

# GENDER and WOMEN'S *Leadership*

A REFERENCE HANDBOOK



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Karen O'Connor

EDITOR





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WOMEN'S *Leadership*

A REFERENCE HANDBOOK

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# GENDER and WOMEN'S *Leadership*

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Karen O'Connor  
*American University*

EDITOR



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\* The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the authors.



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# FOREWORD

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When the editors at SAGE Publications approached me nearly 4 years ago to describe a new leadership handbook series they hoped to develop and to ask if I might be interested in serving as a series consulting editor, I was intrigued. From the viewpoint of a librarian who has worked with the Jepson School of Leadership Studies at the University of Richmond, I was familiar first-hand with the needs of both faculty researchers and undergraduate students and topics of interest and relevance. From this perspective, I collaborated with SAGE to develop a list that, over the intervening years, has evolved into a series of two-volume reference handbooks on political and civic leadership, gender and women's leadership, leadership in nonprofit organizations, leadership in science and technology, and environmental leadership.

It is my hope that students, faculty, researchers, and reference librarians will benefit from this series by discovering the many varied ways that leadership permeates a wide variety of disciplines and interdisciplinary topics. SAGE's *Encyclopedia of Leadership* (2004) has been an outstanding reference tool in recent years to assist students with understanding some of the major theories and developments within leadership studies. As one of the newest interdisciplinary fields in academia in the past 20 years, leadership studies has drawn on many established resources in the social sciences, humanities, and organizational management. However, academic resources that are wholly dedicated and developed to focus on leadership as an academic study have been few and far between. The *SAGE Reference Series on Leadership* will provide an excellent starting place for the student who wants a thorough understanding of primary leadership topics within a particular discipline. The chapters in each of the handbooks will introduce them to key concepts, controversies, history, and so forth, as well as helping them become familiar with the best-known scholars and authors in this emerging field of study. Not only will the handbooks be helpful in leadership studies

schools and programs, they will also assist students in numerous disciplines and other interdisciplinary studies programs. The sources will also be useful for leaders and researchers in nonprofit and business organizations.

I would like to acknowledge Jim Brace-Thompson, senior editor, and Rolf Janke, vice president and publisher at SAGE Reference for their guidance, superb organization, and enthusiasm throughout the handbook creation process. I admire both of them for their intellectual curiosity and their willingness to create new reference tools for leadership studies. I would also like to acknowledge the faculty, staff, and students of the Jepson School of Leadership Studies for the many contributions they have made to the establishment of leadership studies as an academic field. Founded in 1992, the Jepson School of Leadership Studies is the only institution of its kind in the world, with a full-time, multidisciplinary faculty dedicated to pursuing new insights into the complexities and challenges of leadership and to teaching the subject to undergraduates. When I was assigned to serve as the liaison librarian to the new school in 1992, I had no idea of how much I would learn about leadership studies. Over the past 18 years, I have audited courses in the school, attended numerous Jepson Forums and speaker series, taught library and information research skills to Jepson students, assisted faculty and staff with various research questions, and engaged in enlightening conversations with both faculty and students. Through these many experiences, my knowledge and understanding of the field has grown tremendously, and it has been a unique experience to observe the development of a new field of study in a very brief time. I thank my Jepson colleagues for including me on the journey.

Lucretia McCulley, Consulting Editor  
Director, Outreach Services  
Liaison Librarian for Leadership Studies  
Boatwright Memorial Library  
University of Richmond, Richmond, VA



# INTRODUCTION

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When I first was approached by SAGE about my willingness to undertake this project, my initial thought was “What a great idea!” I recently had contributed to George Goethals, Georgia Sorenson, and James Burns’s four-volume *Encyclopedia of Leadership*. I believed that the time was right to develop such a resource exclusively on women’s leadership. With a background in political science as well as the law, I envisioned that this would be a fun and fairly easy enterprise. Was I ever wrong. Although I had edited the journal *Women & Politics* for 4 years and hosted two leadership conferences at the Women & Politics Institute at American University, the breadth of work being done on women’s leadership and leadership studies more generally was astonishing.

A handbook on women’s leadership, in theory, should begin with a definition of leadership. To find one definition that could satisfy all the authors in this handbook would be impossible. Everyone from the popular press to academics seem to have turned their attention to issues of, and questions surrounding, leadership. Many definitions are coached in actions leaders take or how they take them. Many other works are stories of leaders with lessons to be drawn from the performance of certain people in certain situations. Moreover, certain disciplines, as well as the development of leadership as a field of study itself, as a freestanding department or center for the study or action, further complicate the development of grand theory in this area.

Each section in this handbook, in fact, begins with an overview of leadership questions that have been or are still being tackled in every field where the study of women, as women, is important. And, interestingly, as it turned out, this handbook has largely become a handbook written by women. Of the 101 full entries included here, upward of 90% were written by women. In that, this may be the first such comprehensive undertaking to identify the debates within various disciplines, capture factors believed key to leadership, and locate where women leaders have been or are now found from a woman’s perspective. Thus, national surveys of leaders, surveys to identify leaders, and analyses of leadership styles must always be analyzed with an eye to the chances for women’s leadership to be underappreciated

or ignored altogether. The depth of work in this handbook proves that complaints that “there is no literature on,” or no reason to examine, women’s leadership can no longer be sustained. Stories of great women that have been lost over time are found in many of these chapters.

Within these chapters, written by experts across fields all over the globe, leadership is approached from myriad perspectives. None is “right” or “wrong.” All offer useful insights from experts within areas and often come to different conclusions about leadership. In the context of the key role leaders play in all facets of human activity, moreover, those who are labeled as leaders can play an extraordinarily important role in constructing views of leadership.

In 2009 *U.S. News & World Report* published its annual list of leaders compiled in conjunction with the Harvard University School of Business. Of those experts on “leaders” or “leadership” consulted, 27 of 37 (73%) had direct or indirect associations with Harvard. Only 30% of the evaluators were women. Thus, from the beginning, “who” were identified as leaders sang, in the notable words of political scientist E. E. Schattschneider, not only with “an upperclass bias” but with a male one too. The selection team also produced a list of leaders in which one often had to mine deep down into the trenches of local or community leadership to “find” a woman leader. Surprisingly, at least to me, these experts failed to recognize logical leaders such as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, or Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. One, in fact, could argue that as the swing justice on the Supreme Court of the United States for many years, O’Connor not only set national policy but decided the presidency of the United States in 2000. No doubt my background and training bring those two notable absences to mind much the way Brad Pitt fans get upset when *People* magazine fails to name him “Sexiest Man of the Year,” but honestly, how do you look at leadership and not include the leader of the U.S. House of Representatives?

Although I was not aware of it at the time, after reading thousands of pages on women, women leaders, and characteristics of women leaders, several themes became apparent quickly and appeared in most of the entries.



Whether in a part overview, individual chapter, or a Spotlight on an individual woman, one of at least four factors emerged in each entry:

1. *Most of history is still HIStory.* Achievements of women simply were not recorded or deemed important by chroniclers of events. I have never learned more in a 2-year period than I did in editing and writing for this handbook. Finding out about women still takes extra digging into primary source materials or careful collection of data from multiple sources. I am grateful to all of the contributors who took their tasks so seriously to provide us with important new insights on women's leadership and for hundreds of suggestions for future research to continue to put women's accomplishments in a more thoughtful light.

2. *A woman's voice does not a chorus make.* Simply having one woman in a position of leadership does not mean that women will be welcome into leadership positions in a company, as an administrator or as a president. Margaret Thatcher was an effective leader but did little to foster women into positions of leadership. In sharp contrast, Speaker Pelosi has gone out of her way to position women as committee chairs, subcommittee chairs, and in leadership positions. Moreover, for women to have an impact on leadership, usually some critical mass must be met.

3. *Woman not only speak in a different voice, but their voices are heard differently.* A significant body of research exists that documents that women not only speak differently than do men, but often lead differently, too. Part of this difference stems from difference in tone and presentation. This, in turn, leads many men to view women as less visionary, which many leadership theorists see as key to explaining why women are perceived as weaker leaders. Thus, who defines the terms and their components can have a significant outcome on any leadership study.

4. *We are far from approaching equality for women as leaders or in leadership positions.* This handbook ends with a discussion of Hillary Rodham Clinton's unsuccessful bid for the U.S. presidency and a discussion of what can be done to "fix" leadership gaps. But, nearly every chapter in this handbook, or at least one within a section, notes the way that women have to go to be recognized as or become leaders. Whether it is politics, the arts, within social movements, or

the professions, women consistently lag behind men in almost all areas except those related to women's caring functions such as education or nursing.

I would never have undertaken this enterprise if I had had any idea of the time it would take. Natalie Greene started working on this project when she was an undergraduate at American University enrolled in its Women, Policy, and Political Leadership Certificate Program. By the time this work is published, she will have nearly completed her master's degree in library science. I could not have finished this project without her assistance. She has been enormously patient with me—only asking me at least 100 times, "Where is Margaret Sanger?" (a reference to the last Spotlight/chapter completed). She has cheerfully searched for, asked, pleaded, and at times even threatened the authors commissioned to write these chapters. The paperwork and tracking involved in this endeavor were daunting, and Natalie took it all on with her usual brilliance and aplomb. She also has been a wonderful colleague who has shared similar moments of panic when we realized that certain topics were not included in this handbook. I will leave it to readers to discern those omissions. Some were in areas for which we simply could not find authors. Others were ones that come out of nowhere, seem obvious, but we just missed the topic.

I would also be remiss if I failed to mention the support of William M. LeoGrande, Dean of the School of Public Affairs at American University, as well as the help of my talented and knowledgeable editorial board (whose names are listed in the credits).

As a control freak, I personally edited each of these entries—some that came in at 9,000 to 12,000 words—way over the SAGE limit of 5,000 to 7,000 words. To all of the authors who may believe they were overedited, I apologize. But, I think that these efforts, combined with Natalie's and those of the editors at SAGE, have allowed us to produce a body of scholarship that can move the field forward much in the way that James MacGregor Burns's *Leadership* did in 1978.

Karen O'Connor, Editor  
Jonathan N. Helfat Distinguished  
Professor of Political Science  
Founder and Director, Emerita,  
Women & Politics Institute  
American University



## ABOUT THE EDITOR

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**Karen O'Connor** is the Jonathan N. Helfat Distinguished Professor of Political Science at American University and holds the only named chair in the School of Public Affairs. She received her J.D. and Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Prior to teaching at American University, she taught at Emory University, rising from instructor to full professor in 10 years. There, she was the first woman in 150 years to receive the university-wide Emory Williams teaching award. At American University, she received its highest honor, the Scholar/Teacher of the Year award in 2002.

O'Connor founded the Women & Politics Institute at American University and served as editor of the journal *Women & Politics* for two terms. She served as the institute's director for 12 years and now heads its Director's Circle. O'Connor also has served as an advisor to the Speaker of the House on women's issues and has testified before both the House and Senate Judiciary subcommittees dealing with abortion and reproductive rights.

O'Connor is the author or coauthor of more than 100 books, textbooks, and monographs. She is preparing the 11th edition of the number one best-selling American government text, *American Government: Roots and Reform* (with Larry

J. Sabato and Alixandra B. Yanus), as well as the 5th edition of *Women, Politics and American Society* with Nancy E. McGlen (et al.). She is also the author of more than 35 published or forthcoming refereed journal and law review articles, 17 of which have been reprinted in anthologies.

Within the profession, she has been honored for her work in advancing women in politics by numerous organizations, including the Washington, D.C., Women's Bar Association, the National Association of Public Administration (the Joan Fiss Award for outstanding contributions to the field), and the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA), among others. The SPSA honored her with the Erica Fairchild award for mentoring women in the profession in 1988, as well as the Marion Irish award for coauthored Best Paper on Women and Politics on two separate occasions.

She has also served as the president of the SPSA, the National Capital Area Political Science Association, the Women's Caucus for Political Science, the Southern Women's Caucus of Political Science, and the American Political Science Association Organized Research Sections on Law and Courts and Women and Politics. She has also served on the Commissions of the Status of Women of the American, Midwest, and Political Science Associations.

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

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**Morra Aarons-Mele** is the founder of Women Online, a consulting firm for nonprofit organizations, companies, and political campaigns seeking to mobilize women online. She is a blogger and former political consultant. Aarons-Mele's Internet experience spans politics and the private sector. During the 2004 presidential election, Aarons-Mele was the director of Internet marketing for the Democratic National Committee. After the 2004 election she founded Edelman's digital public affairs team. Before going to Washington, D.C., Aarons-Mele worked in various roles at leading online companies, including iVillage.com and iVillage UK. Aarons-Mele has degrees from Harvard University and Brown University. She is active in local politics and represented Washington, D.C.'s Advisory Neighborhood Commission for Ward 2B. She lives near Boston with her husband, toddler, and menagerie.

**Allison Adams-Alwine** is a business development associate at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), a leading international institution on gender and development. Prior to joining ICRW, she worked as a Legislative Fellow in the office of Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), focusing on a wide range of women's issues, including global women's health and human rights, sexual assault in the military, and paid parental leave. She is a member of Women in International Security and helped to conduct research for and edit the *Women in United Nations Peace Operations* report in 2008. Adams-Alwine received an M.A. in conflict resolution from Georgetown University in May 2009. Her undergraduate degree in political science and sociology is from Vanderbilt University.

**Daniel Alef** is a novelist and syndicated columnist who has written more than 300 biographical profiles of the great American titans of industry, law, politics, finance, philanthropy, and transportation. He is also the author of many legal articles, one tax law book, one historical anthology (*Centennial Stories*), and the award-winning historical novel *Pale Truth*. *Pale Truth* was named Book of the Year for general fiction by *ForeWord Magazine* in 2001. Alef is a former lawyer, CEO of a small public company, and rancher. He earned a B.S. and J.D. from University of California, Los Angeles and an LL.M. from the London

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**Laura Ardito** first began working on human trafficking issues in 2001 while she was volunteering with AmeriCorps as a family services manager at a transitional housing program. Shortly afterward, Ardito joined the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Vital Voices Global Partnership where she helped initiate the antitrafficking program. She managed



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**Keri Vacanti Brondo** is an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Memphis. Brondo is an applied anthropologist engaged in teaching and research in the areas of gender, development and social justice, tourism, natural resource management, consumerism and environmental sustainability, and applied participatory action research and assessment. She received a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 2006, served as chair (2006–2007) of the Committee on the Status of Women in Anthropology of the American Anthropological Association, and has worked on two work climate surveys that explored the gendered dimensions of work as academics and practicing anthropologists. In Central America, Brondo has explored the organizational mobilization of female Mayan domestic workers in Guatemala, identity politics and indigenous mobilization, tourism development, and the gendered impacts of neoliberal agrarian reform in Honduras. In the Memphis area her work focuses on (a) women, work, and economic justice, and (b) tourism, natural resource management, environmental justice, and sustainable communities.

**Shifra Bronznick** is the founding president of Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community and consults to nonprofit organizations on navigating change. She has designed influential action research projects in the Jewish community and is coauthor (with Didi Goldenhar and Marty Linsky) of the book *Leveling the Playing Field*. The strategist for the White House Project, Bronznick designs its National Women's Leadership programs. She is a senior fellow at New York University's Research Center for Leadership in Action at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and has a



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**Mary Buckley** directs the Elizabeth J. Somers Women's Leadership Program in International Arts and Culture at The George Washington University, where she is also an assistant professor in dance. Buckley teaches an interdisciplinary arts seminar, dance history, and a course on modernism in Paris, France. She recently completed a video documentary, *Capacity to Transform*, on three Indian women nongovernmental organization leaders. As a dancer, Buckley has performed with Mills/Dance, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Deborah Riley Dance, and Kickstart, a British-based dance company directed by Virginia Taylor. Buckley earned an M.A. degree in dance from The George Washington University.

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**Bette J. Dickerson** is an associate professor of sociology at American University. She received her Ph.D. from

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**Julie Dolan** is an associate professor of political science at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. She received her B.A. in political science from St. Olaf College and received her Ph.D. in political science from American University. She has authored or coauthored six books and numerous journal articles. Her most recent book is *Women and Politics: Paths to Power and Political Influence*. Her journal articles appear in *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Women & Politics*, and *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*. Her research interests include women and politics, executive and bureaucratic politics, and representative bureaucracy. In 2007 she received the Erika Fairchild Award from the Women's Caucus of the Southern Political Science Association and was awarded the Rita Mae Kelly Distinguished Research Award from the American Society for Public Administration in 2004.

**Georgia Duerst-Lahti** is a professor of political science at Beloit College. Throughout her career she has researched questions related to gender, power, and leadership in the executive branch and Congress as well as in campaigns and elections. Her most prominent work on leadership remains her book with Rita Mae Kelly, *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. She also has explored gender as political ideology in many chapters, articles, and the coauthored book, *Creating Gender: The Sexual Politics of Welfare Policy* (with Cathy Marie Johnson and Noelle H. Norton). She currently is focusing on gender and empowerment through the fair trade movement.

**Paula Fleshman** is a research and evaluation analyst with the Girl Scout Research Institute. She is responsible for original and secondary research studies on topics relating to girls' healthy development and leadership, such as *Change It Up! What Girls Say About Redefining Leadership* and *The New Normal? What Girls Say About Healthy Living*. She is a doctoral candidate in urban education at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and has a master's degree in statistics from Virginia Tech.

**Stephenie Foster** is senior vice president for government affairs at American Legacy Foundation and serves as a senior advisor to Vital Voices Global Partnership. She has more than 25 years' experience in the policy arena, serving in senior positions in government, the nonprofit sector, campaigns, and private law practice. Foster has participated in numerous international programs globally, including programs in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. Foster received a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, an



M.R.P. from Cornell University, and a B.A. from the University of California. She is also a professorial lecturer at American University in Washington, D.C.

**Peter L. Francia** is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at East Carolina University. He has published numerous works on interest groups, campaign finance, and U.S. elections, including the forthcoming edited volume, *Guide to Interest Groups and Lobbying*, and his most recent book, *Conventional Wisdom and American Elections: Exploding Myths, Exploring Misconceptions*. His research has also appeared in several academic journals, including *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *American Politics Research*, and *Women & Politics*. He received his Ph.D. in 2000 from the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland.

**July Fulcher** is the director of policy programs at Break the Cycle, where she oversees local direct services and national policy initiatives. She is also a part-time faculty member in the Women's Studies Department at Georgetown University. Fulcher received her Ph.D. in social psychology from The Johns Hopkins University and her J.D. from the Georgetown University Law Center. Fulcher is the chair of the board of directors of the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She served as a Women's Law and Public Policy Fellow and Visiting Professor for the Georgetown Domestic Violence Clinic and was the public policy director for the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Fulcher played a strong leadership role in the drafting and passage of the Violence Against Women Acts in 2000 and 2005 and has testified before Congress on multiple occasions. Under a fellowship from the Japan Society, she researched the systems in Japan for addressing domestic and sexual violence.

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**Judith Gentleman** is a professor in the International Security Studies Department at Air War College. She previously was an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of New Hampshire. She

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**Shaina Goodman** is currently a student in a joint graduate degree program in law and social work at Washington University in St. Louis. She has a B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, also from Washington University. Goodman's research background is primarily on domestic violence in the American Jewish community, examining how Jewish cultural values impact the experiences of survivors in recognizing their abuse and seeking resources. She has also done research on the potential efficacy of using dance movement therapy with children who have witnessed domestic violence. Additionally, Goodman is interested in initiatives to address relationship and sexual violence on university campuses and to involve college-aged youth in the domestic violence movement.

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**Mary W. Gray** is a statistician and lawyer whose areas of research include applications of statistics to human rights, economic equity, and education. The chair of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at American University, she is the founder of the Association for Women in Mathematics, former vice president of the American Mathematical Society, a fellow of the American Statistical Association and the American Association for



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**Denise A. Guerin** is a Morse-Alumni Distinguished Professor and director of interior design at the University of Minnesota. She earned bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees in interior design. She teaches undergraduate studios, ethics and professional practice, and interior design research methods and advises both master's and Ph.D. students. Guerin's research focuses on postoccupancy evaluation in sustainable buildings and implementation of evidence-based design in practice. She has served as president and vice president of the Interior Design Educators Council Foundation, on several task forces for National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ), and as editor of *Journal of Interior Design*. Currently, she serves as a Council for Interior Design Accreditation site visitor and actively participates in Minnesota's interior design practice legislation efforts. She is coauthor (with Caren S. Martin) of *The Interior Design Profession's Body of Knowledge: Its Definition and Documentation* and is coordinator of InformeDesign®. Guerin is a recipient of the International Interior Design Association's Michael Tatum Excellence in Education Award, NCIDQ's Louis Tregue Award, and the American Society of Interior Designers Distinguished Educator for 2007.

**Jane Hall** is an associate professor in the School of Communication at American University in Washington, D.C. She specializes in teaching and writing about politics and the media, the depiction of women in media and politics, and young people and the news. From 1989 to 1997 she covered women in TV news as an award-winning media reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* in New York. She has been a regular contributor to *Columbia Journalism Review*, the *Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics*, the *Freedom Forum Media Studies Journal*, and other publications. She is also a TV commentator on the media.

**Irene Harwarth** earned her Ph.D. in public administration from The George Washington University in 1998. She initiated a line of research on women's colleges while at the Institute for Postsecondary Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning at the former Office of Educational Research and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education. She is an author of *Women's Colleges, History, Issues and Challenges* and *A Closer Look at Women's Colleges*.

**Cecilia M. Herles** is assistant director of the Institute for Women's Studies at The University of Georgia. She holds degrees in philosophy and English from Clemson University. She earned her Ph.D. in philosophy and graduate certificates in Women's Studies and environmental ethics from The University of Georgia. During her time in graduate school, she spent 2 years working as an assistant on the journal *Ethics and the Environment*. She has received recognition for her teaching and enjoys teaching her classes on feminist theories and women and the environment. Herles's research examines feminist philosophies, environmental ethics, and philosophies of race. Her work has been published in the *Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy*, *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, and *Women's Studies International Forum*. She has presented numerous papers at conferences in the United States and abroad. Her current research focuses on natural disasters, global climate change, population, and activism.

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**Melanie M. Hughes** is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. She has published numerous articles on the topic of gender and politics in journals such as *American Sociological Review*, *Politics & Gender*, *Social Problems*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, and the *International Journal of Sociology*. Recently, she coauthored (with Pamela Paxton) a textbook titled *Women, Politics, and Power: A Global Perspective*. Much of her current scholarship focuses on the intersection of gender and minority status in national legislatures around the world. She is also researching growth and change over time in women's international organizations.

**Mary A. Hums** is a professor of sport administration at the University of Louisville and an internationally recognized sport management author and lecturer. She earned her doctorate in sport management from The Ohio State University. Her scholarly work focuses on sport for people with disabilities and sport and human rights. Hums worked the Olympic Games in Athens and the Paralympic Games in Vancouver, Athens, Salt Lake City, and Atlanta. She was an Erasmus Mundus International Visiting Scholar in Leuven, Belgium;



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*This book is dedicated to Lucinda Peach who, after a valiant fight, succumbed to breast cancer while more than carrying her weight of this project.*

# PART I

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## FEMINIST THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP



# OVERVIEW: FEMINIST THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

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It might seem odd to begin an encyclopedia about gender and leadership by claiming that there are no feminist theories of leadership. Yet an extensive study of feminist theory scholarship reveals an alarming dearth of theoretical analysis of women as leaders. What appears instead is a substantive amount of work on feminist theories of power, autonomy, citizenship, representation, and ethics, which are related to but not simply synonymous with feminist leadership. The field of women and politics, which is dominated primarily by political scientists, has produced a large body of scholarship on women leaders, but these studies approach their subjects from a largely empirical or observational point of view. Popular sources on female leaders abound, but they are primarily autobiographical or biographical in nature. As such, these entertaining and often illuminating works are filled with anecdotal and historical detail but are relatively theory-thin. Leadership theory is dominated by other disciplines, such as management, business, education, and psychology.

The reason for the relative lack of scholarship on feminist theories of leadership stems from the very nature of feminism. Leadership has always focused primarily on public life, which is dominated by men. Women have typically been relegated to the private sphere and have focused their attentions on family and social relations. Feminism arose largely in opposition to male-dominated or masculinist forms of power, or patriarchy, which relied primarily on domination. And yet feminism is at the same time indebted to male-dominated or masculinist forms of power such as democracy, liberalism, and socialism for their ability to advance the goals of women and improve the overall quality of their lives. As a result, feminism has taken a deeply ambivalent stance toward power and leadership. Feminism requires leadership to advance the goals of women, and yet it encounters profoundly masculinist

conceptions of leadership that are often ill-suited to the needs of women. Because of this theoretical conundrum, feminist leadership today is fraught with strongly conflicting aims and goals. Women find themselves torn between the need to take charge and exercise leadership, especially in times of crisis, and the desire to work collaboratively with others to make things happen. Women leaders are held to frustratingly conflicting expectations by those who want their leaders to reflect masculinist traits by dominating and aggressively taking charge of a situation, particularly in emergencies, and yet expect women to bring a more collaborative, empathetic approach to problem solving. It is not difficult to see these theoretical dilemmas play out in current debates about female political leaders.

Because there are few political theories of feminist leadership, it is necessary to draw from related theoretical debates about feminist theories of power, autonomy, citizenship, and representation to gain a better understanding of what feminist theories of leadership could and should look like. First, however, it will be helpful to trace the origins of these feminist theoretical debates by examining the history of political thought, which gradually recognized women as theoretical subjects in their own right. By advocating greater freedom, equality, and educational opportunities for women, political theorists and philosophers provided the foundation for feminist political theory to emerge.

## Feminism and the History of Political Theory

### Ancient Greek and Roman Thought

Given that women played no direct role in political life in ancient Greece and Rome, it is not surprising that there



was little significant contribution to feminist theories of leadership. Plato's images of statesmen as ship's captains or philosopher-kings are clearly designed to apply to men, as are Aristotle's political rulers in various regimes. Although the Greek comic playwright Aristophanes portrays women as political leaders in the *Lysistrata* and the *Assemblywomen*, his works are clearly not intended to be emulated by women but rather provide comic relief or encourage reflection on the state of male leadership in Athenian society. More accounts exist of notable women in ancient Roman society who enjoyed greater opportunities than their Greek counterparts, but it cannot be said that they occupied positions of political leadership in their societies.

### Medieval Political Thought

The theories of monarchy that arose in the Middle Ages in the works of Thomas Aquinas and Dante Alighieri were clearly focused on male leaders. However, the female writer Christine de Pizan was a notable exception to the rule. Pizan sought to combat the misogyny of Jean de Meun's *Romance de la Rose* by writing about important women in history, offering advice to women, and urging women to pursue greater learning whenever possible. In *The Book of the City of the Ladies* (1405/1982), Pizan discusses female leadership in an allegorical sense by describing a hypothetical scenario in which a woman builds a city based on virtue with the help of other women. And in *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies* (1405/1989), Pizan offers advice to a hypothetical princess who finds herself in a position of power. The idealism of her earlier work is challenged by the emphasis on pragmatism in *Treasury*, as Pizan urges the princess to abandon her steadfast adherence to virtue when necessary to preserve her rule.

If the views expressed by Pizan in *Treasury* seem rather Machiavellian, they are. It is notable, however, that Pizan's works preceded those of her counterpart by almost 100 years. A closer inspection of Niccolò Machiavelli's works reveals a surprising assortment of assertive female characters. In the memorable concluding passages of *The Prince* (1513/1998), Machiavelli warns his pupil about the dangers of underestimating the power of Lady Fortuna, the traditional personification of fortune, who can thwart any young and ambitious leader's plans in an instant. Nevertheless, the impetuous prince should proceed with attempts to "conquer" Lady Fortuna by constructing protective measures of various sorts to prepare for her unpredictable onslaughts. Machiavelli's ribald comic plays *Mandragola* (1518/1981) and *Clizia* (ca. 1525/1996) feature witty female characters who sexually manipulate men to secure greater influence over them. Although Machiavelli's pragmatic theory of power could hypothetically be deployed by both sexes, the political theorist does not seriously entertain the possibility that women could exercise meaningful leadership in political affairs.

The theory of the divine right of kings, which justified the rule of women such as Mary and Elizabeth I based on their lineage, was nevertheless geared toward men. It is notable, however, that the main advocate of the divine rights theory, Sir Robert Filmer, challenged his opponents by pointing out contradictions in their views. Filmer's critics made remarkably progressive claims that everyone, male and female, was born free and equal, and yet, Filmer observed, they insisted that fathers had absolute rule over women and children in their households. It cannot be said, however, that Filmer genuinely advocated political rule by women.

### Social Contract Theory and the Foundations of Liberalism

These opponents of divine rights theory, referred to as social contract theorists, effectively paved the way for feminist theories of leadership, in spite of the fact that social contract theory did not consider that women would rule on a regular basis. Social contract theory sought to elevate individual freedom and equality and the role of consent in establishing the legitimacy of political rule. New theories of representation—and therewith the foundation of new theories of leadership—based on consent arose as the divine right to rule was undermined by relentless criticism. Human reason and the ability to make sound choices in regulating one's own affairs applied not only to political matters but to other relationships, including marriage and childrearing, as well.

In his pathbreaking work *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (1690/1989), John Locke describes a hypothetical state of nature in which all inhabitants, male or female, are capable of defending themselves against others. It is on this absolute right to self-preservation that Locke's progressive views on freedom and equality are established. The natural right to property is an extension of Locke's principle of self-preservation, and his view that human beings are equally capable of calculating what is in their own interests provides the basis of informed and rational consent to political rule and other associations, including marriage. The state of nature is far from idyllic, however, as human beings are also capable of overreacting to threats from others, perceived or otherwise. The state of nature is paradoxically both absolutely necessary and utterly untenable: necessary because it provides the basis of legitimacy in all that comes next, and untenable because human beings cannot perpetually live in this state of anarchy. Locke insists that human beings consent to form a government that allows representatives to govern in exchange for preserving the basic rights of their constituencies. If a government fails to uphold the rights of its citizens, it can be overthrown by revolution and a new government reestablished. Locke's progressive views on consent extend to the marriage contract as well. Instead of adhering to traditional practices of betrothal, Locke carefully rewrites the theory of marriage as a consensual contract between men and



women that can be dissolved if the rights of both parties are not upheld. Locke is equally adamant that men and women share in the burdens and benefits of rearing children. By making these arguments, Locke finalizes the devastating critique of divine rights theory that denied marriage by consent and insisted on the absolute power of the father in all household matters governing wives and children.

On its face, Locke's theory opens many possibilities for women. The natural freedom and equality enjoyed by men and women alike could be extended to the political sphere. Because labor and not heredity is the foundation for property rights, there is no reason women could not be significant property owners. The importance of reason in making sound choices is reinforced by Locke's views on education, in which girls and boys receive similar instruction with some exceptions to accommodate the different social positions of men and women in Enlightenment society.

And yet Locke's theory presents a number of obstacles to the advancement of women in political life and the emergence of a feminist theory of leadership. Although men and women enjoy relative freedom and equality in the state of nature, Locke claims that the conjugal basis of marriage is based on inequality: Because women are less capable of fending for themselves during pregnancy, they must depend on men for protection. While Locke's goal is to explain how and why men and women stay together long enough to form a partnership of marriage, this admission of inequality compromises his insistence on natural egalitarianism. Moreover, although the marriage contract is entered into through consent, the husband enjoys the last word in most disputes because he is deemed "abler and stronger" than the wife. Men and women hypothetically enjoy equal influence over their children, but it is notable that Locke's discussion of child-rearing focuses almost exclusively on fathers and sons. Finally, Locke's progressive views on representation are challenged by his insistence that the "executive power" operates by prerogative, a feeling of benevolence and duty to look after the welfare of the people that can ultimately be checked only by an "appeal to heaven" on the part of the constituents. These ambiguous views on women and equality create tensions in Locke's thought that have been inherited by and continue to animate liberal feminist political theory today.

It should be noted that Locke's version of social contract theory is not the only one. Locke's theoretical predecessor, Thomas Hobbes, had outlined an extremely violent view of the state of nature in *Leviathan* (1651/2006), presumably in an effort to ensure the swiftest passage to political life possible. Although Hobbes's "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" state of nature would seem to be anathema to women, and his subsequent insistence on the absolute rule of the Leviathan flies in the face of the democratic egalitarian rule favored by feminist leadership theorists, Hobbes actually grants a greater level of equality and

freedom to women in the state of nature than Locke does. Hobbes does not claim, as Locke does, that there is a natural dependency of women on men during pregnancy. He thereby leaves open the question of why men and women ever come together in marriage in the first place. Nevertheless, Hobbes backtracks by granting the husband absolute rule over his wife and children.

Although Jean-Jacques Rousseau adopts many of Locke's theories as his own, he also provides important criticisms of Lockean liberalism that have influenced strands of contemporary feminist political theory. Like Hobbes, Rousseau outlines a state of nature in which men and women are far more independent and self-sufficient than in Locke's view. In so doing, Rousseau returns to one particular characteristic of Hobbes's "solitary" state but vehemently abandons the "nasty, poor, brutish, and short" aspects of his theory. Rousseau's radical questioning of the level of true freedom and equality in Locke's state of nature, combined with his severe skepticism concerning human capacities of reason and the natural right to property, were designed ultimately to provide a more just and equitable political society. Rousseau's political views, especially regarding representation, are far more egalitarian than Locke's. In *The Government of Poland* (1772/1985), Rousseau insists that representatives be held directly accountable to their constituencies upon penalty of death. The same severe spirit pervades Rousseau's views on the General Will in *The Social Contract* (1762/1987), according to which all of the wills of the people on the most pressing matters must be united "into a single one" for a government to be deemed legitimate. The greater level of freedom and equality in Rousseau's theory would seem to hold out even greater opportunities for women. Yet Rousseau goes out of his way to carve out a separate and allegedly equal role for women in society. In *Émile* (1762/1987), Rousseau insists that women receive an education that is fundamentally different from that received by men so that women may learn to serve as the moral guarantors of society. Women are placed in charge of rearing morally upright children and are even responsible for holding their ethically wayward spouses in check through sexual manipulation. It is certainly the case that women are rulers of their households in Rousseau's theory, but by no means are they considered political leaders in their own right.

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792/1995), Mary Wollstonecraft vehemently attacked Rousseau's advocacy of different educations for men and women and the debilitating effects of an inferior education on female virtue. She returns to a Lockean view of education and reason that seeks to tame the passions and ensure sound judgment. Wollstonecraft even went so far as to insist that women be considered full citizens and enjoy political representation. Women should learn skills that will allow them to be self-sufficient and enter into male-dominated professions. Although Wollstonecraft still envisioned women primarily as wives and mothers, she sets the stage



for later theorists to develop effective feminist theories of leadership based on greater educational and political opportunities for women.

### Nineteenth-Century Political Theory

Nineteenth-century political theory produced important developments for feminist political theory and therewith feminist theories of leadership. The confluence of revolutions throughout Europe and the emergence of abolitionism gave rise to the women's rights movement throughout the Western world, which promoted greater rights and opportunities for women, especially suffrage. Much of this revolutionary spirit was encouraged by Karl Marx's theories, which expanded and radicalized Rousseau's notions of freedom and equality, as well as his devastating critiques of property rights. Many feminist theorists have drawn from Marx's comprehensive theory of oppression, according to which the dominant group, or bourgeoisie, systematically oppresses the workers, or proletariat, in a dynamic process that is escapable only with total transcendence through revolution. These theorists have been inspired by his unflinching insistence on true freedom and equality. However, it cannot be said that Marx provides an equally strong basis for feminist views of leadership, for Marx ultimately calls for the transcendence of all political life and advocates a kind of purely communal living free from any recognizable kind of management. Moreover, while the transitional centralized state Marx outlines in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) might allow women to emerge as political leaders, the oppressiveness of this form of government raises important questions about the price to be paid for such opportunities.

A more moderate voice in political theory at this time was that of John Stuart Mill, whose alliance with women's rights activist Harriet Taylor inspired the influential work *The Subjection of Women* (1869/1988). In this work, Mill rehearses the debilitating effects of oppression on women and calls for greater educational and professional opportunities for them. He also insists that men reform their ways and treat women with greater respect and admiration. Although Mill is to be praised for insisting that women enjoy the same opportunities as men, even in political life, he insists on a system of free competition for resources that does nothing to redress the lingering prejudices that remain as a result of the long history of female oppression.

### Contemporary Political Theory

In 20th-century political theory, few figures loom larger than Michel Foucault, the French philosopher whose theories of power and discourse have influenced many feminist political theorists in diverse ways. Foucault adapts Friedrich Nietzsche's views that morality, knowledge, and religion are social constructs created by

those in power and perpetuated by others in reaction to those who dominate. Focusing more intently on the ideas created by those who are oppressed, Foucault calls attention to marginalized and silenced perspectives to gain a greater understanding of the multiple ways in which power operates in society, or what he refers to as the "mechanisms" of power. These marginalized perspectives include the views of criminals, homosexuals, and pedophiles. For Foucault, perspectives are created when those who find themselves included in the dominant discourse of the time seek to define themselves and, by implication, define others who differ. Those who find themselves defined by the dominant discourse internalize these views and adapt them to their own purposes. Although Foucault occasionally mentions women when discussing marginalized discourses of sexuality, feminists have sought to expand Foucault's philosophy to expose the various mechanisms of power exerted on women and the ways in which they are internalized and perpetuated by women themselves. Foucauldian feminists have focused primarily on the discursive construction of gender in order to reveal its arbitrary nature. The exposure of gender as arbitrary construction is potentially liberating for women who seek to make their own hitherto marginalized discourse heard and thereby reshape the terms of debate on their own terms.

### Conclusion

The history of political thought has provided a broad and often contradictory basis on which to build feminist theories of leadership. Those who insist on greater educational opportunities for women find themselves faced with the difficulty of changing social realities to accommodate the more highly developed talents and abilities of women. Those who want to tap into Lockean notions of freedom and equality must reconcile themselves to the mixed and ambiguous messages about women in that theory. Those who align themselves with Rousseau's more radical views of freedom and equality must work through the sexual politics of his views on women, namely, the separate but equal doctrine that arises from it. Feminist leadership theorists who draw inspiration from Marx's comprehensive view of oppression and advocacy of absolute equality must reconcile themselves with the contradictory teachings on political life that arise from his theory: his insistence on political transcendence that makes political leadership obsolete, on the one hand, and the uncomfortable reality that in order to reach that point, an oppressively centralized state must be created. Those who find Mill's theory attractive must face the challenges of establishing a level playing field for men and women upon terrain that has been shaped by centuries of oppression, inequality, and prejudice. Finally, Foucauldian feminists must struggle with the ambiguous possibility of resistance to dominant discourses in his theory. The extent



to which women can liberate themselves and create their own discourses of power remains disturbingly unclear.

## Feminist Theories of Leadership

Feminist theory expanded considerably through the 20th century and continues to grow today. Many feminist theorists shaped their theories in opposition to problems they saw in the works of their male predecessors and in so doing created novel and compelling approaches of their own. Feminist theories of power, authority, and representation have emerged that can inform current debates on feminist theories of leadership. This section discusses major strands in contemporary feminist theory that apply to current trends in feminist leadership theory.

### Liberalism and Feminist Theory

Carole Pateman (1989) condemns Lockean liberalism because it cannot be cured of its deeply patriarchal tendencies. For Pateman, Lockean concepts of freedom, equality, consent, and representation are too deeply tainted to be helpful to women. Instead, Pateman proposes a highly participatory, deeply egalitarian political system in which obedience is transformed into obligation. The leadership theory that emerges from Pateman's alternative understanding is also deeply egalitarian: Leaders and their constituents are obligated to one another as citizens, and not to the state, "to do whatever is necessary to implement their own decisions and to maintain their self-managed political association in being" (Pateman, 1989, p. 62). Although Pateman is harshly critical of social contract theory in general, her theory is more closely aligned with Rousseau's understanding of participatory democracy and especially his strict requirements for political leadership.

Other feminist theorists have sought to reform the liberal democratic state and its views on leadership to conform to feminist sensibilities. Susan Moller Okin (1989) argues that the patriarchal tendencies in Lockean liberalism can be mitigated by political reforms that restructure the family and private life so as to conform to the equality and freedom that are found in public life. For Okin, this requires that men and women participate equally in child rearing and in the workplace, and that spousal wages be split equally. Divorce reform should be enacted to ensure that men and women remain on equal financial footing when a marriage is dissolved.

From Okin's analysis, it is not difficult to imagine what feminist leadership would look like. True feminist leaders would be charged with implementing social welfare policies that create a more egalitarian, gender-neutral society. This lesson is quite compatible with current trends in feminist approaches to leadership that promote public policies and workplace structures that are more amenable to the

needs of women, including paid parental leave, flexible work schedules, health care, pensions, accessible and effective legal remedies for gender bias, and other employee benefits. However, Pateman's criticism of liberal democracy is a useful reminder for those of Okin's sensibility that the notions of equality and freedom upon which Okin's reforms are based may not ultimately be fully applicable to women. Specifically, the deep and persistent challenges in implementing these policy changes are not simply due to popular resistance but may well be rooted in the very theories that make these policies possible and desirable.

### Marxist Feminism

Feminist theorist Catharine MacKinnon (1989) arrives at conclusions very similar to Okin's but by taking a very different path. MacKinnon adopts a Marxist approach to advance a devastating critique of the liberal state as deeply patriarchal. Modeling women's oppression on that of the proletariat, MacKinnon argues that men strive to promote their own well-being at the systematic expense of women's welfare. For example, men create rape laws that purport to outlaw the crime and punish its perpetrators, yet in reality the laws are easily circumvented and actually encourage and perpetuate sexual assault. This is because men have created a patriarchal view of the state that is designed to ensure absolute control over women, sexually and otherwise. The solution, for MacKinnon, is to reform rape laws to prevent the stigmatization of women by excluding women's sexual histories from trials, replacing the standard of "consent" in determining voluntary relations and rape with the standard of "compulsion" broadly understood to include physical and other kinds of coercion, and insisting on the consistent enforcement of all laws. For MacKinnon, women must have unimpeded access to abortion and reproductive technologies because men must be forbidden from having any further control over women's bodies. Finally, MacKinnon insists that pornography be outlawed because it perpetuates the sexual objectification of women (MacKinnon, 1989, pp. 245–246).

