored bills received twice as much hostile witness testimony. An average of 12 percent of the witnesses spoke against female-sponsored bills.²

Yet, despite these barriers and the additional effort needed to move their bills through the process, women were as successful as men in getting their legislation passed and signed into law.

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²Although our focus was the House, other analysis not discussed here shows that these patterns were generally repeated in the Senate.

Women brought new ideas to the legislature. Women were more likely to propose an innovative idea rather than modify existing laws.

The women's education bills usually assumed that the targeted population was already motivated toward the policy goal and that what was needed was the social or political opportunity for these citizens and groups to pursue their desires.

Men's education bills usually assumed that the target population needed to be influenced, encouraged or coerced to meet the policy goal.

Looking in depth at the sixty-eight taped bills, we found five ways elected women in Colorado approached public policymaking differently from men.

Difference 1: Women brought new ideas to the legislature

Women were more likely to propose an innovative idea rather than modify existing laws. Innovative legislation dealt with new areas for public legislation, new solutions to old problems or new programs in the state. It was characteristically complex, typically including a legislative declaration to clarify and state the social intent, goals to be met, the method for solving the problem, the agency or group responsible for implementing it and the funding source. Women sponsored innovative bills more often than did men (73 percent vs. 48 percent). About half of the bills men sponsored, in contrast to about a quarter of those sponsored by women, modified existing laws or updated old laws to conform to changes made elsewhere. Both men's and women's innovative bills usually had a fiscal impact (more than 70 percent of the bills by both sexes) which impeded passage in a particularly tight budget year.

While the issue areas of men's and women's bills did not differ overall, the issue areas of innovative bills did differ by gender. Of the twelve issue areas shown in Table 1, nearly half (47 percent) of the female-sponsored innovative bills were education or family/children bills compared to only 13 percent of the male-sponsored innovative bills. Moreover, the women's education bills usually assumed that the targeted population was already motivated toward the policy goal and that what was needed was the social or political opportunity for these citizens and groups to pursue their desires. Women's bills extended services to children and adults by establishing full-day kindergartens across the state; creating the option for parents to choose the public school which would best meet the needs of their child; and creating adult education programs leading to the high school diploma.

On the other hand, men's education bills usually assumed that the target population needed to be influenced, encouraged or coerced to meet the policy goal. Their bills attempted to keep children in school through positive incentives such as a school dropout prevention act that institutionalized numerous programs targeted at high-risk children and negative sanctions such as requiring sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds to be enrolled in school in order to be eligible for a driver's license.

Both men and women proposed new ideas in the area of health care, but women's bills more often provided direct health services (e.g., mammography screening or extension of Medicaid benefits to children in households up to 150 percent of the poverty line), while men's bills more often extended community health protection through regulation (e.g.,

infectious waste disposal) or set up information bases (e.g., the Rural Health Care Commission).

Difference 2: Women were persistent about their new ideas

When a new innovative bill failed to pass, as about three-fourths did in 1989, women were significantly more likely than men to carry the bill again in the following years. Twenty-seven percent of the female-sponsored bills in 1989 were innovative bills that had been tried in a previous session, compared to only 6 percent of the male-sponsored bills. A number of women remarked that it often takes two, three, even four times to get a piece of innovative legislation through the process. The year a bill is introduced often is the time to acquaint people with the idea and to begin building a coalition of support for subsequent sessions.

While men, too, acknowledged this legislative resistance to new ideas, they were less likely to continue pressing failed issues from past sessions. The men who introduced innovative legislation approached their roles more as initiators rather than caretakers of innovative legislation. Women were more likely to retry not only their own previously failed innovative bills, but other legislators' (often women's but also men's) failed innovative bills as well. The importance of, rather than credit for, the issue was often mentioned by the women as the reason for carrying a previously failed bill.

These divergent behaviors arise from very different attitudes towards public policymaking. Women talked frequently about the need to "believe in an issue" before investing time and effort in a bill. Even when a bill failed to pass, women did not necessarily see the attempt as a failure, but rather as time well-spent laying the groundwork for future introductions of the issue. When asked about their future legislative priorities, only women mentioned reintroducing bills that had failed. Men described a successful legislator as one who did not feel "married to a bill"; that is, the sponsor needed to have distance between himself and the issue in order to allow changes or accept its failure. For the men, "having an interest" in the issue was necessary, but being emotionally involved was likely to harm one's political judgment.

These differing views about policymaking are clearly linked to gendered behaviors. Women's persistence in reintroducing innovative legislation grows out of their longer-range view of the process. For them, final success is not measured by one year or even one term in office. As one woman put it, one of her major responsibilities as a state legislator was "to look long-term in passing legislation." Close attachment to the issue is needed to carry and lobby for a difficult bill known to have failed before. Men's propensity to not reintroduce innovative legislation fits with their view of detachment from an issue. They need to let go of legislation that has failed in order to focus their energies on other bills that session or

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Women were more likely than men to want to spend state monies to provide direct services to people, rather than to fund indirect commissions and regulatory bodies.

Women were more likely than men to sponsor protective regulatory bills that were designed so that they had no direct cost to the state.

Women were more likely than men to use government agencies to implement the stated policy goal when money was involved.

new bills in the next session. With this detachment, men are less persistent and less likely to reintroduce failed issues in following years.

Difference 3: Women's legislation more often targeted spending directly to help people

Women were more likely than men to want to spend state monies to provide direct services to people, rather than to fund indirect commissions and regulatory bodies. Sixty-three percent of the women's bills with fiscal impact provided direct cash or in-kind services to people, compared to only 22 percent of the men's fiscal impact bills. Half of the women's spending bills dealt with policy that distributes benefits to a wide range of individuals, such as providing equal access to library services, property tax relief or full-day kindergarten.

The majority of men's fiscal impact bills were either protective regulatory (39 percent), seeking to protect citizens by banning negative activities or encouraging positive activities, or redistributive (28 percent), providing benefits to a specific group of people at the expense of another group of people. The regulatory bills spent state money on commissions or regulation through licensing bodies. Examples include the commissioning of the Air Quality Improvement Committee or authorizing the Department of Health to promulgate and enforce rules regulating hazardous waste disposal. While men's redistributive bills did spend monies through cash transfers or in-kind services, these tended to provide more indirect benefits to the target population than did the women's redistributive bills.

Difference 4: Women designed no-cost protective regulatory legislation

Women were more likely than men to sponsor protective regulatory bills that were designed so that they had no direct cost to the state. This contrasted sharply with men's approach to regulation (discussed earlier), which relied heavily on commissions and licensing procedures that cost the state money. Women's protective regulatory bills relied more on the private sector (e.g., by mandating insurance benefits) and the court system through granting legal remedies (e.g., bad check collection, child custody proceedings and citizen recourse in case of inappropriate political uses of public funds).

Difference 5: Women proposed more accountable policy solutions

Women were more likely than men to use government agencies to implement the stated policy goal when money was involved. Women's preferred methods for implementing policy included: direct government involvement; direct transfer of benefits to the targeted population, either as cash or in-kind services; and visible programs that can be scrutinized by the legislature on a regular basis (usually annually). Men, on the other

hand, tended not to favor government agencies but opted instead for indirect government involvement (e.g., public/private contracting and spending money on political infrastructure such as commissions), and they tended to design programs without a legislative oversight requirement. Both men and women used administrative procedures (individual determination of eligibility) rather than automatic eligibility procedures.

When discussing state monies, men talked in more general and abstract terms like "holding down state taxes" or designing "equitable tax policies"; only women talked about the use of state money in very specific ways. Monitoring how the money was spent was often on women's priority lists, as exemplified by these comments:

My most important priority is ensuring value for the taxpayer dollars. [I want to make] sure that we aren't spending money forever on something that never did anybody any good.... Even if I'm a voice in a wilderness, that doesn't bother me.

My second priority is to be sensitive to the human side of it, those issues that are involved with people...but also try to be realistic and to be as frugal as possible, to try and get the most out of the dollar.

Interestingly, women's use of efficient policy methods changes over time in the legislature. It was newer female legislators (first, second and third term) who proposed most of the efficient methods, in particular direct government involvement, though even seasoned women continued to favor visible accounting for programs.

Conclusion

Gender differences in politics are controversial. On the one hand, to be successfully elected, women need to cultivate an image of equality — equal competence, equal qualifications and equal interests — with men. On the other hand, to argue that we need to have women politicians, or ethnic minorities, often implies more than simply equal opportunity. It implies that public policy would be better served, more sensitive and responsive to differing social needs, if our body of lawmakers were drawn from our many diverse societal groups. The first consideration demands "sameness": that women are no different than men. The latter emphasizes "difference": that women bring a new perspective to government.

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Women bring to politics their personal knowledge about issues close to "home" and their particular values about how best to design public policy.

Women and men have differing life experiences that translate into gendered value systems and views about societal relationships and responsibilities.

Recent psychological studies have found that women and men have different ways of solving moral dilemmas.³ Men tend to be more concerned with people interfering with each other's rights, while women are more concerned with the possibility of omission, of not helping others when one could help them. It is hypothesized that these differences arise from cultural sex-socialization that teaches us how to behave "correctly" according to our biological gender. These social expectations pervade our lives from infancy, when female babies are cuddled protectively close, and male babies are encouraged to be exploratory, to the toys and fantasy games of our childhood, to the educational and career paths in adulthood. Simply put, women and men have differing life experiences that translate into gendered value systems and views about societal relationships and responsibilities.

Given the differing social experiences of women and men, findings of gender differences in legislative behavior match well with women's more interpersonal relationship orientation. Women are more concerned about helping people by providing direct benefits to targeted groups. Women's propensity to spend state money directly on people rather than setting up commissions or regulatory bodies to promulgate rules is a direct parallel. In the five areas that we have identified, women bring to politics their personal knowledge about issues close to "home" and their particular values about how best to design public policy.

³Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

*Advancing the Women's Agenda Within Local Legislatures: The Role of Female Elected Officials**

Janet K. Boles

Local elected women in Milwaukee, although a minority on the Common Council and County Board of Supervisors, have served as internal catalysts for change by raising women's issues, sensitizing their male colleagues to these issues and bringing these same men into active or passive support of concrete policies. Many elected women are also willing, although often underutilized, "lightning rods" for local women's rights groups. However, no formal caucus or policy network underpins the elected women's distinctive roles; instead, they rely on informal cooperative relations as each issue arises.

The dramatic increase at some levels of government in the number of women in elected and appointed office brings our nation closer to fulfilling the requirements of democracy. The increased presence of women in office also suggests to women that their interests are now likely to be taken more seriously, and it makes better use of talents that historically have been ignored. It is often assumed that the increased presence of a politically organized and socially conscious group may increase the extent to which the group's interests are recognized and acted on in the policy process. However, we have lacked empirical support which would provide definitive evidence that women officeholders differ from their male counterparts in their impact on legislation.

The expectation was that women's different life experiences, the personal importance of "women's issues" and (in many cases) their connections to women's groups would mean that governmental policies and processes would be different because women held office. Women could be forceful catalysts for change by putting women's issues on the agenda, sensitizing male colleagues to these issues and building political support for them. Women officeholders might also be important allies for women's groups as they try to effect policy changes. Given the declining level of federal monies available for services and the increased need for social services in hard-pressed urban areas, the local level of government may provide critical insight into women's impact on policy in the 1990s.

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Therefore, this research project was designed to examine the impact of women officeholders by looking at the policymaking of local legislators, male and female, in a single urban setting: Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Do male and female elected officials place different priorities on women's issues? Are there differences between male and female elected officials in providing leadership on these issues within a local legislative body? Do connections between women's groups and women officeholders affect officeholders' actions as policymakers?

Description of the Study

Milwaukee is an excellent location for research into the impact of female elected officials, for the proportion of women officeholders exceeded the national average. In 1990 there were six (of twenty-five) female county supervisors on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors; four (of sixteen) alderwomen on the Milwaukee Common Council (the city's governing body); and four (of nine) female members of the Milwaukee School Board. Furthermore, eleven of the twenty-two state assembly members and two of the eight state senators elected from Milwaukee County were women.

Between January and June 1990, interviews were conducted with matched pairs of male and female officeholders. All sixteen women who have served since 1966 on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors or the Milwaukee Common Council were interviewed, and sixteen men, chosen from districts that closely resemble those represented by women, were also interviewed. Factors considered in matching included race, socio-economic status and incumbency. Some attempt was made to include both veteran and newly-elected officials. However, since women continue to be relatively recent participants as elected officials in local politics, the average term for the male sample was twelve years, compared with eight years for female officeholders. Four of the sixteen women and two of the sixteen men were black.

In general, the women officeholders reported activity on more and a broader range of women's issues than did men.

Activity on Women's Issues

In general, the women officeholders reported activity on more and a broader range of women's issues than did men. Women placed a greater importance on these issues and were more likely to have provided leadership on the Board or Council when related policies were considered.

The local officials were asked to list any women's issues on which they had worked during their tenure. Thirteen of the sixteen women, but only six of the sixteen men, reported working on three or more women's

issues. Women also defined women's issues far more broadly. Whereas male respondents mentioned a total of eleven issues (three of which dealt with different dimensions of affirmative action), women officeholders recalled twenty-seven different issues, including AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), cocaine-addicted mothers, child support, women in local jails, family recreation programs, homeless families, AIDS and gay rights.

I presented the officeholders with a list of six general categories of services for women and children: day care, domestic violence, sexual assault, displaced homemakers, children's library services and childbirth in public hospitals. The role of male and female officeholders on these six service issues was studied in three ways: 1) each indicated the extent to which that issue had been of special importance to him or her; 2) all officeholders were also asked to recall whether or not these issues had been addressed by the Board or Council during their period of service; and 3) each was questioned about policy outcomes and about which colleagues were most actively involved on each issue. To allow for any officeholders who might consider important only those issues closely associated with her or his own level of government, respondents were given the option "not a Council/Board issue" in reporting their priorities on the six women's issues.¹ The women placed a higher level of importance on all six of these issues than did their male colleagues. This remains true after those "opting out" of the ranking are dropped from the analysis, even though the women were less likely to perceive these issues as "not my job" than the men. (Fifteen percent of all responses from women were of this type, as compared to 29 percent for males.)

There were some differences in the ability of male and female officeholders to recall examples of policymaking on the six issues. On three issues (day care, domestic violence and sexual assault), there were high levels of awareness of activity among local legislators regardless of gender. On the three remaining issue areas (which tend to be less visible in the media and on government agendas as well), alderwomen (children's library services and displaced homemaker programs) and female supervisors (childbirth in public hospitals) exhibited markedly greater knowledge of policymaking than their male colleagues. Since the women and men interviewed served on the same legislative bodies, this could either indicate that women were more active on these issues or that

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¹Although, in practice, both the city and county governments have some programs in each policy area included here, it is a common perception that one level of local government is more responsible for a particular service than is the other. For example, county government in Wisconsin is the primary administrator of social services, including Milwaukee County's only public hospital, but the city's health department provides pre- and post-natal care. Local libraries are a part of municipal government, but the County Federated Library System assures an open borrowing policy for all residents.

"I looked at the alderman [who had made a motion to deny funding for the first women's shelter in Milwaukee] and said, 'Could I ask you to withdraw your motion before we may need a home for a battered man?' At which point, he did withdraw his motion."

Just as these policies appeared to be more central to the women officeholders' agendas, women were also more likely to take the lead in initially raising the issue and in establishing and shaping new programs and bureaucracies.

women were more committed to them. Either reason could explain women's greater ability to recall more details of legislative battles over them.

When asked about action related to these policy areas, rarely did men volunteer anything beyond the policy adopted (e.g., the formation of the Task Force on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence as a part of city government, the establishment of a sexual assault counseling unit within the district attorney's office). For several women on the Board/Council, however, the politics of the decisions were recalled in vivid and full detail: the funding of the first women's shelter in Milwaukee, despite a motion by a male colleague to deny the request ("I looked at the alderman and said, 'Could I ask you to withdraw your motion before we may need a home for a battered man?' At which point, he did withdraw his motion."); the negotiations with the chief of police to establish a special sexual assault unit ("He was backed into a corner by the city's finance committee, who held his purse strings.... He did have to do certain things."); an expanded prosecution unit in the district attorney's office to handle a greater number of domestic violence cases arising from a new local mandatory arrest policy ("Many of your colleagues are attorneys... and many of these attorneys feel that it's going to reflect badly on some of their clients if all of a sudden they wind up getting arrested.... It was held in committee and held in committee.").

Just as these policies appeared to be more central to the women officeholders' agendas, women were also more likely to take the lead in initially raising the issue and in establishing and shaping new programs and bureaucracies. For example, in the area of day care, women coordinated the first day care needs assessment in both city and county governments. Women were key to the establishment of an on-site day care center in the county courthouse, an (unsuccessful) attempt to open a center in city hall and an after-school latchkey program offered through the county parks system. Male legislators were active in other important, but more technical, ways: manipulating the committee system to get a day care proposal on the agenda; establishing a voucher system for day care services in the community and a payroll deduction for county employees; expanding the supply of private day care through granting zoning variances; and (unsuccessfully) requiring developers to provide space for day care in exchange for a building permit.

A core group of three female legislators were viewed as leaders on all three visible issues, which would seem to indicate a general advocacy position on behalf of women's issues. Male leaders often played a leadership role on one issue only as a part of some other official position (e.g. council president, board chair or chair of the finance, public safety or judiciary committee). Exceptions here were men who linked their

activity with district interests (e.g. funding for a shelter or day care center) or a general concern for social services.

Knowledge of available resources and current policies is crucial for taking a leadership role on issues, and women officials, either because of interest or previous experience, knew more about the six issues I asked about. For example, female officials were somewhat more aware of available grants and services for displaced homemakers. In fact, two of the women, but none of the men, had served as advisors to displaced homemakers' organizations. Children's library services were also more salient to female legislators. Two related the issue to their own backgrounds as professional educators; two others noted their service on the Library Board, including one, the acknowledged leader, who reported regular meetings with children's librarians to plan the summer reading program. Four others gave examples of their efforts to expand or preserve branch library services in their districts. Interestingly, only one man acted as district ombudsman on library services; the only other specific policy noted by two men was the audio-visual library maintained for school use by the County Public Museum, a service the Board eliminated from the 1990 budget.

When asked about the topic of childbirth in public hospitals, women and men recalled a variety of different bills pertaining to maternal and infant policies. Women again had a higher awareness and a broader knowledge base. For example, two female supervisors knew that the Board had just authorized the modernization of county hospital's obstetrics unit to include birthing rooms and a more family-oriented style of childbirth. And only the women reported personal involvement herein: blocking a required drug test for pregnant women receiving welfare ("All that means is that women who are doing cocaine are going to have their babies at home.... They're not going to get prenatal care."); teen pregnancy and associated insurance problems; preserving midwife services at a hospital serving a poor neighborhood; and cancelling county prenatal care contracts with those providers not informing their clients about their eligibility for WIC food supplements.

The Impact of Women in Local Elected Office

This conclusion that women are making a difference in policy would come as no surprise to the officeholders interviewed. When asked whether women had changed the way the political body on which they served operated, twelve (of sixteen) male and fourteen (of sixteen) female officials believed that women had made a difference. And even those few who disagreed did so because of the (correctly) perceived ideological diversity among the women. They did not disagree that some individual

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While these women legislators on these local councils were aware of, and in some cases part of, women's organizations, there was little evidence they were a part of a women's policy network.

women had brought about change, only that women as a group had done so.

