

U.S. women getting political clout

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 19 (UPI) -- U.S. women are finally getting political "leverage" nine decades after they gained the right to vote, a political scientist says.

Anna Harvey of New York University is the author of "Votes Without Leverage." She says that was the situation for women in the United States through about 1970, half a century after the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified on Aug. 18, 1920, The Christian Science Monitor reports.

More women than men have voted in every presidential election since 1960, the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University in New Jersey says. While men still predominate as candidates and officeholders, this year women are making their mark.

There are now 17 women in the U.S. Senate, and Republicans and Democrats are expected to have at least 13 female candidates in November, a record in any election cycle. In the lower house, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has been the speaker since 2007.

Jennifer Lawless of American University said women are more likely to vote than men, making them a potential "decisive bloc." She said both parties are trying to appeal to women.

"Security is framed as, 'How to keep the kids safe?' The economy is framed as, 'How do I put food on the table?' 'How do I pay for college?'" she said.

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