Gleaning a feminist theory of leadership from MacKinnon's theory would produce similar results as Okin's. Both are aimed primarily at working to mobilize support for social welfare policies and programs that are designed to benefit women. Yet MacKinnon's theory suffers from the same contradictions as Okin's because it is unclear how such a deeply patriarchal state can simply be purged of its oppressive tendencies with a set of reforms. As Audre Lorde famously observed, it is difficult, if not impossible, to use the "master's tools" to dismantle his own home. Applied to the feminist theories of MacKinnon and Okin, it is difficult to imagine how a set of policy reforms can do away with centuries of oppression and purify the tainted theories that arise from patriarchy.



## Ethics of Care and Feminist Leadership

Building on the tendencies in Rousseau's thought to carve out different yet complementary roles for men and women, some feminist theorists have sought to expand on what are typically thought of as "feminine" virtues such as compassion and caring, which are rooted in the female experiences of childbearing and childrearing, and apply them to political life. This approach is commonly referred to as "difference feminism" because it seeks to highlight the differences between men and women without transforming those differences into sources of inequality between the sexes. For example, Joan Tronto (1993) outlines an "ethics of care" that draws on feminism and "women's morality" and seeks to avoid the stereotypical traps associated with these views, namely, that care is a private virtue associated with the family and cannot be generalized effectively to political life and the public sphere. To do so would require, in effect, treating fellow citizens as one's own children. Instead, Tronto redefines care as both disposition and action to reach out to other people in society at large. She insists that parochialism can be avoided by connecting care to democratic processes and an overall concern for justice. An ethics of care requires several components: attentiveness to the needs of others; responsibility, understood broadly as a set of obligations and duties created by various contexts; competence, in terms of delivering desirable ends and results; and responsiveness on the part of those who receive care. Tronto also insists on the integrity of care, which brings all the required elements together to resolve conflicts among them.

Tronto's ethics of care can be applied to feminist theories of leadership in several promising ways. Clearly, the often-heard calls for women leaders to tap into their compassionate, empathetic, collaborative natures and work toward social justice is strongly reminiscent of Tronto's care ethics. Yet applying this theory runs the risk of reinforcing negative feminine stereotypes. The "Great Woman" theory of leadership, devised as a counterpart to the "Great Man" theory, focuses on female leaders who are "collaborative, cooperative, supportive, understanding, gentle, emotional, and vulnerable" (Pittinsky, Bacon, & Welle, 2007, p. 96). Women leaders, more than men leaders, also reflect slightly greater "emotional intelligence," understood in terms of the ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions effectively in the workplace (Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 2002, pp. 57, 69). It is undeniable that these traits can often be useful in leadership situations. But it is also possible that women who do not reflect these characteristics could suffer a backlash or find themselves excluded from leadership positions that do not lend themselves to these traits. The Great Woman theory could also exaggerate the differences between men and women and their respective approaches to leadership, causing unnecessary and harmful polarization. If Tronto's

approach were followed, there would be no Great Woman or Great Man theory, but rather a gender-neutral ethics of care that informs all types of leadership, male and female alike. Along similar lines, emotional intelligence would reflect concrete, measurable skills in the workplace that apply to male and female leaders, not merely "touchy-feely" skills that are easily stereotyped (Caruso et al., 2002, p. 70).

## Foucauldian and Discursive Feminism and Leadership

Many feminist theorists have drawn on Foucault's views on power and discourse to examine the various ways in which women are oppressed by formal and informal institutions, cultural discourses, and social practices. With the aid of Foucault's philosophy, feminists have been able to locate the mechanisms of power exerted on women and increase awareness of their deleterious effects, especially when those mechanisms are internalized and perpetuated by women. And yet, feminists have criticized Foucauldian philosophy for failing to go beyond mere criticism and articulate a theory of resistance and political agency. Knowing how the mechanisms of power work is not the same as knowing how to resist them.

Feminist theories of leadership could and should draw from Foucault's analysis of power to reveal trends in leadership discourses that hold women back. For example, theories of leadership that focus on innate qualities that make individuals great leaders typically value traits associated with powerful men, including dominance, confidence, masculinity, reason, charisma, and determination. These theories are typically referred to as "Great Men" theories of leadership. Because most leaders are men, it is men who have shaped the dominant discourses of leadership theory. As a result, a culture is created according to which leaders are evaluated by masculinist criteria. Those who do not conform to the criteria, namely women, are deemed inferior leaders. Conversely, when women try to exhibit masculine leadership traits, they are criticized as insufficiently feminine. However, feminist theories of leadership are hard pressed to find an alternative view that would constitute a large-scale movement of resistance. Instead, feminist leaders could deploy Foucauldian analysis to reveal mechanisms of power at the micro level and resist them on a case-by-case basis. It is one thing for women to understand how these leadership discourses operate to their detriment; it is another thing to devise an alternative discourse that would empower them.

Other feminist theorists have sought to transform discourse theory so that it can empower women. Instead of drawing from Foucault's theories, these feminists seek guidance from others such as Jürgen Habermas, who claims that Foucault goes too far in criticizing knowledge and truth as mechanisms of power. Although Habermas is



sympathetic to Foucault's preoccupation with domination, he seeks to preserve the "emancipating" tendencies of previous theories of knowledge and truth without falling prey to their harmful effects.

Iris Marion Young (2000) draws on Habermas's theories to devise a feminist alternative that, like Pateman's, is highly participatory, egalitarian, and democratic. Although sympathetic to theories of deliberative democracy, Young criticizes them for assuming that political discourse could and should operate under ideal circumstances, namely, on a level playing field among all participants, with no preexisting conflicts, problems, prejudices, or crises on the horizon. For Young, these assumptions are dangerous because they gloss over lingering and persistent inequalities among individuals, especially women and minorities, and could even exacerbate those inequities by continuing and legitimizing the marginalization of these groups. For example, the insistence that political debates adhere to current norms would effectively privilege formal rational argument over other modes of communication. As a result, those who are not familiar with or accustomed to communicating in this manner, perhaps due to educational deficits or class privilege, could either be intimidated into silence or patronized and dismissed. Emotional, antagonistic, and other powerful and informative modes of communication would also be dismissed. To address these concerns, Young insists on an all-inclusive approach to political discourse in which different forms of communication, such as individual narratives, testimonies, and storytelling, are included on an equal basis. Participants are encouraged to approach discussion with a mixture of openness, trust, and vulnerability.

Expanding on her views on political discourse, Young outlines a feminist theory of representation that cuts across several different perspectives to ensure the highest level of accountability and responsibility to the greatest number of people. For Young, representatives are charged with reflecting the interests, opinions, and perspectives of their constituents. Although these factors often overlap, they are not simply synonymous. Interests, the self-referring ends of a given individual, may not be the same as the perspectives of that individual, which are the product of the experiences, personal history, and social knowledge acquired over a lifetime. Nor are the interests and perspectives of an individual simply synonymous with the opinions she holds, namely, her general principles, values, and priorities. By insisting on a cross-cutting view of representation, Young seeks to achieve the greatest possible level of enfranchisement for the broadest variety of marginalized and mainstream groups.

Young's theory of representation lends itself extremely well to current trends in women's leadership. For example, the "transformational" leadership style is highly applicable to the needs of women leaders in that it requires a balance between serving as a role model and empowering followers

based on an environment of trust, confidence, and creativity. As a result, transformational leadership is highly consistent with feminist principles of inclusion, collaboration, diversity, and empowerment.

## Summary and Future Directions

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Feminist accounts of power, autonomy, and representation can be combined with contemporary leadership scholarship in the fields of psychology, education, management and business, and political science and its subfield, women and politics, to create feminist theories of leadership. To understand the evolution of feminist theory, an overview of the history of political thought is needed that explores the ways in which women were discussed and the role they played—or could play—in public life. As political thought progressed, women were gradually included as legitimate subjects of theoretical investigation in their own right. Ancient and medieval political thought highlights a few exceptional female figures, but it is not until the emergence of social contract theory and specifically Lockean liberalism that women could potentially be considered as free and equal citizens. Women came to be thought of as subjects of oppression who require liberation to become full-fledged citizens. This development was needed so that women could be envisioned in positions of leadership and theorized as such. Building on social contract theory, Marxism, and postmodernism, feminist theory makes a number of important innovations that in turn provide the basis for feminist theories of leadership. Feminist theories can inform action by clarifying the origins of various leadership practices and providing alternatives to them when needed.

Although feminist theories of leadership are lacking, feminist scholarship in related areas has clearly provided a rich foundation for feminist leadership theories. Further research is needed to incorporate the recent work of feminist theorists who represent marginalized populations, including African American women, Latina and Chicana women, Asian American women, Indian American women, lesbians, transgendered and transsexual women, and disabled women. Harmful stereotypes and misunderstandings about these groups abound and pose considerable difficulties for women in positions in power.

The writings of bell hooks (1984/2000) have called vital attention to the white bourgeois bias in mainstream feminism and the ways in which advocating for greater opportunities for already privileged women is not automatically advantageous for all. True feminism, for hooks, would transcend bourgeois liberalism and create new opportunities for all men and women. Patricia Hill Collins (2000) offers a powerful analysis of the complex ways in which race, class, and sex intersect to oppress African American women. Her work

serves as a compelling reminder of the numerous barriers African American feminists face in leadership positions and the hard work required to overcome them.

Additional analysis of works such as these is required to build a more comprehensive and inclusive feminist theory of leadership.

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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

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Over the past 2 decades, a number of studies have focused on the relationship between gender and leadership, specifically leadership style (Eagly, 2005; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Seyranian & Bligh, 2007), the effectiveness and evaluation of leaders (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992), and leadership emergence (Lips & Keener, 2007). These leadership studies of men and women have identified similarities and differences not only in how and under what conditions men and women lead, but also in how they follow each other. Eagly and Johnson (1990), in their meta-analysis of 162 studies, examined the leadership styles of women and men across three types of studies—organizational studies, laboratory experiments, and assessment studies—and found that women “tended to adopt a more democratic or participative style of leadership and a less autocratic or directive style than did men” (p. 233). Taking a closer look at leadership, in particular with African American women, Parker and Ogilvie (1996) suggested that “socialized leadership traits, behaviors and styles, and leadership context differ by race and gender” (p. 188).

Research attempts have been made to apply the leadership models seen in adult leadership research to the exploration of youth (Klau, 2006). Because such attempts have not fully addressed leadership for youth, an emerging body of research on youth leadership and youth development is beginning to fill the gap. Researchers have explored various aspects of youth leadership: traits and correlates of leadership behavior (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Ehrhart, 2002), offline settings of youth leadership (DeZolt & Henning-Stout, 1999; Edwards, 1994), online settings of youth

leadership (Cassell, Huffaker, Tversky, & Ferriman, 2006), and the development and effects of transformational leadership in adolescents (Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000). Further, researchers have attempted to define the types of environments and after-school programs that are best suited for youth to develop personal and social assets (National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002; Scales & Leffert, 2004; Schoenberg & Riggins, 2003), including leadership (Edelman, Gill, Comerford, & Hare, 2004; Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development, 2003; Irby, Ferber, & Pittman, 2001; Kress, 2006; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005; Mitra, 2006; Schoenberg & Salmond, 2007).

In spite of the wealth of information on adult leadership and the growing research on youth development and youth leadership, there still remains a dearth of research on how girls and youth view leadership. Little is known about how youth understand their leadership experiences or their motivations for pursuing these opportunities. The following are questions that warrant further research:

- How do girls and boys define leadership?
- What kind of leadership does this generation of youth aspire to and connect with?
- What type of leadership is considered “ideal,” and how is it different from the traditional models of leadership?
- What do we need to know in order to support the next generation of leaders, particularly girls and women?

To answer these questions and others, the Girl Scout Research Institute undertook a body of research to explore girls' and boys' thoughts and experiences on a broad spectrum of issues related to leadership: how they define it;



their experiences, failures, and successes with leadership experimentation; their aspirations, hopes, and fears; the effect of gender biases and stereotypes; and predictors of leadership aspiration. This research was launched in conjunction with a commitment from the Girl Scout Movement to renew its focus on leadership development for girls. The work was designed to inform an organizational transformation process that was launched in 2004 to support the role of Girl Scouting as the premier leadership experience for girls in the 21st century.

Initial research was conducted between January and June of 2007. The qualitative research took place in January and employed a combination of traditional focus groups and ethnographies, engaging 165 girls, boys, and mothers in four diverse locations: Hackensack, New Jersey; Cincinnati, Ohio; Atlanta, Georgia; and San Diego, California. Upon completion of the qualitative research, a nationwide online survey was administered to a national stratified sample of 2,475 girls and 1,514 boys between the ages of 8 and 17 years. The online survey was fielded from June 22 to June 29, 2007. The sample was weighted to reflect the U.S. Census representation of racial/ethnic groups among the target-age population. Advisers in the youth development and leadership fields as well as a Girl Scout council advisory body assisted in guiding the direction of this work.

Additional research capitalized on the unique 2008 U.S. presidential election cycle in which an African American man was elected to the country's highest office and two women made highly visible runs for the White House. To examine the effects, if any, of the presidential campaign on youth's attitudes, perceptions, or aspirations toward leadership, an online survey was conducted following the November 4 elections from November 11 to December 2, 2008. Online surveys were fielded with 3,284 youth (2,309 girls and 975 boys) between the ages of 13 and 17. Again, the data were weighted to produce a final sample representative of the general population of young people in the United States. For both studies, the GSRI collaborated with Fluent, a New York-based research firm.

This chapter integrates the research described and includes an analysis of important gender and racial/ethnic differences and relevant comparisons between the studies.

## Leadership Attitudes and Aspirations, Preelection and Postelection

"A leader is any person of great spirit and heart." —*Girl, 3rd grade, San Diego*

"You don't have to be a leader of a group. You don't have to be a leader of an organization. You don't have to be a leader of a class. It's just personally within yourself, like knowing that you're independent, knowing that you can make the right decision. You can be a leader for yourself." —*Girl, 11th grade, San Diego*

Even at a young age, girls and boys have well-formed ideas about what it means to be a leader. In focus groups around the country, the top-of-mind definition of leadership was in terms of authority exercised through power and control. However, youth find this traditional definition of leadership the least appealing or aspirational. Their preferred definitions of leadership imply personal principles, ethical behavior, and the ability to effect social change. Many emphasize what leadership should be used *for*, rather than focusing on specific roles or positions.

In the 2007 online survey, 69% of youth say a leader is someone who "brings people together to get things done," and 62% say a leader is someone who "stands up for his or her beliefs and values." When asked what kind of leader they would *want* to be, both girls and boys express the aspiration to be someone who stands up for her or his beliefs, brings people together to get things done, and tries to change the world for the better, although girls feel these sentiments more strongly than do boys. When asked about their top goals in general, being a leader does not figure prominently for youth, ranking number 15 out of 19 options. The number-one goal for all youth is staying free of alcohol and tobacco, followed by doing well in school, being nice to others, and getting into college.

The relationship of girls and boys to leadership is mixed. On the one hand, many girls and boys are reluctant to think of themselves as nonleaders or followers. Forty percent of girls and 39% of boys report they would rather be leaders than followers. On the other hand, a significant number of girls and boys lack an active desire to be a leader; the majority (52%) of girls say they would not mind being a leader but that it is not that important to them. These proportions are mirrored among boys. To help clarify these variances, five categories of respondents were created based on their desire to be leaders and their self-assessment as leaders (Table 2.1).

Youth have a variety of motivations to be leaders. Girls are more likely than boys to want to be leaders because they want to help other people (67% vs. 53%), share their knowledge and skills with others (53% vs. 45%), and change the world for the better (45% vs. 31%). Boys are more likely than girls to be motivated by the desire to be their own boss (38% vs. 33%), make more money (33% vs. 26%), and have more power (22% vs. 14%).

## Factors That Support Youth Leadership

Overall, the strongest predictors of leadership aspiration are self-confidence in skills and qualities, past leadership experiences, and supportive systems that encourage leadership exploration. The study asked girls and boys to rate themselves on a list of leadership qualities and skills (outgoing, confident, creative, good listener, cares about others, etc.). Interestingly, it was not only what specific skills youth rated themselves highly

	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>
<b>“Leadership Vanguard”</b> : Think of selves as leaders and want to be leaders	36%	36%
<b>“Ambivalent Leaders”</b> : Think of selves as leaders and wouldn’t mind being leaders	25%	25%
<b>“Hopefuls”</b> : Do not think of selves as leaders but want to be leaders	4%	4%
<b>“Unmotivated”</b> : Do not think of selves as leaders and don’t mind being a leader	26%	26%
<b>“Rejecters”</b> : Do not think of selves as leaders and don’t want to be leaders	8%	8%

**Table 2.1** Leadership Index (2007 Survey)

SOURCE: *The New Leadership Landscape: What Girls Say About Election*. © 2008 Girl Scout Research Institute. Girl Scouts of the USA. Used by Permission.

on but how much confidence they have in general that made the difference.

Leadership aspirations and self-assessments are also strongly correlated with participation in extracurricular activities and with experience in leadership roles or positions of responsibility for others. Girls and boys experience a wide range of activities involving some form of leadership or some form of responsibility for others. These activities run the gamut from taking care of people to organizing a protest. Although youth prefer a social change-oriented definition of leadership, they are much less experienced with leadership roles aimed at social change or political activism.

Other factors related to leadership are support systems of people and environments. The influence of family, particularly mothers, on youth's leadership goals and aspirations cannot be overstated. Eighty-one percent of girls say their mothers have encouraged them to be a leader. Additional influential actors in girls' and boys' lives include teachers, coaches, religious leaders, Girl Scout and Boy Scout troop leaders, and representatives of other youth-serving clubs and organizations. Friends and classmates play an important role for all youth and teens, but particularly for adolescent girls. They can serve as positive and negative role models in terms of their leadership aspirations and efforts.

Environments for youth to experience leadership are also very important for current and future leadership aspirations. Although youth experience leadership in different places, the majority experience it more at school (75%) than home (24%) or church (22%). However, places where girls can develop leadership skills and safely experiment with leadership roles are scarce. Notably, youth do not feel they have much power to change things or teach/help others in any environment, even though their preferred idea of leadership is focused on social change. When asked to rate environments in which they felt they could effect change, they rate “school” highest—at 23%—but give “none” the same rating.

## Factors That Limit Youth Leadership

“I do not want to be a leader because people will think I am bossy if I am a leader.” —*Girl, 3rd grade, San Diego*

“I don’t think I can handle the stress as well as others.” —*Boy, 9th grade, Cincinnati*

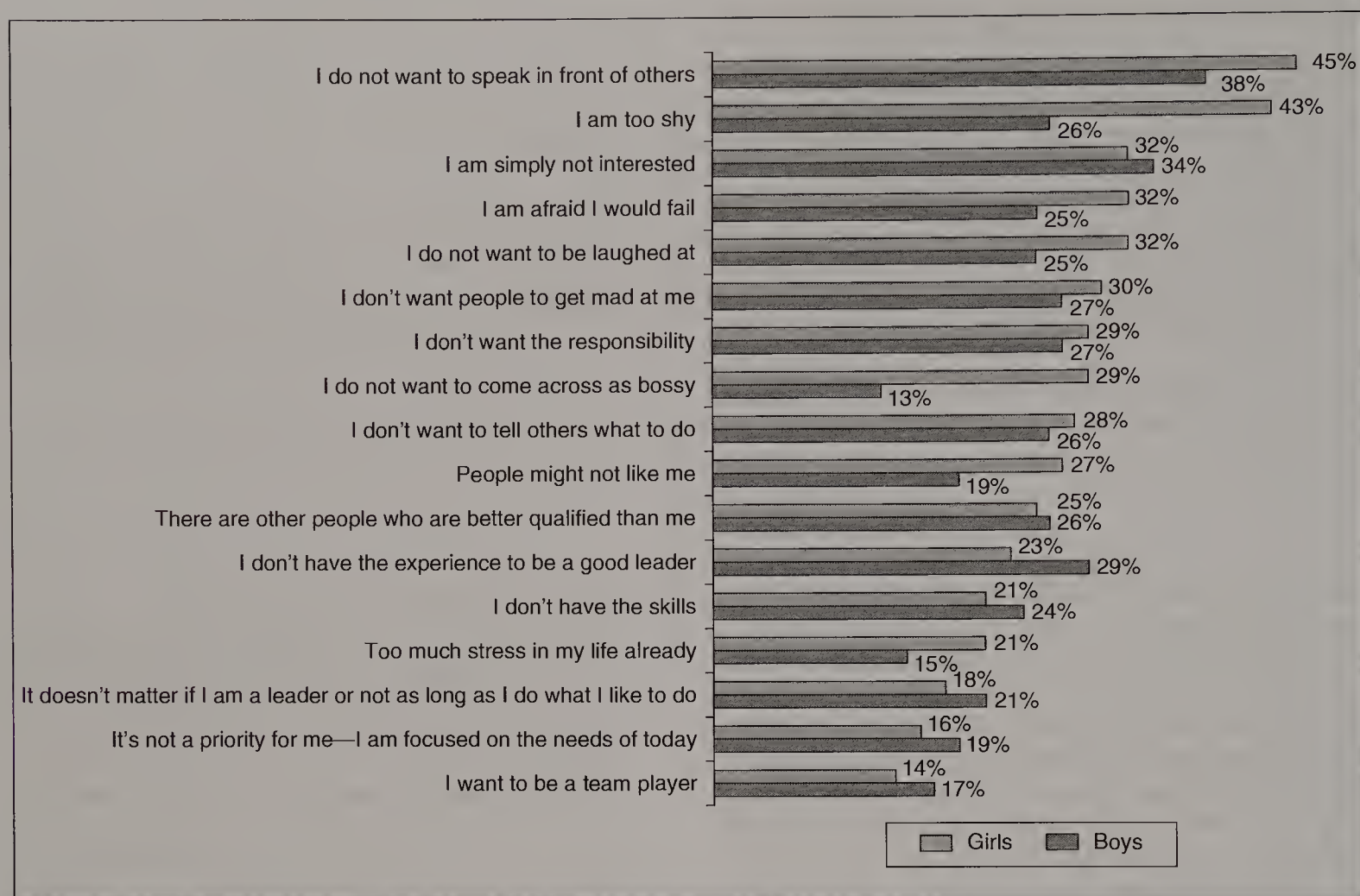
The greatest single barrier to leadership is low self-regard of skills and qualities. When asked to assess themselves on the same list of skills and qualities they deem important to leadership, girls and boys consistently gave themselves relatively modest ratings. A comparison of importance and self-assessment ratings reveals a prominent gap between the two. For instance, while 64% of girls say “taking charge” is a very important skill for leadership, only 24% think it is a skill that they possess.

Other prominent barriers are a highly idealized definition of what a leader should be and, for girls, a desire to adhere to traditional feminine expectations. Leaders are expected not only to be confident, assertive, and persuasive but honest, caring, nice, and creative as well. Girls and boys in the study expect a leader to have at her or his disposal a wide array of qualities and skills that can be strategically employed depending on the specific situation.

Another barrier is negative peer involvement. Fully one third of girls who do not want to be leaders attribute their lack of motivation to things like fear of being laughed at or making people mad at them. More than one third of all girls (39%) report having been discouraged or put down, usually by peers and classmates, when they were trying to lead. In qualitative research, girls complain about the emotional toll of “high school drama.” This toll dampens girls’ enthusiasm for achievement and distinction in their academic or personal goals. It is important to note that barriers to leadership are consistent among boys and girls but that girls experience fears and inhibitions about social acceptance more acutely (see Figure 2.1).

These barriers suggest that some girls still struggle with the unwritten rules of what it means to be “feminine” and





**Figure 2.1** Barriers to Leadership Aspiration

SOURCE: *The New Leadership Landscape: What Girls Say About Election*. © 2008 Girl Scout Research Institute. Girl Scouts of the USA. Used by Permission.

NOTE: N = 360. These questions were only asked of those youth not interested in leadership.

exhibiting stereotypically “female” behaviors like being nice, quiet, agreeable, and liked by all.

### Gender Expectations Preelection and Postelection

Girls and boys were highly engaged by the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, but this election had a mixed impact on young people’s perception of gender equality. Sixty-one percent of girls and 56% of boys reported that the election outcome mattered to them “a lot.” The Hillary Rodham Clinton and Sarah Palin campaigns generated a good deal of excitement among girls. Seventy-five percent of girls said that they were excited about the two female candidates. A slight majority of boys (55%) also reported being excited to see these two women run for high office. Majorities of both girls (65%) and boys (59%) also expressed excitement about the election of the first African American president, Barack Obama.

However, while the election has illustrated the capabilities and leadership qualities of women and has excited girls about the leadership opportunities presented to women, it has also underscored the difficulties women

face in seizing those opportunities. Overall, most young people claim to have no major biases with regard to women’s skills or abilities. A large majority of girls (82%) and boys (72%) agreed that “girls and boys are equally good at being leaders.” The majority of youth also believe that neither gender holds an advantage at fulfilling a variety of roles and functions in society.

When asked directly whether the 2008 election has influenced their opinion of women’s ability to be a leader, almost half of girls (46%) and more than a third of boys (38%) report that they think more highly of women’s ability to lead than they did before the election. Engagement with the 2008 election has also enhanced the perception of the appropriateness of women’s leadership: More youth strongly disagreed with statements such as “It’s unladylike to be a leader” and “On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do” than did in 2007.

Yet substantial numbers also reported a heightened appreciation for the difficulties women face in attaining leadership positions in our country. For example, 43% of girls in the survey strongly believe that “girls have to work harder than boys in order to gain positions of leadership”—up



from 25% in 2007. The percentage of girls agreeing that men and women have an equal chance of getting a leadership position has dropped to 24% from 35% last year. Boys registered similar though less dramatic patterns in their perceptions of women's challenges.

While a plurality (44%) believe that the female candidates were treated as fairly as the male candidates in the presidential campaign, 38% of girls and boys disagree and another 18% are not sure. Also of interest, 58% of girls and 77% of boys say that it does not bother them that no woman has ever been elected president of the United States. Fifty-four percent of girls and 72% of boys also say they would not be disappointed if no female candidates ran for office in the next presidential election.

### Impact of the 2008 Presidential Election Cycle

The 2008 election has had a positive impact on youth in two important ways: (1) engendering interest in political and social issues among young people and (2) positively affecting the self-perceptions of youth and their perceptions of their future possibilities and self-expression (see Table 2.2). Nearly one in two youths (49%) from the 2008 survey reported an increased interest in politics, 44% reported an increased interest in social and political activism, and 71% said they intend to vote when they are eligible. In addition, many youth reported that the election had a positive impact on their confidence levels. This motivational impact was particularly

pronounced among girls, non-Caucasians (African American youth in particular), those from big cities and from Democratic households, and among those who said they would have voted for Barack Obama.

Despite high levels of engagement and excitement, the immediate effect on youth's leadership attitudes and aspirations is mixed. When asked directly what kind of impact the 2008 presidential election had, 41% of girls and 34% of boys said that the election has had a positive impact on their desire to be a leader. This perception is even stronger for African American youth and the Leadership Vanguard segment, the majority of whom believe that the election has had a positive impact on their desire to be leaders in a variety of domains.

However, there was no evidence that the election has stimulated a significantly greater interest among young people in becoming leaders or caused more of them to think of themselves as leaders in general. The number of girls and boys who think of themselves as leaders showed no significant increase compared to the numbers from the 2007 data. Part of this might be due to an increased awareness, brought on by the election, of the challenges and difficulties facing leaders today. Also, it is arguably unrealistic to expect significant shifts in the number of youth aspiring to leadership in a matter of 1 year—even one as exciting as the 2008 election year. However, 2007 data revealed that girls' confidence in their own skills and abilities and their experience with leadership roles or engagement in any extracurricular activities were the strongest predictors of their leadership aspirations. In this context, the 2008 presidential election may eventually have a stronger impact—if only indirectly—on girls' leadership aspirations than is immediately apparent.

<i>What kind of impact did the 2008 presidential election have on your . . .</i>	<i>Percent Who Said Positive Impact</i>	
	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>
Confidence in being able to achieve your goals in the future	<b>59%</b>	52%
Comfort level in speaking up and expressing your opinions on issues that matter to you	<b>55%</b>	47%
Confidence in your ability to change things in the country	<b>51%</b>	45%
Interest in social and political activism	<b>46%</b>	38%
Interest in community service or volunteer activity	<b>44%</b>	31%
Desire to be a leader	<b>41%</b>	34%
Desire to be a leader in your community	<b>37%</b>	30%
Desire to be a political leader	<b>23%</b>	20%

**Table 2.2** Impact of 2008 Presidential Election

SOURCE: *The New Leadership Landscape: What Girls Say About Election*. © 2008 Girl Scout Research Institute. Girl Scouts of the USA. Used by Permission.

NOTE: Bold font indicates statistically significant differences.

## Prominent Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Youth

Two additional variables—race/ethnicity and household income—have an indirect predictive impact on leadership. African American, Hispanic, and, to a lesser extent, Asian American girls and boys indicate a stronger desire to be leaders and are more likely to think of themselves as leaders than are Caucasians. Youth from households with higher incomes are also more likely to have leadership aspirations. However, what actually appears to be at play here is not race/ethnicity and household income alone, but also the fact that youth from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and higher-income families rate themselves higher in leadership skills and dimensions than do others. For example, African American and Hispanic youth rate themselves higher than do Caucasian youth on extraversion, organizational skills, creativity, caring, dominance, and positive problem solving. They are also more likely to report having had leadership experiences.

The proportion of youth with high leadership motivations and self-perceptions is greater among African American and Latina/o youth, and Asian American girls than among Caucasian youth, as seen in the following leadership identity categories. (The subsample of Asian girls is too small to make the results conclusive.)

*Leadership Vanguard:* 49% African American, 47% Latina, 31% Caucasian, 50% Asian American girls

*Ambivalent Leaders:* 25% African American, 24% Latina, 26% Caucasian, 16% Asian American girls

*Hopefuls:* 4% African American, 3% Latina, 4% Caucasian, 9% Asian American girls

*Unmotivated:* 15% African American, 20% Latina, 22% Caucasian, 22% Asian American girls

*Rejecters:* 5% African American, 5% Latina, 10% Caucasian, 3% Asian American girls

African American and Latina girls report high self-regard on a number of leadership skills and qualities and are likely to aspire to leadership. Being a leader is important to 70% of African American, 66% of Latina, and 56% of Asian American girls, compared with 49% of Caucasian girls. For the small percentage of African American and Latina/o youth who are not interested in leadership, their reasons vary from shyness to having too much stress in their lives already (Table 2.3).

Families, particularly mothers, are a major positive influence on African American and Latina girls' leadership aspirations. So are their fathers, relatives, teachers, and friends. Classmates and peers, on the other hand, tend to play more of a negative role. More than 8 in 10 (82%) African American girls and three quarters (75%) of Latina girls say their mothers encourage them to be leaders, followed by fathers (59% vs. 50%), teachers (59% vs. 54%), friends (51% vs. 48%), and older relatives (50% vs. 31%). Forty-four percent of African American girls and 31% of Latina girls report having been discouraged or put down, usually by peers and classmates (60% vs. 51%), when they were trying to lead.

Seventy-eight percent of African American girls and 72% of Latina girls have had an opportunity to be a leader, largely at school (86% vs. 77%), home (42% vs. 29%), church (31% vs. 18%), as part of a club or organization (26% vs. 17%), and on a sports team (23% vs. 24%). Of these girls, the large majority (89% of African American

Barrier	Caucasian		African American		Hispanic	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Fear of speaking in front of others	47%	45%	32%	28%	43%	21%
Shyness	46%	25%	32%	28%	29%	24%
Fear of failure	34%	24%	14%	28%	29%	21%
Fear of being laughed at	34%	33%	18%	17%	19%	18%
Fear of people getting mad at them	34%	29%	11%	22%	19%	21%
Not wanting responsibility	30%	30%	29%	22%	24%	21%
Fear of people not liking them	29%	20%	25%	17%	10%	21%
Not wanting to tell others what to do	28%	30%	22%	11%	24%	29%
Too much stress in their life already	22%	14%	18%	6%	10%	29%

**Table 2.3** Various Barriers to Leadership Aspiration ( $n = 360$ )

SOURCE: *The New Leadership Landscape: What Girls Say About Election*. © 2008 Girl Scout Research Institute, Girl Scouts of the USA. Used by Permission.



and 92% of Latina girls) say their most recent experience being a leader was a positive one. African American and Latina girls also relate that environments in which they can develop leadership skills are scarce and do not empower them to effect change.

## Postelection Results

The level of engagement in the 2008 election campaign was very high for youth in general and specifically non-Caucasian youth. As well, the election had a strong motivational effect on youth from big cities and from Democratic households, and those who said they would have voted for Barack Obama.

Young people expressed a high level of excitement about the election of the first African American president. The majority of girls (65%) and boys (59%) said it was exciting for them personally that an African American was elected the next president of the United States. Eighty-four percent of African American girls and 80% of African American boys said they were "very excited" about the election of the first African American president.

In the 2008 presidential election, women rallied behind Barack Obama, giving him 56% of their vote, compared to 49% of men who cast their vote for Obama. Interestingly, the postelection survey among 13- to 17-year-olds revealed no statistically significant gender difference in preference for president: 61% of girls preferred Obama, as did 57% of boys. The only gender variation was among Hispanics, with a significantly higher percentage of girls expressing a preference for Obama than boys (69% and 57%, respectively). The non-Caucasian youth (especially African Americans) were significantly more optimistic in their predictions of positive change in the country than were Caucasian girls and boys: 92% of African Americans, 72% of Hispanics, and 71% of Asians expect Obama to bring positive change, compared with 51% of Caucasians.

Racial equality was rated as a more important issue for the president to address by non-Caucasian girls and boys (71% and 66%, respectively) than by Caucasian girls and boys (47% and 37%, respectively). Gender equality was perceived as more important by girls than by boys (52% vs. 34%). Interestingly, engaging youth in community service was perceived as a very important issue by the majority of African American girls and boys (60% and 55%, respectively), while only 41% of the total sample said this was very important. The majority of young Americans (51%) say that the outcome of the election has made them prouder of their country. This sentiment was particularly pronounced among non-Caucasian youth, especially African Americans.

Respondents' perceptions of the process seem to be driven by their preference for a particular candidate. For example, respondents from Republican households and those who leaned toward John McCain were more likely to perceive the treatment of female candidates as unfair, whereas African American youth and Barack Obama supporters

were more likely to see the process as fair toward female candidates. Factors that influenced young people's perceptions of the treatment of candidates include race, parents' party affiliation, and preference for a candidate. Youth from Republican households and those who preferred McCain were more likely to think that Sarah Palin was not treated fairly. African American youth and those who would have voted for Obama were more likely to think that race was a factor in his treatment.

The historic representation of women and an African American in the electoral race also generated high levels of excitement. Gender may not be a decisive—or even a significant—factor in young people's evaluation of the candidates, but it does not mean that it is ignored or perceived as irrelevant. The majority of girls would welcome a female president: 59% say it would be a good thing if a woman were to be elected president of the United States. Not surprisingly, girls are more likely than boys to subscribe to this opinion. Female candidates who ran for office in the 2008 electoral cycle generated a great deal of enthusiasm among young girls: 75% of girls say that they were excited about the two female candidates. Although boys exhibited a significantly lower level of enthusiasm about the unprecedented level of female representation in this campaign, a majority of them (55%) report being excited to see two women run for office.

Young people are also optimistic about their chances of becoming president one day: 68% of girls and 56% of boys say it is somewhat or very likely for a girl/boy like them to be president of the United States one day. African American youth feel particularly hopeful: 52% of them say it's very likely for a girl/boy like them to be president one day as compared to 30% of Caucasian, 37% of Hispanic, and 32% of Asian youth. When asked how often they engage in various activities that might help nurture their leadership skills, for example, coming up with solutions to problems, working with peers, and challenging themselves by trying new things, the majority of girls say they do these frequently. Notably, girls seem to have less experience with things like initiating and planning a project than with other types of activities. There is a strong correlation between race and engagement in leadership-building activities: African American and Hispanic girls report engaging in these types of activities more frequently than do Caucasian girls.

## Summary and Future Directions

The goal of this body of research was to explore girls' aspirations, perceptions, and experiences of leadership. We found that youth aspire to leadership, not in the command-and-control form in which it most commonly appears in the culture, but to a model of leadership that is driven by purpose and oriented toward social change. We also found that young people's leadership aspirations and experiences are greatly dependent on their perceptions of their own



abilities and the opportunities and experiences they have had to exercise leadership. Although the 2008 presidential election cycle excited and motivated youth, there was no immediate increase in their personal leadership aspirations. However, it did engender higher self-confidence levels in youth, which might indirectly impact leadership aspirations down the road.

In addition, the results show that opportunities to develop leadership skills are scarce and that a need exists to give youth the opportunity to effect change, which is what they are passionate about. The impact of positive adult role models, especially mothers, cannot be underesti-

mated. Finally, the data show a seriousness of purpose and degree of aspiration toward leadership in young people that deserve to be taken seriously and further explored, especially when they are directed at making a positive difference in the world. Further research in the following areas would add to the literature on girls and leadership: factors that impact the self-confidence of girls from diverse cultures and how these, in turn, impact their experiences with leadership; how adult advisers' conceptions of leadership affect the skill sets they help engender in girls; and how safe spaces can be created to help girls challenge stereotypical "female" behaviors.

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## Appendix: Data Analysis

The 2007 quantitative study was based on a sample size of 3,989 respondents. Data were analyzed in accordance with several statistical methods and procedures, including cross-tabulations, correlations, factor analysis, multivariate analysis of variance, multiple regression analysis, and logistic regression.

First, we identified our dependent variable. Two questions addressed leadership aspiration and self-assessment: (1) whether children think of themselves as leaders, and (2) whether children want to be leaders. The two variables correlate strongly with each other (.51), and both correlate similarly with the leadership factor scores detailed in this appendix. We combined two questions into a single leadership index, ranging from 0 to 4.

4 = “think of self as a leader” and “want to be a leader”

3 = “think of self as a leader” and “don’t mind being a leader”

2 = “not think of self as a leader” and “want to be a leader”  
OR “see self as a leader” and “don’t want to be a leader”

1 = “not think of self as a leader” and “don’t mind being a leader”

0 = “not think of self as a leader” and “don’t want to be a leader”

These segments, in descending order, are Leadership Vanguard, Ambivalent Leaders, Hopefuls, Unmotivated and Rejecters. The subsegment “see self as a leader and don’t want to be a leader” was too small to be analyzed (~1%) and was therefore dropped from the analysis.

The second step was to group the long list of skills and qualities that respondents used to describe themselves into smaller categories. All skills and qualities (with the exception of “emotional,” which appeared to be unrelated to other skills) grouped into four factors that explain 51% of the item variance: extraversion, caring, organizational skills, and creative. The internal consistency of the items was solid (Cronbach’s alpha = .77 to .91), meaning that the items “hang together” well when organized this way.

Next, we conducted factor analysis of psychographic variables yielding three factors that explain 51% of the item variance. We named them dominance, avoiding decisions, and positive problem solving. Self-rating on *positive problem solving* is correlated .29 with the leadership index and is highly correlated (.43 to .55) with self-ratings on *all four* leadership dimensions (extraverted, caring, organized, creative). *Avoidance* of decisions is negatively correlated ( $r = -.29$ ) with the leadership index and modestly negatively correlated ( $r = -.14$  to  $-.17$ ) with all four self-rated leadership factors.

In contrast, self-rating on the *dominance* psychographic factor also correlates with the leadership index ( $r = .25$ ), but it most strongly correlated with extraversion ( $r = .35$ ), more modestly correlated (.19 to .20) with organization and creativity, and entirely unrelated ( $r = .00$ ) to caring.

Once we determined the leadership index and grouped skills and psychographic variables into factors, we examined whether there were any differences by gender (without controlling for age or any other variable). We then determined factors that predict leadership by utilizing multivariate analysis, which allows us to control for the influence of other factors. The multiple regression analysis, using the leadership index as the dependent variable, yielded the following:

- Age effect is significant but very small (explains 0.4% of variance).
- Self-perception as a leader is highest in Grades 2–4, drops in Grades 7–8 and 9–10, and rises again slightly in Grades 11–12.
- No significant age  $\times$  gender interaction was found. Course by age is generally similar for both genders.
- Self-ratings on leadership dimensions explain 33% of the variance.
- Organizational skill is positively related (beta weight = .42,  $p < .0001$ ).
- Extraverted is positively related (beta weight = .33,  $p < .0001$ ).
- Caring is negatively related (beta =  $-.21$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).
- Creative is unrelated (beta = .00, ns).
- Psychographic factors explain an additional 4% of the variance.
- Avoiding decisions is negatively related (beta =  $-.21$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).
- Dominance is positively related but is not too strong (beta = .11,  $p < .0001$ ).
- Regression predictors of leadership index are very similar in both genders. The small age effect for girls becomes nonsignificant after adding self-rating factors.

Our final step was to determine what other variables predict leadership aspirations and self-assessments. Race predicts both self-perception as a leader and desire to be a leader. Higher income was also associated with self-perception as a leader and wanting to be a leader. Race and income effects, however, become nonsignificant once we add self-perception attitudes (i.e., extent to which one sees him- or herself as extraverted, able to organize people, and caring) to the regression analysis. Higher income is significantly (but weakly) correlated with self-assessments as extraverted, organized, caring, and creative, and with psychographic dominance and positive problem solving (but not avoiding decisions). Finally, participation in extracurricular activities and past experience with leadership roles were strongly correlated with the leadership index.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER FOR WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

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*To reconstitute political institutions is one thing; to reconstitute a society and its culture quite another. The first seems unattainable and the second seems inconceivable. Thus, that which lies within ourselves also cuts against our grain—ensuring, I suspect, that the leadership question will remain both centrally important and only rarely answered.*

—Bert Rockman, *The Leadership Question*, 1984

Gender is not synonymous with women, nor is it simply the social construction of biological sex (Butler, 1990). As a result, to explore the consequences of gender for women in political leadership is to look beyond the usual sex variable on a survey. It is to take gender as a category of analysis seriously and particularly to recognize the contributions feminist theorists have made to the discipline, something political scientists have been slow to do. Although recent work suggests progress, political scientists still lack a common language for the study of gender (Beckwith, 2005). They too often treat gender as a dichotomous variable rather than recognize the heterogeneity within males and females. Their heavy reliance upon a left-right, liberal-conservative ideological scale leaves no space for seriously considering gender ideology and the ways it intersects with other ideologies (Duerst-Lahti, 2002a; Johnson, Duerst-Lahti, & Norton, 2007). Despite the centrality of the study of institutions and power to the discipline, and contributions of feminist political scientists (Duerst-Lahti, 2002b; Duerst-Lahti & Kelly, 1995; Guy, 1992; Hartsock, 1983; Hawkesworth, 2003, 2005; Rosenthal, 1998; Seltzer, Newman, & Leighton, 1997), political scientists have done little to gender their research, even on central matters (Lovenduski, 1998). Perhaps the most resounding silence of all surrounds masculinity and

the gender power advantages it produces in politics (DiStefano, 1991; Duerst-Lahti, 2002a, 2005; Ferguson, 1993), which, if left unexamined, places most political science research in the position of “perpetuating distorted accounts of the political world” (Hawkesworth, 2005, p. 151). In no place do these considerations and shortcomings come together more than in the study of political leadership, an orientation explored throughout this chapter in light of its consequences for gender.