As the more objective data on levels of activity, knowledge and leadership on women's issues also revealed, both male and female officeholders credit women with raising women's issues and bringing a different viewpoint to policymaking. Men reported that their female colleagues had sensitized the men on the Board and Council to the policy needs of women.

Women Legislators and Connection with Women's Groups

It is possible that local elected women make a unique contribution because of their connection with women's groups. They might be members of an informal or formal women's caucus in the local legislature or within a government association. Or, local female officials may have developed ties with one or more local women's rights organizations. At the most sophisticated level, these connections can take the form of a women's rights policy network, a constellation of expert or interested groups and individuals forming around the policy area of women's rights. The workings of a policy network are characterized by regular contacts among members at every stage of the policy process, from agenda-building to implementation. However, while these women legislators on these local councils were aware of, and in some cases part of, women's organizations, there was little evidence they were a part of a women's policy network.

Women's Caucuses

Low numbers, partisan differences and fears of adverse reaction from males may prevent a formal women's caucus from forming; instead, ad hoc coalitions of women may emerge around issues. Responses from interviewees suggest that this pattern also applies in Milwaukee.

There is no women's caucus for female elected officials in the Milwaukee area, although one supervisor had attempted to organize one and another had plans to do so but became too busy once in office. Nor are women uniformly incorporated into Women Officials in the National Association of Counties (WON) or Women in Municipal Government (a section of the National League of Cities). Three supervisors are members of WON, but only one is active in the group. And even though several alderwomen were aware of the NLC group, only one, arguably the most traditional member, had joined. Another had previously been a member of both groups but had dropped out in dissatisfaction.

However, men overestimate the extent of formal caucusing and underestimate informal cooperative activities on women's issues among

their female colleagues. Issues on which women have worked together include: sexual harassment, day care, sexual assault, minority women's issues and the environment. The three women most frequently mentioned as being leaders on women's issues are (correctly) perceived by their colleagues as working together. As one alderman put it:

At times it [an informal women's caucus] has surfaced irrespective of ideological position.... Women have gotten their acts together and said, "No, we can't cave in. We're going to take a stand on this. Let's go out and get the votes." They have been an effective force, not on a great number of issues but at times it has surfaced. This is most likely on issues that have an impact on women per se.

The Role of Local Women's Groups

Although women officials were not asked about their group affiliations, several spontaneously noted their memberships in the League of Women Voters; the National Women's Political Caucus; the Wisconsin Women's Network, a state coalition of organizations active on women's issues; and two local women's groups, the Black Women's Network and the Woman-to-Woman Conference. Yet despite these personal ties with local women's rights organizations, women were no more likely than men to initiate contacts with women's organizations or to see evidence of a women's policy network. Women were, however, somewhat more likely than men to recall being contacted by women's groups.

Again, differences between men and women officials in their relations with women's groups showed up most strongly in the open-ended responses. Some hostility or ambivalence toward women's groups and the notion of a women's policy network was expressed by a very few men and women:

I don't know if a women's policy network exists and if they do have one, I think it's abominable. Women should consider themselves of equal status and not a separate character that they have to have a caucus for women. (An alderman)

Do we need one [a women's policy network]? I would ask that question. I think we might have needed one fifteen years ago. (An alderwoman)

For the most part, however, men responded to the questions in a factual, objective and nonevaluative manner. Women were more likely to be evaluative of experiences with Milwaukee groups and, when they

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thought one existed, the women's policy network. And they had different views about these women's groups.

There are informal networks that I think are very vital and very important.... I'm making new networks now in city government.... I love to have women in my networks as much as possible. (An alderwoman)

"I have in the past contacted women's groups [to lobby on women's issues] and they just flat out said, 'Well, we're not into doing those sorts of things.' And I said, 'Look, I am not asking you to put on a skirt and lipstick, I am asking you to make a phone call.'"

Do we have such a network in Milwaukee? No, but we are going to have.... I have in the past contacted women's groups [to lobby on women's issues] and they just flat out said, "Well, we're not into doing those sorts of things." And I said, "Look, I am not asking you to put on a skirt and lipstick, I am asking you to make a phone call." (A female supervisor)

Without it [the women's policy network], I'd have been dead in the water, absolutely. Public office is a "we" job, it's not a "me" job. You cannot do it without others. (An alderwoman)

In a women's policy network, you end up talking in a different vein. You see issues and you see what other women are concerned about. It's kind of bolstering. It keeps you focused. (A female supervisor)

Underlying many of the comments of female (and one male) officeholders was a frustration that women's groups were not more active in Board and Council politics and on the issues the legislator thought most important:

The Wisconsin Women's Network is the only group that even comes close [to being influential] and they usually focus their efforts at the state level.... The [local] groups just sort of seem to be dying on the vine.... What we have are a lot of social service agencies that are run by feminists and have some sort of feminist outlook. (A female supervisor)

There is more concern with drugs and teen pregnancy and I'm not sure the women's movement is leading on that. (An alderwoman)

Right now, they [women's groups] seem to be a little dormant, you know, on the wane. (An alderwoman)

I see a great deal of potential energy being wasted [by women's groups] on the fringes and that disturbs me, and I think it disturbs a lot of other women. (A female supervisor)

I think women's political groups have had an impact, but we still don't have fundamental services that we need. We don't have enough day care. We continue to have a great deal of violence... specifically directed against women. We continue to have young girls having children.... So, I guess there's been progress, but I see a lot of slippage. (An alderwoman)

I'm sort of surprised at their [women's groups'] lack of effort at the county level. I just don't see them as a major player in our policy at this point. (A male supervisor)

What is strongly suggested here is that at least some female officials are quite positive about networking with women, supportive of women's issues and interested in, and involved with, the feminist movement. At the same time, they are disappointed with the low level of activity and the priorities of local women's groups.

Conclusions

Female elected officials in Milwaukee have clearly made a difference for women. Particularly over the ten to fifteen years that women's issues have been on local agendas, a relatively small number of female officials have provided strong and consistent leadership on these issues. Although not every woman played a leadership role, ten of the sixteen women interviewed who served in local public office since 1966 were recalled by one or more colleagues as having been leaders on at least one of the six policy areas considered in this study. As a group, women officials were active on more and a broader range of women's issues and placed a higher priority on them.

Women's leadership is also qualitatively different from that of men. Women are more active in agenda-building and the design of major new policy programs. Men are more likely to advance the women's agenda through incrementally changing existing programs or by using bureaucratic procedures such as zoning and contracting. Female officials also appear to become active out of a commitment to women's issues.

The influence of a formal caucus of female supervisors, alderwomen or elected women in Milwaukee or nationally does not underpin these distinctive roles. Instead, women rely on informal cooperative relations as each issue arises. Compared with men, these women do maintain closer

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ties to local women's groups through both formal memberships in such groups and group-initiated contacts. Yet women officials, like their male colleagues, were quite divided concerning the exact nature of a local women's policy network in Milwaukee. This uncertainty appeared to be linked with a rather low level of activity and visibility of women's groups in local politics, as well as some perceived problems of agenda-setting and strategic effectiveness.

In summary, local elected women in Milwaukee, although a minority on the Common Council and County Board of Supervisors, have served as internal catalysts for change by raising women's issues, sensitizing their male colleagues to these issues and bringing these same men into active or passive support of concrete policies. Many are also willing, but often underutilized, conductors ("lightning-rods") for local women's rights groups who support these same issues.

Judicial Gender and Judicial Choices

Elaine Martin

State task forces have documented gender discrimination in the court systems. Based on judges' responses to a mail questionnaire, one hope of eliminating such discrimination is through the appointment of more women and more feminists to the bench. When asked about general social change and gender in the court system, gender and feminism were both important influences on attitudes. In addition, judges' responses to five hypothetical cases (dealing with maternity leave rights, battered women's rights, abortion rights for minors, property rights for divorcing homemakers and protection from sexual harassment on the job) provide further evidence of the potential for women to make a difference. Women feminists were by far the most likely to cast their votes in all five hypotheticals for women litigants, feminist men followed closely by non-feminist women were the next most likely and non-feminist men were the least likely to do so. Women judges' attitudes suggest they may provide a counterbalance to the perspectives represented by an all-male bench.

What does my being a woman specifically bring to the bench? It brings me and my special background. All my life experiences — including being a woman — affect me and influence me. My point is that nobody is just a woman or a man. Each of us is a person with diverse experiences. Each of us brings to the bench experiences that affect our view of law and life and decision-making.

Justice Shirley Abramhamson¹
Wisconsin Supreme Court

We watch, with great interest, Sandra Day O'Connor, our nation's first woman United States Supreme Court Justice. We listen carefully to her positions, especially on abortion, recognizing the pivotal role she seems destined to play in that continuing national drama. As we watch and listen, our senses are heightened by her unique status: she is the first, she is the only.

Justice O'Connor is unique for the height of her achievement, but she is not unique among women judges in being the first, in being the only. In 1980, one year before Justice O'Connor's historic appointment, only

¹Judith Resnick, "On the Bias: Feminist Reconsiderations of the Aspirations of Our Judges," *Southern California Law Review* 61 (1988): 1877-1943.

Many state legislatures have passed feminist-supported laws designed to improve the rights, opportunities and treatment of women in such areas as spouse abuse, divorce and rape. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that gender-stereotyped thinking on the part of judges may disadvantage potential women claimants under these laws.

It was found that women litigants, attorneys and court employees are denied equal justice, equal treatment and equal opportunity — the result of problems rooted in a web of prejudice, circumstance, privilege, custom, misinformation and indifference.

eleven women sat on our states' highest courts. In that same year, 537 other women judges sat on their states' intermediate appellate and trial court benches.²

As of 1991, thirty-four of our 344 state supreme court justices are women. In addition two other women sit on the Washington, D.C. court.³ Although three states (Michigan, Minnesota and Oklahoma) have at least two women justices and women comprise a majority of justices in one state (Minnesota), nineteen states have never had a woman on their courts of last resort. Approximately 1200 women sit on the lower state courts, out of a total of more than 28,000 state court judges.

With the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment and the erosion of national abortion rights, our state court systems will surely play a pivotal role in determining whether the progress made by women in the years since the advent of the contemporary women's movement will solidify or be taken away. Many state legislatures have passed feminist-supported laws designed to improve the rights, opportunities and treatment of women in such areas as spouse abuse, divorce and rape. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that gender-stereotyped thinking on the part of judges may disadvantage potential women claimants under these laws.

In 1983 in New Jersey, at the request of a woman judge, the New Jersey Supreme Court created the nation's first task force on women in the courts. Twenty-six other states have since followed New Jersey's example. All reports thus far have documented a phenomenon described by Chief Judge Sol Wachtler of the New York Court of Appeals:

It was found that women litigants, attorneys and court employees are denied equal justice, equal treatment and equal opportunity — the result of problems rooted in a web of prejudice, circumstance, privilege, custom, misinformation and indifference.⁴

This study examines the impact women judges are having, or are likely to have, in eliminating or reducing gender bias in the treatment of women by our legal and judicial systems. In most instances, the outcome of any given case will be determined by which litigant has the strongest evidence and the best controlling precedents. Judges are constrained by the requirements of the laws they apply and interpret, as well as the

²Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Women in Law*, New York: Basic Book, 1981.

³National Center for State Courts, Williamsburg, VA.

⁴The Honorable Sol Wachtler, "Foreword," in *Women, the Courts and Equality*, Edited by Laura Crites and W. Hepperle, New York: Sage, 1987.

environment of their courts. Nevertheless, there is considerable room for individual discretion in verdicts, sentencing and court administration.

A basic conclusion of conventional judicial research is that a judge's personal experiences, values and attitudes inevitably have an impact on the direction and content of judicial decisions. Court-watchers speak of "liberal" judges or "conservative" judges, especially on the United States Supreme Court, and they often analyze the role ideology plays in judges' decisions. Although the Supreme Court is the most obvious case-in-point, similar effects have been noted in lower level courts. The reasoning of the present study is that this connection between personal experiences, the attitudes developed from those experiences and their subsequent impact on judicial behavior is the same for women as for men, but with a significant twist. Women's experiences are different as a consequence of their gender, leading to potential differences in attitudes with regard to gender issues. Therefore, women judges may decide gender-bias cases differently from men judges.

Particularly in new and still developing areas of the law such as women's rights, where past decisions are an inadequate guide, the attitudes and values of individual judges may play a greater role in case decisions.

Why Judges' Attitudes and Values Matter

If women bring to the trial bench a different set of attitudes or perspectives on gender than do their male colleagues, they should also behave differently when confronted with issues of gender fairness. The presence of women judges could then help to counterbalance any one-sided perspectives of an all-male bench in those areas such as divorce, domestic violence, juvenile justice, damages and sentencing. Particularly in new and still developing areas of the law such as women's rights, where past decisions are an inadequate guide, the attitudes and values of individual judges may play a greater role in case decisions. One woman I interviewed explains how this could work:

When men judges hear rape cases they cannot help but bring their experiences and understandings as men to their judicial role. When a woman rape victim tells me she was too frightened to resist, I bring my experience as a woman to the interpretation of that testimony.

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One presumes a similar perspective was at work in the encounter between Justice O'Connor and Justice Scalia of the Supreme Court. According to *The New York Times*, in 1986, shortly after Justice Scalia joined the court, the justices met in conference to discuss a California case challenging an affirmative action program for women. Justice Scalia proceeded to treat his colleagues to a fifteen-minute diatribe on the evils of affirmative action. When he finally finished, Justice O'Connor smiled

sweetly and addressing him by his nickname, said: "Why, Nino, how do you think I got my job?"⁵

Typically, studies of judicial behavior do not examine attitudes directly; instead, their existence is inferred from consistency in voting and sentencing behavior. This is because it is much more difficult to measure directly the attitudes of judges than of other politicians. This study uses an approach similar to these conventional judicial studies, but it differs from them in two ways: the attitudes of judges have been tested directly through written questionnaires; and feminist ideology, rather than political ideology, is used to describe judges.⁶

To examine whether women and men judges bring different perspectives to the bench, questionnaires were mailed to all 483 women major trial court judges sitting in 1987 when the study was conducted, and to a random sample of 647 men judges stratified by court location. The response rate was 46 percent for the men's sample and 61 percent for the women, a very favorable result compared with other surveys of public officials.⁷

Views About Social Change

The judges were asked to respond to a set of four statements having to do with women's changing social roles:

Women are already equal to men legally, it is up to the individual woman to take advantage of her opportunities.

Equality before the law is simply a first step to achieving women's rights, full equality will require major changes in the workplace and the family.

If they are to achieve full equality, women must organize and act politically to represent their own interests.

⁵Linda Greenhouse, "At the Bar, Name-calling in the Supreme Court: When the Justices Vent Their Spleen, Is There a Social Cost?" *The New York Times*, July 28, 1989, p. 21.

⁶In many states, the canons of judicial ethics severely restrict the extent to which judges may express personal sentiments about issues that have or might come before the courts. Consequently, the gender attitudes analyzed in this study are general, philosophic ones, not specific, legal ones. Even so, many respondents did not answer all questions, and some expressed concern that confidentiality and anonymity be strictly preserved.

⁷These response rates excluded from the calculations wrong addresses, duplicate listing, retired judges and deceased judges. After these exclusions, 423 women judges and 611 men judges remained. Of these 257 women and 281 men responded.

The United States continues to need a strong women's movement to push for changes that benefit women.

Their responses suggest that self-labeled feminist (particularly women feminist) judges are more likely than non-feminist judges to support continued social change in women's roles.⁸ Feminists united behind the feminist position and non-feminists were less supportive of the feminist stand on each of these questions. Male non-feminist judges (who are the vast majority of the men) are the most dubious of change, with female non-feminists slightly more supportive. (See Figure 1.) However, men feminists' attitudes are more supportive of change than are women non-feminists. Just as we would expect political ideology to affect judicial decision-making, we would anticipate that feminists' and non-feminists' differences in views could influence judicial decision-making in cases relating to women and their rights.

The Representative Role of Women Judges

Compared to their responses regarding social change gender differences among feminists and among non-feminists were greater on a series of four statements about the representative role of women judges. (See Figure 2.) Gender and feminism were both important determinants of judges' attitudes. As above, feminist women and non-feminist men are poles apart on all four statements.

Women, both feminist and non-feminist, feel much more strongly than men feminists on two questions:

Woman have certain unique perspectives and life experiences different from those of men that ought to be represented on the bench by women judges.

Self-labeled feminist (particularly women feminist) judges are more likely than non-feminist judges to support continued social change in women's roles.

Gender differences among feminists and among non-feminists were greater on a series of four statements about the representative role of women judges. Gender and feminism were both important determinants of judges' attitudes.

⁸The questionnaire asked judges to agree/disagree with the statement "I consider myself a feminist." These responses permitted the creation of four subgroups of judges: feminist women (n=185), feminist men (n=90), non-feminist women (n=72), and non-feminist men (n=191). Responses to all other attitude questions were then analyzed using these subgroups.

It is an act of courage for judges to label themselves feminist, given the essentially conservative bias of the legal profession. Thus, there can be little doubt that the self-labeled feminists in this study feel their feminist attitudes strongly, and that some "closet feminists" may be hidden among the non-feminist category. Due to the nature of the questions, it is also quite probable that many non-feminist, or anti-feminist, judges did not return the survey. Thus, the present sample of judges is probably not representative of the general run of judges. However, dividing the sample and comparing feminists with the possibly underrepresented non-feminists, helps to alleviate this problem.

Figure 1: Judges' Attitudes About Social Roles Given Feminist Identification

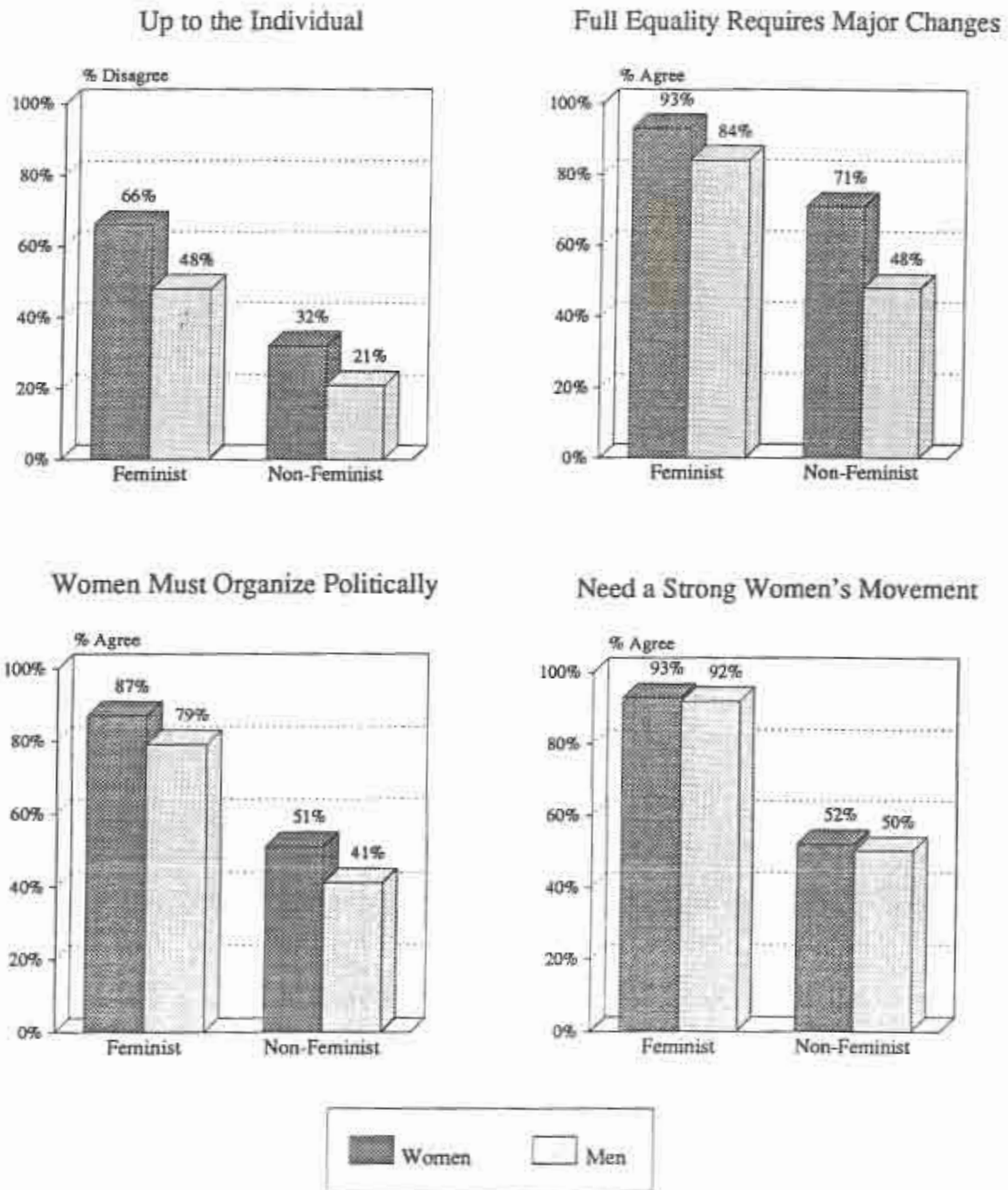
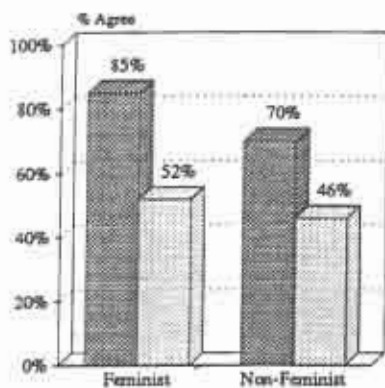
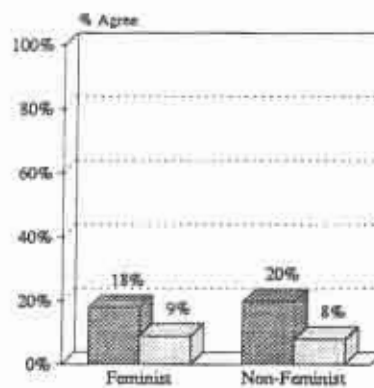


Figure 2: Judges' Views About Gender Roles in the Courts

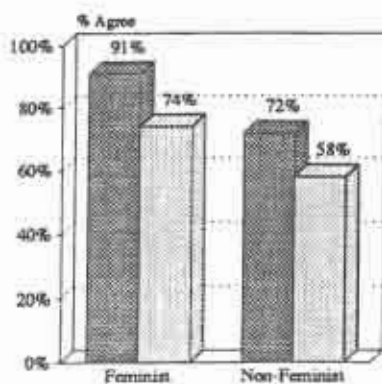
Women Have Certain Unique Perspectives



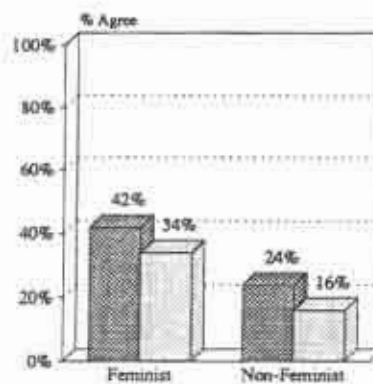
Women Should Be Cautious About Precedent



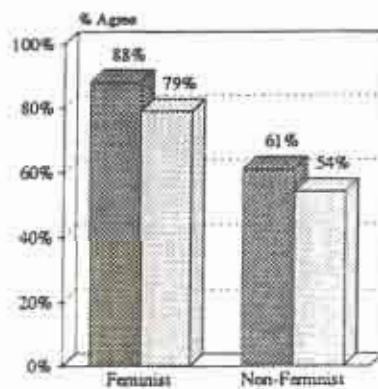
Bench Without Women Doesn't Reflect Society



Women Seeking Judgeship Are at Disadvantage



Judges Discriminate Against Women



Women Men

Judges sometimes treat women attorneys, witnesses or litigants in demeaning, condescending or unprofessional ways.

The majority of judges in this study agreed with the statement, but once again, women feminists showed the strongest agreement, with men feminists in second place, women non-feminists in third, and men non-feminists a distant fourth in level of agreement.

Gender and feminist ideology both influence judges' attitudes about the role of gender in the courts.

Because a woman judge has high visibility as a representative of her sex, she ought to be more cautious in breaking with tradition or precedent.

Nevertheless, the majority of all judges disavowed the need for extra caution by women judges.

However, men feminists express views similar to the views of women non-feminists on the following statement: "More women judges are needed because the bench without women does not reflect the total fabric of society." Feminist women were far ahead of both groups in support for this view. The familiar pattern of the previous section — with feminist men looking more like feminist women than non-feminist women reoccurred in response to the fourth statement: In this day and age, being a woman is not a disadvantage in seeking a judicial post.

In addition to these four questions, I also asked the judges to respond to a statement taken from the New York State Task Force Report: "Judges sometimes treat women attorneys, witnesses or litigants in demeaning, condescending or unprofessional ways." The truth of this statement has been fully supported by the eight state task force reports produced so far. The majority of judges in this study agreed with the statement, but once again, women feminists showed the strongest agreement, with men feminists in second place, women non-feminists in third, and men non-feminists a distant fourth in level of agreement.

It appears that gender and feminist ideology both influence judges' attitudes about the role of gender in the courts. Both women feminists and women non-feminists show more support for feminist viewpoints than do their male ideological counterparts. The most dramatic attitude differences were found between feminist women and non-feminist men.

Judicial Behavior

There are a variety of ways in which women's different perspectives might have an impact on their judicial decisions or might influence their treatment of women — attorneys, witnesses or litigants — involved in the court system (but who state task forces suggest are denied equal treatment).

Traditionally, the major focus of judicial behavior scholars has been on the formal decisions made by judges in deciding appellate cases or sentencing criminals. In this study, however, judges were asked two types of questions to determine what impact women judges might have on the judicial process. First, they were asked to give their impressions of the behavior of women judges. Second, they were asked to respond to a set of five hypothetical cases, all raising gender issues. Hypothetical cases were

used because the small numbers of women judges, their wide dispersal and their lack of a lengthy track record made it impossible to find comparable actual cases across jurisdictions where women judges had rendered decisions. The responses to the hypotheticals, as well as assessments of women judges' impact, are clues to potential behavior, however, rather than behavior itself.

Impressions of Women as Judges

The responses of men and women state trial court judges to four statements about the behavior of women judges are shown in Figure 3. Perceptions of women's impact are influenced by gender and by feminism.

In most cases, women (feminist or non-feminist) are more inclined than men to perceive that women judges behave differently from men. Women, both feminist and non-feminists, are less likely than men are to agree that women behave no differently than men. Similarly, women are more likely than men to agree that "Women judges have an ability in the decision-making process to bring people together in a way that men don't," although less than a third believe this. Women strongly support, and men are fairly united in opposition to, the notion that "Women judges must be better than men to get the same recognition of competence."

However, women are more divided on the question of whether "Women judges are probably more sensitive to claimants raising issues of sexual discrimination than are men." About two out of three women feminists, but fewer than half of women non-feminists and men feminists agreed. Men non-feminists were the least likely to agree.

Hypothetical Cases

The five hypothetical cases raised issues of maternity leave rights, battered women's rights, abortion rights for minors, property rights for divorcing homemakers and protection from sexual harassment on the job. Respondents were asked to choose in favor of one party: the women claimants or the opposing party (private corporations, law enforcement officials, parents or spouses). All cases were drawn from newspaper accounts of actual decisions by state court judges.

Despite the gender and ideological differences, it is also important to note that women litigants can generally expect a better than even chance of winning before all groups of judges regardless of gender or feminist leanings (Figure 4). The social and political changes brought about by the women's movement have clearly wrought great changes in the manner in which the courts treat gender issues. As one judicial scholar has pointed out, so-called "conservative" justices on the present United States Supreme Court are voting for women's rights cases that even a "liberal" member of

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Figure 3: Judges' Perceptions of Women Judges Given Feminist Identification

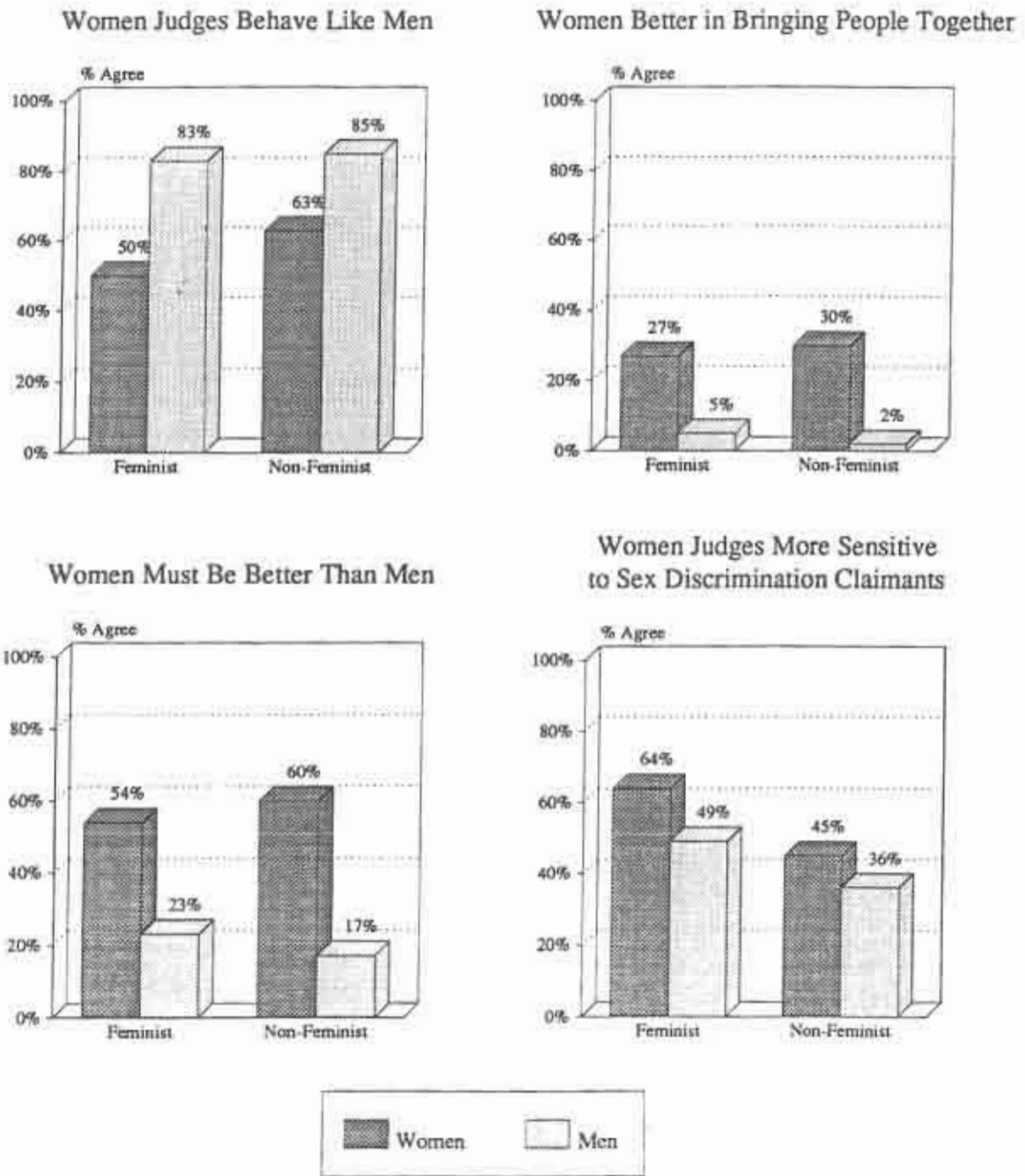
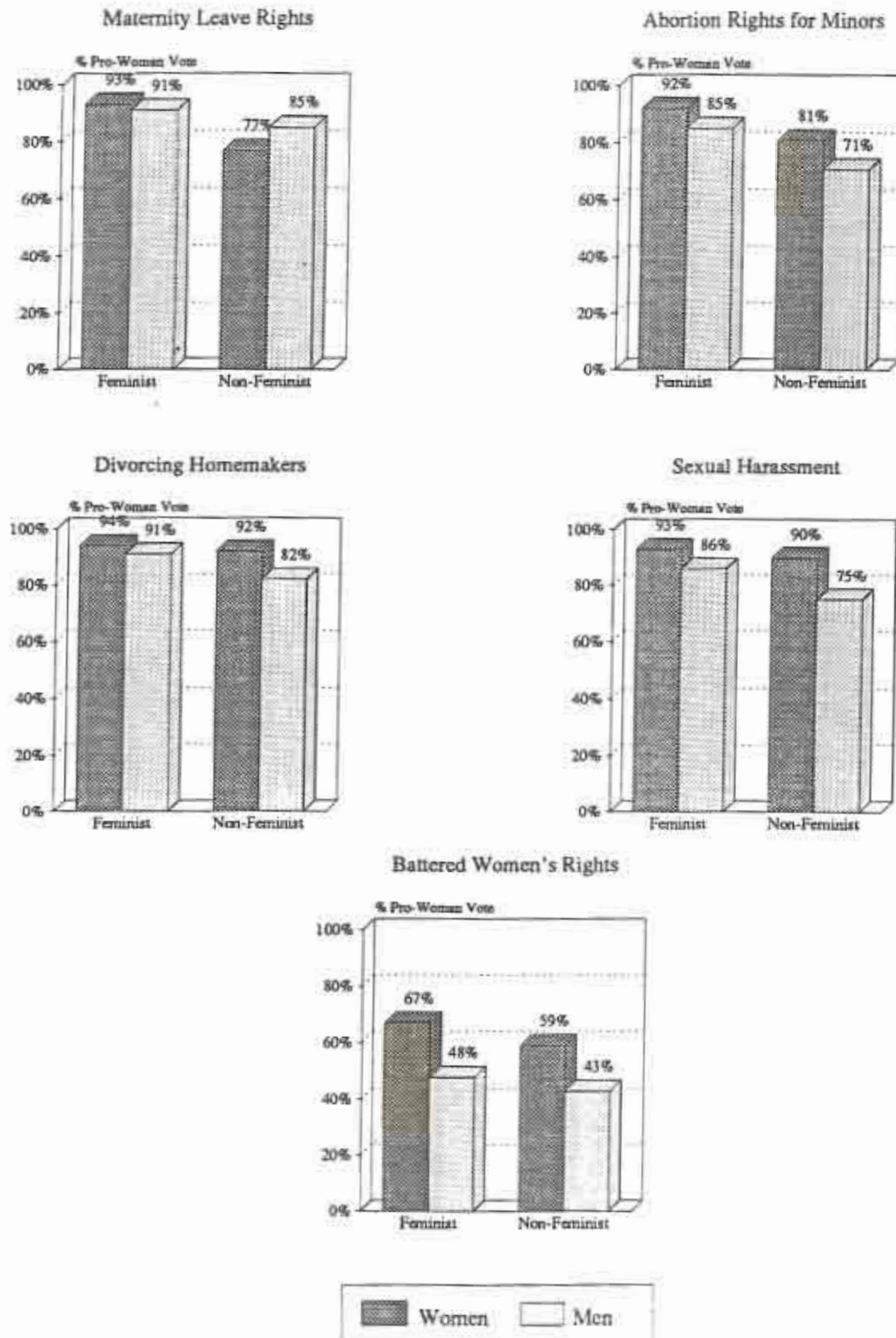


Figure 4: Pro-Women Votes on Hypothetical Cases



In two cases, maternity leave rights and parental consent, men feminists were more likely to decide for the woman than women non-feminists.

Women non-feminists were more likely than feminist men to side with women litigants in the sexual harassment and battered women's rights cases.

Among both feminists and non-feminists, women judges were consistently more pro-woman than men with similar ideological views. It seems reasonable to conclude that women's personal experience, as women, has heightened their sensitivity to gender fairness issues, regardless of their ideological leanings.

the 1960s Court might have hesitated to support.⁹ In spite of these changes, the responses to hypothetical cases suggest that the least favorable response is likely to come from non-feminist men and the most favorable response from feminist women.

Figure 4 shows that women feminists were the most likely to decide in favor of women litigants in each of the five hypothetical cases; men non-feminists were the least likely to decide in favor of women litigants in four of the five cases. In two cases, maternity leave rights and parental consent, men feminists were more likely to decide for the woman than women non-feminists. In a third case, property rights for divorcing homemakers, men feminists and women non-feminists expressed comparable views. However, women non-feminists were more likely than feminist men to side with women litigants in the sexual harassment and battered women's rights cases. Assuming responses to these hypothetical cases accurately reflect the judges' behavior, feminist women may be the most willing to break new ground in the law in cutting edge cases such as those dealing with battered women's rights. In particularly difficult cases non-feminist women may be as willing as, and in some cases more willing than, feminist men are to reach unpopular decisions.

Conclusions

This study was organized on the principle that women judges' different life experiences as a consequence of their gender would lead to different perspectives on gender issues, leading, in turn, to different behavior in cases raising gender bias issues. All the evidence presented suggests that this is indeed the case.

Most studies of judges and of other politicians find political ideology (sometimes measured by political party affiliation) to be the single most powerful influence on behavior. Certainly, this study found important differences along feminist/non-feminist ideological lines. But ideology alone did not explain attitudes and simulated voting behavior; neither did gender alone. Rather, it seems that ideology and gender interact in such a way that there are major differences between feminist women and non-feminist men, but relatively minor differences between non-feminist women and feminist men. Among both feminists and non-feminists, women judges were consistently more pro-woman than men with similar ideological views. It seems reasonable to conclude that women's personal experience, as women, has heightened their sensitivity to gender fairness issues, regardless of their ideological leanings.

⁹Lawrence Baum, *The Supreme Court*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1985.

Although non-feminist men judges, undoubtedly, far outnumber women judges and feminist men judges on our state trial courts, their perspectives may be counterbalanced by the addition of either more women or more feminist men to the bench.