Leadership, like other processes, is gendered. Leadership of and in institutions, like other institutionalized practices and the institutional structures themselves, is also gendered (Duerst-Lahti & Kelly, 1995; Rosenthal, 2002). These processes, practices, structures, and institutions exist within hierarchies of power, including gender hierarchies that generally privilege men over women. Women and men who cross these institutions and processes do so as a lived experience, bringing all of their characteristics (e.g., sex, race, class, education), beliefs, and life lessons of individual bodies with them. As a consequence, women and men who attempt to lead in the political realm cross through institutionalized gender power that shapes and structures their lived experience of leadership. Each reality is more than an individual choice or individualized discrimination. It is the product of institutionalized gender



structures. As a result, women and men have different experiences. Consequently all women and all men do not have the same experiences because the heterogeneity of their selves and their lived experiences in particular bodies also shapes their leadership.

Leadership as a concept is itself not well understood in political science. A casual look at the discipline's scholarship suggests that political science simply assumes public and/or political leadership exists when someone who holds appointive or elective office acts in a formal capacity. Hence political scientists tend to study leadership as the behavior and outcomes of those holding formal positions, although topics can include "power versus politics" views of leadership, personality, recruitment, socialization, integration into institutions, style, linkages with followers, and impacts (Mughan & Patterson, 1992). While an overstatement, it is not too far a stretch to suggest that political scientists mostly approach leadership as implicit. Presidents, in particular, lead implicitly, and the study of their leadership can involve nearly everything they do. Very little of this research takes gender seriously, despite many works on "the man" who is president. Appropriately, sometimes the discipline leadership extends to formal leaders of other institutions, especially Congress, or maybe even leadership in a small town (Wildavsky & Polsby, 2004). Public leadership, in contrast, is most likely to occur within the domain of public administration and public service (Van Wort, 2005). This subfield has expanded, and perhaps even embraced, gender analysis. However, as is discussed later, conflation of management and leadership confound analysis, as does ambiguity about the "political" nature of public service.

To complicate leadership one step more, leadership is necessarily a relationship between leaders and followers, and leadership always occurs in a context that is simultaneously bounded by enduring structures and relatively fluid practices, which are the product of any situation and historical moment. Context matters greatly because it sets the contingencies for lived experience of both leaders and followers, and the meaning and consequences of experience shift with contexts. Therefore, the leadership of a wealthy, white, suburban congresswoman on Capitol Hill or in the executive branch will vary greatly depending upon the context and, very importantly, upon the perception of the followers. Perception of followers is key to leadership, as is correspondence between the context, the leader as a person, and leader's behavior.

This chapter attempts to make sense of these aspects of gendered institutions and the gender power at play in women's political leadership. It begins to rethink public and political leadership with gender in mind. Because political scientists generally assume political leaders will be men, an assumption supported by long empirical evidence, they focus on aspects with particular consequences for women, including public power, cultural constructions of political leadership, the disciplinary treatment of leadership, and the problem women face in being seen as a

leader as well as wanting to be a political leader. They ignore entirely the large literature on leadership style, although I am aware of it and the extensive focus upon gender in it, often in terms of women's special leadership style. I urge awareness that the most effective style is linked to the context and situation, as well as to gender. This chapter most of all attempts to call attention to the gendering of leadership, to urge political science to expand, invigorate, and rethink its approach to the study of leadership, and to lay out areas ripe for research by a collectivity of scholars willing and able to tackle various aspects of this large and amorphous subject.

### **Empirical Progress Toward Gender Heterogeneity in Leadership**

Politics has been largely populated by men since the founding fathers established political institutions. Nonetheless, in early stages of development, occasionally an incumbent's wife would be allowed to inherit an office, particularly in administrative posts, but formal politics largely existed in a state of masculine homogeneity and homosociability. Since the early 20th century, women's progress on the public and political leadership front has improved dramatically. Judging leadership by the number of public officeholders alone (a common practice in the study of leaders), the number of women in leadership has increased greatly. An examination of nearly 3 decades, from 1981 to 2009, shows that women have moved in the U.S. Senate from 2 to 17 (2% to 17%), the U.S. House from 23 to 90 (3% to 16.8%), as governors from 1 to 8 (2% to 16%), and in state legislatures from 12% to 24.3%. At the federal level, 22 of the 30 women ever to hold cabinet-level appointments have done so since 1981 (Center for American Women and Politics, 2009). Between 1981 and 2000, the percentage of all female appointees to Senate-approved positions rose from 12% to 27% (Women's Appointment Project, 2001).

Turning more directly to political leadership, here used to mean leadership within elective institutions, the U.S. Senate in 2009 can boast seven women in leadership posts and two committee chairs. This represents major growth. Although Margaret Chase Smith chaired the Senate Republican Conference from 1967 to 1972, after her departure, it was not until 1993 that another woman held a Senate leadership post. In the House, seven women now hold leadership posts, including Nancy Pelosi, who holds the highest majority party post as the Speaker of the House. Women's House leadership peaked with 10 posts in the 106th Congress (1999–2001), and the 111th Congress has seven women in leadership: six Democrats and one Republican. Historically from 1949 onward, women have usually held one post, as secretary of the Democratic Caucus. House committee leadership shows far less progress. In the past decades no more than one at a time has chaired a standing committee, and the most women to



ever simultaneously chair House committees was two, during World War II. No women chaired a committee from the 105th to the 109th Congresses (1998–2006). This pattern changed in 2007 with the 110th Congress and continued in the 111th when three women chaired committees, including the powerful Committee on Rules, chaired by Louise Slaughter (D-NY). In state legislatures during 2007, women held 17.6% of all leadership posts, 19.1% in state senates, and 16.1% in lower chambers, a pattern that reflects the national level's growth (Center for American Women and Politics, 2009).

In other words, women's political leadership has improved markedly in recent decades when leadership is equated with office holding. Some clear progress has been made in institutional leadership posts in the U.S. Senate and as cabinet secretaries. However, progress is not uniform as indicated by the U.S. House and state legislatures, and a closer look at the pipeline of state legislative office shows that progress may have stalled. Marked progress is evident, but vestiges of masculine domination of political leadership weigh on iterations of change, which also vary by context.

## Leadership and Power

Leadership implies power as well as implying influence in the world beyond the home. While certainly changing since the rise of second-wave feminism, and always more myth than empirical reality, masculinity has long been associated with power, especially public power (Duerst-Lahti & Kelly, 1995; Hartsock, 1983; Kimmel, 1996). French and Raven (1959/1984) famously identified bases of social power: coercion, reward, legitimate authority, charismatic or referent power, expertise, connections, and information. Of these, women began to gain public power mostly through the use of expertise, although some women have always had varying access to all of these social bases of power, depending upon class, personal circumstances, and affiliations with powerful men. Of all bases of power, women are still least likely to have access to formal authority, legitimate power, or positional power. One need only to look at the empirical reality of such posts from the view of men's office holding rather than women's progress to understand that in 2010 men still hold 66% of seats in the U.S. Senate, 88% of governorships, all of the presidencies, and so on. For public and political leadership, as is discussed later, an ability to "see" this naturalized and overwhelming male presence in posts of public authority is to recognize gender power advantages for men and disadvantages for women. U.S. culture has always associated public power with men, drawing this tradition from the general creation of patriarchy and from an even older "sexual contract" tradition (Pateman, 1988).

In general, the more power—especially structural power—there is associated with a particular position, the

less likely a woman is to hold the position. Hence women are more likely to be cabinet secretaries for the outer cabinets than the inner ones, to hold staff positions rather than line positions in the executive branch, and to work on constituent service posts rather than policy in legislative offices. Men are far more likely to hold the clout positions than are women (Eagly & Carli, 2004). Women continually negotiate the "difference 'difference' makes" (Rhode, 2003). In short, women who attempt to gain and use legitimized power confront "the masculinity of authority and the authority of masculinity" (Liswood, qtd. in Wilson, 2004, p. 33). As a consequence, gendered expectations for legitimized power undermine women getting into political leadership.

As a reaction to this fact a sizable business and trade literature on leadership has arisen that purports women's special gifts in using power (e.g., Coughlin, Wingard, & Hollihan, 2005). Usually relying upon anecdotes and insights offered by accomplished female leaders, the reasoning in such works generally is based upon sex difference and the ways in which women's lived experience and preferences drive them to use power in better ways than do men. Their enlightened use of power is to accomplish something useful, empower others, and be effective, rather than to relish in having power over others and adding to their own power base. This orientation toward power—and the leadership style that corresponds with it—is argued to match the needs of contemporary organizations better, to result in higher productivity and satisfaction among subordinates. Social scientists have long found empirical support for these claims, although we now know that gender power operating in gendered institutions often impedes rewarding leaders who employ this orientation toward power.

## Cultural Constructions of Political Leadership

One need not look far to find the close association between leadership and masculinity. In her now classic collection of "great works" on political leadership, Barbara Kellerman (1984) opens with a piece by Thomas Carlyle, "The Leader as Hero," and follows with pieces such as "The Great Man Theory Breaks Down," "The Eventful Man and the Event-Making Man," "The Hero in Myth and Dream," "The Great Man," and "Leaders of Men." Leaders, it seems, are men of high standing, "princes, heroes, and supermen" who lead other men (Jennings, 1960). "Cultural values constitute one common basis for the legitimate power of one individual over another. . . . In most cultures, there are certain areas of behavior in which a person of one sex is granted the right to prescribe behavior for the other sex" (French & Raven, 1959/1984, p. 310). In essence, Frederick Taylor's theory of hierarchical management trumps Mary Parker Follett's web of interaction, regardless



of the quality and effectiveness of either, generally or in particular contexts (Newman & Guy, 1998).

The consequence of the cultural expectation seems straightforward: Leadership itself is culturally gendered toward the masculine so a woman tends to have a harder time both in seeing herself as a leader and in being seen as a leader. She has relatively few recognizable models given the cultural constructions of leaders such as the great man, hero, or the coach. The cultural association is true regardless of the fact that only a few men are leaders; most leaders have been men. For the same cultural reasons—and more—others may have difficulty seeing a woman's leadership potential, trusting that any woman can lead well, or being willing to legitimize her as a leader even if she holds a formal position. As a result, actions of women with vision, who effectively make change and persuade others to follow that vision, do not accord with cultural concepts of leaders. Polls, for example, frequently query whether Americans are ready for a woman president, a question that makes clear the cultural resistance to any woman in the top political leadership post. An individual woman confronts widely shared cultural expectations about both women and leaders, and the two do not correspond. Therefore, they may be seen as effective, as good organizers or coordinators, as talented activists, but not necessarily as the top leaders. Hillary Rodham Clinton's strong bid for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination tested the claim greatly but proved the rule ultimately. As secretary of state, Clinton indisputably leads but fell short of presidential timber. Sarah Palin's treatment as Republican vice presidential candidate reinforced it. Certainly this is progress, but not yet a breakthrough.

Having staked out this exceptionally general claim, it is necessary for me to contextualize the claim of the cultural gendering of leadership. For now, I will ignore questions about distinctions in meaning between *political* and *public* to focus instead upon the context, which should always be subjected to gender analysis. The term *context* can subsume many common elements of leadership studies. It includes the context's gender history, the setting of a formal institution or informal structures and processes, contingencies of a particular leader with particular followers in an ongoing (or new) relationship relative to a particular new or ongoing task, placidity or turbulence in the organizational environment, style as it relates to a crisis or routine leadership, and so on. Context matters greatly for how followers interpret the appropriateness of a particular leader, or the leader's behavior, given the specific context of the moment or a situation.

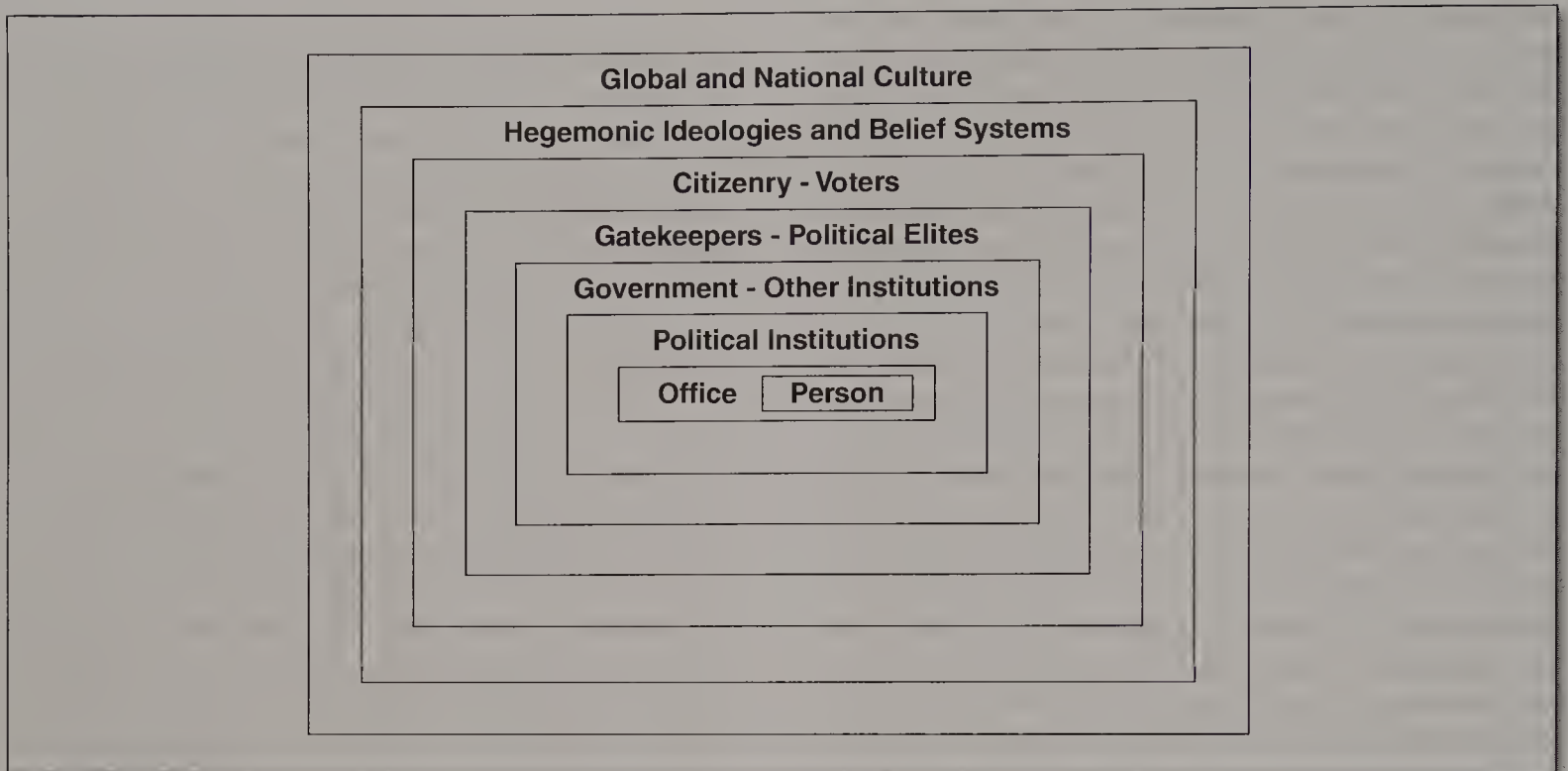
For example, few would be surprised to know that women have always been appointed to leadership roles in the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. It seems ordinary to have woman lead in an agency dedicated to women; it is a good context for women's leadership in many regards, although attempts by the George W. Bush administration to cut the Women's Bureau suggest its structural power is diminishing and hence may be less attractive to any

leader. Similarly, to claim that the U.S. presidency—perhaps the epitome of political leadership—is gendered toward the masculine seems reasonable. With commander-in-chief military leadership functions, the presidency is difficult for any woman. Although Hillary Rodham Clinton made inroads, we still have limited cultural experience with females in the military, and culturally men do the defending and protecting, not women. In contrast to diplomatic functions, for example, this function may be the last to transgender—to seem culturally legitimate—for a woman to fill and to perform its duties. From Geraldine Ferraro forward, because several of the women who have been mentioned as possible presidents have had experience with arms control or weapons procurement in defense budgets, women's knowledge about the military is more difficult to question because individual women have demonstrated expertise. Gender transformations happen continually, with gender expectations adjusting and readjusting (Walby, 1997). Not all contexts for political leadership have been gendered firmly to the masculine—local school leadership, for example—and many conditions of homosocial male leadership are transgendering through women's entry and the heterogeneity experiences they introduce. Senate-approved administrative appointments being held by women in the federal bureaucracy arguably has reached a critical mass that continues under the Obama administration. With that mass, the institutions themselves change and women's leadership in the federal bureaucracy will become more normal. In another contextual example, although men from Maine likely will again serve as U.S. senator, Maine has had two female senators since 1997 and they build upon the strong and early record of Margaret Chase Smith. It would be reasonable to assert that Maine no longer culturally ascribes this important leadership post as appropriate only for men. The presence of capable female senators, and the ability of the larger citizenry to observe their effectiveness over time, contributes to making the institution itself more gender friendly for female leaders.

Figure 3.1 provides an illustration of the political leadership environment and a simple heuristic device for thinking about the layered gendering of political leadership. The idea is that the gendering of each layer, as well as the whole environment, must be considered to understand the consequences of gender for any particular political leader in a particular context.

The individual person who holds a leadership post brings a lived experience in a particular body: short, white, working-class, union and community organizer Barbara Mikulski; figure skater and fashion diva, intellectual, black, “warrior queen” Condoleezza Rice; Wyoming white guy, hunter, economist, long-time political insider Dick Cheney. Each holds a particular office with a particular history and culture that is part of the larger institution and its culture: the genteel and individualistic senator, the demanding but gracious diplomat, the “heartbeat away” from the president.

Each institution is part of the governmental system, which also has its own culture. It matters whether one operates



**Figure 3.1** Elements of Public Leadership Environments

SOURCE: Duerst-Lahti (2005, p. 232).

inside the Beltway or in a home congressional district office, for example, even though both are part of Congress and shape it. Similarly, gendering varies in the Pentagon and State Department and in the Treasury Department compared to Health and Human Services. Gatekeepers and political elites, from lobbyists and campaign donors to news journalists and party leaders, determine who thrives and who does not get through the door. All of these elites share a fascination with politics of little interest to Joe and Jill Sixpack. All of these elites also diverge on many fronts such as partisanship, ideology, career demands, experiences with political leadership, and interactions with other leaders. Given that the entire system functions within a national culture that evolves inside an increasingly globalized world, any individual—whether leader or follower—can effect only a limited amount of change upon the entire context, although every woman who enters a previously homogeneously male domain makes change simply by upsetting the homogeneity. All lead and follow within particular contexts that are embedded in cultures that have deep assumptions about gender. In researching any particular context, the degree of masculinity, femininity (Johnson et al., 2007), or transgendering can be measured and mapped on such a contextual image to highlight ways in which a leader is ensconced inside a gendered context and an institution with specific gendered features.

### Political Science and Political Leadership

“Leadership Studies, qua field, has always been saddled with problems of definitions and meaning-making”

(Kellerman & Webster, 2001, p. 486). Some of the key debates involve distinctions between leaders and power wielders or leadership and management. *To lead* (a verb) requires some action, but what distinguishes it from management? Vision, a capacity to inspire followers to follow? How much willingness is needed given the coercive overtones of many leadership contexts, especially those in the public sector? How much does the act of leading involve empowering followers, and how much involves behaving in particular ways recognized as the act of leading? *Leadership* (a noun) is a process, but besides some type of exchange with followers, what aspects distinguish this process from activism or community organizing around political issues? *Leaders* (also a noun) must somehow be different from followers or do things in ways that mark them as leaders. These observations drive scholars toward traits, character, style, and behaviors of individuals deemed leaders, but given differences in context and the vagaries of the leadership processes, pinning down specifics becomes a challenge.

Even within the realm of public and political leadership, the level of analysis becomes crucial for alleviating confusion. In considering the processes involved in changing minds, an element of leadership, Howard Gardner analyzes processes at the national level, institutional level, group level, one-on-one situations, and within one’s self (Gardner, 2004). He correctly analyzes that leadership of a nation, with a diffuse collection of citizens who seldom cohere through a single set of values, is more challenging than attempting to lead an institution whose members at least are bounded by the rules, norms, and practices of that



institution. This distinction may be useful in demarcating differences between political (elective) and public (appointive) office.

Approaches to leadership have been interdisciplinary, and within this realm, political scientists have focused quite narrowly and employed subfield distinctions that further impede understanding. Judicial leadership receives very little attention overall, which seems oxymoronic given the passive nature of the institution that waits for cases to come to it. Perhaps the deepest divide is found between the foci of political leadership and public leadership. Said far too simply, the term *political leadership* usually is applied to elected officials, such as legislators and presidents or governors. *Public leadership* generally has been the grist of public administration and management. The phrasing connotes leadership in public service by bureaucrats and bureaucracy.

One consequence of this subfield divide is that women have generally advanced into leadership posts more in administration than elective office. The fact that top posts are appointed means that women who hold such posts need not persuade voters they are qualified as leaders and hence being accepted as an appropriate leader might be easier. However, because administrative agencies serve their elected masters, such leadership posts carry less power than elective office. Finally, women's leadership also may be stronger because agencies are subject to workplace laws for sex equity; this dynamic contrasts with elective offices, which are not subject to the workplace laws they pass and impose on other workplaces. In fact, the novelty of top women administrators has, in many contexts, passed. To further that end, President Obama has instituted an interagency taskforce—the Council for Women and Girls—to ensure every agency takes women and girls into account. Much could be learned about gender transformations that have occurred as women undertake this leadership over time. Because, however, the processes and structures of administrative leadership are seen as impossibly different from those of elective institutions, the two literatures seldom meet. Researchers should consider ways in which knowledge of gendered institutions can help bridge this disciplinary divide. Determining what about gendered institutions would advance this knowledge is the next step in this research (Kenney, 1996; Sanbonmatsu, 2002).

One particularly confusing aspect of this political–public divide is the extensive overlap between these two concepts and the multiple meaning employed with each. The public sector is distinguished from the private sector, government from business, so elective offices are public as well as political. Bureaucracies are highly political, and lessons from organizational politics can apply to legislatures every bit as much as agencies, but seldom does this occur. Further, and for gender perhaps most importantly, feminists have clearly theorized the public sphere of employment, government, and civic life as distinct from the private sphere of home and family; public man, private woman (Elshtain, 1981). It is in fact the desire of women

to enter and lead in the public sphere that upsets culture and the gender power arrangements held in place by public institutions. Not incidentally, because, on average, women continue to be responsible for a disproportionate share of private sphere work, including care and relationship work, their collective ability to thrive in the public sphere is impeded. Private institutions impinge upon public ones. Women do not have time to lead if they continue to fill their private sphere expectations for care and nurturing. Regardless, the women who move into top posts do not have “average” profiles for household duties. The point remains: The feminist challenge to political science, that the personal is political and the private sphere is politicized, has enormous consequences for public and political leadership.

Another important aspect of feminist challenges to the political science definition of *political* emerges from artificial boundaries. The discipline is inclined to mark things political as that which happens in, around, and through government and its institutions and constitutions. As a result by definition, work in community and grassroots organizations is not considered “political,” nor is voluntary sector work. That is, the venues where women—and perhaps particularly women of color—have exerted leadership most often are considered to be beyond the scope of political science; instead, such locations are the grist for sociology. As a consequence, when we look for women leaders and women's leadership in environments of political leadership suggested by Figure 3.1, we find that very little of the leadership is undertaken by women.

### Research Strategy: Finding and Grooming Women for Leadership

The shortfall of women willing and able to enter political leadership presents a double bind for increasing the numbers. Institutions are not particularly conducive to women, but the only way the institutions will change is through the politics of their presence (Phillips, 1995). Despite gender transformations that clearly have already occurred, multiple and reinforcing aspects of many different social and political institutions, culture, and other elements beyond an individual's control continue to mark both politics and leadership as something done by men and not women. Therefore women still have few cues to see themselves as leaders or to aspire to acquire power, and they have a harder time than men imagining themselves either actually achieving high office or being able to use public power (Lips, 2000).

Nonetheless, particular women have entered and faced this masculine system and aspire to lead through the system, and some want to bring about change of the system itself (Thomas, 1994). The system is changing as a result, but change is slow and subject to stalling and modest reversal. How we “redecorate” institutions to make them more appealing to and conducive for women is beyond the

scope of this chapter. Here I concentrate on where researchers might find potential female political leaders and explore elements that should be examined in order to encourage women to take the step into political leadership and to change structures and processes that now impede. Figure 3.2 provides hypotheses and suggests interpretive strategies about preconditions for leadership and the processes of developing leadership capacity.

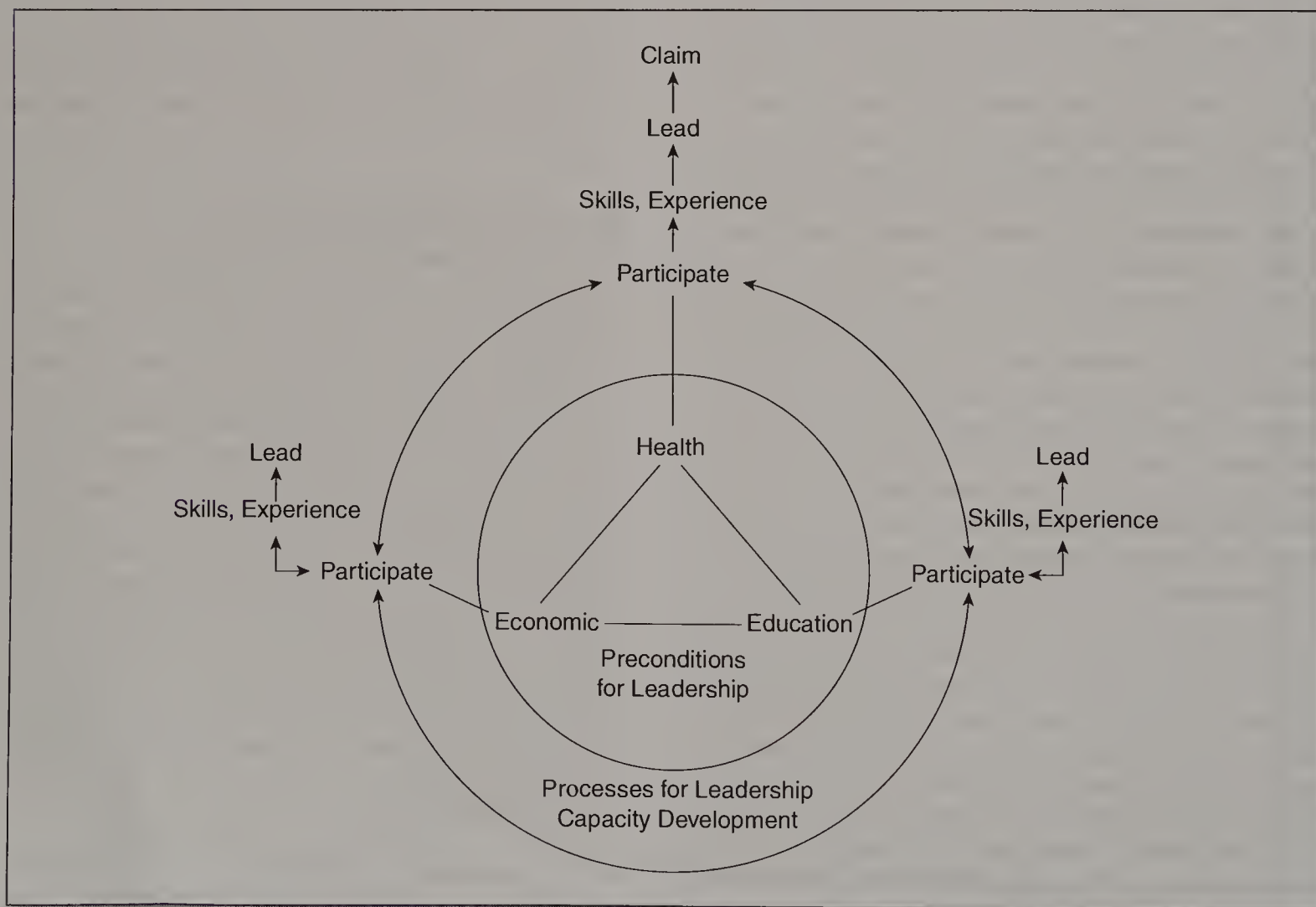
In general, people who are able to carve out time for leadership and to be reasonably effective in it need their basic needs met. Such needs include economic security (basic workplace issues), reasonably good health and well-being (physical and emotional), and some modicum of education commensurate with the level of leadership. These issue areas have been culturally associated with women, so women's legitimacy as leaders in these areas should be easy. In essence, their political ambition—in whatever form it takes—is well accommodated. Further and importantly, women often are catalyzed into action—organizing, coordinating, leading—when they confront issues in these areas related to their families, their communities or affinity groups, or themselves. They therefore function as a welter of “nonconstituted” leaders, leaders who do everything expected of leaders but who do not hold a position

designated or constituted as public leadership posts. Such female leaders can be found as first ladies, key legislative staffers, heads of advocacy groups, and ad hoc community organizers. Such women also have benefited from “representative bureaucracy” efforts, so they have gained workplace experience in related administrative agencies and hence skills and capacities relevant for public leadership whether or not they are recognized as public leaders.

Harriett Woods, for example, was catalyzed as a local leader by the noise of a car hitting a pothole that woke her children. From this “nonpolitical” activism, she made her way into St. Louis city politics and then the state legislature, finally becoming the first female lieutenant governor of Missouri. A seemingly small thing related to the well-being of her family served as the catalyst. By reacting to it, she gained the skills to move on and up in political leadership.

### Future Directions

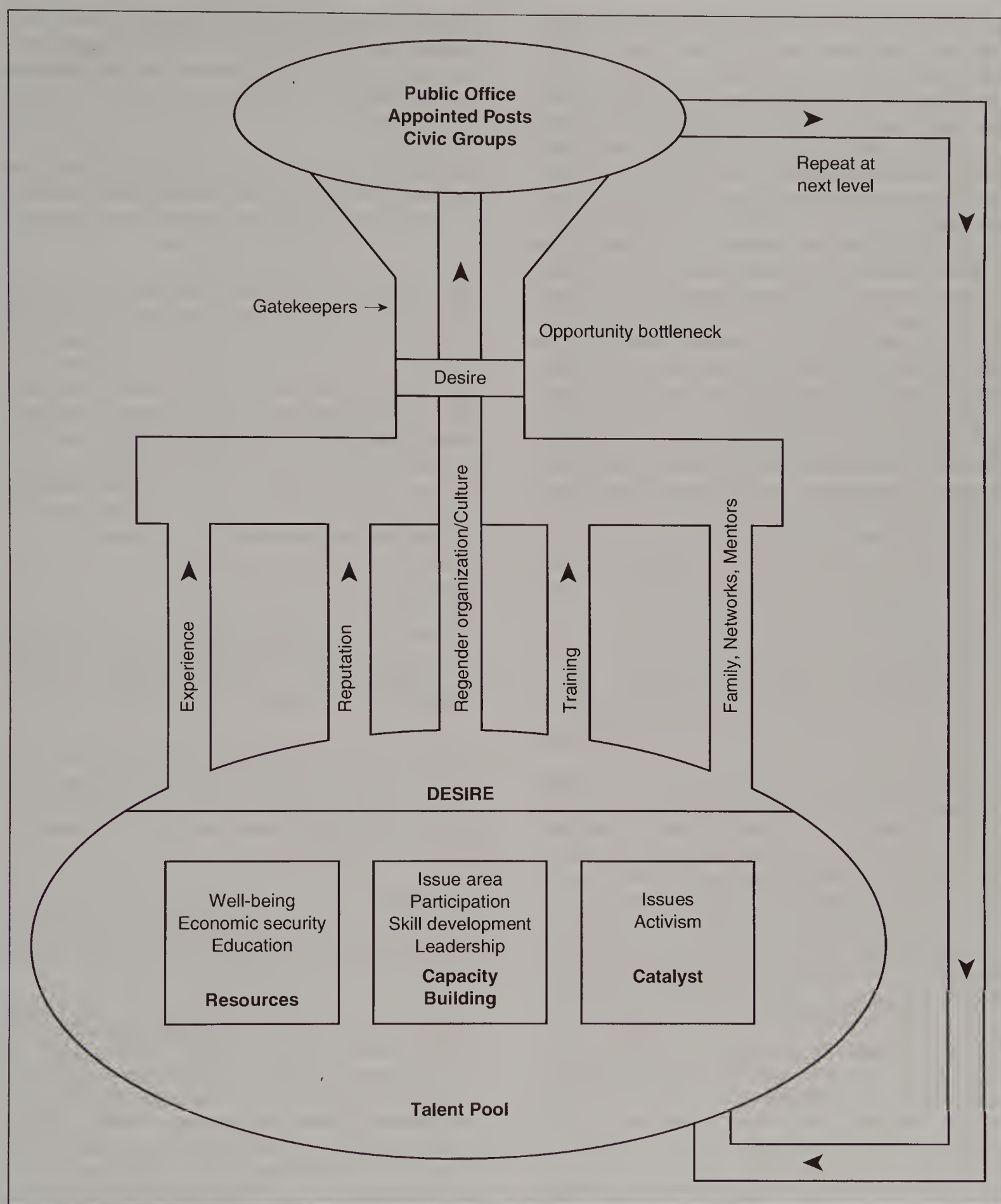
Figure 3.3 represents a heuristic model of multiple variables that reflect these variables, Lieutenant Governor Woods's experience, and the experience of many other leaders. It



**Figure 3.2** Conditions for Women's Leadership Development

SOURCE: Duerst-Lahti (2006, p. 4).





**Figure 3.3** Process of Becoming a Political Leader

SOURCE: Duerst-Lahti (2006, p. 6).

highlights the talent pool of potential leaders, resources needed to be(come) political leaders, processes that build leadership capacity, and very importantly for women, desire

to do so. These elements and processes can be explored through a range of methodologies. In essence, the model posits that from the talent pool of issue participants, who

have varying degrees of capacity and basic security resources, a catalyst sparks a modicum of desire act. This action builds capacities through skills, networks, and the like. At some point, they desire to cross the line into public or political leadership from their “nonpolitical” administrative work or community activism. That is, in doing something safely consistent with women’s gender roles, these women develop a desire to prepare for, or otherwise move into, public and political leadership. Although women can and do gain experience in leadership areas generally associated with masculinity, this pattern still suggests that particular resources for leader development (e.g., training, networks, and family connections) help women enter the pool of potential candidates for political leadership. These women must have a strong enough desire to face the challenges of moving past gatekeepers and through the opportunity bottleneck into leadership posts. As women progress, their very presence means that they inevitably change the institution itself. Sometimes they deliberately make institutional as well as policy changes. This process repeats at each level of leadership, with the demands for resources and capacity heightening at each level.

Each element can be examined to determine the accuracy of its suppositions, contextual differences, and variations by the iteration of gender transformation and level of political leadership. The importance of all can be measured readily, with the possible exception of the regendering of organizational culture. This aspect likely requires an organizational ethnographic approach that is attuned to gender power and sensitive to processes of ongoing gender transformation.

Women undertake many activities that, by external observations, have all the characteristics of leadership. Those who believe more women in political leadership would be good for democracies must contend with the fact that much of what women do falls outside the definition of *politics* and that women themselves may not want to claim the mantle of leader. Nonetheless, interested scholars need to go to places where women seem inspired to participate publicly, where nonconstituted leaders thrive. Participation in any organized activity helps to produce skills and abilities useful for leadership activities. It creates the talent pool. Therefore participating in these areas should help produce individuals with leadership capacity. The processes of Figure 3.2 and the iterative elements in Figure 3.3, along with shortcomings in the study of political leadership, form the basis for several propositions for further research. Some require straightforward empirical testing for accuracy, which I will not detail. Most also suggest a concurrent interpretive strategy to extend our understanding; some suggestions are included.

**Proposition 1:** A disproportionate number of women in political leadership began by activism and work experience in issue areas gendered toward women.

*Interpretive strategy:* Verify the empirical accuracy and determine what issues are associated with women, probing any that seem usual and ensconced in a particular context. Understand how the gendering of these issue areas attracts women.

**Proposition 2:** Women who excel at participation in areas associated with women are most likely to form the talent pool with the skills and experiences that make them capable of political leadership in other areas.

*Interpretive strategy:* Consider which women’s issue areas provide the most transferable skills and consider why. Explore what would make or has made these nonconstituted leaders willing to take the next step into broader leadership; what sparked ambition and made them desire political leadership or be willing to be known as a political leader? What incentives and disincentives exist(ed) for claiming the mantle of public or political leader for them? How did leadership capacities evolve within particular contexts? How might that evolution be transferred to accelerate capacity development in other areas?

**Proposition 3:** Given uneven distribution of women and men across issue areas, participation in which areas—those mentioned earlier or otherwise—provides the most resources for advancing as political leaders (e.g., reputation; a higher quality of skills, abilities, and knowledge; networks important to public and political leadership)?

*Interpretive strategy:* Investigate the structural power differences among issue areas, including the resources for political leadership inherent in the networks. Examine, in particular, race, ethnic, and cross-national variation for these power differentials.

**Proposition 4:** Women and men differ in their ideas about the meaning of public service compared to public leadership, with women being more likely to gravitate toward service and men toward leadership.

*Interpretive strategy:* Discern those differences in order to improve leader recruitment. Scholars should explore the attractiveness of the idea of public *service* in contrast to public *leadership* and explore the perceived differences between them. Similarly, the distinction between political and public service and leadership can be examined. On a related theme, administration—in theory at least—serves political masters and hence is in a hierarchical relationship much as gender hierarchies occur. How does this shape meaning, desire, and power resources?

**Proposition 5:** Because women are no more of like mind than are men, identify and map definitions and understandings of power, leadership, political, authority, and other related concepts, across various women and women leaders.



*Interpretative strategy:* Given gender transformations since feminist research began, the understandings and meanings may have changed over time, and this change warrants examination. Similarly, the meanings different types of women bring to these terms should be considered for women's ability and desire to move into political leadership. Such definitional understandings also can be undertaken with men, and sex differences can be compared within particular race, class, and ethnic or nationality groups.

**Proposition 6:** Context always matters, so particular effort should be given to cross-national contexts and the ways basic elements of Figure 3.3 diverge and converge for women's political leadership.

*Interpretive strategy:* Identify conditions for each element that promote or hinder women's leadership, and consider alternative guises of the same elements in various cultural contexts as well as culturally distinct aspects that may have bearing elsewhere.

Much has been ignored in this chapter, including the entire area of leadership style, what regendered institu-

tions will involve, and a systematic focus upon intersectionality and the meaning each of these points has for various important political categories of people. Nonetheless, moving away from individual great leaders—male or female—and toward a gendered and raced institutional approach will take us toward a better understanding of gender and leadership, changes that have occurred since earlier studies, and strategies to accelerate women's advancement. However modest the suggestions, if research can elucidate conditions and processes that gender institutions and their leadership, then Mareh and Olsen's (1989) promise of equality through democratic institutions will be closer to being achieved. Women leaders can reconstitute political institutions if they desire to take on the challenges of doing so. Male allies certainly can help. Using research to understand the processes that advance and impede women's capacity as political leaders is essential if such institutions are to be the means to reconstitute a society and its culture in ways that uncouple gender difference from gender dominance. A better understanding of women and political leadership constitutes a necessary condition for change.

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## INTERSECTIONALITIES OF RACE AND GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

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Intersectionality scholarship has emerged as one of the most significant areas of research across disciplines and fields of study. It even has been considered “the most important theoretical contribution that women’s studies in conjunction with related fields has made so far” (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). Intersectionality focuses on the differences *among* women, moving beyond simply the differences *between* men and women. It highlights the inequalities that exist among groups as well as between groups.

Intersectionality is an approach to understanding the ways in which race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and nationality, among other categories of social identity, intersect to produce unique social locations and experiences that are equal to more than just the sum of their parts. According to this approach, these categories are mutually constituted and defy separation into discrete categories of analysis. Intersectionality scholars are concerned foremost with the systems of power associated with these categories and how these systems serve to marginalize and empower groups. They recognize that each of these systems works differently and that the way these systems operate changes over time and is dependent upon location.

From this vibrant line of inquiry, a plethora of research questions are emerging focusing on the ways in which women in all their diversity experience the world and how the world reacts to their presence. Viewing the world from the intersections of various social identities—including race, gender, class, ability, nationality, sexuality, among other social locations—has given way to a paradigm shift in terms of how we understand women’s leadership.

In studies of women and leadership, intersectionality is opening new avenues of research and challenging existing

questions across sectors of society in the wake or in the absence of diverse groups of women in the leadership ranks. Scholars from a cross-section of disciplines and fields are interrogating a host of questions using the intersectionality framework. The terrain of intersectionality research is constantly evolving as scholars attempt to refine the definitions and applications of an intersectionality framework. New questions are pushing our previous understandings of women’s leadership in religious organizations, politics, nonprofits, social movements, corporations, and other sectors both domestically and globally—all from employing an intersectional framework. Scholars are questioning the democratic nature of our institutions seeking to understand democratic inclusion. How democratic are American institutions? Are diverse groups of people represented in these governing bodies? Without an attentiveness to diversity (or lack thereof), can we regard our governing institutions as truly representative, democratic bodies? Are other areas of activism such as social movements and interest groups representing the diversity of the U.S. population? How are nonprofits, workplaces, and corporate multinationals including the diversity of women’s experiences into their leadership corps? Such questions are now at the heart of research in American politics and studies of women’s leadership across a diversity of fields. Scholars across the disciplines are renewing their research fields by incorporating an intersectionality framework into their understandings and explorations of all types of institutions.