Given the reluctance of many judicial candidates to discuss their political views in detail and to acknowledge their relevance for judicial decision-making, the best bet for those desiring more pro-woman judicial decisions is to advocate the selection of more women judges. Considering that the state courts on which most women sit are by-and-large more conservative than federal courts, the addition of more women to the state bench holds the promise of more favorable outcomes for women litigants.

Margaret Chase Smith and the Impact of Gender Affinity

Janann Sherman

Senator Margaret Chase Smith was, by virtue of her presence and many of her actions, a leader and a role model for women; her impact was significant and unmistakable. The first woman elected to both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, she was effective and successful in a male institution, the United States Congress, even addressing defense issues which were commonly understood to be men's concerns. She also took some actions specifically on behalf of women and consistently supported and cosponsored the Equal Rights Amendment. She was initially elected in the forties with women's support and retained that support for many years. Smith clearly made a difference for women prior to the advent of the contemporary women's movement. However, the rise of the women's movement altered how she was seen later in her career. Indeed, her pro-military stance, her willingness to adapt to male styles and customs and her rejection of feminism (which she saw as seeking special privileges for women) caused many feminists active in the women's movement of the late sixties and early seventies to regard her as an enemy rather than a trailblazer. This tension ultimately contributed to her defeat and tarnished her status as a pioneering political woman.

Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Republican of Maine, was the first woman to be elected to both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate and the first woman to seek the nomination of a major political party for the presidency of the United States. She wrote, cosponsored and supported major legislation for women's rights, including the Equal Rights Amendment, and she had a major impact on the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. She was first elected to the U.S. House in 1940. Following her election to the U.S. Senate in 1948, which many observers greeted with great expectations of imminent political equity for women, Smith initiated and stimulated a discourse that took the idea of women in higher office seriously.

Throughout her career, Smith projected a public image of a woman of moral courage, integrity and conscience, which was most powerfully expressed in her "Declaration of Conscience" speech denouncing the tactics of Senator Joseph McCarthy (although she did not oppose his mission) four years before his censure by the full Senate. By the time she was defeated in 1972, Smith was perhaps the most powerful woman in American government. She held high-ranking positions on the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Appropriations Committee and the Aeronautics and Space Committee, through which she exercised considerable influence over a broad range of defense and foreign policy issues.

"I never was a woman candidate. I never was a woman member."

Margaret Chase Smith

How did the heroine become the pariah? An exploration of Smith's ambivalent relationship with women highlights the depth and strength of ideological differences among women and generational changes in the women's movement....

Yet, far from celebrating these accomplishments, many women activists involved in the women's movement of the late 1960s and 1970s dismissed them and her. The Maine chapter of the National Organization for Women actively worked for her defeat in 1972.

What happened? How did the heroine become the pariah? An exploration of Smith's ambivalent relationship with women highlights the depth and strength of ideological differences among women and generational changes in the women's movement, as well as the institutional limitations on a woman in a male sphere. We can see how those personal characteristics and the nature of the institutions in which they serve might limit women officeholders' potential for impact on American politics. However, we can also see how Margaret Chase Smith, in the context of her time, made a real difference for women.

January 3, 1949, the opening day of the Eighty-first Congress, and what a day for women it was! Scores of women had traveled to Washington — by auto cavalcade, by plane and by two chartered trains — to celebrate the entry of one of their own into the previously all-male citadel.

Senator Smith's first formal statement after taking the oath of office was to representatives of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW), a large group of business and professional women to whom she felt particularly grateful. Smith had been an active member of the organization since her early twenties, and it was the BPW, she acknowledged, who had provided her with leadership opportunities that were her apprenticeship in public service. "The BPW is largely responsible for putting me in the Senate," she said. Work with that organization "taught me the very touchstones of political success," attributes like efficiency, cooperation, tact and leadership.¹

[Smith] would "gladly accept the unofficial responsibility of being senator-at-large for America's women...to be a voice of America's women on the floor of the Senate and in committees."

Standing proudly before them, Smith reflected on the significance of her victory, "a victory," she said, "for all women for it smashed the unwritten tradition that the Senate is no place for a woman."² Her achievement clearly demonstrated that "ability and proved performance, rather than sex, are the best standards for political selection." She told the assembled men and women that she would "gladly accept the unofficial responsibility of being senator-at-large for America's women...to be a voice of America's women on the floor of the Senate and in committees."³

¹Margaret Chase Smith speech to NFBPW, January 3, 1949, *Statements and Speeches*, Vol. VI, pp. 37 - 40, Margaret Chase Smith Library Center (hereinafter MCSLC), Skowhegan, Maine; also published in *Independent Woman* (magazine of NFBPW), November 1949, p. 335.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Smith noted, however, that she believed there was little difference between the sexes on the major issues. The subjects of greatest interest to women, world peace and domestic security, she insisted, were also of great interest to men. "Men and women are no different on this point."⁴

Smith was part of a generation of women achievers who sought to live their lives in opposition to prescribed gender roles, choosing for themselves professional opportunities and individual achievement. This generation believed that they had the same possibilities as men to redress grievances and establish their political equality; they only needed to prove that they were capable of handling the responsibilities of citizenship. "Women are people,"⁵ Smith proclaimed, and women who sought special favors were pejoratively dismissed as feminists by Smith and her like-minded cohorts. In their view, feminism was associated with rebellion, disharmony and unreasonable hostility toward men. While she celebrated the special contribution women could make to the public realm, Smith had no patience with feminists. "I have studiously avoided being a feminist," she stated. "I have been particularly conscious of, and perhaps sensitive to, the general criticism that women selfishly seek equal rights without agreeing to give up those feminine privileges and niceties which are in direct conflict with the rights sought."⁶ She exhorted women to get in there and fight for their rightful places, as she had. Suffrage had been won. "Whether or not there is a future in politics for women depends on the women themselves," she argued.⁷ From now on women's achievements would be measured in individual terms. The public world was a world of the strong and the able. Economic independence and political access had become the new frontiers for women.

Smith had breached an important barrier, and many believed that more women would soon follow. One columnist predicted in 1948 that a few years in the future, few would remark about a woman's election to the Senate, "For Margaret Chase Smith has marked the trail. Never again will it be quite so hard for a woman to battle her way alone to the Senate."⁸ Smith's decision to run for the Senate had changed the stakes

Smith had no patience with feminists. "I have studiously avoided being a feminist," she repeatedly stated.

⁴Ibid.

⁵This is a statement she reiterated many times since the 1940s.

⁶Margaret Chase Smith, "Washington and You" (weekly newspaper column), April 22, 1949; also used in Margaret Chase Smith, *Declaration of Conscience*, Edited by William C. Lewis, Jr., New York: Doubleday, 1972, p. 85.

⁷Margaret Chase Smith speech, "A Challenge to Women," *Statements and Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 126, MCSLC. First delivered in 1946, this speech, with slight alterations, was used throughout her career.

⁸Ruth Millett, "We the Women" column, *Waterville Maine Sentinel*, October 1, 1948.

for all women, and now "the question of women's place in politics has been settled to the satisfaction of many and the chagrin of a few."⁹

When Smith decisively won her first term in the Senate in 1948, polling 71.4 percent of the vote and soundly defeating her three male opponents, including a sitting governor and an ex-governor, she won despite the opposition of the Maine Republican Party. Such a decisive victory commanded respect, and national GOP leaders began to view her as the senator who could deliver "the women's vote." At a preinauguration dinner given for her, "Mr. Republican," Robert Taft, hailed her as the "Joan of Arc who may lead the Republican party to victory."¹⁰

In return, Smith delivered a challenge to her party to select more women as standard-bearers to show the women of America that the Republicans intended to give women greater representation than the Democratic party. And in her "Challenge to Women" speech, she urged her women constituents to seize the moment: "Some claim that the availability of leadership to women has been unfairly limited. I have no sympathy with this view because it is only those who 'make the breaks' that 'get the breaks.' In other words, to increase the availability of leadership, women must by their own actions create and force that increased availability.... [But] they must not insist upon those privileges and prerogatives identified in the past as exclusively feminine.... In short, there are two reasons why women have had little past success in politics. The reasons are (1) men, and (2) women — men because they vigorously oppose women holding public office and women because they haven't stood together and exercised their power of the majority voting power."¹¹

While Smith took seriously her self-imposed mandate as a spokesperson for women, her voice clearly could not speak for all. Her passion for strict equality without any feminine privileges inevitably placed her at odds with those who believed legislation must recognize the limitations women face in American society.

This division among women was most apparent in the odyssey of the Equal Rights Amendment. Smith was the first woman to endorse the Equal Rights Amendment in 1943, when it was cosponsored by forty-three men. A year later, the ERA became part of the GOP platform. At the beginning of the new Congress in 1945, Smith and Representative Edith Nourse Rogers cosponsored the ERA, the first women to take that initiative. The proposal received a majority vote, but lacked the necessary two-thirds vote for passage, largely because of heavy absences in the last

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⁹Doris Richer Marston, *Lewiston Maine Journal*, October 30, 1948.

¹⁰Robert Taft speech to preinauguration Republican dinner, quoted by May Craig, *Portland Maine Press Herald*, January 20, 1949.

¹¹Margaret Chase Smith speech, "A Challenge to Women," *Statements and Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 126, MCSLC.

days of the session. Once again, in 1949, following Smith's election to the Senate, she cosponsored the ERA. In this new dawn of women's place in national affairs, it seemed that the time was at hand to win the ERA. The Judiciary Committees of both the Senate and the House had passed on the measure with large majorities, both major parties had written it into their platforms, and there was enough support to garner the votes needed to send the measure to the people.

Nevertheless, the measure failed. The two competing agendas, those of women who sought complete legal equality and those who were reluctant to sacrifice hard-won protective legislation, split women activists right down the middle. And without unity among the supposed beneficiaries of the measure, there was little hope for its passage.

Smith did play a key role in the passage of the closest approximation that women now have to legislation granting them equal rights, a simple phrase that hitched a ride on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. During the debate in the House of Representatives on the equal employment provision of the Civil Rights Act — Title VII — Judge Howard Smith, Democrat from Virginia, proposed that the word "sex" be added to the phrase that barred discrimination in employment on the basis of race, creed, color and national origin. It is widely assumed that he did so for the express purpose of making the provision so controversial that it would likely be defeated. It had the opposite effect, however, in that, once the word was there, few were willing to take the political risks of speaking out in opposition to "fair womanhood." In addition, few were willing to risk denying to women what would be granted to black men if the Civil Rights Bill passed. Hence the bill, including the sex provision in Title VII, passed the House and moved to the Senate.

At this point, at the regular luncheon meeting of the Republican Conference, Republican Minority Leader Senator Everett Dirksen announced his intention to propose forty amendments to Title VII in order to weaken federal control over its provisions. He then stated unequivocally that the sex provision would have to go. Smith, the sole woman senator, rose in opposition, warned Dirksen that the Republican Party could not afford to be viewed as the anti-woman party, that such a move could be political suicide for the GOP. Four other Republican senators supported her position and Dirksen decided not to pursue the matter further.

Perhaps the most significant legislation Smith managed on behalf of women was her fight at the close of World War II for regular status for women in the military. Elected to the House in 1940, Smith had been named to the Naval Affairs Committee, which was integrated later into the Armed Services Committee. During the war, she worked on a series of measures that resulted in regular status for Army and Navy nurses, that is, commensurate with men in rank, pay and authority. Towards the close of World War II, when the Eightieth Congress faced the task of designing

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a peacetime military establishment, top-ranking officers of all the services told Congress that they needed women in their regular forces. The House Armed Services Committee, however, reported out, twenty-six to one, a bill putting women only in the reserves, without benefits or status, yet using them indefinitely in active service. The sole "no" vote was that of Smith, who argued that if the military needed women, they must grant them regular status, since any other arrangement clearly discriminated against women. During several days of parliamentary maneuvering she held out, a lone voice of opposition, while engaging in some backstage maneuvering of her own. Her stubborn stand forced the issue to a floor debate, which finally resulted in the granting of permanent regular status for women in the military. Her complex fight, in the face of powerful opposition, earned her political wings, and proved her savvy in managing legislation with the best of them.

By the time she reached the Senate, Smith had gained a reputation as a woman who could play hardball. As the sole woman among ninety-five men, her goal was to appear ladylike, but tough enough to handle the hard issues. The fortuitous circumstance of wartime early in Smith's political career, and the concurrent recognition of a new legitimacy for women in the public sphere, provided the context for her choice of military defense. Defense turned out to be the perfect attention-getter for her. To Smith, a strong national defense is both a strong, hence masculine, ideological stand (projecting seriousness and firmness of purpose) as well as a feminine plea for safety, preservation and security. She sat on military defense and appropriations committees throughout her career, gaining power and seniority on the "tough issues," and avoided being assigned to those considered to be of interest only to women.

Smith served longer in the U.S. Senate than any other woman. And for all but six of her twenty-four years in the U.S. Senate, Smith was the only woman in "the most exclusive men's club in the world." Smith had few options available for establishing her credibility in a position of power. Real power depends upon being taken seriously. The dilemma for a political woman is that effective political action depends upon key institutional actors, and redistributing power means taking it away from those very individuals.

In the male world of the Senate, where only a few women had served, but where no woman had established a career before, Smith had no model other than the male model. As far as she was concerned, the highest praise was that she fought like a man, but was always a lady. Stepping carefully, she balanced on a tightrope between genders — not too masculine, not too feminine — and as a consequence, not entirely pleasing to either.

Despite her rhetoric that women must surrender special privileges for equality, Smith enjoyed the courtly manners of her male colleagues and

was proud when they praised her for being a lady who could fight like a man. Smith relished her status as a pioneer woman among men, proud to be the sort of woman other women jealously admired and men begrudgingly acknowledged as competent. She learned to hear only what she wanted to hear. "I ignored any discrimination. I never, never acknowledged it. Never."¹²

Smith presented other contradictory messages as well. For example, she made frequent appeals to the idea of the woman in the home. As a politician she polished her image with a domestic cloth, posing for pictures ironing her own blouses, cooking her own meals, sweeping the floor. Yet her life bore no resemblance to the traditional homemakers'. Smith saw herself as an exception. She did not simply deny affinity to other women, she actually felt little. To Smith, women were a potential force to be mobilized, but essentially unlike herself. "In my opinion," she insisted, "women are people, and they should be treated as such, and they should act as such. But you take women, time and time again, saying, 'I'm just a limited woman, of course, I can't get very far, they wouldn't listen to me.' Well, I never took that position. I wouldn't have admitted it if I felt it."¹³

Nevertheless, Smith stated she was proud to be a woman, but she consistently denied its relevance to the job at hand. "Citizenship is without sex," she argued. "It makes no distinction between the rights and responsibilities of men and women in America."¹⁴ So too, she believed, gender was irrelevant to the role of legislator. For Smith, the best strategy was to not be a woman. She had no trouble fitting in with the men, Smith insists, because "I never was a woman candidate. I never was a woman member."¹⁵

The difficulty for Smith was in accepting the mandate to work for women while trying to distance herself from being seen as a "woman member" of Congress. She was caught between a denial and an affirmation as a representative of women, both of which were politically dangerous.

How dangerous became apparent when a new generation of activist women began what would later be termed the women's movement. The seeds of hope for genuine equality, fertilized with generous portions of frustration and disappointment, blossomed into a movement of women who demanded more than a legislative guarantee of legal equality. This

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¹²Janann Sherman — interview with Margaret Chase Smith, March 16, 1987.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Margaret Chase Smith speech, "A Challenge to Women", *Statements and Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 126, MCSLC.

¹⁵Janann Sherman — interview with Margaret Chase Smith, March 16, 1987.

younger generation of women, dismayed by the individualistic explanations and self-blame of the earlier generation, demanded recognition of obstacles society placed in the way of women's success. They proposed a sophisticated and complex reformulation of cultural values which, while including equal rights, went beyond that to articulate a challenge to cultural definitions of male and female.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) arose independently of the traditional political structure. Members of NOW recognized the shortfall of the narrowly focused Equal Rights Amendment and were frustrated with token appointments and incremental concessions. They were determined to challenge gender proscriptions in their broadest dimensions. Further, many of the more radical members decided that traditional politics was an ineffective means for solving women's problems. Confrontation and shock tactics were their methods of choice. Militarism was as repugnant as sexism to these feminist activists, and thus, it is not surprising that they would oppose a conservative woman senator who favored gradual equity, abhorred extremism in any form, believed in accommodation to the patriarchal system and formulated as well as supported the military policies of the Johnson and Nixon administrations in the Vietnam war.

Smith "represents everything women in the liberation movement want to eliminate."

The clash between Smith and this new generation of feminists was inevitable. Those prominent members of the women's movement who encouraged women to seek political office, in fact supported only women who advocated a liberal agenda as well as the ERA. A feminist newsletter, "The Woman Activist," rated senators prior to the 1972 election on their votes for legislation of importance to women, which they defined as four pieces of liberal legislation. Smith was rated at 25 percent.¹⁶ She fared better on a scale done by the League of Women Voters (LWV), who rated her at 69 percent that same year. (The LWV scale included votes on welfare reform, multi-lateral foreign aid and liberal trade policies, as well as "women's issues.")¹⁷ She was less than perfect in the eyes of women's groups.

In 1972, during Smith's final campaign, the president and founder of the Maine chapter of NOW, Ramona Barth, called a press conference to denounce Maine's senior senator as a "warmonger" and an "elitist" who cared nothing for women's concerns, a "token woman" who refused to take a stand for women's rights. In short, Barth said, Smith "represents everything women in the liberation movement want to eliminate."¹⁸ Where an earlier generation of prominent Maine women once had been the

¹⁶Reported by Eileen Shanahan, *The New York Times*, April 23, 1972.

¹⁷Reported in *The Washington Post*, February 15, 1972.

¹⁸*Portland Maine Press Herald*, June 28, 1972.

mainstay of Smith's campaign organization, new women's groups were working actively to discredit her.

For her part, Smith was dismayed by what she saw as the unladylike tactics of these activists. They were confrontational, adversarial and extremist, when it was more sensible, she believed, to persuade than to confront. These women, she argued, had ruined the prospect for passage of the ERA. "I still support the ERA," she wrote in 1974, "but I fear that the militant, belligerent, brassy bra burners by their repulsive tactics have killed it for several years."¹⁹

Smith felt greatly misunderstood by the women's movement. "Here I was, a woman with this background and this record — I cosponsored ERA throughout my Senate tenure, stopped Everett Dirksen from knocking the word "sex" out of the Civil Rights Act, got women full regular status in the armed services and championed many women's causes in Congress — and they said I didn't do anything. NOW was calling for a male candidate to replace me while at the same time calling for more women in political office. They didn't like me because I would not join them, fight with them. But I could not have gotten elected if I did those things. Women just don't understand the political reality."²⁰

Changes in the perception of Margaret Chase Smith over the two decades — from a trailblazer who would lead women to political equality to a warmonger who was a target of the women's movement — were as much a function of the changing composition of activist women as they were a critique of Smith's politics. The majority of the women who supported Smith in 1949 were elite women, involved in business and the professions, as well as those who worked within the traditional political structure or sought entry into that structure. They either accepted or did not recognize the strength and pervasiveness of male structural control. Women activists in the 1960s were radical and disdainful of traditional politics — and disdainful, too, of the few "token" women who had "made it."