At the same time that intersectionality helps to make sense of the experiences of people who find themselves living at the intersections of social identities, intersectionality also is concerned with the systems that give

meaning to the categories race, gender, class, sexual identity, and the like. In other words, scholars theorizing the intersectionality approach seek to make visible the systems of oppression that maintain power hierarchies that organize society.

The shifting demographics of U.S. society, reflecting greater numbers of people of color, are contributing to growing interests in intersectionality. An appreciation for complexity is now essential to understanding U.S. society. No longer can U.S. society and culture be understood simply in terms of divisions between blacks and whites. With the growth of the Latina/o population, now noted as the largest minority group supplanting blacks, and with multiracial categories growing in salience, it is necessary to problematize racial categories in ways that allow for greater fluidity within and across categories. This increased fluidity also requires that we take a closer look at how we understand the existence of social categories as systems ordering society. Likewise, globalization is prompting the world to become smaller and more connected. Now more than ever it is important to understand difference and the systems of power that seek to link difference and marginalization. Intersectionality as a theoretical and empirical paradigm offers great insight into understanding society and the demographic shifts that stand to change the nature of society and its politics. With the election of President Barack Obama, the first African American to hold the highest political office in the United States, some argue that we already are seeing the ways in which changing demographics and American attitudes about race, class, and gender are beginning to challenge power relations and systems of marginalization.

This chapter focuses on intersectionality in the context of U.S. women's leadership. It begins by defining what constitutes intersectionality and offering a brief, though not complete, genealogy of the term's development and travels. Though it is an evolving paradigm, there are central principles that shape its parameters. Beyond the history and definition of intersectionality, this chapter follows with specifically examining the importance of intersectionality for understanding women's leadership.

Perhaps the best way of understanding intersectionality and women's leadership is by focusing on a sector in which women's leadership is critical and the leadership of diverse groups of women has been profound. Hence this chapter focuses on the ways an intersectional framework has added to our knowledge of women's political leadership. Using the intersectionality framework, this chapter examines political institutions at the federal, local, and state levels. At all levels of government, the presence of women of color has increased over time and presents an opportunity to understand how their increasing presence is contributing to greater representation.

The chapter closes by discussing the future directions for scholars interested in intersectionality and its relationship to women's leadership. As the reach of the intersectionality

paradigm grows, there is a greater need to specify ways of conducting intersectionality research. One of the most significant directions is more fully understanding how to meaningfully use the intersectionality framework in more broad contexts, particularly in studies of women's leadership in transnational politics where who is privileged and who is marginalized is more difficult to discern and largely depends upon one's vantage point. These are extremely enormous tasks and the scope and depth of my discussion is necessarily limited.

## A Brief Genealogy of Intersectionality

Critical race legal theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) coined the term *intersectionality* as a metaphor to explain the ways in which women of color are often caught between multiple systems of oppression marked by race, gender, and economic hierarchies without being recognized for their unique experiences at the convergence of these systems. Focusing on discrimination cases, Crenshaw argues that dominant conceptualizations of discrimination under the law rely on determining discrimination using only a single axis framework. Using court cases brought forth by black women, Crenshaw illustrates a repeated pattern in which black women are protected under discrimination laws only to the extent to which their experiences align with either white women or black men. Racial discrimination cases are thus determined by the experiences of black men, and in sex discrimination cases, the experiences of white women are privileged. As Crenshaw shows, the courts have a history of failing to account for the lives of black women who experience the effects of discrimination injuries on the basis of both race *and* gender. Crenshaw argues that the single axis framework articulated by the courts limits claims of discrimination as emanating from a discrete source of discrimination (race *or* sex) but not accounting for the experiences of those who are "mutually burdened." The intersectional metaphor is explained as follows:

Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions, sometimes from all of them. Similarly, if a black woman is harmed because she is in the intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination. (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 149)

It is through this analysis of discrimination law that Crenshaw sets the parameters of the intersectionality framework. In discussing the responses of the courts, she argues that the simultaneous experience of race and sex discrimination render black women as invisible by the courts. Similarly, women of color were rendered invisible



through the early discursive practices of both feminist theory and critical race theory. Whereas Crenshaw bases her discussion of intersectionality on the experiences of black women, scholars later extended her discussion to focus on the ways in which single-issue frameworks fail to adequately capture the experiences of myriad groups in society that experience marginalization along multiple axes of power.

Crenshaw was by far not the first to theorize regarding intersectional identities. During the same time period, other scholars became increasingly dissatisfied with the ways women of color's activism, writings, and lived experiences were suppressed through failures to recognize the convergence of identity categories or systems of oppression. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzuldúa (1984), Deborah King (1988), and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1988) all produced pivotal writings during this period that shared in disrupting notions that the category "woman" denotes a universal, homogeneous experience. Instead, these authors asserted that race, class, and sexuality distinguish women's behavior and experiences.

Although many locate the origins of intersectionality scholarship in the 1980s with the writings of feminist scholars of color, for centuries women of color have articulated the conundrum that intersectionality presents and have articulated both a scholarly and activist tradition emanating from their own positioning in U.S. society. Nineteenth-century African American scholar-activist Anna Julia Cooper recognized the unique position of African American women at the nexus of struggles for racial and gender equality. Cooper argued that the progress of African Americans rested upon the abilities of African American women to advance, eloquently articulating that it is "when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole . . . race enters with me" (Cooper, 1892, p. 31). Cooper's words were similar to other activist women of color such as Sojourner Truth and Ida B. Wells, who also articulated the unique positioning of African American women. Later, groups such as the Combahee River Collective, a cadre of black lesbian feminist activists writing in the 1970s, articulated the simultaneous effects poised by race, class, gender, and sexuality.

Across social movements, women of color argued for a politics of inclusion that recognized the legitimacy of their claims based upon their needs as women of color. Many authors recognize the linkages of intersectionality to the developments in black feminist theory. Evelyn Simien (2006) situates intersectionality as growing from black women's lived experience and argues that such theorizing developed as a pragmatic response to their life circumstances. Black feminist theory remains an important theoretical home for the study of intersectionality though many scholars today advocate for moving away from thinking of intersectionality as a framework solely explaining the experiences of

women of color to thinking in terms of how intersectionality offers more robust understandings of power differentials that exist among various groups in society.

As intersectionality developed and in its earliest theorizing and application, most scholars focused on the triumvirate of oppression—race, class, and gender. These three social identities and systems of power were given primacy in light of the ways systems of racial discrimination, gender discrimination, and class oppression work in tandem to situate women of color, particularly in U.S. society. However, as intersectionality has evolved as a paradigm (Hancock, 2007), scholars are more focused on understanding systems of oppression and hierarchies that operate in tandem to position an array of individuals as beneficiaries or marginalized actors. This has been significant in adding to thinking of intersectionality beyond the parameters of the United States.

## The Principles of Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an evolving paradigm and scholars are constantly challenging and refining its parameters by adding new discussions of its operation and application. Though it is in constant development, some principles remain core to an understanding of intersectionality. Intersectionality (a) resists additive models that treat categories of social identity as additive, parallel categories and instead theorizes these categories as intersecting; (b) adheres to anti-essentialist politics and variation within categories of social identity; (c) recognizes that social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location; (d) embraces the coexistence of power and oppression and acknowledges that they are not mutually exclusive; and (e) changes the conditions of society such that power hierarchies are dismantled in efforts to build a more just world. These principles are starting points to understanding this dynamic and complex framework and are critical building blocks toward appreciating women's leadership.

### Resisting Additive Models and Parallel Categories

Intersectionality has encouraged scholars to move away from thinking in the isolate, in which categories such as race, gender, class, and sexuality are imagined as singular axes of power. This framework staunchly resists an understanding of gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability as parallel categories. Instead, what intersectionality encourages us to do is to understand the ways in which these categories are not simply parallel but intersecting categories.

By rejecting the idea that categories of identity are parallel, intersectionality rejects popular identity politics models that assume that identity is equal to the sum of its parts. Intersectionality rejects the additive model, which



assumes that one could start an analysis with gender and simply add race, class, sexuality, or ability, and the summation of these categories of difference will result in understanding how a group or individual is marginalized (King, 1988). Such models of identity politics produce fragmented understandings of the ways actors behave and experience the world. Such approaches also produce an essentialist ideal of what constitutes membership in societal groups, which gives way to further marginalization of social actors. Instead, intersectionality posits that race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and various aspects of identity are constitutive. Each informs the other, and taken together they produce a way of experiencing the world as sometimes oppressed and marginalized and sometimes privileged and advantaged depending on the context.

Intersectionality requires that we pay close attention to the particulars of categories of social identity. As many have argued, it is not enough to simply “add race and stir” to include perspectives of women of color. Intersectionality requires that we recognize that systems of oppression and hierarchy are neither interchangeable nor identical; therefore much is made of understanding the ways that these categories function. These social categories have differing organizing logics such that race works differently than gender, class, or sexuality. Power associated with these categories is not configured in the same ways, and these categories do not share the same histories; therefore they cannot be treated identically (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006).

### Anti-Essentialism and Diversity Within Categories

Intersectionality takes into account that there is great variation within categories of social identity. It demands that we see these variations within categories such that there is not one understanding of blackness, one type of gender, or one type of working class. Instead, understanding social identities as mutually constitutive produces an array of ways of experiencing blackness, working class, or sex and sexualities. This encourages us to move away from *essentializing* or reducing experiences to “the Latina experience” or “the lesbian experience” and allows for multiple ways of experiencing these social categories as they link and are informed by other categories. Cathy Cohen (1999) argues that in doing so, we avoid producing secondary marginalization in which issues are defined based upon the needs of the more privileged of a group and not in the interests of those who are impacted by multiple systems of oppression or even less valued systems of oppression by particular communities. This also reduces the lure to privilege one aspect of a person’s identity at the expense of other aspects.

Intersectionality takes into account the importance of allowing for the complexity of humanity. Leslie McCall (2005) argues that the complexity intersectionality presents is a defining characteristic of this type of research and is one of its greatest strengths. Such complexity is germane to rigorously exploring the multiple dimensions of

social life and categories of analysis. The complexity contributes to the rigor of our understanding of the lived experiences of societal actors and the systems of power that construct meaning.

A recurring critique of the intersectionality framework is its insistence on attentiveness to multiple categories working simultaneously to produce experience, and more so whether this is possible to study empirically. A series of critical questions arise for intersectionality scholars. How many social divisions are possible? How many social divisions should be incorporated into our analyses? With so many possible categories in play, is it possible to retain meaning, or does intersectionality simply mean that everything matters all the time? Critics of intersectionality point to the limitless list of social divisions that must be taken into account in the strongest incarnations of intersectionality. For example, Judith Butler (1990) argues that scholars resort to using “etc.” after race, class, and gender to denote the limitless nature of social divisions or even in exhaustion attempting to be inclusive of so many differences. This is an important critique that intersectionality scholars must take seriously, especially as we seek to apply an intersectionality framework to empirical studies such as those of women’s leadership. This critique also has political implications, as it points out the often limited resources at hand to address discrimination and inequalities. How are activists to apply a politics of inclusiveness of differences? Intersectional scholars have responded to such critiques by pointing to the ways in which history and context give direction to understanding which social divisions are most salient in any given situation (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

### Power as Shifting and Changing

While intersectionality emphasizes understanding the means by which power is configured, it also establishes power as dynamic and shifting rather than static and fixed. As such, we cannot conclude that power operates in the same ways across contexts of time and location. Sociopolitical and economic histories figure prominently into adequately defining the power relations intersectionality seeks to make visible.

#### *Historically Constituted*

What it means to be marginalized has shifted through time. For example, in the industrial coming of age in American cities, the Irish were a despised ethnic group. Other whites of the dominant class during this period made great efforts to prevent the Irish from acquiring the economic resources or political power to uplift the socioeconomic and political conditions of the group. Forced to work as laborers and servants and restricted to living in cramped, overcrowded, squalor-like urban spaces, the Irish possessed none of the privileges of whites. Instead they were the object of strong anti-immigrant rhetoric and actions (Roediger, 1991). Over time, the Irish were able to



amass the political leverage to open the professions, and today the Irish and other white ethnic groups are not constructed as deviants and are not marginalized as a group.

Depending upon the context, those who are marginalized and those who have power differ. Therefore we cannot evaluate oppression and marginalization without a sense of history as well as the social, political, and economic opportunities available to various groups across history. Categories are not fixed; they change over time. Their social and political meanings often change in different historical contexts and are constantly contested and restructured both at the level of the individual (what it means to me and my experiences) and at the societal level (what it means to society and social systems; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

#### *Across Geographical Space*

As intersectionality scholarship has traveled across disciplinary locations and into transnational conversations, an emphasis has been placed on understanding the ways in which geographical location transforms the relationships between categories as well as within categories. What it means to be a woman of color differs depending on a woman's geographical location. The systems of power that dictate whether that social identity is a marker of privilege or marginalization also changes according to geographical location and historical configurations of power in that society. How identities are formulated and how the structures of power are organized and maintained vary according to the locations in which they are studied. Scholars interested in women's social location in the Muslim world, for example, must take into account differences of religious sect and the relationships between the state religious sects in order to understand women's social locations. The salience of these relationships is different for those studying Muslim women in the context of the United States.

Given this attentiveness to history and geography, some have argued for fluidity in how we understand the salience of particular categories for any given context. As S. Laurel Weldon (2006) argues "different types of social structures might have different types of effects in different contexts," (p. 24), which she concludes is particularly useful in doing cross-cultural or comparative analyses. While intersectionality scholars resist the parceling out of each element of one's identity into discrete categories, some are pushing intersectionality scholarship to contend with the possibilities that some contexts will make particular systems of oppression more pronounced.<sup>1</sup> Scholars interested in the transnational and comparative politics of women's leadership must be particularly concerned with the ways history and geography shift understandings of the ways systems of oppression interact in the lives of women leaders.

#### **Privilege and Marginalization**

Privilege and marginalization are central to studies of intersectionality. Although many might assume that these

two categories are mutually exclusive, intersectionality scholarship has focused on their coexistence. One can experience oppression along one axis and privilege along another. Intersectionality focuses on power across categories and in relation to one another, understanding that power is not equal across categories. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) situates race, class, and gender as interlocking stems that create an overarching "matrix of domination" in which actors can be victimized by power but can also exercise power over others. Collins highlights the contradictory nature of oppression suggesting that few "pure victims" or "pure oppressors" exist. Penalty and privilege exist for individuals within the matrix of domination such that no one is exclusively marked by one or the other. This is especially helpful in understanding the intersectional positioning of women in leadership.

Women who represent groups that have not traditionally held power are often situated within this paradox of power and oppression as leaders. At once, they can be both marginalized and empowered. Women leaders in the larger scheme of things are privileged individuals. By virtue of their rise through the ranks or their upliftment to a position of authority in their organizations, they are, by those accounts, privileged. However, these leaders often find themselves marginalized in spite of their privileged status as a leader. They hold power in many respects, yet are still beholden to the trappings of marginalization within their organizations.

In addition to intersectionality's attentiveness to categories of identity and the power configurations produced through these identity categories, intersectionality is concerned with how these systems structure institutions. Identity categories structure institutions and the power afforded to groups within the institutional setting. For women leaders with multiple identities, this means that their identity informs and gives meaning to their leadership, including the extent to which they are even recognized as leaders. Intersectionality scholars call into question the idea that organizations are neutral entities and instead present organizations as laden with preferences that benefit dominant race, gender, sexuality, and class groups, among others. Because organizations are not race, gender, or class neutral, those who are different from the norm in organizations often face marginalization or invisibility, which is antithetical to their roles as organizational leaders.

#### **Changing Conditions**

Julia Jordan-Zachary (2007) reminds us that from the earliest conceptualizations of intersectionality, embedded in the theory is a liberatory agency possessed by those experiencing the effects of life at the intersection. The imperative to change existing conditions and take action from their location intersection toward impacting the lives of those both within and between social identity categories is an important theme woven throughout. So as much as researchers categorize intersectionality as a descriptive



framework or paradigm, it is also a political concept grounded in an emancipatory politics with social justice-based outcomes as the goal. Intersectionality is understood as rooted in efforts to change societal conditions that create and maintain power hierarchies. Intersectionality acknowledges that power differences exist among leaders and seeks not only to understand these differences but devise modes of institutional change that remedy these inequalities.

### Applying the Intersectionality Framework to Women's Leadership

Increasingly, scholars are applying intersectionality to empirical studies. One such area that is growing is women and leadership. Initially, studies of intersectionality and women's leadership focused on the struggle to unearth women of color's participation and leadership in all sectors of public life—including religious institutions, politics, social movements, and for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Historians were pivotal in this initial work of identifying these women's historic contributions to society. Belinda Robnett (1997), for example, offers a salient reading of leadership and the civil rights movement, showing that an important step in understanding intersectionality and women's leadership is expanding notions of what constitutes leadership. Based upon common definitions of leadership, marking those who are the public face of organizations and movements or speak in front of the crowds as leaders, we have missed so many actors, primarily women of color, who contribute significantly as leaders. Because our models of leadership are largely based upon the ways in which men perform leadership functions, leaders who are women of color often go unnoticed. To understand women's leadership and in particular women representing diverse groups, locating leadership in a traditional fashion from the top down is likely not to suffice as a means of locating these women's contributions.

Studies of intersectional identities in relation to leadership have constructed intersectionality as both an advantage and a disadvantage to women's leadership. As discussed later, it need not always result in disadvantage; however, it is clear through studies of women of color's leadership experiences that challenges indeed exist. Mary Hawkesworth's (2003) study of women of color in U.S. Congress and Wendy G. Smooth's (2001, 2008) explorations of women of color in state legislatures illustrate the ways in which race and gender intersect within governing bodies to produce marginalization for women leaders who are powerful by virtue of their positions as lawmakers; yet, in the act of performing their jobs, the effects of institutional life serve to marginalize them within the legislative institution. In studies of diverse groups of women in leadership positions, not only do the challenges of their experiences become clear, but the strategies they employ to change their existing circumstances are also evident in the literature.

### Challenges for Intersectionality and Women's Leadership

Those who experience life at the intersections have used numerous metaphors and descriptors to bring voice to their experiences. Those who have attained leadership positions are particularly expressive about their experiences, being caught between both privilege and power on the one hand and continued marginalization on the other. Women-of-color leaders have been particularly vocal about their experiences in corporations, politics, religious institutions, and social movements and have described the ways that intersecting identities produce unique experiences within organizations, institutions, and social movements.

#### *The Outsiders Within*

Those interested in intersectionality and women's leadership have identified a number of challenges that women with multiple identity locations experience as leaders in their organizations. Several reveal the challenges of identifying with groups that are outside the majority in their organizations. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) documents the experiences of those from groups with histories of social injustices acquiring access to spaces traditionally restricted from the view of marginalized groups as the "outsider within." Outsiders within, according to Collins, are present in these spaces and yet are not fully included as insiders. Drawing on the experiences of African American women working as domestics, she shows how central these women were to their white employers as hired help. In spite of having great access to the lives of these families, shaping the character and motivations of their children, and being such trusted confidants, these women did not truly belong to these white families and were never provided full access to the privileges that such membership would bring.

Collins argues that the experiences of African American women domestics are much like those of other historically marginalized group members who find themselves within organizations and institutions that have historically restricted or forbidden access to members of their group. African American women in inside dominant organizations from domestics to academics cultivate a critical gaze on dominant culture via this marginal access and are able to "see the contradictions between the dominant group's actions and ideologies" (Collins, 1990, p. 11). The experience of having access to the inner sanctums of the dominant group, yet experiencing treatment as an outsider, locates outsiders within as "caught between groups of unequal power" (p. 12) and faced with confronting and negotiating multiple systems of power.

#### *Borderlands*

Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) concept of the borderlands has shaped scholars' research on the diversity of women



in leadership and has helped to describe what is required of these women to operate in their leadership and organizational roles despite their experiences as marginal subjects in these spaces. Anzaldúa (1987) constructs the borderlands as a space similar to the geographical space that exists between the United States and Mexico in which identity, culture, and citizenship are constantly contested. She uses the experiences of those who are within the border with various citizenship statuses and levels of access to English and Spanish to mark the vulnerability that all within the border experience. The militarized nature of the border marks it as a place of instability and contingency subject to the power of others. Some within the border have privileges via their citizenship status, their mastery of the English language, or both, while others do not have such status markers. Anzaldúa argues that in the space of the border, these status markers are still unstable, as they can and are often called into question by those with power.

Management scholars Ella Edmonston Bell and Stella Nkomo (1999) use the borderlands metaphor to depict the challenges experienced by those in leadership who occupy spaces of privilege and marginalization. They argue that existing on the edge of two or more cultures—that of privilege as a leader in an organization and that of being marginalized in the larger society—is much like existence in Anzaldúa's borderlands. As an uncomfortable place, those who find themselves operating within the borderlands are neither at home with their race, gender, or class groups, which they desire to uplift, nor at home in the institutions in which they are leaders. They describe living dual life experiences of both success and marginality at the same time (Bell & Nkomo, 1999).

Bell and Nkomo argue that women of color in management are constantly faced with this crossroad and must develop an oppositional viewpoint in order to survive their organizations. They describe the tumultuous existence of otherness they experience within their home communities where people do not understand their awkward interplay between privilege and marginalization. Similar to Anzaldúa who argues that those in the borderlands must develop a new “mestiza consciousness,” which affords the opportunity to transcend the boundaries inflected by the border and challenges the dominant institutions that seek to restrict one's behavior and multiple ways of being, Bell and Nkomo advocate strategies to embrace the uncomfortable existence between two or more spaces of power. Embracing their own positionality as women of color marginalized in the scholarly field of management science, they choose to use their own marginalization as a teaching tool to bear witness to the borderland experience.

## Employing Strategies

Just as women leaders at the intersections articulate the challenges of existing in their organizations, they also

give voice to the strategies they employ to resist marginalization and use their privilege as insiders. Their strategizing bolsters the connections between intersectionality as a theoretical framework and its more normative goals to enact social change that transforms and moves formerly marginalized groups from margin to center.

### *Tempered Radical*

In light of these challenges, women leaders at the intersections of multiple identity groups employ strategies to address the marginality and other challenges associated with their positioning in their organizations. Debra Meyerson (2003) argues that some with identities that appear as against organizational norms assume the role of the “tempered radical.” These individuals decide to fully participate in the dominant culture of their organizations while at the same time engaging in changing the way the systems of oppression and marginalization operate within their organizational culture. According to Meyerson, tempered radicals use a “small wins” strategy in which they engage in limited, strategic projects designed to incrementally build a foundation to change their organizations rather than directly confront the systems that marginalize those who differ from the norm. What is significant about tempered radicals and the small wins strategy they employ is that they choose to work as insiders to make change and they accept the idea that change can happen incrementally over extended periods of time. Tempered radicals make long-term commitments to their organizations by investing deeply in the existing culture of the organization and attempting to change it from the inside using “quiet modes of resistance.”

### *Strategic Intersectionality*

Based on the legislative experiences of Latinas in U.S. state legislature, Luis Fraga, Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Linda Lopez, and Ricardo Ramirez (2008) conclude that those at the intersections are often best positioned to enact change or address issues. In their study of Latina state legislators, Fraga et al. found that Latinas make use of their positioning between ethnicity and gender groups by actively building coalitions that enable them to work as advocates for poor and disadvantaged communities of color. In this way, they deploy what Fraga and colleagues (2008) term *strategic intersectionality*. In relationship to their Latino male colleagues, Latinas can utilize strategic intersectionality to expand the scope of resources and strategies available in the legislative process.

### *Bridge Builders*

During the civil rights movement, African American women's positions as women in the South worked as a strategic tool for these women to work as historian Belinda Robnett (1997) calls “bridge leaders.” The



South's gender politics, which largely viewed women as simply harmless actors, enabled these women to take risks that African American men were unable to take. Likewise, African American women were able to make use of their grassroots connections to link formal civil rights organizations to local communities. Within the culture of the civil rights movement, African American women were not regarded as significant leaders, yet Robnett shows that these women took significant risks by building bridges between local communities and those civil rights organizers who traveled from the North to these communities to help organize residents. These women moving between spaces and largely under the radar of white oppressors, were critical to the most successful strategy of the civil rights movement, its grassroots localized politics. Such strategic positioning of African American women in the Deep South facilitated the success of the civil rights movement.

### Intersectionality and Women's Political Leadership

So what does intersectionality add to the understanding of women's political leadership? Scholars researching women of color in political leadership are illustrating that one's gender is only one of many social identities that inform women's leadership. The diversity implied by intersectionality is of paramount importance to political leadership. Political leadership encapsulates the democratic values of equality and inclusion, and intersectionality provides a critical lens for assessing the health of democratic institutions and the extent to which they live up to the democratic ideal.

Political leaders in a democracy such as the United States are understood as representatives of the people. The details of how that representation takes place are of great debate among political theorists. On the one hand, we imagine political leaders as offering some *descriptive representation* in that they will in some ways reflect the characteristics of their constituents. In other regards we imagine representatives as *substantively acting* on behalf of the interests of their constituents. Intersectionality scholars challenge notions of representation, whether we focus on descriptive representation or substantive representation. For those who experience life at the intersection of multiple groups that have historically been denied a voice in governing, not only is their presence in governing bodies critical but likewise their ability to provide substantive representation for those groups that have historically been shut out of the governing process.

Studies of women in political leadership consistently show that intersectionality shapes the political behavior of those who differ from the dominant group as well as the behavior of the dominant group itself. Intersectionality matters in determining the legislative agenda that legislators advocate, the strategies they use to represent their

constituents, and the ways the institutions in which they are serving respond to the difference they represent (Smooth, 2008). Political theorist Suzanne Dovi (2008) concludes, "It is not enough for just some women's interests, opinions, and perspectives to be present: the adequate representation of women requires the presence of women's *multiple* interests, opinions and experiences" (p. 152). Beth Reingold (2008) echoes the importance of recognizing the unique experiences of women at the intersections and the ways their multiple, intersecting identities produce experiences that differ from those of the dominant group. She argues that overgeneralizing from the gendered experiences of the dominant majority to those of marginalized minority groups does not produce an accurate picture of women's political leadership.

The numbers of women of color elected to political office are growing. An interesting trend has developed in recent years in which women of color are outpacing their male counterparts in gaining access to political offices. When compared to the ratio of white women to white men in electoral politics, women of color are represented in greater numbers in elected office than their minority men counterparts. Across levels of government, women of color are playing a significant role in providing and achieving a modicum of descriptive representation for their racial groups (Hardy-Fanta, Lien, Pinderhughes, & Sierra, 2007).

Political institutions at the federal, state, and local levels are becoming more inclusive as women of color make gains in gaining election to office; however, their inclusion has been uneven across levels of government. Women of color are experiencing greater success in certain types of offices and at certain levels of government; therefore, specifying the context is significant in explaining their success. Women of color are faring better in gaining access to state legislative offices but find tremendous difficulty in winning statewide offices. Currently, of the 73 women serving in statewide offices, only 7 are women of color (Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], 2010). Winning such offices often prove difficult for women of color because it requires women of color to gain acceptance from a wider group of citizens from across the state who may not be as accepting of candidates that do not represent the status quo. On the other hand, women of color are enjoying success in gaining access to the U.S. Congress and are experiencing even greater success in accessing the state legislature.

In the current 111th Congress, only 3.9% of the 535 members are women of color. Of the 90 women serving in Congress, 21 are women of color (4.5%), and all but one of these women are members of the Democratic party. African American women lead the numbers of women of color with 12 women serving followed by 6 Latinas and 3 Asian American women; there are currently no women who identify as Native American serving in Congress (CAWP, 2010). Although these numbers appear stark, this



Congress is more representative than in previous years, representing the gains that women of color have made since Patsy Mink (D-HI) was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1964, followed by Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) in 1968 and Ilena Ros-Lichtin (R-FL) in 1989, each becoming the first woman of their race/ethnicity groups to enter Congress.

Leadership by women of color has grown most significantly within state legislatures and has had a great impact in terms of increasing representation for both women and racial minorities. As of 2010, out of more than 7,000 legislators, 350 (19.5%) women of color were serving in state legislatures across the country. As is the case in Congress, a majority of these women are African Americans (230), followed by Latinas (74), Asian American women (33), and Native American women (13). Women of color are reaching critical milestones in state legislatures. In 2008, Karen Bass of California was the first African American woman ever to hold the position of speaker of the house, one of the most powerful leadership positions in a state legislature (CAWP, 2010). The state legislature has proven to be a critical step for women of color to rise to higher elective office. As women of color make the move from the state level to Congress, they are drawing on relationships they have made through their work with women's advocacy community and racial advocacy groups. Drawing on these two constituent groups has been critical to reaching broader groups of voters (Smooth, 2010).

Although it is often difficult to obtain data at the local level given the variations in county, municipal, and district governments, this is the level that holds the greatest potential for women of color to gain access to office. The sheer numbers of offices available are an asset as well as the often smaller constituency.

As the numbers of women of color have grown at all levels of government, the challenge remains to go beyond simply counting bodies to understanding the experiences they encounter once they are elected. Do their experiences differ from the dominant group? Does it matter that women of color are elected to governing bodies as political elites, and are they moving an agenda on behalf of underrepresented communities? As such, scholars are most interested in the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. Does greater descriptive representation of marginalized groups mean that their issues are brought to the legislative agenda and succeed there?

Scholars find that the experiences of women of color in political leadership differ from those of white women or men of their respective racial or ethnic group. Not only do their experiences differ, the ways they approach their jobs as elected officials are evidence of an intersectional framing of policy issues. Rather than ranking one aspect of their identity as more salient than the other, African American women legislators are often

working on women's interest legislation and black interest legislation simultaneously. Kathleen Bratton, Kerry Haynie, and Beth Reingold (2006) found that African American women lawmakers signify their straddling across identity groups in the legislation they introduce. They found that African American women state legislators are as likely as African American men to introduce legislation reflecting black interests and as likely as white women to introduce legislation relating to women's issues. Their legislative agendas often carry hallmarks of both the black agenda and the women's agenda. Orey and Smooth (2006) also found that these women are successful in doing this work across the race and gender policy arenas. In their study of Latinas in state legislatures, Fraga et al. (2008) found similar strategies evident among Latina legislators with similar success. Hawkesworth (2003) argues that at the congressional level, in response to the institutional dynamics that often leave them caught between multiple systems of power, African American women take the risk of introducing and supporting legislation that other legislators would consider destined to fail. Their response to their positing in the institution as proverbial outsiders within is to take the risk, despite the odds.

These lessons illuminated from women's experiences within the realm of political leadership are similar to studies of intersectionality in other sectors of women's leadership. Challenges to descriptively represent women in all their diversity in the ranks of leadership is a concern across sectors, as is whether these women are positioned to enact change for the communities they represent. Continuing to understand the consequences of intersectionality for women's leadership is paramount to understanding leadership itself.

## Future Directions

Intersectionality is a rapidly developing framework and has already added tremendously to how we understand women's leadership. Though scholars are engaged in critical debates over the parameters of this vibrant field, some principles remain central. What we know about women's leadership will increase as more scholars introduce intersectionality into their research. Given the shifting demographics of the United States, and our greater emphasis on global and transnational leadership, intersectionality can no longer be considered an option; instead, it is germane to crafting knowledge of women's leadership and their experiences as leaders.

Going forward, the most difficult challenge is fundamentally designing ways of incorporating intersectionality into our studies of women's leadership. How do we operationalize intersectionality for research purposes? How do we specify research designs that are true to the theoretical challenges that intersectionality presents? As interests in

globalization and transnational women's leadership increase, how do we understand the ways in which diverse and multiple identities inform power relationships, and how do we understand the conditions under which privilege and marginalization exist? Applying intersectionality to the study of women's leadership is indeed one of the most exciting areas of research and one that stands to create a wealth of new knowledge.

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## Note

1. This argument in relation to context is also made in relation to policy issues. Some argue that intersectionality is most useful when we take into account the challenges and problems presented by a particular policy area rather than adopting a strong model of intersectionality that asserts that all categories of identity are important all the time. See McCall (2005).



## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES

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At the core of perennial debates in leadership literature are three questions: (1) What is leadership? (2) What competencies should effective leaders exhibit? (3) How are effective leaders identified or developed? Implicit in those debates is the question of whether leadership can be understood in universal terms or if it is always contingent on circumstances (Bass, 1990; Van Wart, 2005). Until recently, both the theoretical and empirical literature placed primacy either on the leader or on the context of leadership. Giving primacy to either one came at the expense of what has come to be recognized as what really matters: the interactions between the leader and the contexts in which she leads. Nonetheless, still absent from most of the leadership literature is a rich understanding of community and its connections with leaders' intersectionally formed identities. Instead, an essentialist view of leadership emphasizing who leads, the types of scenarios in which leadership can be observed, and how leadership can be measured, has driven the theoretical and empirical research. This renders much of women's leadership in their communities invisible, as the essentialist, more static view fails to incorporate critical perspectives on leadership and community. As a result, women are tightly prescribed as a monolith and various notions of community are largely overlooked.

To fully understand women's leadership, then, one must reject essentialist views of leadership and insert a dynamic conceptualization of community and women's multiply marked selves into these debates. Whereas

dominant constructions of leadership are typically gendered and racialized, a contextualized understanding of leadership instead recognizes that "leadership can be exerted in a wide variety of ways, informally and formally, and in multiple milieus" well beyond elite-level politics and management (Thomas, 2003, pp. 89–90). It similarly recognizes that each woman belongs to a multitude of potential communities, whether defined by identity group(s), issue area, or electoral constituency. Thus the places and capacities in which a woman leads may vary along her intersecting identities (poor, affluent, Latina, lesbian, straight, etc.), desired places of impact (mass or elite level politics), or both. Indeed women of all races, ethnicities, socioeconomic classes, and sexualities have emerged as leaders in their various, often overlapping communities. This contextualized view of community and women's leadership agrees that

leadership involves change; change that may be dramatic or radical, subtle or incremental, continuous or discontinuous. Women and other minorities are important contributors to the change process. As leaders, women are in a state of transition trying to overcome their minority status and marginality. (Klenke, 1996, p. 10)

In short, the historically and spatially contingent view of both community and leadership taken in this chapter sidesteps the vast disagreements over how to universally define leadership or identify ideal leadership traits. Doing so

makes the full range of women's leadership activities for their communities visible.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the mainstream leadership paradigms, which, for the most part, overlook both gender and community. It goes on to review the scholarship specifically directed at leadership and gender and demonstrates how the notion of women's communities was fairly absent in these treatments until recently. Debates over leadership styles, effectiveness, and potential gender differences in elite-level positions instead dominated. As the second section of the chapter shows, scholarship on women, politics, and policy regularly takes up how women lead in a manner that defines community and leadership relationally, even when leadership is not explicitly addressed as a concept. This pays dividends, as trends, pathways, and challenges to women's leadership in the United States emerge that are intersectionally informed and richly contextualized. Formal leadership theory is infused with the findings on how women actually lead in their communities to illustrate how transactional, transformational, and shared power leadership styles are differentially relevant.

### The Leadership Literature: Mainstream Paradigms

Much of the mainstream literature on leadership comes from the fields of management, organizational behavior, and education, where the focus is on maintaining stability and order (Northouse, 2007). Early conceptualizations of leadership that date back to the mid-19th century focused on "great men" who possessed innate characteristics, or those derived from position of their birth, and would emerge as leaders in any given situation. By the early 20th century, researchers, particularly those in the field of scientific management, began to focus on individual traits of leaders (e.g., self-confidence, resilience, decisiveness), aiming to match leader traits to the situations that called for them. Later studies distinguished between inborn traits and leader skills (e.g., communication, influence, and analysis) that could be developed while still others focused on leadership behaviors and styles (Bass, 1990; Klenke, 1996; Van Wart, 2005).

In response to the inadequacies of early trait and management theories, *transactional leadership* theories were introduced in the mid-20th century. Transactional leadership emphasizes the exchange relationship between leaders and followers—that relationship is seen as rational and self-interested and rooted in a system of contingent rewards bestowed on followers by leaders (Bass, 1990; Van Wart, 2005). Although those theories provide some advantages over early management theories, they are not adequate in helping explain why some leaders exceed expectations, not only as individuals but also in terms of group achievements. As a result, beginning in the mid-1970s some scholars published works on the concepts of

*transformational leadership* and *charismatic leadership*; both have been studied extensively since then (Bass, 1990).<sup>1</sup> Transformational leadership scholars emphasize that the inherently relational nature of leadership is about more than exchange relationships and requires that the leader exhibit empathy and empower her followers, so that both leaders (who may be charismatic and inspirational) and followers gain from the exchange process (Northouse, 2007; Van Wart, 2005).

Transformational leadership does not provide a clearly defined set of assumptions about how leaders should act in a particular situation to be successful. Rather, it provides a general way of thinking about leadership that emphasizes ideals, inspiration, innovations, and individual concerns. Transformational leadership requires that leaders be aware of how their own behavior relates to the needs of their subordinates and the changing dynamics within their organizations. (Northouse, 2007, p. 194)

Van Wart (2005, p. 337) provides a useful schematic comparing transactional and transformational leadership theories. That schematic identifies the facilitating conditions for transformational (or charismatic) leadership as instability, a need for change, or crisis, whereas transactional leadership is facilitated by a need for stability or refinement. Leader traits (e.g., self-confidence, decisiveness, resilience) do not matter so much in this construction, but their behaviors (e.g., task orientation, people orientation, organization orientation) and use of power do. Transformational leaders rely on expert and referent power and engage in behaviors such as visioning, innovating, managing change, assessing the environment, and strategic planning in order to inspire followers to act in the groups' collective interest. There is an intellectual and often charismatic quality to their leadership. Transactional leaders, on the other hand, use direct influence that comes from a system of reward and punishment legitimated by positional power. They engage in behaviors that help maintain the status quo, such as role clarification, problem solving, operations planning, and staff development; followers are largely motivated by self-interest (Bass, 1990; Van Wart, 2005).

Though these theories predate most research on women's leadership and other differentiating group cleavages are rarely problematized even today, the differences between transactional and transformational leadership styles are often equated with the differences between male and female leadership styles, respectively (Kezar, 2002). Men are more likely to be directive and task oriented, whereas women are more likely to be participatory and relationship oriented (Embry, Padgett, & Caldwell, 2008). Task-oriented behaviors include collecting and evaluating data, planning tactical operations, clarifying role and performance objectives, distributing information, delegating authority, solving problems, and supporting innovation (Van Wart, 2005, pp. 187–188). Relationship-oriented behaviors have to do with planning,



organizing, developing, and motivating personnel; engaging in dialogue about decisions; and managing teams, conflict, and change. Another category of leadership behaviors, organization-oriented behaviors, are frequently not associated with either male or female leadership styles. Organization-oriented behaviors focus on assessing one's environment, engaging in strategic planning, and developing relationships that facilitate the process of managing organizational change, including communicating decisions and engaging in general management functions (Van Wart, 2005).

Only recently have scholars studying effective leadership, even in formal leadership scenarios, recognized that masculine and feminine leadership styles can be merged and that many effective leaders combine those styles and adapt their own styles to the situation at hand (Embry et al., 2008).

## The Leadership Literature: Views of Women

Research that directly studies women's leadership dates back only to the late 1970s/early 1980s and emphasizes differences between men and women, in terms of their leadership competencies—the traits, skills, and behaviors that contribute to leader effectiveness (Bass, 1990; Hoyt, 2007). As with much gender-related scholarship of the time, leadership researchers paid little attention to intersectionality and their research generally produced two distinct types of evidence—one that emphasized gender differences and one that minimized them—each leading to different conclusions about the role of gender in leadership (Kezar, 2002; Klenke, 1996). One strain focused on the dearth of women represented in formal leadership positions (e.g., chief executive officers, congressional seats), illuminating the social, structural, and legal obstacles to women obtaining leadership positions—often referred to as the *glass ceiling*. The other used those differences in style (e.g., directive, supportive, participative, inspirational) and achievement to explain why men were superior leaders (Bass, 1990; Hoyt, 2007; Klenke, 1996). Many of these studies follow the long tradition of seeing leadership in terms of individual traits, skills, and behaviors that a leader does or does not exhibit and emanate to her followers. They fit well with the management theories that prevailed in leadership studies at the beginning of the 20th century and emphasized the importance of scientific analysis of subordinate needs and directive management styles needed to ensure efficiency (Van Wart, 2005). Moreover, they reinforced dominant gender stereotypes that described how women leaders do act and prescribed how they ought to act (Hoyt, 2007). The often managerial focus of these examinations produced an unstated assumption that leadership possibilities worthy of inquiry take place in formalistic and elite settings like boardrooms and Congress.

The ongoing interest in potential gender differences among those in positions of formal leadership reflects the persistence of gender stereotypes about leadership styles and behaviors (Embry et al., 2008). Those stereotypes have been upheld by historically contingent and methodologically constrained research that

has shown gender differences [are] likely to have undesirable consequences for women. It perpetuates unfounded stereotypes of women leaders as behaving too much like women . . . or too much like men. . . . Analyzing research on gender differences chronologically reveals that the time when the data were collected and/or the study was published needs to be considered as a qualifier when interpreting gender differences in leadership. (Klenke, 1996, p. 161)

Further contributing to historically contingent understandings of women's leadership is that gender stereotyping is more prevalent in situations where followers know little about individual leader characteristics. The literature on gender stereotypes reveals that certain traits and behaviors are associated with men and others with women, and that those stereotypes carry over so that people align their expectations of how men and women ought to lead with those stereotypes (Embry et al., 2008). This suggests gender stereotyping is most prevalent when the scenario in question is void of the reciprocal relationships that prevail in feminist conceptions of community and is instead infused with hierarchy—where leaders are not only at the top but a formal, institutional structure reinforces this and followers generally cannot change the structure. Because other forms of community (identity based, local organizing) are not generally problematized, even leadership studies that explicitly incorporate gender tell us little about how gender and leadership interact in less formal settings and what role, if any, gender stereotyping plays in various communities.

That said, views on gender stereotyping in formal, hierarchical settings are evolving. Some recent research (as reported in Embry et al., 2008) shows that male and female leaders generally behave in ways consistent with gender stereotypes, so that men exhibit instrumental traits and use a transactional leadership style while women exhibit expressive traits and employ a transformational style, *and* that feminine leadership styles are preferred by followers. It does not follow that women are always more effective leaders, though. In fact, by the late 1990s, as women gained more formal leadership positions, a scholarly consensus began to emerge based on empirical research that revealed a *lack of differences* between men's and women's leadership styles. Moreover, under some circumstances, a more masculine or mixed-gender leadership style may prove more effective (Embry et al., 2008; Klenke, 1996). Most empirical studies of leadership effectiveness in hierarchical settings show that effective leaders (male or female, transactional or transformational) frequently do not fit any ideal-type model but rather adapt their styles to situations and follower needs as appropriate



(Klenke, 1996; Van Wart, 2005). At the same time, it is important to emphasize that even while more and more research shows little to no difference between men's and women's leadership in formal, hierarchical settings overall, those findings do not point to a balanced representation of men and women leaders (Klenke, 1996; Stelter-Flett, 2008). As the empirical discussion reveals, women confront gender stereotypes that impede their real and perceived effectiveness as leaders.

Despite the fact that all these conceptualizations work to incorporate the importance of gender, the view of gender and leadership that emerges has been shown to be rather narrow. Debates about whether men and women should and do conform to gendered expectations in leadership remain open, as do debates about the effectiveness of each style for men and women. However, how women are intersectionally bound to create multiple potential communities for leadership receives little attention. This stems from the fact that the places where leadership is examined are mainly elite institutions and formal positions (management, boardroom, Congress, etc.). As a result, the notion of community that prevails in leadership studies is still circumscribed to white-collar occupations, and the role of cross-cutting group cleavages (race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, immigration status) is subsequently underexplored. This is particularly problematic given how leadership is viewed differently, not only between men and women, but across racial/ethnic groups and cross-culturally (Kezar, 2002).

Recent developments in leadership scholarship do, however, dovetail more readily with the expanded notions of community, intersectionality, and leadership generally evident in the field of "women, politics, and policy." Crosby and Bryson (2005), in *Leadership for the Common Good*, discuss how *shared power leadership* encompasses many of the competencies present in transformational leadership while including a more explicitly political, contextualized view of leadership that accounts for politics, ethical leadership, and policy entrepreneurship. Its focus on how individuals and groups work together to solve complex social problems also leaves the door open for expanded notions of community. Intersectionality is an underlying concept in Crosby and Bryson's (2005) model, which lays out a framework for building advocacy coalitions and framing issues for public debate and policy action in a way that appeals to a wide array of stakeholders, allowing them "to embrace multiple solutions for a family of problems" (p. 245). Advocates of the model recognize that individuals and communities have complex, sometimes fluid identities and, in order to garner widespread support, proposed solutions have to appeal to individuals and communities at the intersections of those identities. Indeed, models of shared leadership are used to explain how leadership works in a "shared-power, no-one in charge world" considerably more reminiscent of mass political organizing and identity communities (Crosby & Bryson, 2005, p. 8). Shared leadership models are thus

especially useful for understanding how leadership for change happens in the absence of hierarchy—in the context of social movement organizing and consciousness-raising, for example. Like transformational leadership, shared power leadership takes a systems view—the difference is that the latter is explicitly political, so that

the change advocates have to engage in political, issue-oriented, and therefore messy planning and decision making, in which shared goals and mission are being developed as the process moves along. New networks must be created, old ones coopted or neutralized. (Crosby & Bryson, 2005, p. 9)

To be effective, shared leadership requires leaders to create networks of leadership partners (or followers) that are empowered to engage in processes of self-reflection and participation.

The following sections provide an empirical review of the ways in which women lead in their communities. The expanded notion of community and leadership in these empirical analyses reveals three main communities in which women lead: among fairly horizontal identity communities, within similarly horizontal local communities where women organize around "gender-appropriate" concerns, and hierarchical situations in which female leaders respond to women as one major electoral constituency or community. While leadership for change is the focus throughout, the empirical analyses reveal that a variety of women who lead use transactional, transformational, and shared power leadership styles in their communities. These women thus exhibit a range of leadership competencies in how they define and mobilize their communities, the manners in which they negotiate gender stereotypes about where it is appropriate for them to lead, and how women break (or go around) the glass ceiling.

## Women as Leaders: Community as Women Who Share an (Intersectional) Identity

Women consistently emerge as leaders in social movement—organizing and consciousness-raising efforts directed at securing social change for various groups of women (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2004). Within these communities, women leaders exhibit many of the characteristics of effective transformational leaders—including the ability to articulate a vision, empower others, and inspire followers to transcend self-interests—as well as some characteristics of transactional leaders (Hoyt, 2007). In so doing, they purposefully confront gender stereotypes—and the legal and sociostructural obstacles that reinforce them—about whether, how, and where they should lead. Such leaders include Alice Paul, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, Angela Davis, Andrea Dworkin, and the legions of immigrant women, Latina women, poor women, and other African American women who are not the



benefiters of the same kind of name recognition (Gordon, 1988; Piven & Cloward, 1977). In all these instances, women defined the community in which they became leaders as all women or particular categories of women. Community was not defined by geographic boundaries (though they did focus on the United States), and the women who recognized them as their leaders did not do so because of formal, hierarchical organizational ties. Compared to corporate America or the halls of Congress, these female leaders pilot-streamlined social movement organizations in which leadership ascension occurred with regular interaction with other females in the movement and with the consent to lead constantly being negotiated. These instances are good examples of shared power leadership in practice. Indeed the activities required of the leaders in second-wave women's organizing of the late 1960s and early 1990s included negotiating a complex political environment, raising consciousness, changing the political agenda to take a more expanded view of women's rights, and securing resources for movements to flourish (Costain, 1992).

When this sort of women's leadership is front-and-center, the ranks of women who qualify as leaders expand considerably. No longer is leadership the sole domain of relatively elite, disproportionately white women. Rather, the historical record details the leadership activities of African American women, Native American women, Latina women, lesbian women, poor women, and others (Davis, 1983; Gordon, 1988; Piven & Cloward, 1977). As these female leaders understood it, community could include "all women" or be more tightly defined categories of women who share some (combination of) additional intersecting identities. Community is thus an identity group that shares, at a minimum, being female. Although there is no one path to leading women's identity communities, commonalities regularly include growing up in political families and experience in other social movements. So, for example, some branches of early suffragists developed or furthered their political training and a politicized sense of identity while working on abolition (McGlen et al., 2004; see Davis, 1983, pp. 70–86). Sara Evans (1980) documents how eventual leaders in second-wave women's organizing—African American and white—began to politically problematize their gender (and, to differing degrees, how gender, race, and class influenced political experiences and outcomes) via experiences in the civil rights movement. The antiwar movement also helped inculcate gender consciousness among many of its participants (Dolan, Deckman, & Swers, 2007, pp. 25–26).

Leaders of identity communities also emerge from political experiences *within* women's identity communities when they feel the original movement leaders improperly cast themselves as representing all women when, in actuality, they prioritized the concerns of more affluent women (who were often disproportionately white and straight). This provides the condition of instability in the movement that Van Wart (2005) identifies as a facilitating condition for transformational leadership. Transformational leadership

theorists tell us that in periods of crisis or instability, leaders who can inculcate vision, empathy, and empowerment into their followers will be able to transcend follower self-interest and achieve a greater common goal (Bass, 1990; Northouse, 2007; Van Wart, 2005). While here again leadership begets leadership, the community of women becomes more consciously intersectional. So, for example, eventual leaders for lesbian rights gained political skills and cognitive frames conducive to organizing from second-wave women's organizing and recognized a unique need for lesbian rights to be in the forefront of social movement organizations. Racial and ethnic minority women (who are disproportionately poor) emerged as leaders for their identity communities as they conceived that activists who conceptualized themselves as representing all women prioritized the concerns of white women (O'Brien, 2004). Examples continue as many third-wave feminist leaders point to the ways in which gender interacts with physical appearance (Orbach, 1997), Western culture (Mohanty, 2003), and economic status (O'Brien, 2004).

So, when women emerge to lead or organize communities of women defined at least in part by their gender, it is regularly the case that they have had prior political experiences within their families, other movements, and/or other movements that also problematized gender. More importantly, a primary way in which various groups of women have led their identity communities over time is through consciousness raising and shared power relationships. Shared power leadership is evident as these women work in politicized environments defined by inequity and creatively alter the policy agenda to include the concerns of their female identity group. Protests led by feminist organizers at Miss America pageants and lesbian-led boycotts of feature films like *Basic Instinct* provide examples from the 1960s and 1990s, respectively.

In all, the recognition of women's continual leadership of their identity communities drastically changes the view that successful female leaders are few. It remains the case that considerable challenges face these female leaders, but it is also the case that broad categories of women have regularly negotiated these challenges in order to push for change.

### Women as Leaders: Community Around "Gender-Appropriate" Concerns

Another form of women's leadership occurs when women organize politically around "gender-appropriate" concerns. This usually takes place at the local level, so that the community being led are local residents and, occasionally, national residents who share a particular issue concern. One tension these leaders often face—how to truly take into account the full range of views the local women they lead voice on the issue in question—comes from intersectionality. For example, as leaders of the Moms Against Guns billboards group in eastern Pennsylvania argue in the



name of child safety and motherhood, do they also represent those women who need the profit generated from the billboard sales? What of libertarian women in the locality or women who are not mothers? Another tension remains how to negotiate gender stereotyping. On the one hand, the historical record shows that females who lead on “gendered issues” were “allowed” to enter public discussions traditionally closed off to them precisely because of their perceived moral standing on issues of family, morality, and well-being. So, by conforming to some gendered stereotypes, women could take public, political actions that contradicted these expectations about where and on what issues they could lead. On the other hand, this path toward public leadership came at the expense of reinforcing gendered expectations about “male versus female” concerns. It is noteworthy that even in these early days, women’s leadership styles carefully negotiated gender stereotypes in ways decidedly more complicated than those that receive attention when the debate is between whether or not women conform to gender stereotypes as they lead.

Historical examples of this sort of gender-appropriate, though gender-negotiated, community leadership abound. Perhaps the best-known example involves the temperance leagues that ultimately contributed mightily to the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. Though the national leaders on the issue (e.g., Susan B. Anthony and Francis Willard) are more regularly mentioned, various communities of local women ran the temperance leagues out of concerns regarding moral decay, neglected children, and family violence in their localities. Because they were perceived as proper guardians of “private” concerns like health, well-being, and family tranquility, they enjoyed leadership status in arguing that the solution was to ban alcohol. They articulated a set of social problems, demonstrated empathy, and articulated a vision for solving it. It is undoubtedly the case that most of these women truly felt that alcohol use was a real threat to social tranquility. It is also the case that their leadership on the temperance issues traded on gender stereotypes, not about leadership but about the appropriate spheres for women’s action in society.

Another historical example illustrating this tension involves the women’s associations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As Theda Skocpol and colleagues (1993) have shown, these associations were nearly omnipresent in this time frame and formed one of the primary ways women led within their localities and engaged in politics. Most noticeable among their policy victories is the passage of widow’s pensions. Again though, women’s leadership in their locality took place as petitioners of government—petitioners who merited being listened to not as full citizens but as citizens who had unique standing on the relatively small class of issues for which women were believed uniquely suited. Good governance associations, where women could “clean up government,” followed in this tradition.

Other historical examples illustrate both the realities of trading on gender stereotypes in local leadership and also

how racial, ethnic, and class tensions arise among women.<sup>2</sup> Female “child savers,” for example, were undoubtedly well-respected community leaders in major urban areas during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Gordon, 1988). These women gained influence in their local communities based on the notion that they were uniquely positioned to determine how children should be reared and whether or not they needed to be removed from their home. Their leadership was recognized by many men and women, in the public sphere, on a “gender-appropriate” issue. In practice though, the child savers were disproportionately Protestant, upper-middle class, and white. The families that might need saving? Disproportionately poor, immigrant, and Catholic. Group cleavages that distinguish categories of women thus remained an issue when women led on “gender-appropriate” issues in their local communities.

Busing provides another, more recent, example. To take 1970s Boston as a case, many lower-income white women organized and gained local leadership positions in their communities by vocalizing their concerns about the integration mandates occurring in their neighborhood schools. As they became recognized leaders in their immediate community opposing integration, they did so at the expense of linking with other African American women, who were also disproportionately poor and also had concerns about the quality of their children’s education (MacDonald, 1999). These are examples of transactional leadership, where the white, privileged female leadership was in a relative position of power, aiming to perpetuate *their* status quo and using a system of punishment and reward to do so.

Today these tensions of cross-cutting cleavages are not as omnipresent when women lead their communities around “gender-appropriate issues,” but they are far from gone. The delicate challenge of leadership when negotiating and strategically employing gender stereotypes also remains. Some conservative women, for example, have become leaders by taking strong stances in favor of reinforcing gender stereotypes in other realms (Schreiber, 2002). Women’s leadership in organizations such as parent-teacher organizations provides another example. The parent-teacher organization continues to be a considerable player in education policy, but the women who disproportionately continue to be its leaders enjoy more occupational opportunities and less sex-role rigidity than those who came before them. Nonetheless they disproportionately lead an organization concerned with children and education—a “woman’s concern.” This is an issue for women’s leadership born of role stereotyping.

Consciously embracing the notion of “gender-appropriate” women’s leadership can, however, produce more radical female leaders within their local community. Carol Hardy-Fanta, for example, found in her examination of Latina community leaders that gender expectations, and taking public leadership roles on these issues, can be transformative. Gendered norms may help push these women into leadership activities on traditionally gendered issues, but



the politics that ensue are “an *interpersonal politics*—a politics that blends personal relationships into political relationships” (Hardy-Fanta, 1993, p. 27). These Latina leaders got their start around traditional concerns but eventually led their communities on other issues.

These examples of women's leadership on “gender-appropriate” issues reinforce the point that women's leadership evolves over time and that women leaders extend well beyond corporate boardrooms. One constant across the historical record is that when women lead in this fashion, they face the challenge of how, if at all, to negotiate and trade on gender role stereotypes as to where, on what issues, and how they lead. This empirical reality shows how those leadership studies that continue to focus on “whether or not” women lead in stereotypical fashions miss far more complicated dynamics in community politics.

### Women as Elected Leaders: Communities as Geographic and Identity Constituents

The final form of women's leadership in their communities occurs with election to high-level political office—particularly Congress or the state legislature. Here female leaders are beholden to communities defined by their geographic constituencies, and many Democratic and Republican elected women feel beholden to females outside the geographic confines of their electoral district (Carroll, 2002). Community is thus geographically bound to include the host of issues affecting men and women in a district as well as identity bound to include women's interests more generally. Leadership of this sort is marked by considerable prestige and, though elected officials count on constituents for election and reelection, is decidedly more hierarchical and formally structured than activist females who lead particular groups of women or local female leaders who organize around “gender-appropriate” causes. This empirical attention to elite-level leadership is reminiscent of transactional and transformational leadership studies as, like these, the focus is primarily on affluent female leaders who are disproportionately white. This is because, while change has occurred, women elected to the highest levels of office remain disproportionately affluent and disproportionately white (Center for American Women and Politics, 2010a, 2010b).

Trends on these women can be grouped by whether they focus on how female leaders achieve elected office (and barriers to doing so) or the impact female elected leaders have for advancing women's interests once in Congress or a state legislative body. Many of the factors identified by studies of gender differences in transactional leadership, transformational leadership, or both, are relevant here. Female leaders who achieve elective office often report, for example, that they grew up in political households where traditional sex roles were not as severely enforced. Women who have successfully achieved high-ranking political office also often report beginning their political

leadership careers later than male colleagues because of familial responsibilities (McGlen et al., 2005).

Challenges to securing elite-level elective office do remain plentiful but have also lessened in the wake of second-wave women's organizing. Hurdles that remain include getting into the pipeline occupations and socialization sources (media, school, religion, parents) that do not encourage women's interest in politics or that reinforce gendered behavioral adoption (McGlen et al., 2005). Cultural attitudes surrounding women's roles and capabilities have shifted, and today's women have considerably more female electoral leaders to emulate, but sex-role stereotyping around women with ambition remains, and cultural shifts are wrought with ambivalence (Sigel, 1996). Media coverage is also a barrier for women who seek to lead their communities in electoral politics. Female candidates often receive the same amount of coverage as their male counterparts, but the tone of this coverage tends to be more gendered and less focused on the policy priorities female candidates desire to put on the agenda. In other words, they publicly confront gender stereotypes about where, how, and on what issues it is appropriate for them to lead. Financial woes used to be a major hurdle as well: Female candidates reported it was difficult for them to raise the crucial early seed money to fund their campaign, as potential donors did not take female candidates as seriously or took a “wait and see” approach. Today, however, female congressional candidates (controlling for incumbency) report that they typically raise as much money as their male counterparts (Burrell, 1994). The ability of female candidates to achieve near financial parity is regularly attributed to EMILY's List (early money is like yeast . . . it makes the dough rise) and similar organizations that give specifically to female candidates (McGlen et al., 2005).

The story of seeking high-level electoral office is thus one of marked improvement but also one where challenges remain. Concern for getting women into electoral leadership posts, from a feminist perspective, only matters if those women who secure these positions forward women's interests and feminist concerns once they are in office. Potential conundrums for female leaders include whether or not they consider women (as an identity group) a constituency to whom they are beholden and how, if they do, to balance meeting the needs of their geographic constituencies (those who live in their districts) as well as their identity constituents (women). An intersectional perspective amplifies these concerns. As noted, the evidence on legislative impact suggests that, across party lines, female legislators negotiate these conundrums by viewing women as a community to whom they are beholden while simultaneously representing the needs of their geographic constituency (Carroll, 2002).

Indeed, the evidence suggests that women in elective office engage in a range of leadership styles (transactional, transformational, shared power) and exert a legislative impact for women's interests. Although it is often more difficult to gain leadership positions within the



chamber because of seniority (Dodson, 2006), female legislators engage in materially self-interested legislative activities designed for reelection (upholding transactional theories of leadership). It is also the case that they voice policy priorities that are distinct from those that men propose—especially on women's and feminist issues (Swers, 2002; Thomas, 1994). They expand the legislative agenda to include women's issues and perspectives (Dodson, 2006) and have begun to enjoy similar success rates at passing female-friendly legislation (Bratton & Haynie, 1999). To get women's issues on the policy agenda, women leaders have to adapt to the situation at hand by assessing the situation, developing alliances, and creating a shared vision. Although there is some debate as to how important serving with other female legislators is for advancing women's interests, the evidence generally suggests that women in office engage in shared power leadership by building facilitative networks with one another to advance women's interests (Thomas, 1994; see also Camissa & Reingold, 2004).

In summary, "women legislators tend, more often than men, to make priorities of issues important to women and to introduce and successfully usher those priorities through the legislative process" (Dodson, 2001, qtd. in Thomas & Welch, 2001, p. 168). Barriers to women achieving leadership as elite officeholders exist but have lessened as the result of cultural change and upticks in the number of women elected to higher office. The communities these women respond to include those in their legislative district and, typically, women as a whole. The leadership styles used by these women reflect the complicated nature of representation and can be described as transactional, transformational, and shared power depending on the issue and situation under consideration, where it is in the legislative agenda, and the institutional position of the female leader in question (see Dodson, 2006).

## Summary and Future Directions

The mainstream leadership literature has paid scant attention to feminist perspectives or those that incorporate dynamic conceptions of community. The field would benefit from developing theoretical frameworks that really

explore these perspectives beyond what exists in terms of the role of gender and contextual factors. Recent scholarship has advocated for developing androgynous conceptions of leadership, but it is also crucial to develop critical theories of leadership that incorporate dynamic views of community, gender, race/ethnicity, and other differentiating group cleavages (Irving & Klenke, 2004; Kezar, 2002; Stelter-Flett, 2008). Incorporating critical perspectives would allow for more nuanced empirical examinations of how and why women emerge as leaders in their various communities. That framework must recognize the fact that gender stereotyping is actually an intersectionally informed construct differentially placed on women in many communities. These stereotypes not only influence how various women lead (or ought to lead) but also where they lead (geographic or issue areas) and who they lead (groups of women, boards of directors, citizens).

This review of how women lead in their communities indicates that the range of women who lead, the communities in which they serve, and the leadership styles they employ are varied. Sue Thomas called on researchers of women's political leadership to not just look at leadership in formal electoral positions but also to examine how women of different races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses lead (2003, qtd. in Han, 2007, p. 154). In expanding the notions of what "counts" as community and what "counts" as leadership, this chapter contributes to answering Thomas's call and was able to do so by turning to the empirical examples of how women have led for social change.

## Notes

1. The terms *transformational leadership* and *charismatic leadership* are often conflated in the literature, where charisma is often seen as a trait of transformational leaders. Following Van Wart (2005) and others, we include charismatic leadership under the umbrella of transformational leadership. For a thorough review of the literature, see Bass (1990).

2. The challenge of truly representing the needs of all women was felt with women's pensions, as these pensions ended up not covering African American women and most agricultural workers (obviously these were often overlapping categories). The same is true of temperance leagues, as women who worked in bars were not necessarily represented by leaders of the temperance groups.

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## WOMEN'S POLITICAL AMBITION

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Cheryl Perry made partner at her prestigious law firm in Hartford, Connecticut, when she was only 33 years old. She is active in her legal community, holding positions with her city's bar association and the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association. She served as one of the youngest members of the coordinating committee for the 1996 Olympic Games. And she regularly attends school board and city council meetings in her community because she believes it is important to "stay involved, follow politics, and know what's going on." Several of her peers in the legal community have urged Perry repeatedly to consider running for elective office. But when asked if she considers herself qualified to run, Perry replied, "Absolutely not. I'd never run."<sup>1</sup>

Tricia Martinez also looks like an excellent candidate for public office. A sociology professor at a large university, she has won four campus-wide teaching awards, is an authority in the areas of juvenile justice and diversity, and finds her expertise sought by numerous state and city agencies. Indeed, she regularly testifies before the city council and the state legislature regarding her research on crime and recidivism rates. Over the past several years, many of the community and party leaders with whom she meets have suggested to Martinez that she run for office. When asked if she had any interest in pursuing a candidacy, though, Martinez laughed and said, "Lord no. I'm not qualified for something like that. I could never even sit on the city council."

Randall White also seems to fit the bill for entering the electoral arena. He is a college professor in Pennsylvania and proud of his "numerous publications" and "stellar teaching record." He also has a strong interest in local politics. Every month, he attends at least one school board meeting and one city council meeting. According to White, though, he does more than merely attend the meetings; he

makes sure always to ask a question or offer a comment. He explained, "Even when I don't really have anything that important to say, I still speak up. It's important to me that people realize I'm in the room, active, participating." When asked if he thought he might ever seek elective office, Professor White immediately responded, "Yes; I am much smarter and a lot more honest than the people currently in office." He confidently asserted his qualifications to run for any office—local, state, or federal.

Finally, Kevin Kendall is also very politically active and well-credentialed. He lives outside of Seattle, Washington, where he began practicing law in 1990. In addition to working as a full-time litigator, he is active in several professional associations. He also serves on the board of two nonprofit community organizations in Seattle. Kendall notes that he always makes time for politics: "I try to volunteer for at least one candidate every election cycle. And of course, I always give money when I don't have time to put in the hours knocking on doors." When asked whether he feels qualified to pursue an elective position, Mr. Kendall stated, "I'm a quick study." Asked to name the level of office for which he thinks he is most qualified, Kendall responded, "I could run for office at any level. Mayor, city council, governor, Congress. I could do any of them. . . . One day, I probably will."

The stories of these four individuals embody the fact that women remain less likely than men to express interest in running for political office. These four women and men all possess excellent qualifications and credentials to seek elective office. They are well educated, have risen to the top of their professions, are active in their communities, and express high levels of political interest. Yet despite these similarities, the two women resoundingly conclude that they are unqualified to hold public office and express little desire to move into the electoral arena. The two men



confidently—maybe even arrogantly—assert the ease with which they could occupy almost any elective post.

Certainly, we cannot draw sweeping conclusions based on the experiences of four women and men. But Cheryl Perry, Tricia Martinez, Randall White, and Kevin Kendall are not anomalies. These women and men are representative of the nearly 4,000 “eligible candidates” who Richard L. Fox and I surveyed and interviewed for the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study (Lawless & Fox, 2005). Assembling the sample involved creating two equal sized pools of eligible candidates—one female and one male—who worked in the four professions that are most likely to precede a congressional or state legislative candidacy: law, business, education, and political activism (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001). No demographic or geographic differences distinguished the samples of men from women in the candidate eligibility pool. Fox and I conducted the first set of surveys and interviews in 2001, and we resurveyed more than 2,000 of the original respondents in 2008.

In both waves of the study, a clear gender gap in political ambition emerged. Roughly 50% of the respondents had—at some point in their lives—considered running for office. Women, however, were one-third less likely than men ever to have considered candidacy (59% of men, compared to 43% of women; difference significant at  $p < .01$ ). Further, women were only half as likely as men to have engaged in any of the activities that typically precede a political campaign, such as investigating how to place their name on the ballot; discussing running with potential donors, party leaders, or community leaders; or mentioning the idea to family members or friends. Focusing only on the 50% of people who *had* thought about running for office, women were significantly less likely than men to throw their hats into the ring and enter actual races (20% of men, compared to 15% of women ran for office; difference significant at  $p < .01$ ). Women who ran for office—both as challengers and incumbents—were just as likely as men to win their races; 63% of the women and 59% of the men who ran for office launched successful campaigns. The gendered winnowing process, however, resulted in women ultimately comprising a far smaller portion of elected officials than did men.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter provides three central explanations for the gender gap in political ambition and the obstacles that hinder women's candidate emergence as political leaders. The survey data, coupled with the words of the eligible candidates, demonstrate that traditional family roles and responsibilities, self-perceptions of qualifications to run for office, and patterns of political recruitment inhibit women's political ambition and opportunities for political leadership. When appropriate, anecdotes from actual female candidates and elected officials supplement the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study survey results and interview evidence. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the consequences of the gender gap in political ambition, future directions for the study of political ambition, and a series of suggested readings that speak to how

best to incorporate more women into positions of power in the political sphere.

## Establishing the Gender Gap in Political Leadership

It is impossible to deny the substantial progress women have made in terms of their presence in government and politics. Over the past 30 years, the number of women in Congress has more than tripled. Since the end of World War II, the number of women serving in the House of Representatives and the Senate has grown by more than 800% (Center for American Women and Politics, 2009).<sup>3</sup> Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Secretary of State and former U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton received 18 million votes in her 2008 bid for the presidency. And former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin appeared on the national ticket as Republican presidential candidate John McCain's running mate.

Despite these stories of political success, the United States ranks 85th worldwide in the percentage of women serving in the national legislature (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). When the 111th Congress convened in January 2009, 83% of its members were men. Three-quarters of statewide elected officials and state legislators are men. Men occupy the governor's mansion in 44 of the 50 states, and they run City Hall in 89 of the 100 largest cities across the country. Moreover, whereas the 1980s saw a gradual increase in the number of women holding public office, and the 1990s experienced relatively dramatic surges, the past several election cycles indicate a plateau at the state legislative level and only very marginal increases at the federal level.

It is not only the low proportion of women in elective office that raises concerns for women's representation. Women's full integration into the highest echelons of the careers that lead to candidacies has slowed to nearly a glacial pace. The National Association for Law Placement (2009), for example, reports that women account for only 19% of the partners in the nation's major law firms, which is only 5% higher than a decade ago. In the business world, female chief executive officers run only two companies (DuPont and Kraft Foods) included in the Dow Jones industrial average, and only 15 Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs (Catalyst, 2009). Merely 16% of the Fortune 500's 11,000 corporate officers are women. According to the Securities Industry Association, men occupy 4 out of 5 executive management positions and represent more than 70% of investment bankers, traders, and brokers (Roth, 2006). Gender segregation persists in higher education as well. Since 2003, women have comprised slightly more than half of all doctoral recipients, up from 12% in 1966; the percentage of women among tenured faculty, however, is not markedly different from the mid-1970s (Falkenheim & Feigener, 2008). The “opt-out revolution,” in which many



professional women give up or postpone their careers so they can stay home to care for their children only exacerbates the gender imbalances in the political pipeline (see Stone, 2007).

Given women's numeric underrepresentation in U.S. political institutions, as well as the trends that suggest stagnation in the composition of the candidate eligibility pool, it is essential to turn to the women who are currently well-situated to consider running for office, examine the factors that deter them from running, and assess the representational consequences of the barriers they face.

## Traditional Family Roles and Responsibilities

When Alaska Governor Sarah Palin announced her resignation in July 2009, she said that her decision ultimately came down to concerns about her children. A press release posted on her Web site read, "This decision comes after much consideration, and finally polling the most important people in my life—my children, where the count was unanimous. . . . It was four 'yeses' and one 'hell yeah!'" Governor Palin was neither the first, nor will she be the last, politician to refer to family considerations when explaining a political career decision (Lawless & Fox, 2005).

Although family concerns affect both women and men, questions about women's suitability as wives and mothers have historically dogged women who try to move into politics. On Patricia Schroeder's (D-CO) first day in the House of Representatives in 1973, for example, Congresswoman Bella Abzug (D-NY) commented, "I hear you have little kids. You won't be able to do this job" (Schroeder, 1999, p. 35). Implicit in this statement is the assumption that, in addition to being a member of Congress, Ms. Schroeder would naturally be expected to remain the primary caretaker of her children. More than 30 years later, these sentiments still ring true on Capitol Hill. A 2007 *Washington Post* article chronicled how the 10 female members of Congress with children under the age of 13 simultaneously manage their family responsibilities and congressional workload. Characterized as teetering on "a shaky high wire, balancing motherhood with politicking, lawmaking, fund-raising, and the constant shuttle between Washington and their home states," the women recount the scrutiny they withstand and the hardships they endure for choosing a political career (Layton, 2007). Male politicians rarely justify their parenting skills. Taking the 2008 presidential election as just one example, neither the public nor the media scrutinized Barack Obama's time away from his two young daughters; his absence on the home front was not a political liability. Women who enter the public sphere, therefore, often face a "double bind" that men rarely need to reconcile (Jamieson, 1995). If questions arise about the effectiveness of a woman successfully fulfilling her traditional role, then those questions might also affect assessments of her professional performance.

Indeed, traditional family structures and responsibilities emerged as a clear root cause of the gender gap in political ambition among the eligible candidates who participated in the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study. From the outset, it is important to recognize that women in the candidate eligibility pool are nearly twice as likely as men to be single, separated, or divorced. They are 20% less likely than men to have children (gender differences significant at  $p < .01$ ). These gender differences suggest that traditional family structures can often impede professional achievement. As one successful partner in her Florida law firm explained, "The child thing is still a big issue for women and probably always will be. We have just lost three dynamite young [women] associates because they had to take time out to have children. Men never, in my experience, have left for child-care duties." She then described her own family arrangements, noting that she and her husband decided that she could not be both a successful litigator and a successful mother: "It was a painful decision, but we decided that my career was more important." Another female attorney echoed this sentiment: "Of the top five women attorneys in my city, only two are married, and only one has a child. That can't be a coincidence." The female vice president of marketing for a large company agreed:

Women are less willing to compromise on family and are thus willing to sacrifice professionally. Men are not forced to choose. In business, if you choose to cut back at work to take care of kids, you are looked down upon. This is a problem because women are expected to take care of the kids, men aren't.

Despite the double bind, the majority of women in the candidate eligibility pool did not eschew traditional family structures; 70% are married or living with a partner, and 66% have children. Those women who are married with children tend to conform to traditional gender roles. In families where both adults are working, generally in high-level careers, women are 12 times more likely than men to be responsible for the majority of household tasks and more than 10 times more likely to be responsible for the majority of child care.

In the course of the interviews with the eligible candidates, the traditional distribution of household and child care responsibilities emerged as a clear obstacle for women's entry into the electoral arena. A businesswoman from Chicago asked, "We're supposed to run for office? Women are responsible not only for the family but also for earning half the money. . . . How much can you possibly ask?" A female political activist from California summarized the difficulty of even thinking about a candidacy:

I'm tired after spending a day in the office and then coming home to take care of whining, sniffing kids and having to cook them dinner. I'm tired after spending a day in the office and then coming home to take care of a whining, sniffing husband and having to cook him dinner. I can't go to a movie, let alone a PTA meeting. I don't have the time to think about running for office. I definitely don't have the time to do it.



A woman professor from Iowa observed, “Women can’t run for office until their children are older. Men aren’t husbands and fathers before they are career people. Women are wives and mothers first, elected officials, lawyers, professors, whatever, second.”

Many ambitious women mentioned the possibility of entering politics after their child care duties abate, a finding consistent with studies that find women tend to be older than men when they first enter politics (Burt-Way & Kelly, 1992; Sapiro, 1982). Considering that politics in the United States tends to be a career ladder—and most people begin at the local level and then work their way up to state or federal office—substantially delaying their entrance into the political arena leaves women with a more complex path to navigate. Even today, if women want to achieve the highest levels of political success, then they can climb the political career ladder at a faster rate than men, or they can start the climb on a higher rung.

Roughly 65% of the women interviewed stated that children made seeking office a much more difficult endeavor. In the interviews with men, the issue of children serving as an impediment to running for office was raised only 3 times. The fact that, across professions, women are less likely than the men to receive encouragement to run for office from a spouse or family member corroborates women’s notions that a political candidacy is just not possible, given their professional and personal obligations. The United States remains far off from allowing women to disentangle work and family life. As a result, for many qualified, credentialed, politically interested women, entering the electoral arena would simply be a “third job,” which is quite unappealing considering they already have two.

## Perceptions of Qualifications to Run for Office

In 2002 *Time* magazine named Minneapolis FBI agent Coleen Rowley one of its “Persons of the Year.” Ms. Rowley gained notoriety as a whistle-blower when she called attention to the FBI’s refusal to seek a national security warrant to search suspected terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui’s possessions. The refusal to seek the warrant, Rowley argued, contributed to the intelligence failure that ultimately allowed for the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Because of Ms. Rowley’s national security expertise, Democratic Party officials urged her to run for Congress in 2004. Her background and expertise regarding issues on which Democrats are more likely to be perceived as weak made her an attractive candidate to challenge Minnesota Republican John Kline. Even with widespread support for her candidacy, Ms. Rowley chose not to run. In explaining her decision, Rowley recounted a story from her childhood as evidence that she lacked the qualities and characteristics of a retail politician: “As a child, I only sold sixteen boxes of Girl Scout cookies. I was the lowest in the whole troop” (Associated Press, 2003).<sup>4</sup>

In an interview conducted for the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study, an active member of the Sacramento County Taxpayers’ League shared a similar story. He described an exchange with a friend whom he thought would make an outstanding candidate:

She is an All-American Athlete, Phi Beta Kappa, Rhodes Scholar Finalist, Harvard Law Grad, and advisor to the President. I met with her for dinner the other night and basically begged her to run for office. She told me she doesn’t think she’s qualified. She’d never consider running. I don’t get it. Who is qualified if she’s not?

The female eligible candidates surveyed and interviewed are, objectively speaking, just as “qualified” as the male eligible candidates. They have achieved comparable levels of professional success in the pipeline professions to politics. Their résumés include the same educational backgrounds and employment credentials. And their levels of political interest, political knowledge, and campaign experience are indistinguishable from one another. Yet 60% of the men, but fewer than 40% of women, self-assess as “qualified” to run for office. Further, women are significantly more likely than men to factor their self-doubts into the decision-making calculus they employ to consider a candidacy. More specifically, multivariate analysis reveals that a woman who does not think she is qualified to run for office has less than a 25% chance of even thinking about running. The average man who doubts his qualifications still has roughly a 60% chance of contemplating throwing his hat into the ring.

The surveys and interviews suggest that the gender gap in self-assessments stems, at least in part, from the different definitions women and men use to determine whether they are “qualified.” Women in the candidate eligibility pool who self-assess as qualified to run for office tend to state very specific credentials. An attorney from Wyoming, for example, explained that she is well-suited to run for a state-level office because of her previous work in politics. She has worked for two governors and served on a statewide board. An attorney from Georgia referenced her work with the local, state, and federal government for the past 25 years, as well as her role as government affairs liaison between organizations and legislative bodies. The majority of the women who believe that they are “qualified” to run referred to similar links between the political arena and their professional positions. Nearly all offered abridged versions of their résumés. Nearly all stated the importance of concrete experiences in dealing with public officials or groups that influence the policy process.

The majority of the male eligible candidates do not link their professions to the political environment when explaining why they think they are qualified to run for office. Rather, they tend to reference passion, leadership, and vision. An attorney from Oklahoma, for example, explained that “all you need is the desire to serve. That makes you qualified for the job. You can learn the details of policy-making later.” The president of a branch of the Massachusetts Family Institute made a similar claim: “I’m



as qualified as anyone. I have tons of passion for the issues. Everything else will fall into place." An attorney from Washington concurred: "You bet I'm qualified. What do you need to know more than that you want to serve?"

Women's tendency to establish a higher bar for themselves when considering their qualifications to run for office may be driven by perceptions of bias in the electoral arena. Granted, political scientists routinely find that, at least in terms of fund-raising receipts and victory rates, women fare just as well as their male counterparts (e.g., Dolan, 2004; Fox, 2006; Lawless & Pearson, 2008). Researchers consistently find, however, that women who run for office often must navigate a more difficult and demanding electoral process. Female congressional candidates face more primary competition than do their male counterparts (Lawless & Pearson, 2008). Geographic differences facilitate women's election in some congressional districts but lessen their chances of success in others (Palmer & Simon, 2006). Female candidates often recount bias in the campaign press coverage they receive (Rausch, Rozell, & Wilson, 1999). And women perceive fund-raising as more difficult than men do, ultimately devoting more time to it (Fox, 1997). The empirical reality of gender-neutral election outcomes, therefore, does not mean that women and men compete on a level political playing field.

Indeed, more than 90% of the women in the candidate eligibility pool identify gender bias in the electoral process. It follows that women often feel that they need to be more qualified than men just to compete evenly. An educator from California summarized this position: "When they violate traditional gender roles, women have to do things twice as well to be considered half as good as men." A businesswoman from the Northeast agreed: "Professional women need a tremendous amount of confidence to survive in a man's world, especially in light of the unspoken requirement that women be twice as good as men." As former Texas Governor Ann Richards famously commented in support of the idea that public women have to meet a higher standard, "Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, only backwards and in high heels."

Overall, the survey data and the comments from the interviews indicate that perceptions of a sexist environment and the challenges associated with succeeding in a traditional male domain convey to women heightened levels of electoral competition and a more challenging campaign trail to traverse. As a consequence, women are less likely than men to express confidence in their qualifications to run for office or a willingness to enter the electoral arena and become political leaders.

## Gendered Patterns of Political Recruitment

Following the 1989 abduction of her son, Patty Wetterling created the Jacob Wetterling Foundation, a national

organization that focuses on missing children, child abduction, and sex abuse. For 16 years, she led a high-profile crusade for child safety. Through her work at the foundation, Wetterling successfully advocated for the national AMBER alert system and was instrumental in passing federal legislation that required states to implement registries of individuals who commit crimes against children. Given Wetterling's policy background and reputation for working well with people on both sides of the political aisle, Democrats heavily recruited her to run for Congress when their presumed candidate withdrew from the 2004 race in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District. Until she was approached by party officials to run for the seat, Wetterling commented that she had never "really seriously considered [running]" at all (Gordon, 2004, p. A1). With party support behind her, however, she entered the race.<sup>5</sup>

Patty Wetterling is not unique; studies of congressional and state legislative candidates identify party recruitment as one of the most important factors women and men reference when reflecting on their decisions to seek elective office (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001). It might not be entirely surprising, therefore, that researchers who conducted early studies of women's election to office argued that gender bias and overt sexism in the recruitment process contributed to women's underrepresentation (Carroll, 1994; Rule, 1981). More recent scholarship continues to uncover evidence of both actual and perceived gender bias in the candidate recruitment process. Kira Sanbonmatsu (2006), in a six-state study of party leaders and activists, finds that these "gatekeeper" networks are still overwhelmingly male and that they identify and recruit candidates from these networks. Consequently, in states with strong political parties and systematic recruitment activities, women are disadvantaged. David Niven's (1998) four-state study of political recruitment reveals that a majority of local women officeholders believe that party leaders discourage women from running for office, both by openly belittling politically ambitious women and by channeling them into low-profile political roles. His surveys of local party leaders in these states corroborated the officeholders' suspicions of bias: Male party leaders prefer male candidates.

Data from the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study also suggest that political recruitment practices embody a masculinized ethos that favors the selection of male candidates. Overall, female eligible candidates were one-third less likely than men to have been recruited to run for office by a party leader, elected official, or political activist. They were also significantly less likely than men to be recruited frequently or by a variety of political actors. Politically active women who occupy the same professional spheres as politically active men, therefore, are not viewed as equally capable and desirable candidates.

The gender gap in political recruitment is important because multivariate analysis indicates that eligible candidates who receive the suggestion to run for office are more than 4 times as likely as those who receive no such support to think seriously about a candidacy. For many individuals,



recruitment from political leaders serves as the key ingredient in fomenting their thoughts of running. An attorney from Connecticut commented that her interest in running for office stemmed directly from party leaders' interest in her as a candidate: "I considered running [for the legislature] because Democratic Party leaders suggested that I do it. You need to have the Party's support in order to have a viable run for any office. It wouldn't have occurred to me without the suggestion from the Party." A woman attorney from Delaware also attributed her entrance into politics to her involvement with the Democratic Party and her exposure to its recruitment efforts. She ran for the board of assessors because the Democratic Committee did not have anyone else to run, so they asked her to do it. She ran to "be a good sport, but not with any genuine desire to assume the position." She later served as chair and as secretary of the board. Recruitment by Democratic gatekeepers encouraged this woman—someone who was politically active but who had no ambition to seek elective office—to run for a local position and climb the political career ladder.