One of the old saws about women is that they do not support one another. In fact, women do not and will not support women just because they are women. Gender solidarity does not overcome ideological differences. Differences among women, influenced by class, race, ethnicity, religion, life experiences and world view will inevitably give rise to disparate views of women's circumstances and potential solutions. Only on certain narrowly defined issues, suffrage being one example, have women organized and acted as an "interest group" in pursuit of a gender-specific goal. The irony for feminists is that a conservative

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¹⁹Margaret Chase Smith letter to Peg Schroeder, February 27, 1981, correspondence file, MCSLC.

²⁰Janann Sherman — interview with Margaret Chase Smith, September 3, 1989.

Did Margaret Chase Smith as a woman have an impact on American politics? The answer must be, "Yes, but..."

woman, one most likely to be "successful" in the male sphere of politics, is least likely to formulate and defend a feminist agenda.

Did Margaret Chase Smith as a woman have an impact on American politics? The answer must be, "Yes, but..." She was the first to breach several important barriers to higher office for women. She served in them with distinction, personifying moral courage and firm convictions and created a positive image of women in government. Perhaps her most important legacy was that her presence in the halls of government helped to legitimize women as political actors. Smith was a highly visible and a positive symbol of political attainment. But her effectiveness was largely dependent on the approval of her male colleagues from whom she sought access to power, and that approval was largely dependent on her ability to distance herself from allegiance to women. While she was able to achieve some significant goals for women, she could do so only within narrowly defined limits and at specific moments. Smith had neither the power to overcome obstacles to full equality nor the desire to risk everything in the challenge.

Black Women Mayors: Reflections on Race and Gender

Jeanette Jennings

Black women officials experience the "double whammy" of race and sex discrimination in our society. Based on anecdotal evidence from conversations with black women mayors, gender and race affect what they do in office. Although black women are often mayors of smaller, poorer towns, they believe they have a greater commitment than their white predecessors did to problems of the economically disadvantaged. This is an outgrowth of their ties to the black community and their own experiences. But many of these black women also see themselves as using different leadership styles and having different ways of solving problems than their towns' previous male mayors. Sorting out the effects of race and gender is difficult given that these women often are the first woman and/or the first black to hold office. These preliminary reflections clearly point to the importance of recognizing racial diversity among women officeholders.

The civil rights and feminist movements fundamentally changed American society. The increasing numbers of women and blacks running for office and winning are striking evidence of social and political changes that have occurred over the past thirty years. But the progress of women and blacks into the mainstream of politics is incremental, and both groups still face numerous obstacles in seeking and winning elective office. Regardless of where they live, blacks and women frequently have been denied the opportunity to acquire the political training, experience, skills, knowledge and resources necessary to move into the political arena. Some of the obstacles that both groups face are similar: discrimination due to racism and sexism; the failure of political parties to recruit them to run in viable contests; the difficulty of raising money to run effective campaigns; and the power of incumbency in races where they are most likely challengers rather than incumbents. The barriers to political participation are symptomatic of the problems they encounter in other aspects of daily life as well.

This report, like others in this volume, addresses the issue of why it matters that women hold office, but it concentrates on black women's impact as mayoral officeholders.

Despite the fact that both black women and white women must cope with gender discrimination in society, their experiences are also different. First, black women, unlike white women or black men, have had to overcome the "double whammy" of barriers posed by sex discrimination and by racial discrimination. For example, one black woman mayor I interviewed recalled that in her first campaign for office, a group of black men in the community approached her with a message: "The white men of

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the town did *not* want a black as a mayor, to say nothing of a woman." The ability to overcome these dual barriers makes black women's representation in the political arena even more extraordinary and could affect what they do once in office by influencing the perspectives they bring to bear on political decision-making.

Secondly, black women and white women have had different socialization experiences. For example, black women, out of economic necessity, have always been in the labor force. In contrast, white women's entry into the labor market has been considered somewhat out of the ordinary until recent years. Black women, therefore, may have been less confined than white women have been by traditional gender roles.¹ This may give black women greater freedom, influence their aspirations, increase their willingness to pursue particular political goals and could affect what they do in office.

These racial differences in women's experiences are also due to differences in the economic status of blacks and whites in the United States. The issues for black women are much broader than those often mentioned as a "women's agenda." When black women strive for empowerment, they must deal with more general questions of economic opportunity which influence the wellbeing of the entire black community — whether there are jobs out there for them or their family members given the large numbers who are unemployed or who work for low wages. Once those issues are addressed, then, some might argue, they might have the luxury of focusing on issues the issues that are on the minds of white middle-class feminist women — day care, ERA and abortion. Such differences in situations make it abundantly clear why black women make a different kind of difference in office.

Most of the data presented in this article were collected from interviews and conversations with black women mayors as well as from observing the women's caucus meetings at the National Conference of Black Mayors. Although much of the data discussed here is impressionistic, the fact is that very little is known about this group of officeholders, and they are often overlooked in larger studies of mayors. By bringing their experiences as women and their experiences as blacks in America to the mayor's office, many of these black women mayors believe they have made a difference. Often these women are "firsts" — the first woman mayor and the first black mayor of their towns. This

¹See for example Marianne Githens and Jewel Prestage, *A Portrait of Marginality*, New York: McKay Co., 1977; LaFrances Rodgers-Rose, *The Black Woman*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980; Lena Wright Myers, *Black Women: Do They Cope Better?* New York: Prentice Hall, 1980; Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell and Barbara Smith, *All the Women are White and All the Blacks are Men*, New York: Feminist Press, 1982; Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, New York: Bantam, 1984.

makes it difficult and often impossible to sort out the effects of gender and race on impact. Yet these black women mayors have accomplished things in their towns that had not been accomplished by their male or white predecessors.

The Context

In 1991, there are only seventy-four black women mayors, in merely eighteen of the fifty states.² The most substantial representation of black women mayors is in the southern states and, primarily, in rural areas. The largest numbers are in the South Atlantic region where there are twenty, followed by east South Central States and the west South Central states — each with fifteen. The Mountain and Pacific Coast regions do not have any black women mayors. Most of these women serve in small towns. In 1988, when this study was begun, the U.S. Conference of Mayors listed only five black women who governed cities with populations over 30,000: Mayor Carrie Saxon Perry, Hartford, Connecticut; W. M. James Leake, Chester, Pennsylvania; Jessie M. Rattley, Newport News, Virginia; Florence Farley, Petersburg, Virginia; and Lottie Shackelford, Little Rock, Arkansas.

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Black women mayors are faced with almost insurmountable odds, but being pioneers, they must be effective in a political system that they did not design, that may well be foreign to them and that may be hostile to them because of their gender and race. Most of the cities that have elected black women mayors are small (median population, 2218) and have lower than average per capita incomes and high levels of poverty (median per capita income, \$5832).³ Nevertheless, these small, often poor, communities must continue to provide services that are crucial to the operation of the town and to the lives of citizens living in poverty: for example, poor children may require special preschool training and hot lunch programs; families may require subsidized housing; and many towns need major infrastructure development. These towns, with small tax bases but great service requirements, must tax at a higher rate, yet still provide a lower level of service. This leads to fiscal deterioration.

²When this study was conducted in 1988 and 1989, there were sixty-nine black women serving as mayors. Information about the number of black women mayors holding office is from the National Conference of Black Mayors and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

³Statistics calculated using data collected from the following sources: United States Bureau of the Census, *County and City Data Book*, Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1988; and Rand McNally, *Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide*, New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1989.

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Given the dearth of economic resources in these cities, and their fragile economic bases, much of the economic success of these cities where black women and men are now mayors is dependent on outside resources. The federal government and private foundations are the major sources for bringing resources and programs into the community. Under previous white mayors, federal support was sought primarily from the Department of Agriculture in the interest of planters.⁴ The financial assistance from the federal government is important, but perhaps just as significant is that often for the first time since reconstruction, in rural towns, funds and programs are made available that have particular and direct relevance to black Americans.

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The Importance of Race

Many of these black women mayors have lived through and been a part of the civil rights struggles during the last half century. Simply based on their life experiences black women have to do things differently; they cannot go on with the status quo. For example, one black woman mayor was very concerned about having a city hall, and she succeeded to obtaining a trailer for this purpose. Why was this so high on her list? Because previously, utility bills had to be paid at the mayor's house. Sometimes he would not be there or he would be in the middle of dinner, and those who wished to pay their bills would have to return at a more convenient time. And in earlier years, she recalled, blacks had to go to the back door to pay their bills. Having grown up in that town and personally experienced this pain of segregation, she felt the people of the community should have a place that belonged to them; they would know the hours it was open and know they were free to conduct business then. This had not been important to the white men who had been the prior mayors of the town.

Other mayors spoke with pride of efforts to erode discrimination in employment. For example, one of the mayors contacted noted that one of her major accomplishments was getting the first black man hired at City Hall. Another pointed with pride to obtaining a post office for her community and then getting a black woman appointed postmaster.

⁴Minion K.C. Morrison, *Black Political Mobilization: Leadership, Power, and Mass Behavior*, New York: New York Press, 1987.

In interviewing another black woman mayor — a striking, poised and very articulate woman — I asked what her occupational background had been. Fully expecting her to respond "school teacher" like many others, I was surprised when she said instead that she had worked for "rich white folks." She was the cook and her husband the butler and for years they had moved from one family to the next working as household staff. Clearly the life experiences of some black women leaders may be so different from those of their white counterparts and, in some cases from black men, that these women must have a unique impact on policy.

The civil rights movement's struggle for racial equality has given some black women the opportunity to develop leadership skills and the courage to fight those whites who would attempt to block empowerment. Two women's stories illustrate this well. Both women sought to give their towns a sense of identity which would empower citizens to exercise their powers through the ballot box.

For years, blacks and whites alike in Mayersville, Mississippi had wanted to get their community incorporated, but to no avail. In 1976, Unita Blackwell, a civil rights leader in the community, acquired the necessary information, mastered the technicalities of incorporation and took on the state bureaucracy in order to get the town incorporated. Once it was incorporated, Blackwell served as interim-mayor until elections were held. By the time of the election, her leadership was recognized and highly acclaimed so she was elected to serve as mayor. Without this leadership, the townspeople might never have achieved their goal of incorporation.

In contrast, racial divisiveness marked the incorporation struggle in Keysville, Georgia. Keysville had disbanded its town government during the depression in the 1930s. In the mid-1980s, black residents, led by Emma Gresham, began efforts to resurrect the government. White residents claimed that the town had no definable boundaries and therefore could not hold elections. A federal three-judge panel ruled that the town could proceed with an election and Gresham was elected mayor in that first election. Her skills and courage helped her empower a community so that it could decide its fate at the ballot box.

Why Gender Matters

Over and over again, black women mayors — like their white counterparts — said that the people of the community felt very comfortable talking to them, they were accessible to the public, and the constituents could talk more freely to them than to previous mayors. Many of these black women mayors were school teachers, community and church activists. They not only encountered the powerful in their lives,

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but they also served and worked with the powerless before ever attaining public office. Indeed, one woman mayor at a community festival introduced me to her constituents, pointing out that she had taught almost everyone in the community (and if not them, their parents or grandchildren). The vast majority of these black women mayors had grown up in the community and thus were not outsiders in any sense of the word. Many of them — like their white female counterparts — see themselves as continuously reaching out to the residents to find out what is going on in the community.

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The presence of a woman may also affect the process by which things get done. In another town, which had faced serious economic problems, the black woman mayor had a team — a team of women it so happened — to get things done. This team was committed to getting her programs for the town implemented. She was far more successful than her predecessors had been in getting companies to at least discuss building water and sewage treatment facilities for the town. Many credited her team approach for bringing about this progress; but she also found that men were far less willing than women to be a part of her team.

Perhaps a distinctive way of doing things is why another black woman mayor was able to solve long-standing problems with the local white sheriff and ultimately with crime in the town. For years, the sheriff had ignored both the concerns of the previous mayors and those of citizens. The first black woman who was elected mayor felt that many of the town's problems with crime and fights stemmed from violation of liquor licenses — particularly selling to minors. She felt that she was more effective than her male predecessors had been in communicating with the sheriff and in working with him to address these crime problems. Because she was a woman, she felt she was less threatening to him; the old stereotypes of women — as not "hanging out" in bars — helped to clarify for him her position on the crime problem and the root cause of the problem so they could begin to work together. She tried to go beyond the issue of "they are breaking the law" in order to help the sheriff see the problems that were created by people ignoring the law.

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Another black woman mayor — the first woman mayor elected in her town — found that previous mayors had the view, "If it's not broken, then don't fix it." But she saw many things to be done — improving city services, cleaning up the city and monitoring of the nearby hazardous waste disposal. She also attempted to coordinate boards that had been long neglected. She worked to change the town motto to "If it could work better, then improve it."

Conclusion

Much work remains to be done to better understand how the very small, yet growing, population of black women mayors is shifting policy agendas and political processes. Yet it is clear that black women mayors may serve as a symbolic representation of what women and blacks can become; they may also provide much-needed support to other black women who may experience limitations in the black community due to sex discrimination and who may not be well integrated into the white women's community. The experience of Urbancrest, Ohio is a case in point. Mayor Veronika Shepherd, the second black woman who served as mayor there, credits her success to the first black woman mayor of her town — Ellen Walker Craig. Craig not only inspired her, but encouraged her to run for mayor and served as her campaign manager. The important function that black women officeholders can serve in representing, empowering and mentoring blacks and women — and especially black women — can help us progress a least one step closer to fulfilling the ideals of democracy.

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The Unseen Influence of Women in the State and Defense Departments

Nancy E. McGlen and Meredith Reid Sarkees

Women in the Department of State and the Department of Defense hold few high-ranking positions, either as political appointees, career civil servants or military officers. Women have often been segregated within certain areas of the departments, hampered by stereotypes or limited by a lack of military experience. Nonetheless, during the Reagan administration, top-ranking women saw their jobs as directly involving foreign policy formulation more often than did their male colleagues, and most of the women, like the men, felt that they had at least partially achieved the goals they had set for themselves. Women and men were more similar than different in their policy attitudes. On those questions where they differed, the nature of the gender gap varied depending on the type of position and department. At the State Department, female career civil servants were more moderate in their views than their male colleagues, but women political appointees were more conservative than the men. At the Defense Department, women in both categories, when they differed from their male counterparts, were apt to be more conservative. The results suggest the impact of women in foreign policy formulation will depend on at least three factors: the ideological views of the administration; the relative power of the State Department and Defense Departments; and the relative power of appointees and career employees.

Introduction

In the foreign policy arena women are seldom interviewed on television, quoted in newspapers or appointed to positions of authority. In the United States as in most countries, affairs of the nation state in dealing with other nation states have been considered nearly off limits to women. Men have been identified as the authorities in this area, while women, if they are seen as having any political expertise at all, are often characterized as mostly concerned with social welfare or related domestic political issues.

The exclusion of women and women's interests from the foreign policy arena has been under serious challenge from women's groups and women's peace groups for almost a decade. Yet, few women experts are visible in this field. This state of affairs led us to pose the following questions: Do women have an impact on foreign policy formulation? In what ways does women's impact differ from that of their male colleagues? Do women foreign policymakers have different foreign policy priorities than male policymakers?

Our primary interest is the role of women in foreign policy formulation, and therefore, we decided to focus our investigation upon the two major foreign policy agencies: the Department of State and the Department of Defense. The State Department has been the traditional

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center for U.S. foreign policy, bearing the primary responsibility for the conduct of foreign relations. However, recent developments have led to a decline in the department's influence and a corresponding rise in power of the White House and the Pentagon. The Pentagon is currently the largest gatherer and supplier of information for foreign policy formulation; as a result, the post-World War II record of U.S. foreign policy is replete with evidence of a military approach to foreign affairs.

Restricting ourselves to the two departments in the executive branch most responsible for setting foreign policy, we next set out to identify the women in those departments who were in positions of influence. We chose to include political appointees plus career service employees in the upper echelons of both departments — the Senior Executive Service (SES) in the Defense Department and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) in the State Department. Although, as most of our respondents noted, policy is influenced below the level of Senior Executive/Senior Foreign Service, most significant policy is made at these levels or higher. For simplicity, we will refer to the members of the SES and SFS as the career employees although the reader should remember these are *high* level career employees.

By the time we conducted our in-person interviews in the summer of 1988 (before the change of administrations), we had obtained from the departments names of fifty-five women in the Department of Defense and the Department of State who fulfilled our criteria and worked in the Washington, D.C. area. We were able to interview thirty-four of these women. We also conducted interviews with a sample of their male counterparts. Fifty-five men were selected randomly from the same lists used to identify the women, and twenty-two interviews were conducted with the men. Additional mail surveys were sent to forty-two women and a random sample of forty-two men working abroad or who were unable to meet with us. Eighteen men and seven women responded from the mail portion of the study. The average age of women respondents was forty-seven and the average for men was fifty-two years old.

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Do Women Have an Impact on Foreign Policy Formulation?

In both departments, women have historically been excluded from the decision-making process. Indeed, as late as 1989, an appeals court found in *Palmer v. Baker*¹ that the State Department still systematically discriminated against female Foreign Service officers. The Defense

¹*Palmer v. Baker*, Remedial Order, United States District Court for the District of Columbia, 1989.

Department is also a rather hostile environment for women as well, as one woman career employee noted:

The Department of Defense is male dominated. The top positions are all filled by men. It is basically a power club and you don't push your way into that world. They can pull a few of us up. But the major jobs, the more critical jobs, are basically held by men, military and civilian, in the Department of Defense.

One obstacle women face is stereotypes. The ability of women to "fit into" each department is severely hindered by traditional views of women's lack of knowledge and training in foreign and military affairs. In the State Department, women in positions of authority reported that they faced obstacles due to traditional stereotypes about women in the United States and in other countries. When asked whether there were any views about women that limited her influence or the influence of other women in the State Department, a high-ranking woman in the department noted:

They tend to be mostly behavior views: The fear of the shrieker; the fear of a woman's uncontrolled anger. It's in that area of not being confident about how a woman would play the game.... I'm confident when I took this job three years ago there was great skepticism as to whether I would fit in. Could a woman fit in? Because you bring a new element to the physical appearance of a meeting, it changes and it's upsetting. Are you going to make things difficult for them? Or are you going to be a great show? Are you going to be a bitch to deal with? And there is usually an effort to handle that problem by cutting you out.

In the Defense Department, women's ability to influence the decision-making process is hampered even more because women generally lack the military training and background of many male decision-makers in the department. The comments of a woman in the naval weapons area outline the problem:

Military themselves have a discrimination against civilians whether they're male or female, because most civilians have not been in operations. So there is that bias or perception that civilians don't know what they're talking about. Then when you put the women on top of that it makes it even a little worse. So DOD [Department of Defense] is a very macho world. You just don't have that many military women at the top officer, at the admiral or general, level.... We have laws that prevent females from serving in combat positions and that, in essence, is the hard

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A second problem women encounter is the structure of these bureaucracies. The organization of both departments undermines women's positions. Because both departments have extremely hierarchical structures, women have found it difficult to break into the decision-making ranks. Moreover, women who do find themselves in higher ranking positions are often segregated into areas with limited impact on foreign policy, such as personnel and legal services in Defense and in Consular and Administrative Affairs in State.