Even women who have not been recruited are well aware of the legitimacy and viability that recruitment efforts can confer. An educator from New York epitomized this sentiment, explaining that she cannot seriously think about running for office because she does not have the support of a political party. A college administrator from Pennsylvania drew the same conclusion: "I am not politically naïve enough to think that I could think about running for office without party support." A woman environmental activist from California said she had never thought about running for office, but if someone from a party approached her and made her realize that she had a broader base of support, she would consider a candidacy.

Comments from women and men who have been recruited reflect the political viability conveyed by the suggestion to run from a party official; party support brings the promise of an organization that will work on behalf of a candidate. Statements from individuals who have yet to receive political support for a candidacy demonstrate that, without encouragement, a political candidacy feels far less feasible. External support is important to potential candidates from all political parties and professional backgrounds. But women are significantly less likely than men to receive it.

## The Consequences of the Gender Gap in Political Ambition

As long as women remain systematically less likely than men to consider entering the electoral arena, large gender disparities in office holding will persist and women's substantive and symbolic representation will be somewhat precarious. After all, a wide body of research demonstrates that, at both national and state levels, male and female legislators' priorities and preferences differ. Controlling for party, region, and constituency characteristics, women in the U.S. House of Representatives are more likely than

men to support "women's issues," such as gender equity, day care, flex time, abortion, minimum wage increases, and the extension of the food stamp program (Burrell, 1996; see also Gerrity, Osborn, & Mendez, 2007). The Women's Health Initiative, for instance, was enacted only because women in Congress appealed to the General Accounting Office to fund the research. The Senate Judiciary Committee will never again grill a woman who charges a man with sexual harassment the way they did Anita Hill because two women—Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)—now serve as 2 of the committee's 19 members and 16 other women serve with them in the Senate. Further, both Democratic and moderate Republican women in Congress are more likely than men to use their bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship activity to focus on "women's issues" (Swers, 2002).

In addition, the degree of comfort women articulate regarding their entry into electoral politics serves as an important barometer of where society falls in integrating women fully into all aspects of life. Women in politics, in essence, not only serve as symbols and role models for women and girls outside the political arena, but also as a gauge of democratic legitimacy. As political theorist Jane Mansbridge (1999) explains,

Easier communication with one's representative, awareness that one's interests are being represented with sensitivity, and knowledge that certain features of one's identity do not mark one as less able to govern all contribute to making one feel more included in the polity. This feeling of inclusion in turn makes the polity democratically more legitimate in one's eyes. (p. 651)

Citizens and scholars must question whether a government that is democratically organized is actually legitimate if all its citizens—including women—do not have a potential interest in entering the political sphere as candidates for public office.

## Directions for Future Research

This chapter began by asking why highly accomplished and politically minded women like Cheryl Perry and Tricia Martinez demonstrate no ambition to run for office, while their similarly situated male counterparts, Randall White and Kevin Kendall, confidently speak about their prospects of entering the electoral arena as candidates. The chapter ends with an answer to that question: Traditional family structures and roles, perceptions of what it means to be a qualified candidate, and patterns of political recruitment impede women's interest in running for office. There is no question that the public faces of politics have become more diverse. Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Condoleezza Rice have moved us away from a time when it was nearly unheard of for women to envision themselves as candidates. But as the survey and interview evidence from the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study clearly demonstrate, running for public office



remains a much less attractive and feasible endeavor for women than for men. The changes required to close the gender gap in political ambition involve dismantling some of the most deeply embedded and socialized beliefs that both women and men hold about what political candidates look like and what performing that role entails.

Considering the fundamental role gender plays in the precandidacy stage of the electoral process, three avenues of future research merit attention. First, studying gender differences in early family, education, and career experiences is a vital prerequisite for understanding the roots of the gender differences in political leadership. For most people, choosing to run for office is not a spontaneous decision; rather, it is the culmination of a long, personal evolution that often stretches back into early family life. From an early age, do women and men develop different conceptions of what political careers embody and entail? In school, does political history in the United States, which tends to focus on men's accomplishments, leave enduring effects on the psyches of young women and men? When women first enter the workforce, do they have strong role models and mentors to encourage their professional achievement and facilitate their political ambition? Women's greater sense of self-doubt pertaining to their abilities to enter the political arena is one of the most complex barriers to their emergence as candidates. Researchers must explore the origins of these doubts and assess the cognitive and contextual processes that affect whether and how women and men come to view themselves as candidates.

Second, we must build on the research that already speaks to the "double bind" women face and sort out the manner in which it impedes their political ambition. The bind appears more complicated and persistent than scholars originally imagined. Under what circumstances can women foresee simultaneously running for office and being a spouse and parent? To what extent must men reconcile their careers, their families, and their political ambition? Can opting out of the candidate pipeline serve to catalyze women's political interest and involvement at the local level? A wide range of questions about whether and how politics can merge with family and household responsibilities merit investigation.

Finally, if we are to gain a fuller understanding of the roots of women's lower levels of political ambition, it is necessary to study how ambition evolves over the course of the life cycle. Although many patterns of traditional gender socialization dampen women's opportunities to run for

office, there is growing acceptance of women candidates, even at the highest levels. As women gain greater exposure to women in politics, do they become more likely to consider running for office? Are they less likely to view the political environment as sexist and more likely to believe they can overcome adversity in male-dominated spheres? Did Hillary Rodham Clinton and Sarah Palin's candidacies serve as lightning rods to fuel women's political ambition? Tracking women and men's political ambition over time will allow for an assessment of these dynamics.

These new avenues of research must be complemented with investigations that continue to track women's electoral success when they do emerge as candidates. Future investigators, however, must be very careful when generating broad assessments from end-stage analyses. We must withstand the temptation to conclude that, because there are no gender differences in general election vote totals and campaign fund-raising receipts, the electoral process is "gender neutral." When women become candidates and make it to the general election, they perform as well as men. But a pervasive, albeit more subtle, form of discrimination persists through the continued manifestations of traditional gender socialization in the electoral arena.

## Notes

1. To protect anonymity, the names and identifying references of the men and women surveyed and interviewed have been changed. The backgrounds and credentials described, as well as the specific quotes included, are taken directly from the surveys administered and interviews conducted as part of the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study (Lawless & Fox, 2005).

2. The most thorough explication of the 2001 data appears in *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (Lawless & Fox, 2005).

3. The statistics pertaining to women's numeric representation, noted here and throughout the remainder of this section, are compiled from various "Fact Sheets" provided by the Center for American Women and Politics (2009).

4. Two years later, Ms. Rowley changed her mind and ultimately decided to enter the electoral arena; she lost the race.

5. Wetterling lost her 2004 race against incumbent Mark Kennedy by an 8% margin (she garnered 46% of the vote; Kennedy received 54%). After coming up short in her 2004 bid, Ms. Wetterling was recruited and ran again in 2006, this time facing nonincumbent Michelle Bachmann. The outcome for Wetterling was the same. (Bachmann won the general election by an 8-point margin.)

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## PART II

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# HISTORY OF WOMEN'S PUBLIC LEADERSHIP





## OVERVIEW: HISTORY OF WOMEN'S PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

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This chapter explores women's leadership positions tracing women's role in what most scholars recognize as the three waves of the women's movement in the United States. Since the founding of the United States, women have been leaders throughout U.S. history. This leadership role has evolved from managing a family in the private domain to serving as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and, as such, second in the presidential line of succession. The chapter begins with the role of women in the founding of the United States, moves to how women fought to gain the right to vote (first wave), examines what has been dubbed as the modern women's movement (second wave), and ends with what some political observers describe as the third wave of feminism (Generation X).

Women have been struggling with the issue of equality and opportunities to display their leadership skills since the nation's founding. As the colonists settled America, women were relegated to the private sphere and a domestic world of housework and caring for children; men were in charge and controlled the public world, which included community activities and politics. Despite the rhetoric in the Revolutionary period that stated "all men were created equal," women were basically excluded when it came to legal rights, voting rights, holding public office, obtaining an education, or being able to divorce an abusive husband.

The Revolutionary War gave women new opportunities and provided, at least for some, an avenue for a new outlook as many women began to aid the war effort and help the American armies in their fight against the British. Women raised money, plowed the fields, made ammunition, and cooked, cleaned, and cared for the soldiers.

Many even joined the new Daughters of Liberty and participated in the Boston Tea Party (Tindall & Shi, 1996, p. 273). Although most women remained in the home during this period, a few outspoken women leaders began to question their lot in life and demand equal treatment during and after the war. History reveals that, as early as 1776, Abigail Adams, the future first lady and wife of John Adams, wrote to her husband in a now-famous letter:

I long to hear that you have declared an independency—and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies [*sic*], and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion [*sic*], and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation. (qtd. in Levin, 1987, p. 82)

Abigail Adams, however, did not convince her husband to include women in the U.S. Constitution, which was ratified in 1789, or the Bill of Rights, which was ratified in 1791. As a result, legal and political rights for women remained basically as they had been in the colonial era: Women had no right to vote and little or no control over property or custody of children (Han, 2007, p. 17).

### The Early Women's Movement

It would not be until 1848 when two brave and bold women took on the establishment and convened a meeting in

Seneca Falls, New York. The two women, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, authored a document declaring the rights of women that they modeled after the Declaration of Independence. Their words included the following:

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government. . . . But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constraints them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled. (Dolan, Deckman, & Swers, 2007, p. 12)

This declaration and a series of resolutions calling for specific rights were approved at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, which was the first women's rights convention in the United States. Stanton and Mott had worked in the abolitionist movement and had previously met at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. When the male abolitionists at this meeting refused to seat women as delegates, Stanton and Mott decided to hold a women's rights convention to discuss discrimination against women. About 300 men and women attended the Seneca Falls women's rights convention; the declaration sought to address social, legal, and economic inequalities faced by females such as the fact that married women were essentially the property of their husbands with no right to their own earnings or to their children.

*The Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions* was the first major document to include the demand for women's right to vote. The argument over the franchise was so heated that it was the only resolution not passed unanimously at Seneca Falls. One has to remember that many people who were committed to improve women's lot in other areas of life were less inclined to grant women political rights. That is, ideas of equality, liberty, and inalienable rights were competing in American culture with common-law and religious traditions of the unity of husband and wife, and, according to these traditions, the husband acted for and ruled the wife. To separate men and women, which any doctrine of individual rights required, would threaten the family unit and social peace.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, women lost most of their legal rights when they married and were considered the property of their husbands. Married women had no right to own property, no right to an education, no right to their children in cases of divorce, no access to most professions, and no right to the money they earned.

Relationships between men and women during this time were grounded on separate spheres in which men were the breadwinners for their families and represented the family unit in the public sphere, which included the political world. Women were expected to take care of the home, raise and educate the children, and conduct themselves on a higher moral plane.

## Women Involvement in the Abolitionist Movement

The demands for women's right to vote were influenced by the ideas and rhetoric of the movement to abolish slavery. Many women's movement leaders had first begun their political activity working in the abolitionist movement. They borrowed its language, seeking "emancipation" for women from the "slavery" of marriage and the demand for full equal rights as citizens. Women eventually took an active and vocal role, especially within the more liberal branch of the antislavery movement headed by William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison, the editor of *The Liberator*, a leading abolitionist newspaper, believed that the rights of blacks and women to vote and otherwise participate in government followed from the proposition that all men and women were created equal. Thus, both groups possessed the same inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canady, 2005, p. 4).

The civil rights movement and the women's movement have a long, complicated history that dates back to this abolitionist period and the origins of modern feminism. However, the two movements experienced a bitter split between the abolitionist Frederick Douglass and the women's rights pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Although Stanton was a fervent abolitionist and a close ally of Douglass, she later confined herself to the cause of women's equality. These ideals would eventually clash, resulting in increasingly divisive rhetoric that reached a harsh climax after Stanton and Anthony condemned the Fifteenth Amendment—which gave black men the right to vote but left out women of all races—as something that would establish "an aristocracy of sex on this continent." She also alluded to the "lower orders," such as Irish, blacks, Germans, and Chinese, who also won the vote (Leibovich, 2008, pp. 1, 4).

The start of the Civil War all but suspended the campaign for women's rights. Women in the North and South dedicated themselves to their respective causes, but most suffragists at the time supported the Union effort. In 1863, Stanton and Susan B. Anthony organized the Women's Loyal National League in the North to promote the emancipation of all slaves through constitutional amendment (Ryan, 1992). The amendment proposed universal suffrage and was intended to include freed slaves and women. Many abolitionists objected to women's inclusion in the



suffrage clause, fearing that it would cause the amendment to fail. The Republican Party argued that an attempt to enfranchise women would jeopardize efforts to enfranchise black men in the South (Kraditor, 1981, p. 3).

Those who believed in the precedence of women's suffrage could not get past the willingness of others to accept the word *male* in the text of the Fourteenth Amendment and the exclusion of women from the Fifteenth Amendment, which removed race as a disqualifier for the right to vote.

## American Equal Rights Association

The American Equal Rights Association (AERA) was formed in 1866 to advance the cause of universal suffrage, and many active in the organization believed that suffrage was already implied in the language of citizenship. Black men and women active in the movement clearly linked women's rights with the vote and focused their efforts on universal suffrage and universal reforms. However, the AERA was embroiled in a battle between those whose first priority was black male suffrage and those who were dedicated first to woman suffrage. This tension came to a head in the discussions about the Fourteenth Amendment. If the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified as proposed, the word *male* would appear in the Constitution for the first time, thereby establishing two categories of citizens: male and female. Suffragists could not agree among themselves as to how they ought to react to the language of the proposed amendment. Anthony and Stanton believed that the amendment should be defeated unless it included women, whereas others, such as Lucy Stone, argued that it was "the Negroes hour, and that the women must wait for their rights" (Kraditor, 1981, p. 3).

White female suffragists left the AERA, blaming male abolitionists for sacrificing women in the name of expediency. Black women "remained quiet or divided among the prevailing forces" (Terborg-Penn, 1998, p. 24). The disunity resulted in the dissolution of the AERA and the formation of two rival organizations for women's rights in 1869: first, the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), led by Stanton and Anthony, and later, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), led by Lucy Stone and Henry Ward Beecher. NWSA turned its immediate attention to the fight over women's inclusion in the Fifteenth Amendment; AWSA continued to support the Fifteenth Amendment as written, vowing to support a Sixteenth Amendment dedicated to women suffrage (Banaszak, 1996).

The disagreement with abolitionists and the divide among suffragists is important because it signals an end to women's quest for universal suffrage and a switch to the often ugly nativist and racist rhetoric and action that characterized some claims to the woman's vote. Women had worked as social activists, grounded in the liberal tradition and dedicated to the universality of natural rights and to full citizenship rights and privileges for all adults. But, their

negative experiences with allied groups in these formative years of the rights movement pushed women toward self-interest and exclusion, transforming the women's rights movement into a women's suffrage movement. In a broader sense, Lynne E. Ford (2002) has argued it forced women to give up the philosophical and moral high ground and to sacrifice forever the most radical notion of all: transforming the social and political structure itself.

During a heated AERA meeting in New York City's Steinway Hall in 1869, Stanton wondered, "Shall American statesmen . . . so amend their constitutions as to make their wives and mothers the political inferiors of unlettered and un-washed, ditch-diggers, bootblacks, butchers and barbers, fresh from the slave plantations of the South?" At which point, Douglass rose, paid tribute to Stanton's years of work on civil rights for all, and replied,

When women, because they are women, are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans; when they are dragged from their houses and hung from lampposts; when their children are torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement; when they are objects of insult and rage at every turn; when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down . . . then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own. (qtd. in Ford, 2002, p. 40)

## Women in the Temperance Movement

Women were involved with temperance from its beginnings in the late 18th century. In their accepted 19th-century role as guardians of the home, they contributed to the pre-Civil War movement. Although leadership and public participation were denied them, they were encouraged to use their roles as mothers, sisters, and daughters to exercise moral suasion and set a good example within the family. However, when legislative solutions to intemperance were first adopted in the 1850s, women found their place in the movement in jeopardy because they could neither vote nor participate in political campaigns (Bordin, 1981, p. xvi).

In the post-Civil War temperance movement, women became the leaders. Women found temperance the most congenial cause through which to increase their involvement in public life. During the last quarter of the 19th century, women used the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) as a base for their participation in reformist causes, as a sophisticated avenue for political action, as a support for demanding the ballot, and as a vehicle for supporting a wide range of charitable activities. By the 1880s, WCTU was the largest organization of women the United States had yet known. It reached into every state and territory, all major cities, and thousands of local communities. Through both private charity and support of legislation, WCTU attempted to meet the many social problems arising from urbanization, industrialization, and immigration in the United States.



WCTU was unquestionably the first mass movement of American women. It had no competitors in size of membership or breadth and depth of local organization. It cut across sectional, racial, and ethnic boundaries, sheltering under its broad umbrella women from nearly every sector of American life. Among its members were seamstresses and the wives of artisans and clerks; women physicians, lawyers, clerics, and educators; and wives of business and professional men. WCTU was also the first sizable organization controlled exclusively by women. From its beginning WCTU excluded males from voting membership. As a result, men never competed for leadership roles, and women ran the entire organization, including its affiliated business enterprises.

Other traditional opponents to suffrage were businesses, primarily textiles and agriculture, that would be directly affected by women's voting on progressive reform agendas. These interests provided a welcome ally for the anti-suffragists. A relative latecomer to the antisuffrage coalition was the Catholic Church. Suffrage opponents initially shied away from the church because of fears of foreigners and papists. The Catholic Church opposed suffrage primarily on ideological grounds, arguing that the church wanted "to prevent a moral deterioration which suffrage could bring and feared the development of a political structure and social climate deleterious to Catholicism" (Camhi, 1994, p. 111).

Like other hierarchically organized religions opposed to women's suffrage, the Catholic Church believed that a traditionally constituted society was ordained by God, and any move by either sex on the terrain of the other was viewed as unnatural and a threat to the universal order. The association of the birth control movement with women's rights and suffrage after 1885 only solidified Catholics' official opposition to a more public role for women.

## Women's Suffrage

In 1869, after the disagreement over endorsement of the Fifteenth Amendment, NWSA and AWSA were formed. There were differences in the two groups. NWSA, led by Anthony and Stanton, was dedicated to winning a federal amendment for women's suffrage. NWSA restricted membership to women only, and members were active in a range of causes, including working conditions for women, divorce reform, and the position of women in the church. The more conservative organization, AWSA, led by Lucy Stone and Henry Ward Beecher, both notable abolitionists, concentrated on the right to vote and avoided other causes that could alienate important members of the political community. Rather than working for a federal amendment, they focused their energy on a state-by-state campaign for the ballot.

Beginning in about 1880, female suffragists encountered their most vexing opponents to the cause: other women. At first, suffragists dismissed the "remonstrants" (as they were called) as inconsequential and misguided.

Later, these opponents were attacked as fronts for male corporate interests, particularly the interests of their wealthy husbands. To suffragists Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, "the 'antis'" served to "confuse public thinking by standing conspicuously in the limelight while the potent enemy worked in the darkness" (Anthony & Harper, 1902, p. xxix). They further dismissed the anti-suffragists as throwbacks to outdated gender norms. After more than 20 years with little to show for their efforts, these two groups were merged in 1890 to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) with Anthony at its helm. NAWSA concentrated its efforts on obtaining the right to vote within individual states.

The demand for women's suffrage became a mass movement after 1910 (Morgan, 1972). Energies focused on getting congressional support for an amendment to the Constitution, but drives for referenda in the states continued as well. A wide variety of groups supported the plan, but the vote meant different things to different groups. Black women joined suffrage organizations so they could use the vote to fight against oppression by white men. Working women wanted to vote to help them obtain better wages and conditions. Some upper-class women thought the vote would ensure their supremacy over growing numbers of immigrants (the suffrage movement was not immune to racism and ethnocentrism in the culture). Militant suffragettes considered absolute equality of the sexes an essential part of democracy.

Numerous organizations dedicated themselves to preventing women's suffrage. Many of these were organized at the state level in response to statewide women's suffrage referendum campaigns. There were also more nationally focused groups like the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, formed in New York City in 1911 during a convention of state antisuffrage groups. Its members included wealthy, influential women and some Catholic clergymen. In addition to the distillers and brewers, who worked largely behind the scenes, the "antis" also drew support from urban political machines, Southern congressmen, and corporate capitalists (including railroad magnates and meatpackers), who supported the "antis" by contributing to their "war chests" (Flexner, 1975, p. 306).

Anthony and Stanton were dead long before the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified. Catt (1859–1947) and Alice Paul (1885–1977) led the final battle for women's suffrage but in dramatically different leadership styles.

Catt worked her way through Iowa State University, serving as a school principal and later as one of the nation's first female superintendents. She began her suffrage work with the Iowa Suffrage Association upon the death of her first husband. The prenuptial agreement, signed before her second marriage to George Catt in 1890, guaranteed her 4 months each year to work on suffrage activities. She was known for her strong organizational skills and took the helm of NAWSA in 1917. She implemented the "Winning Plan,"



which combined a careful congressional lobbying strategy for a federal amendment with continued efforts to win suffrage in individual states. She urged NAWSA members to remain nonpartisan in their calls on lawmakers. After the Nineteenth Amendment had been ratified, Catt founded the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization dedicated to educating women for full civic participation (Ford, 2002, pp. 46–47).

Paul, born to wealthy Quaker parents, graduated from Swarthmore College in 1905, earned a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1907, and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1912. Her studies combined her overlapping interests in economics, political science, social work, and women's equality. Later in her life she would also earn three law degrees. While pursuing a graduate fellowship in England, Paul was introduced to the militant tactics of the British suffrage movement. When she returned to the United States in 1910, she brought with her an appreciation for the direct and aggressive methods of the English suffragettes. Initially working within NAWSA as chair of its congressional committee, Paul organized a massive suffrage demonstration in Washington, D.C., which was held the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration.

Paul, arrested and force fed, believed that the party in power and incumbent politicians should be held accountable for their lack of support for suffrage. After having been ousted from NAWSA, she organized the National Woman's Party to facilitate women's direct political action. She continued to organize and coordinate the actions of hundreds of women who demonstrated in front of the White House and engaged in hunger strikes while imprisoned. Both Catt and Paul had the ability to organize. However, Paul's methods were viewed as more controversial and radical.

With the suffrage amendment stalled in Congress in January 1917, suffragists implored President Wilson to lead his party to support votes for women. He refused, saying, "As the leader of my party, my commands come from that party and not from private personal convictions." The next day, January 10, the picketing of the White House began, as Doris Stevens (1920) recalled:

The beginning of our fight did indeed seem tiny and frail by the side of the big game of war, and so the senators were at first scarcely aware of our presence. But the intrepid women stood their long vigils, day by day, at the White House gates, through biting wind and driving rain, through sleet and snow as well as sunshine, waiting for the President to act. Above all the challenges of their banners rang this simple, but insistent one:

Mr. President!

How long must women wait for liberty? (pp. 65–66)

Finally, after 6 months, Mr. Wilson's patience ran out. While he marshaled national support for America's entrance into World War I to save democracy, the further picketing of the White House by women demanding the vote led to arrest, prison, and, for some, hunger strikes and forced feeding.

It would not be until 1920 that the Nineteenth Amendment was passed by Congress and ratified by the states. Thus, it took 70 years for women to gain the right to vote. One of the lesser-known stories of the suffrage movement concerns Harry T. Burn, the man who broke the tie in the Tennessee legislature to put ratification over the top on August 16, 1920.

I want to state I changed my vote in favor of ratification, first, because I believe in full suffrage as a right; second, I believe we had a moral and legal right to ratify; third, I knew that a mother's advice is always safest for her boy to follow and my mother wanted me to vote for ratification; fourth, I appreciated the fact that an opportunity such as seldom comes to mortal man to free . . . women from political slavery was mine. (qtd. in Cahn, 1970, pp. 60–63)

In her letter, Mr. Burn's mother, a poor farm wife who nonetheless read the newspaper, wrote, "Dear son, Hurrah and vote for suffrage! Don't keep them in doubt. . . . Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put the "rat" in ratification" (qtd. in Cahn, 1970, p. 63).

Dorothy McBride Stetson (2004) asks, "What would women do with their hard-won voting rights?" (p. 69). The answer was awaited anxiously by politicians and feminists. In fact, a women's voting bloc did not appear at the national level, at least not in the calculations of politicians in the 1920s. And the initial interpretations of those first elections in the 1920s created a myth about women as political actors that affected their influence for decades. According to McBride Stetson, the myth goes something like this: Suffragists promised a powerful voting bloc of women, and politicians initially were ready to consider reform proposals from the leaders of these new voters. But the bloc never materialized and suffragists' threat of revenge against antisuffrage senators at the polls never materialized. McBride Stetson points out that, according to this version, the first elections after 1920 showed that women were not interested in politics because it was foreign to their primary domestic roles in the family. If they did vote, they voted like their husbands, making little difference in the outcomes of elections. This myth that women need not be taken seriously as voters was supported by the claim that after women got the right to vote, voter participation dropped precipitously.

The final verdict on the voting behavior of women during the 1920s may never be known for sure. There were no polls to compare the turnout of the choices of men versus the choices of women. Only one state, Illinois, had separate ballot boxes for men and women. We also know that, as voters, women are diverse. Turnout varied from group to group, state to state. And the costs of voting the first time are relatively high, and women may have had many educational and cultural barriers to surmount. But not all women were first-time voters in the 1920s. Women already were voting in some states. Wyoming was the first state to enfranchise women (in 1869), and women have had the vote there ever since 1869. New Jersey's enfranchisement of women



(1787–1804) was short-lived. As Ford observes (2002), opponents to suffrage were the liquor industry, big business, and the Roman Catholic Church. The liquor industry, represented by the U.S. Brewers' Association, the Wholesale Distillers' Association, and the Retail Dealers' Association, held significant power in U.S. politics, particularly in state legislatures. The political influence, however, was not enough to block the Nineteenth Amendment. Its direct interest was reversing prohibition rather than preventing women's suffrage. Since many women suffragists were also temperance advocates, the liquor industry believed keeping women away from the voting booth would be in its best long-term economic interests (Ford, 2002, p. 51).

After the Nineteenth Amendment had been ratified, the women's movement in America basically died since suffrage had been extended to women. Historian Nancy Cott writes that the 1920s, rather than the end of feminism, signaled the end of the suffrage movement and the emergence of the early struggle of modern feminism. "That struggle was, and is, to find language, organization, and goals adequate to the paradoxical situation of modern women, diverse individuals and subgroups who 'can't avoid being women whatever they do,' who inhabit the same world as men, not in the same way" (Cott, 1987, p. 10).

## The 1960s and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

The equal rights amendment (ERA) was first proposed in the United States Congress in December 1923. It was promoted by Paul and the National Woman's Party but opposed by many of their colleagues who had worked to pass the Nineteenth Amendment (women's suffrage) in 1920. The ERA would have eliminated protective legislation which, for years, reformers had sought for female industrial workers. But Paul was determined that women should be treated as individuals under the law just as men were, not as a class subject to mass governmental regulation.

Most scholars trace the second wave of the women's movement to the 1960s and the fight for the ERA. In March 1972 the ERA to the U.S. Constitution, which had been introduced in all sessions of Congress since 1923, passed the Senate with a vote of 84 to 8, 15 votes more than the two-thirds vote required for constitutional amendments. The ERA had three provisions: (1) Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. (2) The congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article. (3) This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification (McGlen et al., 2005, p. 48). In the following 10 years, from 1972 to 1982, a majority of Americans consistently told interviewers that they favored this amendment to the Constitution.

Yet on June 30, 1982, the deadline for ratifying the amendment passed with only 35 of the required 38 states having ratified. Political scientist Jane J. Mansbridge argues that, if the ERA had been ratified, the Supreme Court would have been unlikely to use it to bring about major changes in the relations between American men and women; the American public did not want any significant change in gender roles, whether at work, at home, or in society at large. Mansbridge goes on to point out there was an irony in the fierce battle between the proponents and opponents of the ERA: This was that the ERA would have had much less substantive effect than either side claimed. This is because the ERA applied only to the government and not to private businesses and corporations; it would have had no noticeable effect, at least in the short run, on the gap between men's and women's wages (Mansbridge, 1986, pp. 1–2).

Also, during the 1970s, the Supreme Court began to use the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution to declare unconstitutional almost all the laws and practices that Congress and the states had intended to make unconstitutional when it passed the ERA in 1972. Mansbridge believes the exceptions to this were the laws and practices that most Americans approved. Nevertheless, Mansbridge argues that its defeat was a major setback for equality between men and women. Even though its direct effects would have been slight, its indirect effects on both judges and legislators would probably have led, in the long run, to interpretations of existing laws and enactment of new laws that would have benefited women. Many scholars and pundits believe it would have had large symbolic effects.

This second wave of feminism produces some progressive outcomes for women. Women won the right to make a choice about abortion in some circumstances (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973). Women also advanced in the military, corporate America, college and professional sports, institutions of higher learning, the U.S. Congress and state legislatures, as well as other governmental positions. Also, while second-wave feminists were obtaining power, they were also engaged in redefining it. Rather than re-creating the oppressive, dominating nature of power that permeated male hierarchies, second-wave feminists sought to "empower" others through forms of shared leadership and consensual decision making (Iannello, 1992).

## The Third Wave (Generation X)

By the mid-1990s, a new generation of feminists had joined the ranks of activists working toward gender equity and sexual equality in America. This generation of feminists is represented by the Third Wave Foundation, a national organization that seeks to promote a feminist social and political agenda among young people aged 15 to 30. The emerging leaders of this next generation of the women's rights movement continue to advocate reproductive freedom and political reform, but the Third



Wave Foundation's agenda also includes efforts to eradicate homophobia, racial inequality, and economic injustice. The National Organization for Women (NOW) is also committed to protecting and expanding women's rights to political representation, educational opportunity, and economic equity.

Many scholars who have researched the increasing public role of women in politics, business, and other public spheres argue that these third-wave feminist perspectives on power and leadership differ greatly from those of their male counterparts. That is, men and women have different leadership styles. A recent analysis of 45 separate studies addressing this difference found that women are slightly more likely to be "transformational" leaders, collectively setting goals and empowering their teams to achieve them. Men are more likely to be "transactional" leaders, letting subordinates know what is expected, rewarding them for their successes, and holding them accountable for their failures. Most leaders, however, did not fit neatly into one or the other of these categories, but there was a measurable difference based on gender (Myers, 2008, p. 133).

Research also shows that transformational leaders, particularly the leaders who also reward good performance, a positive aspect of transactional leadership common among women, tend to be more effective, especially in the less-hierarchical, fast-paced, and innovation-driven contemporary world. So, one could conclude not only do women have a somewhat different leadership style, it's more likely to be successful.

As Marie C. Wilson, founder of the White House Project points out, again and again, women battle perceptions of what they can do, often based on gender. She cites the 1998 book *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women* by Hunter College professor Virginia Valian. Valian discusses what she calls "the table incident." We learn that even if a woman is at the head of a table, she is not automatically seen as, or treated as, a leader. In an experiment, Valian showed college students a series of slides of five people at a table, one at the head and two on each side, then asked the students to identify the leader among them. When all the people at the table were of one gender, the answer was clear: Whoever sat at the head was the leader. If the groups were mixed and a man was at the head of the table, he was seen as the leader. However, in mixed groups, if a woman sat at the head, the students did not automatically identify her as leader; half the time, they picked a man who sat in another spot. "The symbolic position of leadership (the head of the table) carries less symbolic weight for women," explains Valian. And female students were as likely as males to respond in this way (cited in Wilson, 2004, p. 81).

Former White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers points out that, as more and more women find themselves in positions of power, they're finding new metaphors to describe their world. For men, it's always been sports and war. For women, increasingly it's motherhood. Motherhood builds a broad range of valuable skills. Moms

learn to anticipate needs. (How long can we go before someone has to "go"?) They learn tough decision making. (When are the kids ready to ride their bikes to the park by themselves?) They learn diplomacy. (How do you get three kids to agree on one TV show?) And they learn discretion. (What happens in the minivan stays in the minivan.) They also learn sacrifice, time management, multitasking, hard work, long hours, flexibility, and team building.

As Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Speaker of the House and the country's most powerful woman explains, her first career was motherhood; her second is politics. Pelosi often notes the similar skills required of the two disciplines: multitasking, maintaining discipline, making sure everyone has done their homework. Pelosi did not run for public office until age 46, when her last daughter was in high school (Bzdek, 2008, p. 5).

Wilson (2004) notes that "when Pelosi got into leadership, she didn't act the way people expected. She surrounded herself with family, which was an enormously unusual thing for a woman leader to do" (qtd. in Bzdek, 2008, p. 170). Wilson feels the image Pelosi created when she gathered 20 children, many of whom were her own grandchildren, around her in front of the high-backed leather Speaker's chair the very moment she was elected was a breakthrough for Pelosi herself. Wilson explains, "I don't think she's somebody who's been seen as a strong leader. But she stood up and with that vote said I am a strong leader. And I'll show you how strong. I'm just going to surround myself with my family. You're not going to take a thing away from me" (qtd. in Bzdek, 2008, p. 171). One observer noted that, in a single moment, Pelosi may have widened the country's definition of "leader" and its respect for the role motherhood plays in sustaining a society's civic life.

Those who have worked most closely with Pelosi say what is unique about her as a leader, and the primary engine behind her climb, is her left-brain, right-brain approach to the game. Over and over again, politicians who know her best said the secret to her success is the double-barreled ability to do both policy and politics. Bzdek points out, she can crack heads with the best of them in the behind-the-scenes, mechanical part of her job, and she can display a great deal of empathy and warmth in the public, campaign part of her job.

## Summary and Future Directions

From the era of 1848 and Seneca Falls, New York, women have made incremental advances. Women have been political participants, political candidates, and legislators; have served in executive leadership positions; have been appointed to cabinet positions and have served as White House advisors; have been elected to statewide and local public offices; and have been appointed to the Supreme Court and state court systems. But parity is still elusive.



Comparing the United States and other nations, the United States has never had a female chief executive. Contrast this with countries that include Turkey, Indonesia, Israel, Guyana, Argentina, Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Poland, Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Ireland, Iceland, and Norway.

One can point to Hillary Rodham Clinton and her campaign for the presidency in 2008 as a breakthrough for women; she was the first to actively seek the nomination of one of the two major political parties. In one of her major speeches prior to her dropping out of the race and conceding defeat to Barack Obama, she referred to the “18 million cracks in the glass ceiling.” She was referring to her vote numbers during the Democratic primaries. However, some feminists have observed, if 18 million votes are not enough, what does it take in the Democratic Party to get a woman on the ticket?

The 2008 primary season set a score of state primary and caucus turnout records. More than 57 million Americans voted in the 2008 nominating elections, which easily eclipsed the 31 million who voted in 2000. And women turned out en masse at the polls and claimed record numbers of seats in both houses of Congress. They even made history at the country level. A record number of 17 women will represent their states in the U.S. Senate. And three more women will go to the U.S. House, for an all-time high of 73. As Speaker of the House, Congresswoman Pelosi (D-CA) is second in the presidential line of succession, the first woman to hold the top House post (Center for American Women and Politics, 2009).

But, women are still not there yet when it comes to political parity. For example, today, the United States ranks 22nd among the 30 developed nations in its proportion of female federal lawmakers. The proportion of female state legislators has been stuck in the low 20% range for 15 years; women's share of state elective executive offices has fallen consistently since 2000 and is now under 25%. The U.S. political pipeline is 86% male (Faludi, 2008).

As Christine Whitson, president of Columbia College in Columbia, South Carolina, points out, “I feel very strongly that the playing field is far from level. There are so many restrictions—often self-imposed. Women are in the margins of a dominant culture” (qtd. in Cooper, 2009, p. 1). Whitson also believes women's rights have slipped backward a bit because there are equal rights under the law but not equal positions. People can still get away with being sexist in a world where they can't get away with being racist, she said. Perhaps one could conclude that when sexism is as taboo as racism is in the political world and cultural environment, perhaps then it will be “the woman's hour.”

One must, however, acknowledge that women have made much progress since the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. Yet much work remains as today's female leaders must advance in order to achieve even greater success in the 21st century. Whether in the political and legal arenas, the corporate world, higher education, or any number of important civic or social roles, women leaders can bring different perspectives to public life and can continue to help change

negative cultural stereotypes about women in U.S. society. Many barriers to equality for women have been eliminated with the help of the election and appointment of women to high-ranking political positions. More women will have access to these positions of power as U.S. society continues to accept and embrace women as political leaders. Women, when viewed as an inclusive group, represent political perspectives, policy choices, and backgrounds that run the gamut of partisan and ideological preferences.

So, how can this community of talent be better utilized in U.S. society? First of all, women should observe and learn, using the 2008 presidential election as an example of what can happen in the political realm. That is, women have to build an organizational base nationwide, much as President Barack Obama did in his presidential campaign. He used his skills as a community organizer to come up with a winning campaign organization. Of course, this will require leadership and expertise. The United States has many charismatic female leaders who are waiting in the wings.

In addition to mobilizing participation, women's organizations can provide a wide range of services. These groups include organizations such as NOW, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the League of Women Voters. The National Council of Women's Organizations is a bipartisan network of leaders from more than 100 organizations. The council proposes a “National Women's Agenda” every 2 years, which corresponds to a new session of Congress. Other nonprofit organizations not affiliated with any candidate or political party are springing up across the country.

One example of such a group is the Southeastern Institute for Women in Politics headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina, a state that ranks 50th—last—in the nation in terms of women in public office. According to their Web site, this group's objectives include the following:

1. To research the viability of federal, state, county, and municipal seats of power to identify which seats, in which parts of the state, offer the best potential for women to run and win
2. To develop for various geographic areas of the state a profile of the qualities women candidates might need to win in those areas
3. To identify and encourage women to run for political office
4. To train women statewide in the strategies and tactics of running to win
5. To expose women candidates to mentors, campaign professionals, skilled volunteers and other resources that can help them win
6. To connect women candidates with demographic, electoral, attitudinal, and issue research they need to design winning campaigns
7. To train a cadre of campaign managers, fund raisers, field directors, and other volunteers who will work for women candidates



8. To identify, motivate, and train women to navigate successfully the process of getting appointed to powerful boards, commissions, and task forces

Another example of a group doing just this sort of grassroots effort is Women Under Forty Political Action Committee (WUFPAC). The mission of this group is to identify, encourage, and support women 40 years of age and under running for local, state, and federal offices. The mission statement for this organization notes that women aged 40 and younger are nearly absent from elected office, and therefore the policy perspective of this demographic group is missing. In 2009, WUFPAC will celebrate their 10th anniversary as the nation's only nonpartisan political action committee dedicated to supporting young women running for public office.

The future looks bright when one reflects on the progress women have made since 1848. Glass ceilings have been broken, and women are entering into the launching positions to move on to higher levels in all

realms of American life. One by one, the number of "firsts" women have yet to achieve is dwindling. Women head major corporations. They make millions on Wall Street. They are presidents of universities. They have their own professional sports leagues. Women serve as generals in the military. In September 2009 the army made Command Sergeant Major Teresa L. King commandant of its drill sergeant school at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. It is a first. No woman has run one of the U.S. Army's rigorous schools for drill instructors. Today, the roster of women judges, aviators, diplomats, and government officials would fill a large volume. Two women serve on the Supreme Court, and a woman serves as secretary of state, the nation's top diplomat.

Women today have more choices than ever. They can choose to be full-time moms or they can go to graduate school and run a company or seek election to the Congress. And, some day a woman will crack the ultimate glass ceiling: the presidency of the United States.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND THIRD-WAVE FEMINISM

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**L**eadership is a term that women strive to claim as their own. Whether in the halls of Congress, the corporate boardroom, or the privacy of the home, women's leadership challenges traditional notions of the concept. Throughout the ages images of leadership feature men in uniform and men in positions of power, whether it be military, government, or market. The traditional view of leaders is imbued with male images of "heroes," who issue orders, lead the troops—save the day. But leadership has another face. It is the face of Abigail Adams admonishing her husband to "Remember the Ladies" in the formation of this new American nation (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2002, p. 1). It is the face of Susan B. Anthony in 1872 standing trial for illegally voting. It is the face of scores of women in today's world who have shattered glass ceilings in corporate America and hold important legislative and administrative posts in state and federal government. Yet there is more to the concept of "women's leadership" than substituting one face for another.

Leadership can be viewed as a gendered concept. That is to say that there is something about being female or socialized to "female values" that can be identified in women's organizational behavior. Research in political science, psychology, sociology, and Women's Studies supports this claim (Swers, 2002). Studies show that women, more so than men, as leaders, encourage nonconfrontational styles of decision making. Women, more than men, utilize network building to work toward consensus in support of new organization initiatives, new legislation, policy, or laws, as the case may be. In addition, women are more inclined to lead from "where they are," to "create change in their own lives and in their own communities"

(Dicker & Piepmeier, 2003, p. 163). Women are less inclined to need an official title or location on the organization chart to initiate change. Women are more inclined to challenge hierarchy, or classic, top-down organization structure (Iannello, 1992).

Women's collaborative nature has long been a factor in gaining equal rights for women in the United States. As far back as the Revolutionary War, women collaborated in organizing boycotts of tea and other British goods (Elshtain & Tobias, 1990, pp. 94–95). This early collaboration gave women their first opportunity to make claims for citizenship—the early seeds of first-wave feminism and the fight for the right to vote (Klosko & Klosko, 1999). The Women's Strike for Peace (WSP) in the early 1960s, the beginning of a second wave of feminism, was an example of women's collaboration in forming a spontaneous "un-organization," as they liked to say, focused on reducing the threat of nuclear war. WSP also unintentionally used the strength of "female culture" to disarm the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the communist witch hunt conducted by Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI; Swerdlow, 1990). Numerous examples of women's collaborative leadership exist throughout the second wave of American feminism.

By contrast, a "third wave" of feminism, emerging in the 1990s and extending to the present day, is raising new questions about women's leadership in the 21st century. While collaborative leadership is still valued, third-wave feminists see new possibilities for individual initiative, rejecting group identity, in some cases rejecting the label "feminist," as they seek power in their professional and personal lives as well. To understand this contrast in the



form and function of women's leadership, it is important to gain a broader understanding of feminism in waves. Of particular interest is the way in which collaborative leadership emerged in the second wave of feminism that produced consensual and modified consensual organization structure. These organizations contributed in many ways to cultural and political changes advancing the collective rights of women in the United States. The question is, in the third wave, how has this paradigm shifted?