Thus, neither the State Department nor the Defense Department has been very hospitable to women, and the few women who make it to positions of authority face a difficult task in attempting to influence foreign policy. But what about those women in authority? Are they able to influence policy in spite of the handicaps they face?

In trying to gauge impact on foreign policy, we asked a number of questions designed to tap people's perceptions of their influence. Most felt they had an impact or influence on policymaking, in general, although the women were slightly more likely than the men to consider their jobs as directly involving foreign policy formulation. One female respondent felt that women's evaluation of their own impact was affected by their age.

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I think there has been a real change in the process now in terms of American culture...women's views of themselves and women's views of other women in terms of people being empowered and being in fact able to make a difference. I think that people who grew up in the forties typically don't acknowledge their own power. My experience is that women of the sixties and young women of today have much less a problem, first of all in wanting to make a difference [and then in] acknowledging that they have the power to make a difference.

To gauge whether our respondents came to their positions with pre-planned agendas, we asked whether they had specific policy goals when they took their current jobs. Not surprisingly, the vast majority could identify a policy or policies they hoped to implement, and in this there was no difference between men and women. Among those persons who had initial goals, the women were slightly more likely than the men (46 percent vs. 36 percent) to have specific foreign policy goals. Some of the

goals cited by the women ranged from negotiations on International Nuclear Forces (INF) and Inter-continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) modernization to advancing human rights issues in the Middle East.

We also tried to ascertain if our respondents had been able to achieve their goals. The overwhelming majority of those who had goals saw themselves as having at least partially achieved their goals, with no significant difference between men and women.

In trying to gauge impact along another scale, we asked our respondents to list their major policy accomplishments. Men were somewhat more likely than women (59 percent vs. 42 percent) to mention foreign policy as an area where they had some success.

However, when we asked about the other types of accomplishments (not in terms of policy formulation), greater differences between men and women emerged. Women were twice as likely as men (63 percent vs. 31 percent) to list management accomplishments, e.g., multiplying the programs in their area, introducing automation, increasing productivity of staff and introducing a formalized strategic planning process. Women were also more likely than men to list accomplishments that affect women (18 percent vs. 6 percent) and accomplishments in the area of improvement of human rights (24 percent vs. 9 percent).

These comments of one woman in the State Department give a flavor of the kinds of goals some of the women report:

My proudest accomplishment for this office is that if anybody walked in here now, they would say that my office would be a model of EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] goals. It is a personal thing of mine that I think about a great deal because when I was first looking for a job in 1971, they didn't have any. A number of times I went to government agencies and they looked at me and said we have our woman lawyer, thank you very much. And that was in 1971. And it always stuck in my mind, that I wouldn't do that. And I really work at truly reflecting an integrated society.... That's a personal achievement I'm proud of.

Although women respondents see themselves as having positive impact on policy formulation, many also see "being a woman" as a handicap. Thirty-six percent of women and 26 percent of men indicated that being a woman, for themselves or their female colleagues, limits the ability to influence foreign policy. As one woman noted:

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very subtle kind of thing, but it requires energy and time to overcome, so it keeps us from being as effective as we might be.

One man expressed the same view in discussing his female colleagues:

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About a quarter of both the men and women also said public stereotypes about women's lack of knowledge concerning foreign affairs were likely to condition the ability of women in their departments to influence foreign policy. When asked whether women have to work harder than men to have their contributions to department decisions taken seriously, one man responded,

Yes, I think inevitably and unfortunately.... Initial assumptions are easily overcome by demonstration. If a man or woman demonstrates competence, most people's attitudes will change quickly.

Others were less certain about the short-term effects of such stereotypes. A woman described the limitation as follows:

"When I was early into the position...[and] I came through with a very creative solution and a very useful solution to a problem...I would get double credit for it because, 'My God, she can think....'"

Sometimes you have to prove yourself first. I've had some advantages and disadvantages. When I was early into the position...[and] I came through with a very creative solution and a very useful solution to a problem...I would get double credit for it because, "My God, she can think...." However, they might not have asked me because they might have assumed, "Well, she wouldn't know." But once you come through you'd get more credit than a man would have gotten. Now that I have been around for a long time that has evened out. But it is harder for a woman to get to that position and be accepted and recognized. People assume [she] is a token.

Even larger numbers of men and women (49 percent and 71 percent respectively) cited other gender stereotypes (apart from lack of knowledge) that hindered women's influence on policy decisions. Such views included, "The usual clichés: emotional; detail oriented; afraid to make unpopular decisions." Women also felt themselves limited by beliefs that it is somewhat unnatural for women to be working, that women are less serious about their careers, that they are less quantitative and are unable to

understand military exigencies and that they get bogged down on appearances and trivialities. Several women also reported that physical attractiveness was a negative attribute: "The public thinks that if [a woman] looks nice, it means you don't have any brains." "I have seen beautiful women not taken seriously because they were beautiful."

Interestingly, the recognition of stereotypes, publicly or personally held, about women's ability or knowledge did not seem to affect women's estimate of their own personal power in the foreign policy arena. When women and men were asked to rank their own influence on a seven-point scale from little to great influence, the rankings were similar.

Having seen that women are as likely as men to come to their jobs with goals, achieve those goals and, at least in their own estimate, influence foreign policy, the next question becomes what kind of influence they bring. Are their views on foreign policy questions like those of men, or is there a "women's point of view" evident among these women on issues of international affairs?

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Does Women's Impact on Foreign Policy Differ from Men's?

Our expectations regarding men and women's policy views were shaped by two conflicting bodies of data. Studies of citizens' public opinion have generally found women to be more pacifist than men. However, research conducted on elites, such as political appointees, leaders in politics, education, media, business, law and the military, has discovered fewer differences.² Furthermore, especially in relation to war, women have historically been found with the ranks of peace activists and of war supporters. Based on our interviews with foreign policy decision-makers, it is clear that women in the foreign policy process are not a homogeneous group. There is no women's view adopted, even in part, by all women.

We first asked respondents whether they saw themselves as having different foreign policy priorities or goals than their counterparts of the opposite sex. Most of the respondents did not see any differences. However, men were more likely than women to think women's and men's priorities were similar, with only about one of every twenty men compared with one of every five women believing women's views differed from their male colleagues. Most women who saw gender differences discussed them in terms of management style rather than policy.

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²Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "The Foreign Policy Beliefs of Women in Leadership Positions," *The Journal of Politics* 43 (1981). Also see Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, *American Leadership in World Affairs*, Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984.

As we would expect in a conservative Republican administration, appointees in each department are more conservative than career civil servants.

The most liberal members of the foreign policy establishment are the career women at State, although the career men in both departments are also quite likely to adopt a moderate or liberal label for their political views.

It is possible nevertheless, that the perception of the majority of those interviewed — that women in the foreign policy arena hold the same foreign policy views as men — may not reflect reality. To examine this possibility, we asked respondents to classify their general views in political matters ranging from far right to far left and to respond to a lengthy series of questions about attitudes regarding the importance of various foreign policy goals and positions on current issues in American foreign policy.

Looking first at the self-described political ideology of the respondents, we find that the women in the sample are generally more conservative than the men, with 45 percent of the women, but only 28 percent of the men, labeling themselves as very or somewhat conservative. These figures contrast sharply with those of the general public; a *New York Times* public opinion poll found 32 percent of the women and 37 percent of the men to consider themselves conservative.³

As we would expect in a conservative Republican administration, appointees in each department are more conservative than career civil servants. Moreover, while the number of cases makes generalization difficult, female appointees in both departments tend to be the most conservative followed by the men appointees in State and Defense and the career women in the Defense Department. The most liberal members of the foreign policy establishment are the career women at State, although the career men in both departments are also quite likely to adopt a moderate or liberal label for their political views.

Of more importance than whether they see themselves as liberals or conservatives are the specific foreign policy views of men and women in policy formulation positions. Women and men expressed different views on only seven out of a total of eighty-seven questions. *If* there is a pattern, it is that women took more conservative positions on issues, just as they were more likely to identify with the conservative label when asked to describe their political ideology.

A similar pattern emerges among women and men in each of the two departments. In the State Department men and women take divergent stands on only three policy questions although the differences are not in a consistent policy direction. In the Defense Department, however, more questions separate men and women and the pattern is somewhat clearer. The women, more so than the men, are likely to take the hard-line, or administration, viewpoint on the few questions where they differ from the men.

Dividing the sample still further between appointees and career civil servants in each department for a total of four subgroups, we have to be

³Alison Leight Cowan, "Women's Gains on the Job: Not Without a Heavy Toll," *The New York Times*, August 21, 1989.

tentative in our generalizations because of the small size of the sample. Women and men express similar views on most questions; but when they differ, the analysis across the four groups is revealing. Only in the State Department among career employees does the gender gap look similar to general public opinion polls, where women are less inclined to subscribe to hard-line stands. In contrast, when women political appointees at State and Defense and women career employees at Defense differ from their male counterparts, they tend to be more hard-line and conservative.

The gender differences are most often found among career civil servants in the State Department. On eighteen separate issues, women's views diverge from those of men, with women taking more liberal policy stands. For example, women are more likely to reject the hard-line, or Cold War, view of the world and they are more likely to disagree with propositions that the domino theory is valid and any Communist victory is a defeat for America's national interests. Similarly the career women are more likely than men to reject the statement that the United States should take all steps, including the use of force, to prevent the spread of Communism. In choosing policy goals for the United States, the career women at State were more likely than the men to reject promoting capitalism, containing Communism and bringing democracy to other nations and to favor combatting world hunger and giving foreign aid to poor countries. In selecting strategies for foreign policy implementation, the career women at State favor cutting the Defense budget and fostering international cooperation. They also soundly reject the use of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to undermine hostile governments.

The picture for political appointees at State, however, is nearly the mirror image. Female appointees diverge significantly from male appointees on only eight of the eighty-seven policy questions, but on all eight of these, women's views are more hard-line or conservative. For example, they strongly endorse the Cold War view of an expansionist Soviet Union and the need to contain Communism. Goals such as combatting world hunger and fostering international cooperation are rejected. Instead, the policy of using the CIA to undermine hostile governments is strongly supported.

Why are women appointees at State more hard-line than the women in career positions? One possibility is that there is a greater preponderance of outsiders or political ideologues among appointees in the Reagan administration. Maybe the difficult struggle to make it as women in an environment hostile to women has allowed only the solidly doctrinaire to survive, or to even be chosen, as appointees. Whatever the reason, we can say that when it comes to policy attitudes, the gender gap at State is complex, and the absence of an overall gap is largely a function of the sharply divergent views *among women* in the Department.

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Women coming into Defense may... overcompensate and become more conservative. Alternatively, it may be that only the most conservative women are considered for the higher ranks at the Pentagon.

"I was on an assignment and I went into this office and they said to me, 'This is the most critical project for the Department of Defense. It is much too important for a woman to work here.' I was detailed there for eight months and they let me know it every day that I was just a woman and couldn't make these decisions."

In the Defense Department women appointees and those in career positions show few attitude differences from the men. However, when those few differences occur, women tend to take more hard-line positions. For instance, women are more likely than their male counterparts to reject the idea that revolutionary forces are nationalistic and not controlled by the Soviet Union or China. They are also more likely to downgrade the goals of protecting the global environment or giving aid to poor countries. Similarly, in terms of strategies, they reject enlisting the United Nations in settling international disputes and they reject the ability of the press to fairly report on foreign policy. They also are less likely than men to adopt the foreign policy goal of protecting the jobs of American workers.

One possible explanation for the differences between State and Defense centers around the different political cultures of the two departments. Most observers of foreign policy formulation would characterize the Defense Department's position on most foreign policy positions as more hard-line than that of the State Department. Given the two political environments, the process of selection (whether it be self-selection or selection by others) and the socialization experience for women career employees may be different in each department. Women coming into Defense may, in their attempt to fit into an overwhelmingly male-dominated organization, overcompensate and become more conservative.

Alternatively, it may be that only the most conservative women are considered for the higher ranks at the Pentagon. Indeed, women at Defense are more than twice as likely (46 percent vs. 20 percent) as women at State to say their gender limits their ability to influence foreign policy. The Defense Department's organizational ethos may have a major impact upon women, where some women claim to have a difficult time establishing credibility due to their lack of military experience. As one of our women respondents in Defense noted:

I was on an assignment and I went into this office and they said to me, "This is the most critical project for the Department of Defense. It is much too important for a woman to work here." I was detailed there for eight months and they let me know it every day that I was just a woman and couldn't make these decisions. In the Department of Defense, it is much more difficult to be a woman and to be accepted and have people listen to what you have to say. There is a military macho image, so you have to prove yourself. Before they listen to you, you have to prove yourself, over and over and over again.

As another woman from Defense observed:

There isn't any room for women who dress cute or act sexy or accentuate the fact that they are very different. But if you effectively blend in, then you are taken as seriously as anybody else.

The same organizational pressure may not be happening at State. Or, the differences could result from a self-selection process, with women who espouse more liberal views being drawn to the State Department and/or more conservative women being drawn to Defense.

The more conservative stance of the Reagan women appointees compared with women career employees or male appointees may reflect similar factors. Women who fit into the very conservative Reagan Administration may have had to be even more conservative than the men to be selected as appointees, or once selected they may have overcompensated in adopting the hard-line of the political right to fit in.

Conclusion

The question that provided the focus for our research was whether adding women to the foreign policy process would change the output of that process. Asked whether having more women in the Department of State and Defense would have an impact on foreign policy, 83 percent of our respondents said no. Even when a change was anticipated, it was not one of major proportions. "Policy wouldn't be different, but a better cross section would give a wider range of opinions, lead to more diversity." Just as we found the similarities between men's and women's goals are more notable than their divergences, those we interviewed did not see women as having a united, or "women's," position on foreign policy. During the Reagan years, women could be found at both ends of the foreign policy issue continuum. The relative influence of the various "women's views" will depend on at least three factors: the ideological views of the particular administration which selects the political appointees; the relative power of the State Department and Defense Department; and the relative power of the appointees versus the careerists.

In a positive vein, 48 percent of our respondents felt that the influence of women in the departments will increase in the future. The situation looks brighter for women career employees at the State Department. First, after years of discriminatory behavior, the State Department is under court pressure to allow women a wider role. Thus, State may be more permeable to women's views. Second, more women are moving up through the ranks at State than at the Defense Department.

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However, the policy implications of women's advancement in the foreign policy arena will depend on the political environment created by future administrations. They will determine which (if any) of these women's views will prevail — the more liberal views exemplified by women career civil servants at State, the more conservative views such as those of women career civil servants at the Defense Department or the views of appointees serving a particular president.

Do Women Leaders Make a Difference? Substance, Style and Perceptions

Sue Tolleson Rinehart

To explore the impact of women in public office, interviews were conducted with current or former female mayors of five large cities and their male predecessors or successors. Overall, there were few differences between the male and female mayors' views about the nature of their communities and the policy problems that should be addressed. This similarity may be due in part to the increased acceptance of humanistic concerns as public issues that should be addressed by government and to the mandate of local government to pay attention to human problems. However, women and men mayors exercised different leadership styles, with women employing a more hands-on style that emphasized collegiality and teamwork. Women and men of the mayoral pairs also saw the implications of gender for officeholders differently. Men tended to attribute differences between men and women mayors to personality while women more often attributed them to gender.

On the whole, during the last twenty years, government has been taking increasing cognizance of humanitarian questions, things that deal with the happiness of human beings, such as health, education, security. There is nothing, of course, to prove this is entirely because of the women's interest, and yet I think it is significant that this change has come about during the period when women have been exercising their franchise.

Eleanor Roosevelt, 1940¹

For the last two centuries, some women activists in the United States have argued that women *must* have a place in politics because of the special moral and nurturant perspective that women could provide. Many have believed that women would not merely duplicate the beliefs and actions of men. Instead, they would bring a different perspective to government, for women have been taught to embrace nurturance, peace and concern for the well-being of others and the community. The health, happiness and education of children, the private morality of the family and the community have been called the concerns of women; men's have been the concerns of the larger public world. Male policymakers' historical neglect of family, health and welfare policies was actually a policy by default: since these were women's concerns, and the concerns of the

¹Susan Ware, "ER and Democratic Politics: Women in the Postsuffrage Era," in *Without Precedent: the Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, Edited by Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

private domain, they were not appropriate public questions.² When such policymaking did occur, it was often initiated and sustained by women, and it was unique for that reason. For example, in the United States and Great Britain, it was women health care workers and women volunteers who were responsible for creating drastic changes in standards, availability and delivery of medical care during pregnancy in the first decades of the twentieth century.³

Today, the gender gap in men's and women's policy preferences and voting behavior suggests that more and more women have decided that women's concerns are, indeed, public concerns. If we look at the Scandinavian countries, where the largest concentration of women elected officials in the world has had more than a decade to bring about change, we can see that women officials have made a substantial difference in public policy by increasing attention to humanistic concerns.⁴

Despite an ever-growing acceptance of women as political actors and of women's issues as legitimate *public* questions, we may still retain many expectations about leadership that are shaped by our stereotypes of male and female behavior. Do differences in gender role socialization mean that women leaders are more concerned than men about the care and well-being of their constituents and less concerned than men about the aggrandizement of their own political power? Do women and men see different issues as pressing political problems? Are women less competitive, and more cooperative, in their approaches to seeking political solutions? Are women officeholders less hierarchical, and more communal and hands-on, in their leadership style than male officeholders?

Leaders are supposed to be strong, forceful, commanding, decisive and wise; we think of great military commanders or nation-builders, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson or even Ronald Reagan, riding tall in the saddle and making America proud again. Is it a simple matter to envision a woman occupying such roles? Women leaders may be caught in a crossfire of expectations: that they will bring the woman's point of view to politics, but that they will be able to be one of the guys. Or is the potential for gender differences among leaders never realized because men and women see the world and its problems differently, yet must confront the same problems as officeholders? The state of literacy in the United States, a city's crime rate and any of a host of other problems are gender-neutral, even though possible solutions to them may be influenced

²Virginia Sapiro, "The Gender Basis of American Social Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 101 (1986): 221-238.

³Sue Tolleson Rinehart, "Maternal Health Care Policy: Britain and the United States," *Comparative Politics* 19 (1987): 193-212.

⁴Elina Haavio-Mannila et al., *Unfinished Democracy: Women in Nordic Politics*, Translated by Christine Badcock, New York: Pergamon Press, 1985.

by whether a leader is male or female. Leaders are also limited by their institutions — what they can or must do in a particular office — and must work within those constraints.

Data Collection

In 1988, twelve of America's 100 largest cities had women mayors, and women were mayors of 11.4 percent of cities with populations of 30,000 or more, a tripling of women's share of mayoralties since the mid-1970s.⁵ Among many other things, this has meant that there is a growing pool of women political chief executives from which to draw observations about gender and leadership. Some women leaders hold office in more powerful or challenging situations than do others, and I focused my study on those who were or recently had been mayors of some of the nation's largest cities.