## Feminism in Waves

The metaphor of "waves" is often used to describe and explain the history of feminism in the United States (Evans, 2003). The first wave of feminism in the United States is usually marked by the women's rights convention held in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York. This included the writing of *The Declaration of Sentiments* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as well as others, whose goal was establishing legal identity for women separate from their fathers and husbands. This wave crested with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, finally winning the right to vote for women in the United States (Klosko & Klosko, 1999, p. 11).

The second wave of feminism began with the consciousness-raising groups of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) helped define "the problem with no name" that many middle-class American housewives were experiencing. This problem went to the core of women's self-worth and lack of identity in the public world of paid labor and their definition of self primarily as wife and mother in the private realm of family. The second wave of feminism sought equal rights for women in the public sphere "kicking open" the doors to many previously all-male professions (Evans, 2003). While feminists in the 1970s and early 1980s achieved some rights with regard to abortion and equal access to education and jobs, they fell short of the chief legislative goal: an equal rights amendment (ERA) to the Constitution.

A third wave of feminism is thought to have begun in the 1990s and continues to the present day. This wave has the potential to empower women by helping them shatter the "glass ceiling" in politics, business, and other fields to which women have limited access, whether it be the presidency of the United States or chief executive officer of major corporations. From first to third wave, women have made—and continue to make—legal, economic, and political progress.

## Feminism in the Third Wave

Third-wave feminism is thought to have begun in the early 1990s as a partial reaction to issues raised in the Hill/Thomas Senate hearings on sexual harassment as well

as claims of "post-feminism" and *Time Magazine's* 1998 cover story asking the question, "Is Feminism Dead?" Out of sexism in the Hill/Thomas hearings and reaction to 12 years of Reagan-Bush conservative policies, the Third Wave Foundation was formed, aimed at recruiting and supporting feminists between the ages of 15 and 30. Additionally a new culture of music and journalism appeared with the creation of punk groups such as Riot Grrrls and "zines" (magazines) such as *Bust*, *Bitch*, and others (Dicker & Piepmeyer, 2003).

Third-wave feminism's roots are clearly embedded in popular culture. Even though in *Manifesta*, Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards (2000) outline a 13-point agenda for action that includes safeguarding women's reproductive rights, increasing the power and visibility of lesbian and bisexual women, and guaranteeing equal access to health care, generally, third-wave feminism is not thought of as an activist movement. This is because there doesn't seem to be a collective identity. In fact, third-wave feminists reject the notion of collective identity and refuse to be categorized because they *embrace* disunity (Gilmore, 2001, p. 218).

Much of social movement theory argues that collective identity is crucial to social movement formation and ultimately the ability to challenge existing structures of power. Feminist social movements in the past have been said to engage in struggles on two levels: over meanings and over the distribution of resources for society. For example, in the first wave of feminism women's nature had to be viewed in a new way before women were seen as worthy of a political resource: the right to vote. Thus cultural change led to political change. In the second wave of feminism a collective consciousness enabled women to see themselves differently than just wives and mothers. This made it possible for women to exercise leadership in challenging existing gender relations and eventually gain power in the public sphere. If this is the model for leadership and change, the question is: What does feminism in the third wave contribute to a collective consciousness?

If third-wave feminism could be seen as having one ideological perspective, it would be born out of a tension with the second wave. As one author states, "We want to be linked with our foremothers and centuries of women's movements, but we also want to make a space for young women to create their own, different brand of revolt, and so we chose the name Third Wave" (Walker, 2004, p. xvii). Third-wave feminists criticize the second wave for its lack of diversity, as the second wave is commonly known for being led mostly by white affluent women. Third-wave feminism is multicultural in nature and sexually diverse as well, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual perspectives. Third-wave feminism recognizes the "interlocking nature of identity—that gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class never function in isolation but always work as interconnected categories of oppression and privileged" (Henry, 2004, p. 32).

One could look at a third-wave feminist reader like Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmeyer's book *Catching a*



*Wave* to get a sense of the wide range of topics included in the third-wave discussion. The chapters cover issues related to the news and entertainment media's treatment of feminism, childhood development and feminism, concepts of feminist leadership on college campuses today as well as broader leadership for the movement, and feminism applied to particular groups. The groups include American Jewish women and the third wave, Arab American feminism, hip-hop feminism, and a discussion of transsexual feminism. Additionally, chapters explore subjects such as pornography, highlighting differences in perspective between second- and third-wave feminists.

Second-wave feminism revealed the oppression of women in the entertainment media in terms of obsession with the portrayal of women as sex objects. This is described in the literature as "victim feminism" and obviously extended to opposition to pornography, which was seen as promoting violence toward women. Some feminists, such as Catharine MacKinnon, worked toward laws aimed at banning pornography (Evans, 2003). Third-wave feminists reject victim feminism and endorse "power feminism," which is based on a sense of individualism. Thus, for example, not all third-wave feminists are against pornography as long as women involved in it claim empowerment via economic (or other) resources. Some theorists observe that the third wave is "a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures" (Heywood & Drake, 1997, pp. 2–3).

## Emerging Leadership

Leadership in the second wave of feminism, based largely on consensual style, clearly emerged in the public sphere of politics, achieving goals of new legislation that enabled women equal access to resources in many policy arenas, including education, work, and some aspects of family life. Second-wave feminism was a movement, based on a collective consciousness. Third-wave feminism appears in a different form. Leadership in the third wave is individually defined. The goals of leadership in the third wave are not collective and are not focused as much on policy change at the national level. They may be locally focused, they may be an outcome of personal direction, or they may be both. For the purposes of comparison, organization and leadership in the second and third waves of feminism will be addressed next.

## Second-Wave Organization and Structure

Concepts of leadership in the second wave of feminism are inextricably tied to feminist organization structure that emerged in the 1960s, continuing into the 1970s and 1980s in some cases. First-wave organizations such as the National Woman Suffrage Association, formed by

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, disbanded after women secured the right to vote in 1920. So much energy had gone into the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment on August 26, 1920, that the women's movement virtually collapsed from exhaustion. With the exception of a few organizations such as the National Woman's Party (NWP), founded by Alice Paul in 1916 (formerly the Congressional Union for Women Suffrage), and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) and "good government" groups such as the League of Women Voters, the women's movement became dormant until the 1960s (Klosko & Klosko, 1999, pp. 277–278).

The 1960s saw the birth of new women's organizations and marked the beginning of what we now term the *second wave* of feminism. In 1961 President Kennedy created a national Commission on the Status of Women that led to the formation of a citizen's advisory council and women's commissions in all 50 states. These commissions clearly documented the second-class status of women in the United States, yet the government did little to bring about change. This lack of action mobilized many who had been involved with the commissions to join with Friedan in founding the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. Thus began one branch of the feminist movement, later to be joined by organizations such as the National Women's Political Caucus and the Women's Equity Action League, as well as the organizations such as the BPW that had existed since the 1920s. The structure of all these organizations was top-down hierarchical, with elected officers, boards of directors, by-laws, and other procedural rules. Leadership was defined "traditionally," that is, by position (Evans, 2003, pp. 18–53).

As second-wave feminism moved forward, hierarchy itself became an issue. This, in turn, affected the second-wave view of leadership. The primary goal of feminists in the second wave was to reduce patriarchy, defined as male domination by birthright, wherever that was possible. They believed that patriarchy was perpetuated through hierarchical organization; thus eliminating hierarchy was essential to eliminating patriarchy. In the literature of organization theory, hierarchy is defined as "any system in which the distributions of power, privilege and authority are both systematic and unequal" (Iannello, 1992, p. 15). In this context power is defined as domination. Privilege implies a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed by a person or restricted group of people. Authority is defined as "legitimate" power, in which those subject to domination by others willingly accept this arrangement (Iannello, 1992, p. 15).

By the late 1960s the feminist movement had organized small groups called "consciousness-raising" or "rap" groups. Much of this organization was in reaction to Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique*. There Friedan wrote of a "problem with no name," which characterized the plight of the 1950s suburban housewife who longed for a life-affirming value that only men had access to through their



professional careers. Woman joined small groups to discuss Friedan's book and identify larger issues of sex discrimination in U.S. society. The groups became committed to nonhierarchy and began experimenting with organization structure. They were not interested in formal leadership and organization as it had developed in the larger groups of the movement.

Every organization faces the question of leadership. This is particularly true with regard to the development of more equalitarian structures. Organizations attempting to avoid hierarchical structure face a dilemma. They may wish to allow leadership to develop naturally out of the skills and interests of its members, but there is risk that some members may gain unaccountable power in the organization. Thus Jo Freeman (1974) coined the phrase, "the tyranny of structurelessness" (p. 202). This means that if there is no organization process that places women in leadership positions, there is also no process to remove them should they assume a leadership position due to media attention or external circumstances. In response to the extremes of hierarchy and nonstructure (meaning no process at all), feminists in the second wave began experimenting with consensual forms of organization. Consensual organizations are defined as groups in which control or power rests primarily with members. They operate through consensual process, which means that issues are discussed, then summarized, and if no objections are voiced, they become policy. Voting does not occur and is viewed as less efficient than consensus. Voting generates winners and losers. Those who lose may reorganize and present the same or similar issue again. The organization remains divided (Freeman, 1974).

Consensual organization is *structured*; it is the outgrowth of a participatory, egalitarian culture that is willing to invest quality time in the decision-making process. In consensual organization, procedure is as important as outcome. When outcomes are achieved, it is because all members are invested in them and support them. Members of consensual organizations support the notion that efficiency is gained in the long run. Although voting provides short-term efficiency, issues tend not to be resolved. As feminist consensual organizations evolved, it became apparent that not all types of decisions faced by organizations warranted the attention of the entire membership. This thinking gave birth to a "modified" consensual structure. Distinctions are made among types of policy decisions: critical and routine (Iannello, 1992, p. 94).

Critical decisions are those that have the potential for altering the path of the organization or defining its central mission. These decisions are made by the entire membership. Routine decisions are those that sustain the organization on more of a daily basis and are not likely to alter the path of the enterprise. Routine decision making in modified consensual structure is delegated outward, not downward, to coordinators who have expertise in a particular area. These decisions sustain the organization but do not alter its path. A diagram of this organization would portray routine decision making as lines of communication inside

a circle, with critical decision making remaining on the outer circle representing the entire membership (Iannello, 1992, p. 96).

The contributions of consensual and modified consensual organization in the second wave of feminism were important in challenging conventional hierarchical organization structure and the patriarchy perpetuated by those structures. The existence of these organizations in the form of health clinics, peace groups, and Women's Studies programs on college campuses, to name a few, provided models of leadership, organization, and communication that began to affect the larger bureaucratic structures of business, education, and government. Although it was obviously not possible for these large bureaucratic structures to completely adopt consensual practices, some of the values supporting consensus were incorporated at various levels of these bureaucracies. And although second-wave feminist organizations were not the only organizations in the world to provide an alternative example to hierarchy, at the very least they sparked enough interest in alternative models to give birth to new concepts of leadership and organization in traditional settings (Senge, 1990).

### Third-Wave Initiatives

Third-wave feminists seek the individual opportunity to explore, experiment, and focus on their own personal and career development. Further, the concept of individual *leadership* is quite opposite the notion of leadership through a collaborative process utilized in the consensual organizations that served the second wave of feminism so well. Consensual organization, in rejecting individual leadership, required accommodation and sought individual power through "oneness" with the group. Feminist leadership in the third wave can be collaborative, or not, but is more frequently individually focused. Third-wave leadership is mindful of hierarchical boundaries but not bound by hierarchical minds—nor is it restrained by consensual process. Third-wave feminism presents the *opportunity* for leadership, the ability to reestablish "self" as the subject (Drake, 1997, p. 97). In this way third-wave feminist leadership serves to challenge the established paradigm of consensual structure in the second wave.

### Goals of Third-Wave Leadership

In the public sphere third-wave feminists have the opportunity to shatter the glass ceiling. Due to the successes of second-wave feminism, many more women have reached higher levels in corporations, law firms, and government. Now that the link between hierarchy and patriarchy is not as strong as it once was, young women have a new platform from which to launch their own careers. One way to think of it is that they have a running start in reaching the top and much more legitimacy in making the attempt. As Baumgardner and Richards (2000)



state, these young women grew up with feminism “in the water” (p. 17).

So far, one of the great contributions of third-wave feminism is its challenge that each young woman define feminism to include herself (Drake, 1997). This challenge may hasten young women's ability to discover their “centered self” (Pipher, 1994, pp. 1–15). Thus the feminist struggle in the third wave becomes a personal one. In the private sphere of home and family, third-wave feminists have their work cut out for them. Second-wave feminism brought attention to the significant differences in the way men and women have been socialized to think and act with regard to home and family. Surprisingly even women who thought themselves more “liberated” came to realize that they too were invested in the powerful social norms underlying the belief that men should be the “breadwinners” (Potuchek, 1997).

## Summary and Future Directions

So what can be said about leadership in the third wave of feminism? Broadly it may be defined as a break with the paradigm of the second wave, retaining the ethos of consensual process as one possibility for leadership while exploring a wider range of individual initiatives. The wider range includes exercising leadership in the private sphere of the family, which some refer to as “the final frontier” of women's quest for equality.

## Third-Wave Feminism and Motherhood

While much of the third-wave feminist focus is located in the social culture of women between the ages of 15 and 30, more attention needs to be given to a slightly older group of women who came of age during the Reagan era and are now mired in the issues of motherhood. This group, aged 30 to 50, is often ignored in the discussion of third-wave feminism, especially in the generational mother-daughter discourse between second- and third-wave feminists (Henry, 2004).

Judith Warner's (2005) book, *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety*, argues that women in this age group were especially socialized to the notion of individual responsibility that was characteristic of the social and economic conservatism of the Reagan years. Believing that they had real “choices” regarding career and family, many of these women pursued careers first and then tried to accommodate those careers to family.

This accommodation took many forms. Some women worked in careers that offered flexible hours or allowed them to work at home. Others found themselves being sidelined from career advancement by employers who demanded more of them even though they had families. And some women “chose” to quit their jobs in favor of staying at home with their children. In all of this very few women were truly happy with their choice, and nearly all of the women took full responsibility for this unhappiness.

If each mother's life was not working out as planned, this circumstance was due to her individual “choices.” If her children, house, and family life were not perfect, it was her fault, because she was “responsible.” Further, these women were utilizing their career skills in attempts to “perfect” their home lives, bringing CEO-like skills to sports schedules, music and dance lessons, birthday parties, and other child-related activities. As Warner (2005) explains, “rather than becoming rebels or pioneers, we became a generation of control freaks” (p. 47). Warner refers to this as “the mess,” which in some ways is the modern version of second-wave feminism's “problem with no name,” the phrase coined by Friedan in 1963.

As a starting point for addressing this “mess,” Warner (2005) calls for a “politics of quality of life” (p. 268). By comparing her experiences of first becoming a mother in France with those of mothers in the United States, Warner is easily able to see the part that culture plays in defining the role of mothers and the locus of responsibility with regard to family. In brief, according to Warner, French culture views mothers as citizens who deserve a full and rewarding “adult” life of their own. There is a clearer separation of adult “space” and child “space” as it applies to the structure of the French home both physically (no child-centered “family room”) and mentally (time for adult conversation).

French culture views the raising of children as a community responsibility, and thus the French are willing to spend government money for quality day care and paid parental leaves, as many other European countries do. As Siim (2000) explains in her book, *Gender and Citizenship*,

French political and intellectual history transcends the liberal language of abstract individualism by placing the individual as part of the national political community. And historians and political scientists have recently suggested that there is a specific French conception of citizenship . . . with implications for women's citizenship. (p. 46)

As Siim (2000) further explains about the French example, “Parental policies were built on a double assumption that women are both workers and mothers—and that subsequently public policies ought to support women in their dual role” (p. 20). Warner calls for American policy making that would begin to relieve the individual burden that American mothers bear. She states that “one of the most surprising things about our current culture of motherhood is that while it inspires widespread complaint, it has not led to any kind of organized change” (p. 53).

Warner is far from alone in her analysis. Many other books and articles have been written that underscore her arguments. Taylor, Layne, and Wozniak (2004) have written a book titled *Consuming Motherhood*, which looks at the effects of motherhood under modern capitalism. Arlie Hochschild's (1997) book *The Time Bind*, which has the subtitle *When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*, points to a work/family crisis. In *The Impossibility of Motherhood*, Patrice DiQuinzio (1999) highlights the “paradoxical politics of mothering” (p. 28).



Ulla Björnberg and Anna-Karin Kollind (2005), in their work, *Individualism and Families*, discuss “time politics,” meaning shorter work hours and extended leaves, as a means for reaching gender equality by “dissolving the hierarchical dualism of work and private life” (p. 14). These books are just a sampling of the literature that now exists, articulating the very real hardships facing mothers in U.S. society. Most of these books conclude with a call for government intervention and assistance, yet, to date, in the United States, their analyses have fallen on deaf ears or have been ignored entirely by legislators. Thus the “dualism” of work and private life in the United States remains an “individual” matter.

Mothers in U.S. society are consumed with the daunting task of balancing the public and private, the responsibilities of career and home. From the concerns of this group come the most pressing, if not dire, questions of our time: Who will take care of the family? Without time to step back and reflect on the problem, mothers are trapped in a never-ending circle of personal responsibility for making “choices” that don’t actually exist. They attempt to “perfect” a lifestyle in which perfection is not possible. At the same time, a false sense of equality is being experienced by a younger group of women as they pursue a path of individualism. If nothing changes, their sense of equality will be challenged as they enter the stressful world of family life in the next decade.

Out of this nexus comes the declaration that “feminism has failed.” Linda Hirshman’s research, first presented in *The American Prospect* (2005) and most recently published in her book *Get to Work: A Manifesto for Women of the World* (2006), notes that “half the wealthiest, most-privileged best educated females in the country stay home with their babies rather than work in the market economy” (2005, p. 1). For example, she provides data that show that in the year 2000, only 38% of female Harvard graduates with a master’s degree in business administration (MBA) were working full-time. Hirshman (2005) correctly identifies the problem of the lack of change in the private lives of women (p. 3). She argues, “While the public world has changed, albeit imperfectly . . . private lives have hardly budged. The real glass ceiling is at home” (p. 1).

Hirshman also points to the flaws in so-called choice feminism. Women are faced with the “moral” dilemma of whether to work or stay at home with their children and that these “choices” are incredibly constrained. This is the frame that pits working moms against stay-at-home moms, thus creating a war between women rather than a war against patriarchy. Additionally, she points out that press coverage of the “choice” dilemma does nothing to advance the cause of women. Hirshman (2005) argues that women need real solutions, not feminist theories. She finds these solutions in the world of work. She offers three rules to young women: “prepare yourself to qualify for good work, treat work seriously, and don’t put yourself in a position of unequal resources when you marry” (p. 6).

On this last point she recommends that women either find a spouse with less social power (i.e., marry down,

marry someone much younger or much older) or find a spouse with an ideological commitment to gender equality (much harder to do in reality). The goal is to avoid taking on more than your fair share of the “second shift,” but this is difficult to accomplish. Hirshman (2005) cites a survey by the Center for Work-Life Policy indicating that 40% of highly qualified women with spouses felt that their husbands create more work around the house than they perform (p. 8). Further, according to another team of researchers, “when couples marry, the amount of time that a woman spends doing housework increases by approximately 17 percent, while a man’s decreased by 33 percent” (p. 8).

Women’s choice in opting out of the world of work could be viewed as a rational alternative to the “perfect madness” that Warner describes in her book. Viewed this way, “opting out” is not a failure of feminism but instead the only real solution to current economic and political circumstances. Additionally, Hirshman’s solutions or “rules” reinforce individualism: Women should solve this problem personally by strategically selecting a partner and maintaining a high level of ambition for work. At a time when there are no other alternatives, this may be good advice—or the only advice. But what about the long term?

Hirshman (2005) states that “the family is to 2005 what the workplace was to 1964 and the vote was to 1920” (p. 6). This should be viewed as a political challenge, calling for a redistribution of resources. To achieve political change, like their sisters before them, third-wave feminists must work toward a redefinition of terms. This time, it is not a redefinition of women’s nature, as it was in the first wave of feminism. Although there are still questions about “the ethic of care” and women’s “natural inclination” or “suitability” toward children and home, feminism in the second wave worked to provide more equitable answers (Evans, 2003). The challenge for feminist leadership in the third wave is to redefine women’s *responsibility* toward the private sphere of children and home.

### **Third-Wave Leadership and Conservative Feminism**

Feminism as it has been discussed so far has been defined through a liberal ideological lens. Modern liberal ideologists in the United States generally express the view that the federal or national government has a responsibility to establish legislation and therefore programs to help people in need, to enhance equality from a nationwide perspective, and to protect citizens from the ill effects of a capitalist economic, or market, system. The New Deal programs of the 1930s still serve as an example of modern liberal thought. With regard to U.S. feminism, liberal feminists have sought to help women become an integral part of the governing process by electing them at every level: local, state, and federal (Tong, 1998, p. 23). This enables women, through political leadership, as legislators, executives, and bureaucrats, to enact and implement laws that are favorable to women.



Not only are third-wave feminists rejecting the paradigm of the second wave, they may also be rejecting the ideology of modern liberalism. There is an obvious modern liberal underpinning to second-wave feminism in U.S. politics. In its quest for the collective, for expansion of women's rights through an equal rights amendment and endorsement of pro-choice policy with regard to reproductive freedom, second-wave feminists embody a modern liberal political stand. That is to say that the basic tenants of modern liberalism are grounded in a view that the federal government has a responsibility to create and administer legislation and laws that promote equality and advance the cause of minorities. The standpoint is from that of the collective, the broadest community. Conservatism tends to reject the collective view and initiatives that are group based from the federal level. Conservatism favors a more localized, individualized approach.

Conservative feminists, like third-wave feminists, reject what they see as a group-bound sameness, promoted by second-wave feminists. Conservatives argue that liberal feminists make "monolithic" prescriptions or establish qualifications for calling oneself a feminist. Further, they argue that individuals have the right to practice "private feminism" (over "public feminism"), which is expressed through personal and individual choices made in the private sphere of home and family (Koertge & Patai, 1994, p. 3). Liberal feminists argue that traditional identities have been forced upon women in the private sphere of home and family; thus the public sphere is the only avenue for changing these perceptions.

There is much debate among feminists and others as to whether "conservative" feminism actually exists. There are, however, conservative women who claim feminism as part of their agenda. Academics such as Christina Hoff Sommers, author of *Who Stole Feminism?* (1994), have argued that conservative feminism has a place in the third wave. The existence of organizations such as Independent Women's Forum and ifeminist.com confirm this (Schreiber, 2008, p. 7). Sommers (1994) argues that conservative feminism can be viewed as "equity" feminism, a feminism grounded in free market principles that favor equality of opportunity over equality of outcome. The concept of equity feminism has taken hold among many younger conservative women who feel alienated from

feminist-based programs and organizations, such as women's centers, on their college campuses. Attempts at including conservative perspectives in women's center programs have met with controversy on some campuses. Often, at the heart of the controversy, is the issue of whether an individual or organization can claim to be feminist while at the same time including a pro-life position on abortion. Feminist Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (1996) makes the following comment on this subject:

Feminists accuse the religious right of trying to dictate what a woman should be and how she should think about a vast array of complicated problems. Meanwhile, these same feminists practice the very thing they preach against. . . . Feminist diversity does not embrace women who oppose abortion . . . (or) prefer to stay at home with children. (p. 30)

Feminist scholars such as Jean Bethke Elshtain contend that liberal feminists are incorrect in their assertion that women need to be liberated from their traditional roles in the family. She argues that "ideals and values from this world can exist separate from female subordination if women's traditional identities are not perceived as devoid of vitality and substance and defined by male domination" (Elshtain, 1982, p. 368). This perspective has also been described as "maternal" feminism and "communitarian" feminism. Those holding these perspectives do not consider the boundaries of the public and private spheres to be as sharp as liberal feminists may suggest.

Most women in the third wave want to advance the idea that feminism is individual and fluid (Dicker & Piepmeyer, 2003). This goal gives way to models of leadership that encompass a much broader range than in previous feminist movements. In the third wave there is less of a commitment to leadership that fosters a collective consciousness, yet a dynamic individualism that is pathbreaking with regard to achievement in both the professional and the personal sphere. So what can be said about leadership in the third wave of feminism? Broadly it may be defined as a break with the collective paradigm of the second wave, retaining the spirit of women's cooperation while exploring a wider range of individual initiatives. Scholars are still in the process of studying third-wave leadership. The challenge will come in measuring its real outcomes.

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN CONGRESS

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In recent decades political scientists have dedicated a great deal of attention to the study of female politicians with specific attention focused on female legislators. This research includes analyses of the obstacles women confront when running for legislative office, including incumbency advantage, fund-raising challenges, and exclusion and absence from the pool of eligible candidates (e.g., Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994; Palmer & Simon, 2008; Sanbonmatsu, 2006). In addition, extant research has examined how women behave once in elected office (e.g., Bingham, 1997; Dodson, 2006; Swers, 2002; Thomas, 1994). The research on female legislators is divided between analyses of female politicians at the state and local levels and studies of women at the national level. In-depth studies of female legislators often have focused on the state and local levels. The smaller size of these legislative bodies in comparison to Congress, easier access to local and state legislators, and greater proportional representation of women in many state houses combine to make the study of local and state politicians attractive to political scientists. More recently, studies of women and Congress have become more prolific as the number of women in Congress has increased.

This chapter draws on the research on female legislators at the local, state, and national levels to shed light on women's leadership in Congress. Women's leadership in Congress pertains to a variety of different roles that women play in Congress, including the election and appointment of females to formal party leadership positions and committee assignments, as well as women's leadership on a variety of policies and issues. This chapter begins with a brief review of the history of women's representation in Congress and proceeds to a discussion of women in formal leadership positions in the House of

Representatives and the Senate. Special attention is focused on Representative Nancy Pelosi's ascent to the first female Speaker of the House. Next, I discuss women's leadership style and the characteristics that distinguish female legislative leadership from male leadership. I proceed to a review of the vast political science literature documenting how female legislators act as leaders on women's issues. Finally, I discuss the various obstacles that historically have kept women out of the pool of eligible candidates for Congress, and subsequently out of leadership roles, and the changes that have occurred in recent years to increase the likelihood that women will undertake a run for Congress.

### Women in Congress

In 1916 Jeanette Rankin (R-MT) was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and became the first woman to serve in Congress. Since that time, a total of 252 women have served in Congress, including 213 in the House of Representatives (142 Democrats and 71 Republicans), 31 in the Senate (19 Democrats and 12 Republicans), and 8 women in both houses (6 Democrats and 2 Republicans; Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], 2010a). Many of the first women in Congress were widows appointed to their positions or elected via a special election to fulfill the duration of a deceased spouse's term in office. Since 1923, 47 women have come to Congress following the death of a spouse, including 39 in the House of Representatives and 8 in the Senate (CAWP, 2005). As recently as 2005, Doris Matsui (D-CA) ran in a special election and was elected to the House of Representatives after her husband's death. Other recent examples of a widow



coming to Congress after the death of her spouse include Jo Ann Emerson's (R-MO) election to fill the congressional seat of her deceased husband in 1996 (she has been reelected six times); the 1998 appointment of Mary Bono (Mack) (R-CA) to fill Sonny Bono's House seat (she also has been reelected numerous times); Lois Capps's (D-CA) special election to complete the term of her recently deceased husband in 1998 (she won the general election later that year and has been reelected each term); and Jean Carnahan's (D-MO) 2000 appointment by the governor of Missouri to fill the Senate seat her husband won shortly after his death (she was defeated in the 2002 election to determine a permanent replacement for the seat).

Beginning in the 1970s, more women began to seek election to Congress in their own right. This increase coincided with the development of the women's rights movement in the United States. As a result of the women's rights movement, women felt emboldened to run for office and decided to enter congressional primaries. In addition, the public's perception of female sex roles was changing and voters became more accepting of female candidates. As Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon (2008) report, "Between 1970 and 1974, the number of women running in primaries jumped from 42 to 105, the number of women winning primaries increased from 24 to 43, and the number of women winning the general election went from 12 to 18" (p. 23). Since the 1970s the number of women in Congress has slowly increased with most women elected to the House of Representatives.

A notable exception to this steady increase in female representation was the spike in the number of women elected to Congress in 1992. This year is commonly referred to as the "Year of the Woman" because 47 women were elected to the House, including 24 nonincumbents, and 6 women were elected to the Senate, including 4 nonincumbents (Palmer & Simon, 2008). The large increase in the number of nonincumbent women elected to Congress in 1992 reflected the substantial increase in the number of women seeking election to office that year. For example, a total of 209 women ran in primary elections for the U.S. House of Representatives; 104 of these women won their primaries, leading them to compete in the general election in 1992 (Palmer & Simon 2008, p. 26). Many of these women were motivated to run for Congress by the confirmation hearings for Clarence Thomas's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court. The hearings garnered an unusual amount of public attention as a result of Anita Hill's sexual harassment allegations against Thomas. The hearings were televised and widely viewed, and many women were outraged by the all-male Senate Judiciary Committee's treatment of Anita Hill. The increase in female candidates for Congress that year combined with an unusually large number of open seats and an advantageous electoral environment to be very conducive to the election of women.

In 2010 a record 90 women are serving in Congress, including 73 (56 Democrats and 17 Republicans) in the House of Representatives and 17 (13 Democrats and 4

Republicans) in the Senate (CAWP, 2010a). In addition, three women—Elcanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU), and Donna Christian-Christensen (D-VI)—serve as Delegates to the House (CAWP, 2010b). Yet, women still account for less than one fifth of the members in each house of Congress despite the fact that women are a majority of the U.S. population. As a result, women are underrepresented in formal leadership positions in Congress as well.

## Women in Positions of Leadership in Congress

There are two opportunities for women to obtain leadership positions in Congress. Women may be selected as committee or subcommittee chairs or they may obtain leadership positions within their respective party organizations in the House and the Senate. In both instances women have struggled to gain access to these opportunities, and it has only been in recent years that women have been steadily represented in the leadership ranks. That being said, considering that the first woman was elected to Congress in 1917, it was not long before the first woman chaired a congressional committee. During the 68th Congress (1923–1925), Representative Mae Ella Hunt Nolan (R-CA) served as chair of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Post Office Department, making her the first female committee chair in congressional history (Kaptur, 1996, p. 214; U.S. Congress, 2009a).

Notably, during Representative Mary Norton's (D-NJ) 26 years in the House of Representatives (1925–1951), she chaired four House committees, including the Committee on the District of Columbia, Committee on Labor, Committee on Memorials, and the Committee on House Administration (Kaptur, 1996; U.S. Congress, 2009b). As chair of the Committee on the District of Columbia, Representative Norton was charged with governing and managing the finances of Washington, D.C., earning her the nickname the "mayor of Washington" (Kaptur, 1996, p. 41). Later as chair of the Labor Committee (1937–1946), Norton played a pivotal role in securing the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, a key piece of President Roosevelt's New Deal legislative package, which implemented a national minimum wage and a maximum 40-hour work week (Kaptur, 1996, p. 43). Yet, despite these early successes in securing chair positions in the House, beginning in 1955 women's leadership was intermittent until 2007: Only two women served as committee chairs during this period (CAWP, 2009).

Similarly, in the Senate, the first woman was selected to chair a Senate Committee shortly after the first woman entered the Senate. In 1933, Senator Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-AR) chaired the Committee on Enrolled Bills (CAWP, 2009). But, it was not until 1995 that a second female Senator chaired a committee. Republican Senator Nancy



Kassebaum's (R-KS) elevation to chair of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources in 1995 made her the first female to chair a major Senate committee in Congress (CAWP, 2009).

With respect to party leadership positions in Congress, it was not until the 1990s that female legislators were able to make substantive inroads. Despite some early successes such as Senator Margaret Chase Smith's (R-ME) selection as chair of the Senate Republican Conference in 1967 and the election of numerous women to serve as secretary of the House Democratic Caucus—Chase G. Woodhouse (D-CT; 1949–1951), Edna F. Kelly (D-NY; 1955–1957 and 1963–1965), Leonor K. Sullivan (D-MO; 1959–1975), Shirley Chisholm (D-NY; 1981–1983), Geraldine Ferraro (D-NY; 1983–1985), and Mary Rose Oaker (D-OH; 1985–1987)—it was not until the 1980s in the House and the 1990s in the Senate that women began to gain regular access to a variety of important party leadership positions (CAWP, 2009).

Beginning with Republican Representative Lynn Martin's (R-IL) selection by her party to serve as vice chair of the Republican Conference in the House in 1984, women have gradually made inroads in party leadership in the House (CAWP, 2009). Notable accomplishments include the Democrats' selection of Representative Mary Rose Oaker (D-OH) as vice chair of the House Democratic Caucus (1987–1989) and Representative Barbara Kennelly (D-CT) as chief deputy whip in the House of Representatives in 1991 (CAWP, 2009). During the 1990s in the Senate, notable accomplishments include Senator Barbara Boxer's (D-CA) selection as Senate deputy majority whip (1993–1995); Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's (R-TX) selection as Senate deputy majority whip (1997–2001); and Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) serving as their respective party's conference secretary (CAWP, 2009). More recently, Senator Patty Murray's (D-WA) election as the first woman to chair the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in 2001 and the first female assistant floor leader in 2005 broke new ground in the Senate as did Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY) becoming the first woman in the House to chair the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (CAWP, 2009). Clearly, however, Representative Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) ascent through the Democratic Party leadership in the House to become Speaker of the House of Representatives is the most significant example of a woman in a leadership position in congressional history. In the 111th Congress, six female Democrats and one Republican woman occupy party leadership positions in the House, including Speaker Pelosi (D-CA), and four Democratic women have party leadership roles in the Senate (CAWP, 2009).

The elevation of women to formal leadership positions in Congress has various benefits. First, descriptive representation of women in Congress provides female state and local elected officials and members of the general public with models of women succeeding in their pursuit of leadership positions and exercising authority in a male-dominated institution.

Second, substantive representation often derives from having women in leadership positions. Female leaders in Congress may utilize their authority to advance women's interests in the policy process and enhance political opportunities for women. Finally, as women gain access to formal leadership positions in Congress, they are able to enhance their individual public and institutional profiles and position themselves for advancement to other leadership positions in future congresses as well as use their leadership experience as a launching pad for higher political ambitions.

As previously noted, women's leadership in Congress broke new barriers in 2007 when Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) was selected as Speaker of the House. Pelosi is the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House, and she is the highest-ranking woman in congressional history. As Speaker of the House, Pelosi is also second in line to the presidency. Pelosi's ascent to Speaker was steady and systematic. Pelosi was born to a political family—her father served as the mayor of Baltimore and spent nearly a decade in the House of Representatives—and she was very active in Democratic Party politics. Prior to her election to Congress, Pelosi had been the chair of the Democratic Party in California and served as a member of the Democratic National Committee (CAWP, 2010b). Pelosi was elected to Congress in 1987 in a special election to fill the seat of deceased Representative Sala Burton (D-CA). Once in Congress, Pelosi pursued opportunities that would enhance her institutional profile. For example, she quickly was able to secure a coveted seat on the powerful House Appropriations Committee. In 2001 Pelosi was elected House Democratic Whip and assumed a leading role in the Democratic Party leadership. In the process, she became the highest-ranking woman in the history of Congress (CAWP, 2005). Then, in 2002, Pelosi was elected by House Democrats to be the first female House Democratic leader (CAWP, 2005). As minority party leader, Pelosi was the leader of the Democratic Party in the House and joined Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), the Senate Democratic leader, as the two national leaders of the party. Finally, in 2007, after Democrats gained majority control of the House of Representatives, Pelosi was elected as Speaker of the House.

As Speaker of the House, Pelosi is the leader of the House of Representatives and the head of her party in the House, two roles that give her substantial authority and power. Pelosi is able to establish the legislative agenda in the House, and with the recent election of a Democratic president she will work closely with President Barack Obama to further his agenda and coordinate policy between the legislative and executive branches of the federal government. In addition, Pelosi assigns committee and subcommittee chairs and decides who will represent the House on conference committees. As a result, she is able to use her appointment powers to substantially shape the legislative process. Finally, she controls all legislative debate and possesses the authority to recognize members seeking to speak on the floor of the House. It is also worth noting



that Speaker Pelosi is one of the few recognizable names and faces within the Democratic Party, and she is one of the party's national leaders. In fact, until the election of President Obama, Pelosi was the *de facto* leader of the national Democratic Party, a first for a woman.

Despite women's progress, barriers to women's leadership in Congress continue to exist. For example, committee and subcommittee chair positions are often awarded on the basis of seniority. This predisposition works to the detriment of congresswomen when they seek committee assignments and leadership positions because many of the women in Congress were recently elected to their positions (Dolan et al., 2007, p. 256). During the 110th Congress the average length of service for the chairs of the 22 standing committees was 13.7 terms, but of the 435 members of the House there were only 5 female representatives who had served 10 or more terms in comparison to 70 males (Palmer & Simon, 2008, p. 94). As a result of the emphasis on seniority, women in Congress have not had many opportunities to chair committees.

In the 111th Congress women remain underrepresented in committee chair positions. There are three female committee chairs in the Senate: Barbara Boxer (D-CA) is the chair of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) is the chair of the Select Committee on Intelligence, and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) is the chair of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee (CAWP, 2010c). Similarly, three women chair committees in the House: Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) chairs the Committee on Ethics, Louise Slaughter (D-NY) chairs the Committee on Rules, and Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) chairs the Committee on Small Business (CAWP, 2009). Gaining access to committee and subcommittee chairs is important because the individuals serving in these leadership positions are able to exercise significant influence in the legislative process and play a pivotal role in determining the success and failure of different bills. Although women have made progress in securing committee chairs in recent years—there were no female chairs in the Senate and House as recently as the 107th and 109th congresses, respectively—there is much progress to be made given the power associated with these leadership positions (CAWP, 2009).

It is also worth noting that female Democrats have achieved more success securing chair positions than have their Republican counterparts. This may reflect the fact that there are more female Democrats (69) than female Republicans (21) in the 111th Congress, and this has been true since the late 1980s. Beginning with the 100th Congress, female Democrats surpassed female Republicans and the disparity has grown wider over time (CAWP, 2010a). In addition, female Democrats have accrued more seniority than Republican women, and this enables the former to fare better in chair appointments and party leadership position as well. Finally, Republican women may be disadvantaged by the fact that they often identify as moderate Republicans when the party leadership has been controlled by conservative Republicans in

recent decades (Rosenthal, 2002a). That being said, if the number of women in Congress continues to increase and if these women are professional politicians pursuing careers in the House and the Senate, the number of women chairing committees and assuming formal leadership positions should increase as well.

But for more women to rise into the ranks of the congressional leadership, more women will need to run for and win election to Congress, and they will have to retain their seats to gain the advantages of seniority and increase the likelihood that they will be selected to be a committee chair or elected to a party leadership position. According to Palmer and Simon (2008), one of the obstacles to women's pursuit of committee chairs is that women tend to be older than men when they run for office. As a result, women may serve fewer terms in Congress than men and be passed over for leadership positions in favor of their longer-serving male counterparts. Yet, in recent years there have been a few notable exceptions to this trend. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD) is an example of a younger woman serving in Congress. Herseth Sandlin was 34 when she was elected to the House of Representatives in 2004, and she is the youngest woman serving in Congress. If she remains in Congress, she will accrue seniority on par with many of her male colleagues and be in a position to chair a variety of committees or pursue other leadership opportunities.

## Women's Distinctive Leadership Style

Men and women legislators tend to exhibit different leadership styles and take the lead on different policy areas. These distinctions influence both the institutional environment (notably how business is conducted among members of Congress and with external actors) and the types of legislation that will be considered and successfully passed out of Congress. The evidence indicates that women tend to be facilitative leaders, utilizing their authority to promote discussions, foster cooperation, and guide policy solutions to fruition. (Dodson & Carroll, 1991; Dolan et al., 2007; Kathlene, 1994, 2001; Rosenthal, 2000). Female legislators employ democratic and cooperative, as opposed to autocratic and confrontational, means to reach resolutions (Kathlene, 1994; Rosenthal, 2000). As Julie Dolan and colleagues (2007) explain, "Women adopt more egalitarian leadership styles that value consensus and collaboration whereas men adopt more authoritative styles that emphasize competition and conflict" (pp. 249–250). Even when men and women acquire similar amounts of power and comparable leadership positions, the evidence indicates that they continue to behave differently (Kathlene, 2001).

Due to the fact that women in Congress have not had many opportunities to chair committees or assume party leadership positions, there is limited research on women's formal leadership style in Congress. Yet, the evidence indicates that female members of Congress often distinguish



themselves from their male colleagues when they take the lead in sponsoring and ushering legislation. For example, congresswomen often utilize different language than congressmen when debating an issue (Levy, Tien, & Aved, 2001). Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) is known for engaging in "Patty-speak," where she employs personal anecdotes and straightforward language to make the case to her colleagues and the American public (Bingham 1997, p. 113). She explains, "I think women talk in language and in terms that people understand more clearly. . . . If you listen to the men, they debate economic theory. The economic theory is important, but what really makes people understand what's in a bill is when you talk about what it really means to you" (qtd. in Bingham, 1997, p. 113). In addition, female members of Congress often discuss their personal experiences as women when introducing or speaking on behalf of a piece of legislation advancing women's interests (Bingham, 1997; Walsh, 2002).

Extant research indicates that female legislators seek the input of a variety of players when formulating policy, and female committee chairs use their positions of power at committee hearings to facilitate discussions among committee members and witnesses and usually restrict their own contributions to the discussion, whereas male committee chairs tend to control the discussion and direct it in ways that reflect their own interests (Kathlene, 2001, p. 39). For example, Representatives Henry Hyde (R-IL) and Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) were each allotted 10 minutes to speak at the beginning of a 1993 debate about the Hyde Amendment; Hyde spoke for the majority of his time slot, whereas Schroeder divided her time and gave nine other members of Congress each 1 minute to speak, thereby leaving herself only a single minute as well (Levy et al., 2001, p. 123).