The twelve of the largest American cities which had women mayors in 1988, plus two other large cities where women mayors had recently left office, provided the starting point for my selection of male-female mayoral pairs to be interviewed. After eliminating cities where it was impossible to obtain a pair of interviews (because of the death or unavailability of a mayor or former mayor), and taking geographical balance into consideration, I was left with seven cities. I began by contacting the woman mayor or recent mayor first and, upon securing a scheduled interview with her, tried to schedule an interview with her male counterpart as close to the same day as possible. The conclusions presented below are based on interviews with male and female pairs in five of the seven cities. The mayoral pairs interviewed represent cities in the northeastern, southeastern, midwestern and southwestern United States. Nine were Democrats and one was Republican. Three women and three men are white, and two men and two women are black. The five sets of interviews here also represent all race/sex combinations.

All interviews were conducted in-person by me, and ranged in length from about twenty-five minutes to almost two hours. Each person was asked the same questions and was invited to respond as completely and individually as possible. At the end of the interview, women were asked whether "being a woman made any difference to you as a candidate? To people's perceptions of you? To being the kind of mayor you are?" The men were asked the same questions, altered to elicit their responses about

⁵Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), "Women in Elective Office 1988," New Brunswick, NJ; Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1988.

Women and men see their political environments...in the same way. The female-male pairs were usually in agreement on the characterizations of their communities and their constituencies.

their perceptions of their female counterpart, and whether they thought that gender made a difference in the kind of mayors each was or had been.

Women's and Men's Assessments of the Political Environment

In many ways, men and women mayors interviewed for this study do not differ. Women and men see their political environments — the constituency and the problems their constituencies face — in the same way. The female-male pairs were usually in agreement on the characterizations of their communities and their constituencies.

One city was described by both its current and former mayors as a challenging combination of wealth and poverty; each mayor spontaneously pointed out that the middle class needed and demanded less from government than either the rich or the poor. The male former mayor said:

I think [the disadvantaged and business] are basically the two main constituencies. There is a middle-class working community, but I think mainly they are self-sufficient. They don't seek government support as much as the wealthy and poor do.

Earlier that day, the woman who succeeded him in office said the community was:

...spirited, a tale of two cities. We have two extremes, the very poor and the financial [sector].... Although we have that tale of two cities, there is such a welcome effort of each to deal with the other. It's a proud city.

Two other cities, both of which experienced crises of racial integration and unpredictable growth, were noted by both mayors for their large groups of warm, unselfish and committed citizens, despite the strains both cities had experienced.

It is not surprising that men and women who have been active for, campaigned in and led the same city, would be in close agreement on its essence. And their success must be kept in mind: these are people who knew their cities well enough to win the confidence of the electorate. Nor is it surprising that men and women would be in the same strong agreement when it comes to identifying the city's most important problems; the mayoralty offers a distinctive vantage point to whomever is in office.

Overall, there was more similarity than difference in the problems women and men mayors viewed as the most important facing their cities.

Both men and women stressed the problems of growth and economic development, and similar community issues such as education and housing. However, only men mentioned drugs, and women mentioned a broader range of issues.

A similar pattern emerged when I asked the mayors about the three most important problems facing the nation. Men mentioned national economic policy while women did not. Both men and women most frequently mentioned issues of social welfare or social justice, peace, education and the environment. However, women mentioned about twice as many different issues as men did.

In four of the five cities, both the men and the women were internationalist in their perspectives. "I think you should always talk about our role in the universe...[from the perspective of the city] you have a great foundation to talk about global relationships" and "The world's changing. We have to start encouraging people, pushing people to start thinking in terms of the international spectrum, whether it's city-to-city economic relationships or [shared environmental problems]" are comments from a woman in the northeast and a man in the southwest, and are typical of the mayors' thinking.

When I asked about the three most serious problems facing the world, both men and women mentioned the same list of issues: peace, world hunger, population growth, the environment, drugs and international economic development. The mayors saw drugs in particular as a problem solvable only by multinational cooperative efforts. Most of the mayors, at some point, talked in terms of "my city and the world."

Perhaps few gender differences emerge in these areas not because these women were more like men, but because men are freer now to think about things that, before women entered office, were not seen as public problems. Many of the issues that male as well as female mayors raised were, after all, also issues long thought to be the special purview of women's nurturance: education, social welfare, peace, world hunger and the environment.

Leadership Style

Gender differences emerged when I began to ask the mayors about their leadership style and their views on the nature of leadership and followership. Four of the five women, for example, said that they had an involved, hands-on style, and emphasized collegiality and teamwork. As one woman explained:

I'm a believer in "hands-on," probably to a fault.... I think this is a woman's management style.

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"I'm a believer in 'hands-on,' probably to a fault.... I think this is a woman's management style."

Her views were echoed by another woman:

I'm pretty much a "grab it by the reins and get it done" person... I'm very "hands-on;" I like to be involved in what's going on.

Women, and women alone, admired women leaders: Margaret Thatcher, Barbara Jordan and Shirley Chisholm.

Four of the five men, in contrast, said that their staffs were their implementers and sounding boards; they were more likely to mention delegating responsibilities and seemed to be speaking more frequently in the "command" idiom that we have come to associate with (male) leadership. The following are typical of the men's remarks:

I tended to use my staff as a sounding board for ideas.... I always felt that their job was to advise and mine was to decide.

I give them the opportunity to assist me in getting the necessary information I need to make a decision.

I believe in delegation of authority and trying to keep my staff as small as possible.... I was organizationally oriented.

While these men clearly believe the qualities they have mentioned are central to leadership, their own leadership styles are still more hierarchical and directive, as we saw above. The women's leadership styles, in contrast, appear a closer match with their most valued leadership qualities.

I asked which political leaders, no matter when or in what circumstances, the mayors admired most. John F. Kennedy, Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman and Abraham Lincoln appeared on both women's and men's lists. Men also mentioned Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Adam Clayton Powell and Adlai Stevenson. Women, and women alone, admired women leaders: Margaret Thatcher, Barbara Jordan and Shirley Chisholm. This variation in the choice of role models suggests that we have not come so far that men will adopt female leaders as personal models.

Despite gender differences in the choice of role models and in the style of leadership exercised, the men and women were similar in their views of what constitutes good leadership, and individual pairs were in especially close agreement. Most men and women told me that the best follower is a leader-in-the-making, a participator in the vision and not an unthinking, loyal soldier. The qualities of leadership all seemed to admire most are motivation, concern for people, vision, commitment, listening and communication. These seem closer to the stereotypical qualities valued as feminine than the sterner, more aggressive qualities our culture has attached to male leaders. However, while these men clearly believe the qualities they have mentioned are central to leadership, their own leadership styles are still more hierarchical and directive, as we saw above. The women's leadership styles, in contrast, appear a closer match with their most valued leadership qualities.

Gender and Perception

For all their similarities, do female and male mayors believe the gender of the mayor is irrelevant? Do female and male mayors see the effect of gender in the same ways? The answer to both questions is that they do not. Three of the male mayors were thoughtful about gender differences and usually made fairly accurate assessments of the women mayors' experiences. But, for obvious reasons, they did not see the differences to be as serious as did their female counterparts. All of the men spoke in more abstract terms while the women were immediate and personal in their responses. The men spoke in terms of equality of abilities; for them, that was what mattered most. The women all saw things in more complex ways.

From pair to pair, one's sex appeared more determinative of reactions to questions about gender than one's leadership of any particular city. Does sex make a difference to the kind of mayor a person is? "Not by their sex," says one man, "only a woman, by her sex, often has to confront issues, reactions, different from what males do. Otherwise, it's personalities." He continued:

We're still dealing, living in a male world, and there are times when one has to confront that bias. But that's folly. Not only just as a general attitude, but because there are more capable women who're assuming all these responsibilities, and demonstrating that they're getting results, a capacity to lead which has always been there, it's just never been recognized. [In one of the city's genuine crises,] it was women in this community, black and white, [who found a solution to the problem]. So the difference really, still, may be in perception and inbred bias, but more and more it will be tied to individual personality and not sex.

"I think, you know, most of the time, a woman tends to feel that our sex has no bearing, but in reality it does. While we work very hard to minimize whatever impact that may have,...I still feel that every move I make is, for some reason, still a test.... I think women, especially in politics, are still measuring their moves, much more than men measure theirs."

His female predecessor was not so sanguine:

I think, you know, most of the time, a woman tends to feel that our sex has no bearing, but in reality it does. While we work very hard to minimize whatever impact that may have,...I still feel that every move I make is, for some reason, still a test.... [I still don't think that] if I make a mistake it would be considered just, you know, "that was a bad day." It would still be a measure of competence, capability.... The bottom line: I think women, especially in politics, are still measuring their moves, much more than men measure theirs. We're still so early in this process that the record we make directly impacts upon what kind of opportunities other women will have.

"I very much do [believe that being a woman makes her a different mayor] because of two things. One, the female is not as confrontational as a male because of the way we're raised, what's expected of a male, what's expected of a female. [Two] the motherly instinct you have, being a female, those characteristics are very, very good attributes, because you aren't as quick to anger, you don't go into a meeting confrontationally, you go in looking for cooperation."

Men more often than women said that personality differences were responsible for any difference between themselves and the female mayor while women saw gender as a more important influence.

Similar views were expressed by female-male mayor pairs in other cities. One man said:

I've seen...a host of mayors, male and female, who, I couldn't tell much difference on the basis of their sex, as to whether they had a different outlook toward their leadership roles, or a different style.... There's a big difference [between me and my female counterpart], but that's just personality.... I don't believe all that stuff I've heard about kinder, gentler, softer, more compassionate.

The woman who had also been mayor of his city did, in fact, seem to believe that women were "kinder, gentler, softer" at the same time that she echoed the difficulty of being rather tentatively accepted by her constituency:

You have to work twice as hard and prove yourself much more, to prove your capabilities. A male comes into it totally accepted because he's a male. A female, people look at questionably, and say "Well, is she really qualified?" So you've got to go that extra mile to convince people that yes, you are qualified and that you're starting out on equal footing with whoever the male opponent might be.

I very much do [believe that being a woman makes her a different mayor] because of two things. One, the female is not as confrontational as a male because of the way we're raised, what's expected of a male, what's expected of a female. [Two] the motherly instinct you have, being a female, those characteristics are very, very good attributes, because you aren't as quick to anger, you don't go into a meeting confrontationally, you go in looking for cooperation.... Now the down side of that is sometimes...it takes you a little longer to get to the point where you really have to put your foot down and say "okay, this is the way it's going to be."

Four trends appeared from comparisons of the mayors' perceptions of difference. First, men more often than women said that personality differences were responsible for any difference between themselves and the female mayor while women saw gender as a more important influence. The same four men who emphasized no differences, though, acknowledged past or present discrimination.

Second, when I asked whether they thought men and women mayors were different, women and men diverged in their interpretations of the

question. All five men interpreted "difference" to be a measurement of women's performance against that of men. However, the women did not see "difference" as a measurement against a male standard of performance, although all five admitted, with varying degrees of humor, weariness or frustration, that others were, in fact, measuring them that way.

Third, four of the women believed that women bring an added, or extra dimension, to politics. In one case, that dimension was phrased largely in terms of style, whereas with the other women, it seemed to color policy orientations as well, even if implicitly. Only one of the five women did not believe that women were substantively different from men.

Finally, these women are still rather lonely in one respect: all of them are acutely aware of their uniqueness and the fishbowl-like aspects of their lives. All of them are eager to end that condition, and they are quick to point out that its best cure is to bring more women into public office.

Conclusion

No reasonable person would argue that the presence of women in elective office has not made a difference. The challenge is to determine what kinds of differences have occurred. Looking at these ten men and women who have governed some of America's largest cities, we can see three ways that women in political office have changed the political world.

First, their very presence changes the appearance of political leadership. School children no longer see leadership wearing only a male face, when they have lived and grown up in a place where women lead. This expands the numbers and kinds of their role models and their perceptions of who leaders are and what they do. This means that girls will grow into women who feel they can be leaders, and boys will grow into men for whom leadership means a greater variety of things. When those girls grow up to become leaders then perhaps they will be accepted as readily as their male counterparts, no longer having to endure an additional level of scrutiny that an earlier generation of women leaders endured.

Second, the similarity in views of the constituencies and their needs may be attributable to the influence of women, as Eleanor Roosevelt observed. Women in elective office have brought attention to, and made a place on the public agenda for, problems that have almost always been with us but that have not been seen as proper questions for political deliberation in the past. Now, through the efforts of women, these "women's" issues are increasingly recognized as issues affecting the well-being of the entire public, as their importance to the male mayors attests.

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Third, women in public office have more closely joined valued leadership qualities to leadership styles. This is not a mere question of image, but one of how we lead, and women thus far seem more able to put beliefs about participation, cooperation, communication and the development of leaders-to-be into practice. This conjunction does not necessarily mean that different leadership abilities are present on X or Y chromosomes, or that we need men when we need someone to be tough and women when we need compassion. It does mean that, with women's growing presence in seats of political power, we can expect women and men to understand power and leadership in new ways. Or, as Texas Governor Ann Richards said after her first 100 days in office, "The joy of having power is being in a position of distributing it, giving it away, empowering others."⁶

⁶Wayne Slater, "Richards Makes Mark on Office," *Dallas Morning News*, April 21, 1991: 1A.

Rethinking Municipal Governance: Gender Distinctions on Local Councils

Susan Abrams Beck

Women and men who serve on local councils are similar in many respects. Yet interviews with councilmembers in seven suburban towns revealed some striking gender differences in how they behave and in how they evaluate each other's behavior. The differences center on how women and men perceive and respond to citizen concerns and complaints, how they gather and use information and how they feel about political maneuvering. For example, men and women alike view councilwomen as more responsive to constituents; but women see this as positive and men more often see this as a negative. Women dislike the backstabbing and dirty politics; men complain about irate constituents. Men often express frustration that women ask too many questions, while women see themselves as well-prepared and think their male colleagues are often "winging it." Most of the women claim to have experienced discrimination of some kind, and most seem to have altered their behavior in some ways in response to perceived differences with their male colleagues. There is potential for the impact of women in local government to grow. However, the narrow range of issues that councils confront, along with the many constraints on their capacity to act, limit women councilmembers' ability to make a difference.

What has been the impact of women officeholders at the most fundamental level of politics — the local community? The local government for most citizens is the source of their most direct experience with government. The town is not where the burning issues of the women's movement erupt. Few municipalities are gripped by the politics of abortion, for example. But if the more obvious gender issues are not deliberated, it is true that the lives of women are deeply affected by the decisions made by local government, decisions that influence, for example, where women live, the availability of child care and how they will deal with difficulties in their senior years. Moreover, there are everyday concerns of localities, such as zoning, garbage collection, safety and development, that might be treated differently by women than by men.

To what extent then, as women have taken their places on local councils, have they addressed different concerns, approached the customary concerns differently or conducted themselves differently in their new positions? In other words, what has been the impact of women on governance at the local level?

To ascertain the answers to these questions, twenty-seven semi-structured interviews were conducted in seven suburban towns located in one county outside a major American city. The municipalities

were selected to reflect the ethnic and racial make-up of the region. The towns ranged in size from 5,000 to 25,000 and included working class, middle class and very affluent communities.¹ Only municipalities where there were at least two councilwomen were selected for study. This was done to avoid problems stemming from generalizations based on one "token" female. (In the county where the interviews were conducted, 19 percent of all council seats are filled by women.)

Interviews were attempted with all women council members from the towns selected and an equal number of their male colleagues. The group interviewed consisted of fourteen males and thirteen females, sixteen Republicans and eleven Democrats. The interviews were conducted in 1988 and 1989.

The municipalities from which the council members were drawn were all highly developed, with some, but very little, open space remaining. At one extreme, the more affluent communities consisted of large suburban tracts dotted with expensive homes and small commercial centers. At the other extreme, the working class communities tended to be closer to the central city, more commercial, with closer living. Some of the problems of poverty and homelessness spilled over into these working class towns, but only one had anything bordering on a serious problem. All were severely strained by the cost of municipal services, especially garbage collection and schools. Their police forces were paid, but with the exception of the poorest community, which was also the largest, the fire department was voluntary.

All seven towns had council-mayor forms of government and, except for one, had councils consisting of six members elected at-large. (The one exception had a single-member district system.) For all practical purposes, council members were volunteers engaged in community service. In those few towns where they received very small stipends, the stipends rarely even covered the expenses they incurred. More often, council members served without pay. Thus, all seven communities were similar in that council service was certainly not a profession, nor could it pay the officeholders' bills — it was clearly volunteer work.

It was expected that few differences would be found between men and women because, for the most part, their agendas are set for them. With business conducted at evening meetings and a calendar of obligations to fulfill, the chance for creative thinking is minimal. Moreover, politics in these municipalities is conducted among neighbors, bringing very strong social pressures into play. Given these realities, it was hypothesized that governance with women participants would not look very different than

¹Subsequent analyses will often focus on the contrast between working class and the more affluent communities. In these instances, the more affluent communities are the middle class and the very affluent municipalities.

when councils were exclusively male enclaves, and to the extent that women made a difference, those distinctions would be small.

Convergences

On the whole, women and men councilmembers were very similar in many important respects. This was true in terms of their priorities and their positions, tenure and partisanship. In other words, given the range of activities and decisions with which they are involved, often there is relatively little to distinguish councilwomen and councilmen.

The convergence between these councilwomen and councilmen in defining priority issues in their communities is striking. Almost without exception, they identify the same concerns — taxes, development and the quality of life. Male and female councilmembers alike feel hostage to the tax rate, perennially seeking ways to keep it down and avoid development whenever possible, and in general trying to freeze their communities in time. This, in essence, means making a concerted effort to exclude the poor, minorities, illegal aliens or any other "undesirables" who might change the makeup of their towns. Councilmembers from working class municipalities feel threatened by an encroaching inner city; those from middle class and affluent towns want to maintain their exclusivity, despite new state laws that require that they take on a greater role in providing affordable housing. Thus, protectiveness, for both the working class and the other more affluent towns, informs almost all of the councilmembers' decisions. The effort to keep a community's "identity and character" in the face of people "who have just moved in" and "see an opportunity to make a lot of money in a hurry" is an operating principle for both women and men.

The desire to prevent change sometimes conflicts with another important value, keeping taxes down. The members of councils want to avoid the wrath of the residents at all costs and they are all aware that the quickest way to spur a revolt is to raise taxes.

People feel, oh God, another increase in taxes; my gas and electric are going up; this is going up. I don't think they can yell at the...utility company or even their own credit card. But they can reach out to the Mayor and the Council and yell...that the taxes are going up.

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These imperatives propel them away from projects that put pressure on the tax rate and towards decisions that make it more difficult for people to afford housing in the locality. Suggestions for multifamily buildings or more flexible zoning laws that might permit single parents or

seniors to find extra income are treated with suspicion. Where the few open spaces remained and more development was permitted to creep in, backlash occurred. Such proposals are seen as threatening to the town, imposing new burdens while contributing insufficiently to the revenue base. Residents of suburban condominiums are seen as the newcomers, whose lack of participation in the affairs of the town does little to endear them to the old timers who sit on councils.

Another major area in which men and women councilmembers agree is their perception that there is little to distinguish the parties on the local level. Their choice of membership in one party or the other is often fairly arbitrary. Several members reported having been recruited by friends, asked to run by both parties, or having thought of themselves as belonging to the opposite party at some previous time. Even when a councilmember indicated that the difference between the parties lay in ideology, both parties claim the same ideology: caring for the people, doing what's right and spending with caution. Without exception the opposing party is blamed for overspending or irresponsible spending, bringing in too much development and making personnel decisions based on partisanship rather than merit. Nor is there anything distinct about the parties' political cultures which makes one party more receptive to women or men. There is no evidence of any class distinctions between the councilmembers of the parties either.

Thus, it is almost impossible to distinguish between the parties philosophically, with the practical result that each consistently blames the other for overspending, overdeveloping and for catering to special interests. Predictably, these charges and countercharges emerge perennially as elections approach each November, but an observer of municipal politics is hard-pressed to ascertain who is a Republican or a Democrat on the basis of issue stands or statements. Both women and men, Republican and Democrat, hop on the bandwagon to protect housing values, resist change and promote themselves as the optimal managers and guardians of the public treasury.

Divergences

The congruences between women and men councilmembers are striking, but there are important differences as well. These distinctions emerge in the way they go about representing constituents, their behavior and their policy contributions to council deliberations, as well as their interpretations of these differences.

Men's Views

In all, twelve of the fourteen men interviewed saw differences between men and women. Nine of those twelve made comments that were clearly negative, although some (four) of them evaluated women in positive terms as well. Both men and women agree that councilwomen are more responsive to their constituents, but councilmen interpret this attribute negatively, seeing women as too responsive to feeling and not analytic enough. "Women," claimed one councilman, "are not as detailed. They're generally more emotional and vote on emotion rather than on details and facts and figures.... They will react to the last few people [they've] spoken to rather than [to] more hard facts." Another argued that women "will avoid positions that will offend a group in town. They respond to feelings and people." And yet a third councilman stated that "women are more intuitive than men," which causes them to "get bogged down in affairs of the heart and individual cases, rather than being concerned about all the people."

These "sympathy thoughts" are viewed negatively because, according to this view, emotionalism translates into poor public policy when programs are accepted or rejected because of constituent sentiment. For example, in one town leaf ordinances that imposed a burden on seniors were fought by women over the objections of their male colleagues, who argued that either fees or special bagging requirements were imperative because of escalating costs. Another councilman reported he was horrified that councilwomen supported an emergency appropriation for a homeless shelter that was not in the budget. To him "that violated everything I know about budgeting." This adherence to the rules, which Carol Gilligan, author of *In a Different Voice*, argues is the male voice, makes the men see the responsiveness of women as unprofessional.

Men also see other behavioral differences in women that they view negatively. One criticizes women because:

they want to get on the phone with me and talk through an issue 'ad nauseam'.... With women, they get very impatient with me. They want to talk it through.... You've got to be sensitive to their feelings. That's great. That's understandable. I don't want to be insensitive to them, but there's a point at which I think men are bigger risk takers.

To this councilman, women throw obstacles in the way of decision-making. Other men agree. One describes as irksome the questioning of councilwomen:

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Years ago I didn't particularly care for women because their outlook or ideas sometimes come from a different angle.... They want everything explained to them.... Different questions that they ask sound silly to us. How come we're spending this money for this, or how come we're doing this? Why would you spend \$500,000 [to] buy a truck when you can get one cheaper? But that's the kind of fire truck we want, one that has a ladder that goes up. They ask questions on why you're spending that much money — do you follow what I'm getting at? Women don't have the mechanical knowledge about trucks [and] automobiles.

Another objected to the "frustrated housewives" in politics who "have nothing to do all day...[but] go around looking for every little nit-picking thing in town...making a mountain out of a molehill." These comments are aspects of the female stereotype — talkative, nagging, arguing without knowledge.

For some men the distinctions between women and men are viewed more positively and they value the diversity women bring to the council — the "philosophy of woman" as one councilman put it. On the most elementary level, women's presence was thought to elicit more "genteel" male behavior, such as less swearing. A more substantive contribution was offered by the example of women thinking about beautifying the downtown district with trees and less garish signs rather than just providing more parking spaces. For some, the increased attention that men agree that women give to their council duties is seen as a bonus for the town and themselves rather than a burden that leads to make-work that impedes the business at hand.

Women's Views

As might be expected, women see a different political reality, in terms of both what they bring to the council and what men bring. Whereas men see the women's response to citizen's concerns as soft-hearted, women see themselves as better representatives because of their responsiveness. Searching for additional money for a shelter, reducing or eliminating garbage fees or regulations, supporting residents who object to increased traffic headed for the garbage transfer station are what they feel their jobs are all about. Women interpret this as a willingness to "listen, not look for the quick solution. Men are looking for the management solution." Put another way, women more often see themselves as delegates, obliged to follow the direction of their constituents; men more often see themselves as trustees, independent of citizen demands.

This interpretive divergence is also evident in the way councilwomen see their persistent questioning. They see themselves as better prepared, more diligent and more organized. They relate that they are careful to be

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well-prepared before meetings, read the minutes and keep records on matters that need follow-up attention. Women "go along very slowly, methodically and they feel they have to be prepared, whereas men are more apt to wing it." One woman describes herself as the monitor, who keeps "a follow-up file and puts things on paper. Then in three months I write another memo, [saying] you didn't answer my memo from two months ago.... I'm a nudge." And in contrast to men's views of themselves as the more logical decision-makers, some women argued that men operate with less fact:

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The serious divergence in the interpretation of women's behavior leads some councilwomen to a sense that they must be more capable than their male peers to justify their questioning. Others feel inhibited or intimidated. One very experienced, competent councilwoman reflected on this problem:

I think that women are more organized than men...it's always a 'qualified woman.' Did you ever have a qualified man? I always felt, I'm under the gun here. I want to hold my own; I want to do a very good job, just not an adequate job.... I want to make sure I go to all my meetings. I want to make sure I respond to people.... I read all the minutes.

Another women also described this double standard:

[A] woman has to prove herself where it's assumed that a man knows.... I think you have to be exceptional.... My running mate...is a hands dirty kind of guy. I don't think he's the brightest person. He's got the biggest heart and I think he's a good councilperson.... If you had someone like that she never gets in.... You should always be a lady up there, always smiling. Men have more authority when they speak, not because they know more, but because they're more comfortable. Women are nervous because people say "what does she know?"

Significantly, of the thirteen women interviewed, eleven reported some experience of discrimination by men on the councils. This ranged from use of language such as "honey" or "dearie" by their male colleagues to more serious offenses, such as being denied campaign assistance at re-election (technically outside council business, but not

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unrelated); finding out about decisions after they had been made; creating informal ways to circumvent the woman in authority; public demeaning of a councilwoman who had tried to express her concerns about the budget. What is clear is that for almost all the women, there is a sense that they are left out on at least some occasions. One particularly frustrated woman described her sense of being on the outside as "nobody hears me." This discrimination did not affect official committee assignments, nor did women report being given any additional workload, although, as noted, many feel obliged to take on that responsibility.

What is important about these differences is not whether they are objectively true, but that they are perceived to be such. Women who "hold back" because they fear intimidation, even subtly so, or women who take extra pains to be as "qualified" as they are able, or those who "feel" the concerns of their constituents, whether such a response is a positive or negative, change the nature of the job. They are not behaving as the men do, and although these distinctions do not permeate everything councils do, they mold behavior in significant ways.

In contrast to councilmen, many of the councilwomen find distasteful the politics accompanying the job of councilmember. Half the women interviewed stated the thing they liked least about being in office was the politics, the "backstabbing." This "political junk," as one put it, involved the obligatory accusations that are launched at the opposing party on personnel questions, appointments and tax rates. Nothing enrages these councilwomen more than the charge that the other party is putting someone on a board just to give legitimacy to that person at election time, knowing full well that their party did exactly the same thing in the effort to establish the credibility of a candidate; or being pressured to make a hiring or firing decision based on partisanship rather than competence; or blaming the opponents for a tax hike, when, in fact, it is clear that mandated state programs are the cause of the additional costs; or not being able to give credit for a good program or idea if its sponsor belongs to the opposing party. The more seamy side of politics is appalling to some of them because they have a cooperative view of how councils should work. As one councilwoman expresses this distaste:

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Local politics [is] the kind of thing I don't like because...when you have someone that you're sitting next to on the council who happens to be of a different political party and is going to run against someone from "your party," I find it very hard — if I like this man and he's doing a good job and I work well with him — to go out and not support him, no matter what party he was.

Women find "not working together" is the hardest thing about politics, and some even mention that it will propel them out of the

political arena. But men do not articulate this same displeasure. Their most common objection is to the complaints of "irate citizens" who are often the only ones to express themselves to the council. These "loudmouths" often make "unjust accusations" which these councilmen find disturbing. Women "think it's great they come down, they're interested enough" to provide "public input." Rather than seeing them as citizen outbursts, women find them positive expressions of citizen concern.

Policy Contributions

Another divergence between women and men on councils appears in their policy contributions to the council agenda. These substantive distinctions exist within the context of the deep and broad consensus on the major eco-development issues within municipalities. The differences that emerged were reflected in some specific efforts made to shape municipal ordinances, and in their responses to questions about some hypothetical public policies:

The suggestions for ordinances made by councilwomen ranged over a wide array of programs, including instituting a municipal child care program; expanding a new library to encompass community center functions; granting a permit to a women's shelter; reducing onerous garbage collection fees and eliminating bagging regulations; prohibiting motorcycles in parks; restricting the size and display of signs in commercial districts; and redefining "family" in the new master plan to include unrelated individuals. In contrast, councilmen suggested building town tennis courts; building a new soccer field; eliminating indoor garaging of garbage trucks to save money; erecting a veteran's monument; and introducing an innovative financing plan to get sidewalks built.

None of these proposals was central to municipal business; indeed, most of them failed. But, when taken as a whole, they reflect the different experiences that women and men bring to council business and the potential that women officeholders can have a distinctive impact.

This potential for women to make a difference is made even clearer in responses to hypothetical questions about child care and zoning. One question asked whether or not the interviewee thought the municipality had any responsibility to provide child care and, if so, whether the councilmember had taken steps in that direction. Interviewees were also asked about their reactions to a zoning ordinance that would permit homeowners to take in boarders strictly to supplement income and not to share kitchen or other facilities that would qualify as some sort of quasi-family unit.

Surprisingly, the child care issue elicited a negative response from both men and women. One councilwoman had taken it on as her *cause celebre*, but for the others, it was a problem to be addressed by the school boards or the recreation department in after-school soccer programs

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or summer camps. However, only one councilmember, a man, argued against child care because a "woman's place is in the home." But it was not just the men who did not see this as a municipal issue; the women were just as unresponsive.

The zoning question about boarders elicited dramatically different reactions from the men and women. The case was presented in order to address the question of the single parent, left without adequate financial resources to continue mortgage payments after the departure of (usually) her spouse. Only one woman was against such an ordinance in principle, although such arrangements were illegal in all but two towns. Women's reactions were almost universally sympathetic to the plight of the resident who needed supplementary funds; one even admitted that, although the practice was illegal, she knew of it and ignored it. Five men accepted the idea, although not all with enthusiasm. Councilmen objected to the effect of boarders on property values; the "element" that would be brought into town; the additional burden on municipal services without increased taxes; and, for those towns in which they were illegal, the violations of the law.

Although the zoning question posed was hypothetical, zoning can have a profound impact on the affordability of housing, and this is a very relevant issue to each of these towns. Each of these municipalities was adjusting to the state mandate to fulfill its affordable housing obligations. The state had set quotas for every town, and most of the state's municipalities have fought the quotas. A few have adopted plans to meet the standards. Councilmen interviewed see affordable housing policies "as a way that we can satisfy our [obligation]," whereas councilwomen see it as a way to offer options to residents. One councilman who was the primary agent implementing the act in his town, was "100 percent against the Act.... I only [developed a plan] because I felt it was in the best interest of [the town] to reduce the impact...." For men, their actions were determined by the legal framework. Women, on the other hand, were sensitive to both the legal and compassion dimension of the obligation.

Conclusion

What emerges from this analysis is that the governance of these municipalities is not yet very different in many respects from what it would be without women on the councils. The broad strokes of taxes, development and suburban life are painted with essentially the same brush. However, there is an important subtext unfolding, one that requires close attention. Women perceive and manage this political world in a manner that distinguishes them from their male colleagues — reaching out to constituents, occasionally adjusting policies to their view and certainly

being receptive to a new kind of politics. But as long as low taxes and high property values remain the *sine qua non* of municipal politics, women will continue to make many decisions that do not fundamentally contrast with men's. Local policies will have to fit a standard that rejects inclusion, that attacks the opposition and that devalues thinking with the heart.

Women are uncomfortable in this political world and their instincts to respond to individual needs, reach out for collegiality and call on their own experiences all provide the seeds of an alternate model of politics. This would be a politics that stresses cooperation, empathy and openness over manipulation, efficiency and exclusion. However, this model is just that — a model — and one that will remain elusive until women are sensitized to the implications of playing by the old rules. Councilwomen do not see the full range of the impact of local policies, but once those implications are pointed out to them, they are willing and able to recast them.

For the most part, local representatives react to the issues put before them. They have little time and few resources to think outside of the context within which political problems are posed. Should greater efforts be made to change their consciousness, there is every indication that the impact of women in office, at least at the local level, is apt to grow. For the time being, however, women still play by the old rules, and business as usual continues to determine the direction of local governance.

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Gender Differences in Legislative Effectiveness: The Impact of the Legislative Environment

Jeanie R. Stanley and Diane D. Blair

Women state legislators in Arkansas and Texas face a number of barriers to their effectiveness as lawmakers. Both legislatures are male-dominated institutions with proportions of women well below the national average and with a relatively low degree of "professionalism" as measured by indicators such as length of session and level of pay. In both states, lobbyists play significant roles and personal relationships often weigh heavily in decision-making. In such an environment where politics rely on old-boy networks, women are still disadvantaged. They may have difficulty acquiring the prerequisites of power and being viewed as effective by the men's criteria. Women lawmakers may be able to effect change in policy areas that matter to them, but which are not considered the "power issues" in the institutions. However, changes over the last decade suggest that as both legislatures move toward greater professionalism, as the number of women members, lobbyists and staffers increases and as women gain seniority and savvy, female members will be able to enhance their effectiveness.

Most previous studies of women legislators have been based on exceptionally effective women officeholders or on women in legislatures with exceptionally large numbers of women. In contrast, our study included all of the women serving in two state legislatures in which the proportion of women is below the national average. Women constituted 6.6 percent of the Arkansas General Assembly and 10.5 percent of the Texas Legislature in 1989 (when the interviews were conducted), markedly below the national average of 16.9 percent for that year.¹

We assumed other factors in addition to the small number of women would make Arkansas and Texas highly challenging legislative environments for women. The biennial Texas and Arkansas legislative sessions are short and intense; both legislatures have been notably accommodating to large economic interests and to relatively unregulated lobbyists. Moreover, in both legislatures, camaraderie and congeniality have often outweighed other influences on decision-making. We wondered

¹Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), "Women in Elective Office 1989," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1989. At the time this study was conducted, Arkansas had ten women lawmakers, one of whom was black. Texas had nineteen women lawmakers. Four of the nineteen were black and three were Hispanic.

how outnumbered women could forge the strong personal relationships which many observers have deemed essential for effectiveness in such situations; we also wanted to see whether the differences in formal power structure and degrees of professionalism between Arkansas and Texas had an impact on women's effectiveness.

To address these questions, we undertook a two-pronged strategy. First, in December 1988 we mailed surveys to all legislators (135 in Arkansas and 181 in Texas) and 100 lobbyists in each of the states. We received completed questionnaires from seventy-five Arkansas legislators (sixty-seven male; eight female) and seventy-two Texas legislators (sixty-one male; eleven female), along with sixty-eight Arkansas lobbyists (sixty male; eight female) and eighty-five Texas lobbyists (seventy-three male; twelve female). Second, from January through June 1989, a total of seventy-five in-person interviews were conducted in Arkansas and Texas. We interviewed most of the women legislators (nine of ten in Arkansas; eighteen of nineteen in Texas) and a random sample of twenty-nine of their male colleagues (ten in Arkansas and nineteen in Texas). The two top legislative leaders in each state (all male) were also interviewed as well as a total of fifteen lobbyists from both states combined.

Among our clearest findings is that institutional factors, such as the degree of legislative professionalism, can influence the extent to which women legislators function as "effectively" as their male colleagues.

Legislative Effectiveness

While power is at the center of many questions which political scientists explore, power is an elusive concept which must often be approached through subjective personal perceptions rather than precise objective measurement. Whatever political scientists may mean by "legislative effectiveness" is less important than what legislators and lobbyists themselves, operating in a particular legislative environment, define as effective. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, we allowed legislators and lobbyists to use their own personal, subjective definitions of effectiveness. However all of their definitions appear to include one central idea: the ability to get things done in the legislature.²

²It is possible that members of these predominately male institutions could judge effectiveness with a gendered bias. For example, these subjective assessments could be influenced by the types of bills legislators pursue. They might label as more effective a lawmaker who wins passage of a bill backed by the insurance industry than one backed by the teachers' association. To the extent that bills dealing with humanistic concerns are deemed as less important than those dealing with traditional male interests, then gender differences in concerns could lead to men being seen as more effective than women lawmakers. Or, if those considered effective legislators are insiders who are "one of the boys" and women are excluded from these networks, then women might not be considered as effective as their male colleagues with the same record of getting bills passed.

Our survey and interview questions used items from previous studies of state legislative behavior, and we added questions to probe how our respondents defined and evaluated effectiveness. Among our clearest findings is that institutional factors, such as the degree of legislative professionalism, can influence the extent to which women legislators function as "effectively" as their male colleagues.

Both the Arkansas and Texas legislatures have undergone significant changes since the early seventies. Our findings suggest that these changes, including the trends toward a more businesslike atmosphere and legislative process, along with increased legislative staff support, are facilitating the increased effectiveness of women as legislators and lobbyists. Moreover, the Texas women legislators and lobbyists report that the presence of more women lobbyists also increases women's effectiveness in the legislature.

Legislative Reforms in Arkansas and Texas: Style and Substance

Political scientists employ the concept of "legislative professionalism" in various ways. Sometimes it refers to institutional capability (staff, compensation, facilities, procedure, etc.) and sometimes to legislative careerism (the extent to which members think of themselves as full-time legislators). However, by any definition, the Arkansas and Texas legislatures prior to 1970 were distinctly unprofessional. Descriptions of the Arkansas General Assembly prior to the reforms of 1973 are similar to frequently critical accounts of the Texas Legislature during the same period:

Each new term brought a large proportion of newcomers who wandered in bewilderment through a raucous and undisciplined atmosphere in which lobbyists swarmed on the chamber floors (and frequently joined in the voting), bills were scheduled or buried at whim through mysterious manipulations, committees and committee assignments were so numerous as to be meaningless, and whatever real business the legislature accomplished was worked out in late-night (and frequently liquorish) sessions in downtown hotel rooms.³

Because of their short, biennial regular sessions and low annual salaries, Texas and Arkansas are still sometimes classified as "unprofessional" legislatures. However, reforms in the 1970s substantially

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³Diane D. Blair, *Arkansas Politics and Government: Do the People Rule?* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.