In addition, research indicates that female members of Congress bring a distinctive perspective and give voice to underrepresented interests in legislative debates (Walsh, 2002). Many female members of Congress readily acknowledge that they bring a different viewpoint and approach to policy formulation than their male counterparts. According to Representative Sue Myrick (R-NC), "Women tend to always try to find a solution. We aren't as confrontational as men. We team build. It gives us a definite advantage. We come into situations with a more relaxed, open attitude" (qtd. in Foerstel & Foerstel, 1996, p. 135). Similarly, Representative Karen McCarthy (D-MO) stated, "We're more inclusive. We tend to bring people into the scheme in the effort to create unity. . . . We always look for bi-partisan support. Our egos are less domineering than men's" (qtd. in Foerstel & Foerstel, 1996, p. 135). Thus, based on the limited research that is available, it appears that female leaders in Congress exhibit unique behaviors that deviate from the traditional norms associated with male-dominated legislatures.

Women's contextual political behavior may influence the types of policy that are produced because this approach emphasizes preventative and comprehensive, as opposed to

reactive and piecemeal, policy responses (Kathlene, 2001, p. 43). The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 is an example of a preventative and comprehensive policy proposal first introduced by Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) in 1984 absent a single cosponsor. Yet, by the time the FMLA was signed into law in 1993, male legislators were more than happy to be associated with this legislation. In fact, after years of working to see her bill become law, neither Schroeder nor a single female member of Congress was invited on stage when President Clinton signed the legislation. Instead Senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Representative Bill Clay (D-MO) spoke at the signing ceremony. Schroeder later stated, "I had worked on it for nine years, but when it finally passes, it's the guys who take the credit" (qtd. in Foerstel & Foerstel, 1996, p. 129). Yet, the reality remains that Schroeder's leadership on the FMLA both shaped the substance of the law and contributed to its ultimate passage. Furthermore, Schroeder's early leadership on this issue paved the way for male members of Congress to get on board with the FMLA and indicates that despite their limited numbers women in Congress may not only play an important role in shaping the legislative agenda, but they may influence the behavior of their male colleagues as well.

These findings suggest that as more women enter Congress and assume formal leadership positions, including chairing congressional committees, and take the lead on various legislative issues, the institutional environment for the consideration and crafting of legislation will change as well as the substance of the legislation that is produced. Thus, the presence of women in Congress is significant because women exhibit a distinctive leadership style and cultivate different relationships with various players when initiating legislation and chairing committees that distinguishes them from male legislators. As the number of women in positions of leadership in Congress increases, we may see more emphasis placed on cooperation and accommodation in the pursuit of legislative goals and policies. In addition, women's distinctive political behavior likely will continue to influence the substance of the bills that are passed in Congress even in those instances when women's contributions are not readily apparent or publicly acknowledged.

Existing research also documents that male and female legislators tend to have different policy priorities. Most notably, women are more likely to assign priority to women's issues (as discussed at length later). Yet, women and men also exhibit different priorities on issues that are not necessarily "women's" issues. For example, men prioritize the protection of individual rights, whereas women emphasize responding to individual's needs in the legislative process (Kathlene, 2001), and women tend to assign higher priority than males to environmental legislation (Thomas & Welch, 2001). In addition, women often tend to conceptualize different policy responses than men to the same issue. For example, men and women tend to approach legislation dealing with crime from different perspectives (Kathlene, 2001). As a result, male and female



legislators are likely to take the lead on and prioritize different policy areas, and the increased presence of women in Congress may raise the saliency of new issues.

## Women as Leaders on Women's Issues

The first woman elected to Congress, Jeannette Rankin (R-MT), campaigned as an advocate for women and children and stated that women were needed in Congress because "there are hundreds of men to take care of the nation's tariff and foreign policy and irrigation projects. But there isn't a single woman to look after the nation's greatest asset: its children" (qtd. in Dolan et al., 2007, p. 242). More recently, Susan J. Carroll interviewed 82 female members of Congress and found that nearly all of the women felt a responsibility to represent women and their interests in Congress (Carroll, 2002, p. 53). The challenge that confronts many female legislators is how to advance and become a leader on women's issues without being marginalized in other issue areas. In addition, women may find that it is difficult to represent the interests of their district's constituents and women (Dodson, 2006). Women in Congress do not want to be perceived as only being capable of representing the women in their districts. Thus female legislators must often strike a careful balance between women's issues and other social and political issues. In some instances this concern may lead women to abandon a focus on women's issues in order to better fit into a male-dominated institution. At the same time, some female legislators may feel extra pressure to take the lead on women's issues given the dearth of women in Congress. As Michele Swers (2002) reported, "One Democratic congresswoman explained, 'as the only woman on the—Committee for many years, I was the only one thinking from a women's point of view so I had to be responsible for bringing women and family issues to the table on top of everything else', such as district and other policy interests" (p. 74).

Research indicates that women legislators are more likely to produce bills related to women's issues when they gather together to caucus and discuss these issues (Bingham, 1997; Carroll, 2001; Dodson, 2006; Thomas, 1994; Thomas & Welch, 2001). The existence of a women's caucus provides like-minded women from both political parties with the opportunity to work together to devise policies and craft strategies for advancing women's interests in Congress. Given the small number of women in the U.S. Senate there is no formal women's caucus, but female senators have opted for informal gatherings as a means to get together and discuss women's issues. In contrast, the House of Representatives has the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (CCWI), an official bipartisan women's caucus founded in 1977 that is open to all women in the House. Although the CCWI's influence has ebbed and flowed over the years, the very existence of the caucus may enable women in the House to be more comfortable introducing legislation related to women's issues than if it

did not exist. For example, in the aftermath of the 1992 elections, "energized by the increased numbers of women members, the . . . [CCWI]—to which forty-two of the forty-eight women in the House belonged—outspokenly advocated numerous matters of concern to women members; and, perhaps as a result, the 103rd Congress passed a record sixty-six bills aimed at helping women and their families" (Dodson, 2006, p. 2). Whereas the CCWI met with great success during the 103rd Congress, in the aftermath of the Republican Revolution of 1994 the newly elected Republican leadership cut staff and funding for CCWI, thereby undermining its institutional influence (Dodson, 2006; Swers, 2002). Today the CCWI has more than 70 members from both parties, making it one of the biggest membership organizations in the House, and it has focused its attention on issues such as women's health, the challenges confronting women in the military, and enhancing educational opportunities for girls and women (Capps, 2008). Furthermore, the CCWI seems poised to benefit from having Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), a former caucus member, as Speaker of the House.

Additional research suggests that a critical mass of female legislators may be necessary in order for female members of Congress to be comfortable lobbying for women's interests (Darcy et al., 1994; Dolan et al., 2007; Thomas, 1994; Thomas & Welch, 2001). Women have become increasingly more likely to prioritize women's issues and interests, and this may reflect the increase in the number of women in Congress. It is noteworthy that after the 1992 elections in which a record number of women were elected to Congress, female legislators worked to produce a bipartisan agenda addressing a variety of women's issues (Bingham, 1997; Dodson, 2006). Furthermore, evidence indicates that a critical mass of female legislators may influence male colleagues to be more proactive in addressing women's issues and passing legislation advancing these interests (Darcy et al., 1994, p. 184). Again, the 103rd Congress, composed of a record number of women, passed a record number of bills addressing women's issues (Dodson, 2006, p. 1). Thus it appears that the actual number of women in Congress may impact the substance of the legislation that is passed. As more women are elected to the legislature, women become more comfortable advancing women's interests through the legislative process and male legislators become more aware of and comfortable working on these issues as well. These findings support the call to increase the number of women in Congress for substantive, as well as descriptive, benefits.

Numerous studies of legislative behavior indicate that women and men exhibit different policy priorities. Notably, women and men tend to exhibit their greatest differences on policies related to family, women, and children (Carroll, 2001; Dodson, 2001; Thomas & Welch, 2001). Female legislators are more likely than their male counterparts to identify legislation focusing on women, children and families, and social welfare issues as their top legislative priority (Carroll, 2001; Dolan et al., 2007). Women are also more likely than men to work on legislation specifically



advancing women's rights (Carroll, 2001). In addition to assigning higher priority to these types of issues, female legislators often seek out committee assignments that enable them to work on women's issues and social welfare policies (Darcy et al., 1994, p. 182), and women in Congress are more likely than their male counterparts to sponsor legislation on women's issues (Swers, 2002, p. 40).

Women's leadership on women's issues is especially significant in certain policy areas. Taking the lead on issues related to reproductive rights, and abortion in particular, may come with high costs for members of Congress. Abortion is a divisive issue and there are no direct district benefits associated with legislating on this issue. In fact, taking a lead on the abortion issue may have the effect of mobilizing constituents in the district as well as powerful national interest groups against an individual when he or she is up for reelection (Swers, 2002, pp. 40–41). As a result, many male legislators prefer to avoid advocating on behalf of legislation on controversial "feminist" issues. Yet, both Democratic and Republican women in Congress have taken the lead on feminist issues and introduced legislation in controversial policy areas such as abortion even if this exposes them to greater opposition come election time (Dodson, 2006; Swers, 2002, pp. 40–41). Thus female legislators in Congress play an important leadership role by increasing the saliency of and introducing bills that address various feminist issues such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, and abortion. Absent women in Congress, it seems likely that these concerns would be given much less attention as male legislators often seek to avoid the electoral and political costs associated with tackling these issues (Swers, 2002).

Furthermore, the presence of female legislators increases both the extent to which legislators consider how legislation will affect women and the number of bills passed that deal specifically with women's issues (Carroll, 2001). Sue Thomas and Susan Welch (2001) suggest that women's leadership on women's issues is important because female legislators are perceived by their colleagues as having more credibility in these policy areas. For example, during consideration of the FMLA in 1993, newly elected Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) spoke openly about their personal struggles as working mothers and described how they were each asked to leave their jobs when they were pregnant with their children (Bingham, 1997, pp. 112–113). Similarly, numerous women in the House shared their experiences as pregnant women in the workforce (Bingham, 1997, p. 118). Their male colleagues could not speak with the same authority on the issues of maternity and family leave. The Congresswomen's personal anecdotes, combined with the increase in the number of women in Congress that year and the election of Democratic President Bill Clinton, contributed to the passage of the FMLA guaranteeing national family and medical leave to many workers in the United States nearly a decade after Congress first considered the issue. Thus legislation that addresses women's issues

appears to be taken more seriously or is pushed more aggressively when female legislators are present to act as leaders, offer their support, and lobby for its passage.

Extant research also indicates that female legislators tend to be more liberal than their male counterparts even when controlling for party affiliation (Darcy et al., 1994; Dodson, 2006; Dodson & Carroll, 1991; Dolan et al., 2007). Women's liberal political ideology extends beyond women's issues and indicates that the increased presence of women in Congress may have implications for a variety of issue areas (Dodson, 2006).

## Obstacles to Women's Leadership: Underrepresentation of Women in Congress

One of the biggest obstacles to women's formal and informal leadership is the underrepresentation of women in Congress. In order to enhance women's contributions to the legislative environment and provide opportunities for women to lead, it is necessary to increase the number of women in Congress. Early female politicians confronted the challenge of attempting to enter into a "man's" profession. Female opportunities in the workforce were limited to certain professions—teacher, nurse, secretary—and the expectation was that politics was men's work. Senator Feinstein (D-CA) described her experience when she first decided to run for public office in 1969 as follows:

Taking that first step in running for office is always the most difficult. How well I remember visiting many of San Francisco's "movers and shakers" in 1969 to ask how they felt about my running for the Board of Supervisors, the eleven-member legislative body that governs both the city and county of San Francisco. To a person, the reaction was "You shouldn't run. There's only one woman's seat on the board and it's already filled." (Feinstein, 1992, p. xiv)

Feinstein's experience reflects the common sentiment that women did not belong in politics or that token representation of women was all that was necessary.

Also, women interested in entering politics were hamstrung by the fact that most women did not occupy jobs in the fields that are the traditional launching pads for political careers. Historically, male members of Congress have come to politics from jobs in the law and business, but throughout much of U.S. history, women's access to these professions was socially and legally constrained. In addition, male members of Congress often sought election to national office after successfully running for office at the local or state level. Women, however, confronted the same obstacles in running for these lower offices as they did when running for national office. As a result, women were unable to benefit from the "pipeline" elected positions whereas male politicians were able to draw on their previous experiences and connections as campaigners and officeholders when seeking election to Congress.



In contrast, female members of Congress initially began their political careers as community activists or as members of a local parent-teacher association or school board (Dolan et al., 2007, p. 244). Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS), one of the first female U.S. senators, was elected after serving on the local school board. Kassebaum's father, former Kansas governor and presidential candidate Alf Landon, did not want her to run for the Senate, but she entered the race and was elected in 1978 (Kaptur, 1996, p. 197). In some instances, women elected to Congress were able to make the transition to politics from traditional women's jobs. For example, Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), the first black woman elected to Congress, was a teacher prior to entering politics.

In recent years, more women are coming to Congress from the traditional eligibility pool and the pipeline offices at the state level that have produced male candidates. Yet, even as women successfully have integrated the legal and business fields and made inroads in state legislatures, a handful of female candidates have been elected to Congress with little to no previous political experience. For example, Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) had no prior political experience when she decided to run for Congress, but she was motivated by her desire to advance strict national gun control laws after her husband was murdered in the Long Island Railroad shootings. In addition, many female candidates continue to draw on their unique experiences when running for Congress. Patty Murray (D-WA) was elected to the Senate in 1992 after serving a single term in the Washington State Senate. Murray referred to herself as just a "mom in tennis shoes" throughout her campaign for Senate and intentionally drew attention to the characteristics that differentiated her from her male opponents in the primary and general elections. Similarly, Hillary Rodham Clinton's (D-NY) path to the Senate was aided by the political experience she acquired as First Lady of the United States. Yet, despite these women's successful elections, the reality remains that voters are most likely to take seriously those candidates that currently hold or have held elected office in the past (Darcy et al., 1994, p. 83). As a result, many women interested in pursuing a career in Congress are starting their political careers at the state and local levels in order to get in the "pipeline" for national elections. Of the 73 women serving in the House of Representatives in the 111th Congress, 55 held previous elected office (CAWP, 2010b).

One of the greatest obstacles to women's representation in Congress is incumbency advantage (Burrell, 1997; Darcy et al., 1994). Incumbents have a variety of advantages when running for reelection and they tend to win their races for Congress. Due to the various obstacles that kept women from pursuing election to Congress for over a century and half, incumbent members of Congress are usually males. Incumbency advantage has two detrimental impacts on female representation in Congress. First, female candidates challenging incumbents are likely to face nearly insurmountable odds in congressional races.

Second, female (and male) challengers often wait until an incumbent retires before launching a run for Congress. The increasing professionalization, however, of Congress has meant that incumbents are serving lengthy terms in office thereby decreasing the number of open seats contested in each congressional election. As a result, women interested in running for Congress often perceive limited opportunities as they wait for open seat elections.

Female candidates for Congress have on occasion benefited from the fact that they are able to position themselves as alternatives to the traditional politician (as exemplified by Patty Murray's successful campaign for Senate discussed earlier). Drawing on their unique experiences and highlighting what distinguishes them from candidates drawn from the traditional eligibility pool can work to women's advantage in certain electoral circumstances. For example, female candidates may benefit when the public is clamoring for action on social welfare issues because women are perceived as being better situated to address these concerns. Similarly, women are able to benefit in years when there is a strong anti-incumbency sentiment. Certainly the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings worked to the advantage of female nonincumbents by enabling them to position themselves as alternatives to the "old boys' network" in Congress.

Traditionally, women campaigning for a seat in Congress have faced questions about their viability as candidates in both primary and general elections. As elections have become increasingly more expensive, party leaders and donors often seek to support the candidate they believe will be most viable, and perceptions of viability are closely correlated with one's ability to raise money for the campaign. Female candidates for Congress were often perceived as less viable than male candidates, but organizations such as EMILY's List have played a significant role in challenging this perception. Founded in 1985, EMILY's List seeks to identify and support pro-choice female Democrats running for national office by raising campaign contributions for these candidates and eliminating questions about their financial viability.

As women have become more active in politics and challenged the assumption that politics is men's work, they have been able to overcome some of the aforementioned challenges. In recent decades, female politicians have made inroads at the state and local levels and are increasingly represented in state houses and other political offices thereby positioning themselves for election to higher office. As the number of women serving in state legislatures continues to increase, it is likely that the number of women competing in congressional elections and serving in Congress will increase as well. Similarly, women have diversified a variety of professions, and many female candidates now come from professional backgrounds that allow them to draw on the same financial and electoral resources as their male counterparts. These advancements are significant because in order for more women to break into the ranks of congressional leadership and take the



opportunity to lead on a variety of issues, more women will first need to be elected to Congress.

## Summary

Women in Congress make a unique contribution to the institutional environment and the legislative process. Female legislators exhibit a distinctive leadership style that favors cooperation and accommodation, and women are leaders on women's issues and generally offer a more liberal perspective on a variety of political issues. Women in Congress have played an instrumental role in advancing legislation addressing women's health concerns, notably drawing attention to breast cancer and women's heart disease, as well as reproductive rights and health care reform (Dodson, 2006). As more women are elected to Congress, both the policy-making process and the substance of congressional legislation should change and reflect women's influence.

One of the biggest obstacles to women's leadership in Congress, however, remains the underrepresentation of women in Congress. Since the 1970s female candidates have made inroads in Congress, increasing their numbers and their access to committee chairs and formal leadership positions. Most recently, Nancy Pelosi's election to Speaker of the House broke a glass ceiling for women in Congress. Yet, women remain underrepresented in formal leadership positions. As previously noted, committee chairs exercise enormous influence over the legislative process and the inclusion of more women as chairs would likely produce more bills that include the interests of women. Furthermore, if more women were members of the

formal party leadership, the bills coming out of committees that reflect the interests and priorities of women would likely receive different treatment.

Absent a significant increase in the number of women in Congress, it is possible that the current women in Congress will continue to advance into the party leadership. Given the increasingly competitive political environment and the continued existence of the gender gap in voting, it may be advantageous for both political parties to increase the profile of the women in their respective parties in Congress in order to appeal to female voters. This may lead to more women acting as committee chairs and assuming formal leadership positions.

Finally, as the number of women in Congress continues to increase, there are more opportunities for in-depth studies of women's political behavior. Analyses of women's leadership styles, voting behavior, and legislative priorities should continue in order to evaluate whether or not female legislators change their behavior as the number of women in Congress increases. In addition, the election of Speaker Pelosi provides a unique opportunity to examine whether or not legislation addressing women's interests fares better with a female leader. Lastly, additional attention should be focused on the role that women of color play in Congress, including identifying their policy priorities and the obstacles to their achieving leadership positions. Racial and ethnic minorities are underrepresented in Congress, but women of color may face specific obstacles to election—there are 21 women-of-color representatives in the 111th Congress—and elevation to leadership positions as a result of the intersection of sex and race, and they may behave differently than white women once in office as well (CAWP, 2010a).

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN EXECUTIVE SERVICE

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In January 2009, Hillary Rodham Clinton was nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as his secretary of state. When she was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on January 21, Clinton became the third woman to serve as secretary of state in the history of the United States. Yet a mere 12 years ago, the position had been held only by men. In fact, of 66 secretaries of state who have served since 1789 when the position was first created, the overwhelming majority (97%) have been men (U.S. State Department, 2009). Since 1997 the position has been held by three women and one African American man: Madeleine Albright (1997–2001), Colin Powell (2001–2005), Condoleezza Rice (2005–2009), and Hillary Rodham Clinton (2009–).

Although it took more than 200 years for a woman to reach the apex of the U.S. State Department, women have been part of the federal executive branch since they first began serving as clerical workers in the 1860s (Aron, 1987). Despite the fact the federal executive remains male dominated at the highest levels, women have been making slow but steady inroads into executive leadership positions. The first woman to head an executive branch in the federal government was Frances Perkins, appointed in 1933 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to head the Department of Labor. It took another 20 years before the next woman, Oveta Culp Hobby, would be appointed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to serve as his secretary of health, education, and welfare. Beginning with the Carter administration, all presidents have appointed two or more women to their cabinets. As of 2009, no woman has ever headed the Departments of Defense, Treasury, or Veterans Affairs (CAWP, 2009).

This chapter investigates women leaders in the executive service, comparing and contrasting Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice. What can we learn by comparing the tenures of Albright and Rice? Besides the fact that they were appointed by different presidents of different parties, and served in very different political climates, there is still much we can learn about gender and leadership from comparing these two women. After reviewing the literature on gender and executive leadership more generally, I first compare the paths each woman took to arrive at the top of the U.S. State Department. How do their paths to office compare? Are they more similar to one another or to their male predecessors? Is there any evidence to suggest that women aspiring to leadership roles in the State Department need to take a different route than men? How do they compare to other executive women in the paths they take to reach leadership posts?

Second, I draw from the literature on leadership styles to compare and contrast their leadership styles. Much literature suggests that women and men exhibit different leadership traits. In particular, scholarship often shows that women are more likely to employ consensus building and compassion, whereas men are more likely to employ hierarchy and authority (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Helgesen, 1990). Additional scholarship shows that women leaders more often prioritize women's and children's issues during their tenures and make conscious efforts to employ greater numbers of women in policy-making positions (Dolan, Deckman, & Swers, 2010; Swers, 2002). However, as Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) recognized long ago, organizational context and climate are also theorized to influence leadership styles. For women serving as tokens, or executives where very few women have gone before,



heightened performance pressures associated with being the lone woman at the top may induce different strategies for leadership. As women serving where mostly only men had gone before, how did Albright and Rice lead? Did either woman draw on feminine leadership styles at the top of a very masculine U.S. State Department? Did either make women's issues a priority during her tenure? What do their tenures tell us about women serving at the top of highly masculinized organizations?

In examining these questions, I review some of the main themes that emerge in the literature on female executives and also provide brief case studies of two women serving in one of the highest unelected positions in the entire U.S. government. By doing so, I highlight some of the challenges and opportunities facing women in executive leadership positions today and in the future.

## Gender and Executive Leadership

Scholarship on executive women is relatively new, reflecting the fact that women have only recently begun to reach high-level executive branch positions in any substantial numbers. A great deal of research focuses on the personal backgrounds of women tapped to serve in presidential administrations, their leadership styles, and their attention to women's issues. I discuss each of these in turn.

Much early research on female executives examined their paths to power, comparing and contrasting women with the men who also received appointments to presidential administrations. On the whole, researchers conducting these studies have found that male and female appointees have much in common: They are highly educated, come to their positions with experience in state or federal government, and are overwhelmingly white. Yet some important differences remain: Female appointees are far less likely than their male counterparts to be married or have children; they tend to have slightly lower educational levels and are more often drawn from the Washington, D.C., area; and they are typically a bit younger than the men who are called to serve (Borrelli, 2002; Martin, 1997; McGlen & Sarkees, 1993).

In addition, male and female appointees tend to receive different kinds of appointments. As MaryAnne Borrelli (2002) and Georgia Duerst-Lahti (1997) have found, women typically receive less prestigious and powerful appointments than do men. Women are more likely to be appointed to positions distant from the president's agenda, thereby giving them less influence in shaping policy central to the administration. Further, women tend to receive appointments in departments and agencies dealing with stereotypically feminine issues, such as health, education, and social services (CAWP, 2009; Duerst-Lahti, 1997). Part of the explanation, according to Borrelli (2002) and Duerst-Lahti (1997), is that the executive branch is a masculinized arena, and so masculine visions of power

predominate. Because women are far less likely than men to exhibit masculine traits and expertise, they are less likely to secure inner cabinet positions (State, Defense, Treasury, and Justice) where power and masculinity are fused.

In a related vein, the public tends to harbor more reservations about women's capabilities in traditionally masculine areas, such as defense and foreign policy, crime, and the economy (Alexander & Andersen, 1993; Rosenwasser & Seale, 1988). For many years, scholars have pointed to women's lack of experience in military affairs and the corresponding public fears about their capabilities in this arena as the largest stumbling block for women aspiring to the most powerful executive role of all, the U.S. presidency (see Lawless, 2004). Although it would be premature to conclude that the public no longer harbors these reservations, the candidacy of Hillary Rodham Clinton certainly challenged conventional wisdom on the topic. In fact, she routinely outpolled her male colleagues on questions about who would make the best commander in chief, who would be best at dealing with terrorism and dealing with the situation in the Middle East (Dolan et al., 2010). With such public confidence in Clinton's foreign policy credentials, it was not particularly surprising that President Barack Obama tapped her to be his secretary of state.

Additional research compares and contrasts how women and men exercise power and influence and whether they utilize different strategies to achieve their goals. Many studies investigate the extent to which managers and executives rely on "feminine" or "masculine" styles of leadership. Feminine leadership, also referred to as "power to" or democratic leadership, emphasizes cooperation, participation by many, information sharing, reliance on interpersonal skills, and sensitivity to other's feelings and perspectives (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Helgesen, 1990; Reingold, 1996). Masculine leadership, on the other hand, is marked by competition, strict control of information, individual accomplishment, hierarchy, and command and control strategies.

Consistent with these stereotypical gender roles, many scholars find evidence that women value interconnection and employ interpersonal skills to get things done, whereas men value autonomy and separation and rely upon command and control (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Helgesen, 1990). Sally Helgesen (1990) differentiates between hierarchy and an interconnected web to contrast men's and women's leadership styles. In her interviews with four private-sector executive women, she found that women lead in characteristically different ways than do men. Whereas traditional texts on managerial behavior place a premium on masculine concepts such as hierarchy and command and control, Helgesen argues that women have successfully adopted different strategies and tactics to be effective managers. As she explains,

Hierarchy . . . discourages diffuse or random communication; information is filtered, gathered, and sorted as it makes its way to the top. By contrast, the web facilitates direct communication,



free-flowing and loosely structured, by providing points of contact and direct tangents along which to connect. (p. 50)

Helgesen found that whereas men generally succeed using hierarchy, the interconnected web more closely approximates women's ways of leading. In their meta-analysis of 162 leadership studies, Eagly and Johnson (1990) found similar evidence that women are more interpersonally oriented and behave more democratically and less autocratically than do men.

However, a number of studies have found that women and men actually rely on similar leadership styles (Bayes, 1991; Duerst-Lahti & Johnson, 1992; Reingold, 1996; Rosenthal, 1997). For example, Reingold's (1996) study of male and female state legislators shows that both value feminine traits such as compromise and coalition building for getting things accomplished. Rosenthal (1997) found that male and female committee chairs in state legislatures likewise use very similar leadership strategies. In fact, both are about equally likely to share information and include their colleagues and the public in committee activities. Duerst-Lahti and Johnson (1992) found that in state bureaucratic settings, "men's and women's styles are far more similar than they are distinctive" (p. 155), and Jane Bayes (1991) found that both male and female executives in two federal cabinet departments incorporate interpersonal skills into their management styles. Yet Nancy E. McGlen and Meredith R. Sarkees (1993) found that women executives in the State Department and the Defense Department are slightly more likely than their male colleagues to report successes in dealing with human relations and to emphasize their own interpersonal communications and negotiation abilities; this finding was paralleled in an additional study focusing on female ambassadors (Morin, 1995).

Are the State and Defense Departments substantially different from the private sector or from state legislatures, where many other studies show similar leadership strategies used by women and men? Perhaps so. According to Kanter (1977), organizational structures and context can have significant influence on one's behavior on the job. In her 1977 study of Indsco, a large U.S. corporation, Kanter found that managerial behaviors are influenced by the larger context in which one works. Thus, if women employ different leadership or managerial strategies than their male colleagues, their behavior, she argues, should more appropriately be understood as conditioned by their work environment, not their gender. And the organizational climate of the State Department has not been particularly hospitable to women. Not only has the organization been predominantly male since its founding, but it has made very slow progress in incorporating women into policy-making positions ever since. The State Department was sued for employment discrimination in the 1970s (McGlen & Sarkees, 1993) and was subsequently ordered by a U.S. district court to strengthen antidiscrimination procedures and eliminate sex discrimination in its personnel practices

(Lasher, 2005; Scott & Rexford, 1997). Since then, women slowly have been increasing their share of foreign policy-making positions. One estimate is that women made up 18% of career foreign service officers, 22% of ambassadors, and 35% of top officials in the late 1990s (Lasher, 2005). Yet there are very few women who have served in high profile positions in the State Department. Further, women are disproportionately concentrated in clerical and administrative positions rather than policy-making ones (Scott & Rexford, 1997) and tend to receive ambassadorial appointments to countries of limited importance (Morin, 1995). Presidential appointees often arrive in Washington with previous federal administrative experience, often having previously served in the same departments or agencies to which they are called to serve. Because historically few women have worked in policy-making roles for the State Department, it is not particularly surprising to see that men have far outnumbered women in these positions.

Even though Albright and Rice led the same department, they did so under different presidents and faced different foreign policy challenges. The entirety of Albright's tenure as secretary of state was prior to September 11, 2001, while the vast majority of Rice's tenure at the National Security Council (NSC) and the entirety of her time at the State Department followed the 9/11 disaster. During Rice's tenure, the United States launched and maintained wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and faced heightened public concern about foreign policy and terrorism. Under Madeleine Albright, the United States used military force to respond to ethnic cleansing in Kosovo (often referred to as "Madeleine's War") but otherwise was not nearly as militarily engaged as during the two terms of George W. Bush. As such, comparing these two women is complicated by the fact that they served in very different contexts.

In addition to the importance of work environment, Kanter also discusses leadership challenges for the token, an individual who differs in some obvious and salient way from the majority of his or her colleagues and is easily singled out because of this visible difference. According to Kanter, tokens face all sorts of performance pressures: They are highly visible in their roles, they are usually treated as representatives of their entire demographic group, and they are more closely scrutinized than those who have dominant status in the organization. A consequence of these heightened visibility pressures, according to Kanter, is that tokens often behave in ways that deflect attention away from this "otherness," to demonstrate that they are more like their dominant colleagues than outward appearances might suggest. For women working in male-dominated groups, Kanter (1977) notes a tendency to downplay their connections to other women, explaining that to fit in with the dominant group (men), women will "occasionally turn against 'the girls'" (p. 282).

Many executive women also report feeling a keen sensitivity that that they are being judged as women first and administrators second. As pioneers trailblazing where very few other women have gone, the pressures to succeed so



that other women can follow in their footsteps are often substantial (Dolan et al., 2010). A senior executive woman interviewed by McGlen and Sarkees (1993) for their book on women in foreign policy explains:

You feel like you try harder. You wouldn't want to embarrass your sex. So I think you are conscious of that. Gosh, sometimes you walk in the room and you're the only woman and the room is filled with all these biggies. It makes you conscious. So you better look right, act right, be right. (pp. 280–281)

Clearly, Secretaries Albright and Rice would fit Kanter's definition of token. Albright was the first woman to head the State Department, and Rice was the first African American woman to head the department. Both received media attention that highlighted the historic nature of their appointments, and both clearly looked different from their predecessors and highest policy-making officials in the department. Further, both were chosen to lead a department with a long history of discrimination against women that once required female foreign service officers to retire upon marriage, where few women had ever held high-ranking policy-making positions before, and that is steeped in policy issues considered far more masculine than feminine (McGlen & Sarkees, 1993).

One additional component of women's leadership style that has received scholarly attention is the extent to which they emphasize women's issues in their work. Much research from the legislative and executive arenas demonstrates that women more often prioritize women's issues than do their male colleagues, that they work across party lines to advance policy that will benefit women, and that they are more likely to consider the impact that policy will have upon women in the population than are their male colleagues (Dolan et al., 2010; Swers, 2002).

As this chapter illustrates, a number of themes run through the literature on women in executive leadership. First, their career paths to the top tend to differ slightly from those of their male colleagues. Women more often serve in positions distant from the president's inner circle, they arrive with slightly less education, they are slightly younger when appointed, and they are less likely to be married or to have children. Second, there is some evidence that executive women embrace collaborative leadership styles and prioritize women's issues during their tenure. Third, we can expect organizational and political context to affect women's leadership in the State Department. The next section draws on these three themes to compare and contrast Albright and Rice and their leadership.

### Career Pathways for Albright and Rice

For all of their differences, Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice took very similar paths to the top. Both women are highly educated, holding Ph.D. degrees in subject matter central to the State Department's mission. Each

studied Soviet politics in the pursuit of her doctorate: Albright at Columbia University under Zbigniew Brzezinski, who would later serve as National Security Advisor under President Jimmy Carter, and Rice at the University of Denver, under Albright's father Josef Korbel. In comparing them with their immediate male predecessors at the State Department, Albright and Rice are similarly educated, both coming to their positions with advanced degrees. Warren Christopher, Clinton's secretary of state throughout his first administration, has a law degree and Colin Powell, George W. Bush's secretary of state during his first administration, has an M.B.A. (U.S. Department of State, 2009). In comparing Albright and Rice to all of their male predecessors going back to the first administration of President Harry S. Truman, they diverge more noticeably in terms of their educational attainment. Looking at all of the secretaries of state appointed since 1945, 75% of the men and 100% of the women have arrived at their positions with advanced degrees.<sup>1</sup> Albright and Rice also both worked as professors at prestigious universities before their initial federal appointments (Albright at Georgetown and Rice at Stanford, where she also served as the provost) and as staff members for the National Security Council years before they were appointed as secretary of state (Albright, 1978–1981; Rice, 1989–1991 and 2001–2005). Finally, both women also became secretary of state shortly after presidential elections rewarded their bosses with a second term.

Consistent with previous scholarship, neither Albright nor Rice was married when she was appointed, whereas both of their male predecessors were. Albright had divorced many years before her appointment and Rice has never been married. Albright has grown children, and Rice has no children. Both of their male predecessors have children. Both Albright and Rice were significantly younger than their male predecessors when appointed and also younger than most of the men who have served as secretary of state since the 1940s. Over the past 60 years, secretaries of state have been an average of 61 years of age when they first began their service. When they were appointed, Albright was 59 years old and Rice was 49 years old. Their male predecessors were 67 and 63 years old, respectively (U.S. Department of State, 2009). Thus Albright and Rice are similar in many ways to other female appointees and diverge from their male colleagues in predictable ways: They are less likely to be married and are significantly younger when appointed. In contrast with previous studies that found female appointees have lower educational levels than do male appointees, Albright and Rice arrived in their positions with advanced and highly specialized degrees relevant to the State Department's mission.

Current Secretary of State Clinton is perhaps more like her male predecessors at the top of the State Department than was Albright or Rice. When appointed in 2009, Clinton was 62 years old, older than her predecessor Condoleezza Rice and 1 year older than the average age for secretaries of state. She is married and has one child and also comes to the position with a law degree, the most



common educational background for secretaries of state who have served in the past 60 years.

## Leadership Styles and Priorities

To get a sense of their leadership styles, I draw on a variety of written sources. The fact that more time has passed since Albright has left office means that there is more information published about her tenure as secretary of state than is true for Rice. Thus, to get a clearer sense of Rice's overall leadership style, I also draw from her time as provost at Stanford University and her tenure as national security advisor as well as secretary of state. As such, the conclusions presented here are preliminary and certainly subject to revision as more information is revealed about Rice's tenure at the State Department.

In many ways, Madeleine Albright's leadership style can be characterized as feminine, drawing on consensus and collaboration and tending to interpersonal relationships. When President Bill Clinton announced her as his choice for secretary of state, he emphasized not only her "steely determination," instincts, intelligence, skill, and strength, but explained that she and his other picks for national security positions were "committed to work together as a team" ("Remarks Announcing the Second Term National Security Team," 1996). In her memoirs, Albright (2003) similarly talks about the importance of teamwork and about building collegial relationships with her staff and political players in both the United States and abroad. In her own words, as secretary of state she "tried to nurture a strong sense of teamwork within the department and the administration . . . [and] attended diligently to the important relationships I was developing with other foreign ministers and on Capitol Hill" (p. 344). Others who worked with her agree that she excelled at interpersonal relationships. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the former national security advisor and her mentor at Columbia University, praised her by noting that "Madeleine is good at people-handling. She knows how to make people feel good about themselves" (qtd. in Dobbs, 1999, p. 267).

Second, Albright gets credit for consensus building, another characteristic of the feminine leadership style. One biographer contrasts her leadership style with that of Richard Holbrooke, her successor as UN ambassador and rival for the position as secretary of state:

Their positions on many foreign policy issues are similar . . . but their style is quite different. While he bulldozes his way through every conceivable obstacle, she prefers to work by consensus. . . . While he is willing to upset almost everyone to get his way, she tries to charm her opponents into agreeing with her. (Dobbs, 1999, p. 406)

She also describes herself as someone who has "a default drive to cooperate" (Albright, 2003, p. 349) and others concurred, noting that she sometimes held her tongue in

meetings with other foreign policy principals, not wanting to appear confrontational (Dobbs, 1999).

In contrast, there is little evidence that Rice embraces a particularly feminine leadership style. To the contrary, most information about her style places her firmly in the masculine, hierarchical camp of leadership. At Stanford, few colleagues described her as consensual. When serving as the newly appointed provost, Rice uttered, "I don't do committees" during one of her first faculty meetings. The refusal to use committees to arrive at decisions certainly fits more closely with a hierarchical, authoritarian style than an interconnected, weblike approach to leadership. When she was faced with making substantial budget cuts early in her tenure as provost, she explained she was not going to rely on consensus to get the job done, even acknowledging that she was bucking Stanford's consensual culture by doing so (Bumiller, 2009).

In an interview with *George* magazine during the 2000 presidential campaign, when she was serving as George W. Bush's top foreign policy advisor on the campaign, she explained "[Nor do I] believe you can do everything by consensus. At the Pentagon, I learned that if you seek consensus you get a third of a tank, a third of a plane, and a third of an aircraft carrier. If you don't *drive the process from the top*, you get across-the-board cuts and everyone gets weaker" (qtd. in Dowd, 2000, p. 102, emphasis added). Not surprisingly, she continued to employ top-down decision making at the NSC in relation to her staff. In this position, some characterized her management style as hierarchical and corporate, noting that she delegated policy responsibilities to her subordinates so that she could focus on other issues and have sufficient time to advise the president (Burke, 2005).

In the aftermath of the war in Iraq, scholars have paid a fair bit of attention to her performance as NSC advisor. In this role, Rice was responsible for leading meetings among the foreign policy principals, including, among others, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and Secretary of State Colin Powell, and for brokering disagreements among these individuals. Many criticize her explicitly for her lack of ability to forge consensus among the primary foreign policy players, an important responsibility of the position (Burke, 2005). Under her watch as NSC advisor, intelligence about weapons of mass destruction and Iraq's nuclear capabilities were insufficiently vetted and ended up central to the administration's case for the war in Iraq, policy disagreements about a postwar Iraq were not resolved or even discussed at great length, and the principal players were not always informed about the administration's plans or decisions. Critics have been quick to assign blame to Rice, suggesting she failed to build consensus or provide an environment where policy disputes could be hashed out or resolved before going to the president.

The second element of leadership identified earlier is the willingness to press for women's issues. How do the two women compare here? On the whole, Albright is given



more credit for behaving as an advocate for women's issues during her tenure. President Clinton appointed her to chair the White House Interagency Council on Women in 1997, an agency charged with implementing policies developed at the Beijing United Nations (UN) Fourth World Conference on Women. Along with Hillary Rodham Clinton, Albright had previously participated in the 1995 conference from her post as U.S. ambassador to the UN and while in Beijing gave a speech emphasizing the ways in which the United States would work to improve women's lives. According to Albright (2003), "The message was simple and universal: violence against women must stop; girls should be valued equally with boys; and women should have full access to education, health care and the levers of economic and political power" (p. 198).

After becoming secretary of state, Albright quickly instructed all U.S. embassies to "consider the advancement of women's human rights as an integral objective of U.S. foreign policy" (Lippman, 1997), and throughout her tenure she consistently argued that democracy could not take hold without women's participation. She communicated these priorities to State Department bureaus and embassies, challenging them to consider whether or not women had access to microenterprise credit, whether enough was being done to combat violence against women, and whether they were being included in democracy-building projects. One particular accomplishment Albright identifies in her autobiography is getting more women judges appointed to the international war crimes tribunal, recognizing that many of the victims of war crimes are women. Albright had the support of international women's organizations during her confirmation hearings and later made concerted efforts to meet with groups of women activists whenever her overseas travel permitted it (Albright, 2003).

There is little to suggest that Condoleezza Rice, on the other hand, has prioritized women's issues throughout her career. While provost at Stanford University, she tangled with a number of female faculty over university affirmative action policies and came under investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor for potential gender discrimination in the hiring and promoting of female faculty (Bumiller, 2009, p. 119). Biographies and articles about Rice are remarkably silent on the issue of Rice's perceptions of gender discrimination and any particular attempts to advocate for women's rights (Bumiller, 2009; Burke, 2005; Lasher, 2005; Mabry, 2007). In fact, one is hard pressed to find anything that suggests that Rice identifies with other women or feels any special responsibility to represent their needs and perspectives.

## Summary and Future Directions

So what can we learn about executive women's leadership from this study? How well do the careers and styles of Albright and Rice fit with previous scholarship on executive women? First, their career backgrounds mirror

those of many women who have preceded them in federal executive positions but also diverge in some significant ways. Both of these women came to their positions with significant federal government experience, a characteristic common for most male and female appointees who preceded them. They also resemble other appointees in that they are highly educated. In comparison with their male predecessors over the past 40 years, they have slightly higher educational credentials. This finding stands in contrast with many previous studies that find female appointees have slightly lower educational levels than do male appointees. To be sure, these studies have not relied on comparisons between particular individuals serving in the same appointive position but have used aggregate groups of female and male appointees. Both Albright and Rice were unmarried when appointed, a characteristic much more common for female than male appointees. Albright had grown children when she was appointed, and Rice does not have any children. Again, these family arrangements are more common for women called to serve than for men.

Second, Albright and Rice brought different leadership styles to their positions. Albright more closely approximates a feminine style of leadership, whereas Rice appears more masculine in her style. Albright emphasized and prioritized women's issues during her tenure; Rice did not. But the fact that these women differed in many respects is not particularly surprising. Nothing in the literature suggests that all women will employ feminine leadership or embrace women's issues; rather, women are simply more likely than men to do so. The fact that these two women were appointed by different presidents, who themselves had different leadership styles, is important (McGlen & Sarkees, 1997). Again, as Kanter (1977) long ago emphasized, organizational context influences leadership style. The fact that Albright did more to emphasize women's issues may simply reflect that she served under a president and first lady for whom these issues were of great importance. George W. Bush did not make women's issues a priority for his administration and neither did Condoleezza Rice. First Lady Laura Bush took a slightly more active role here, promoting education rights for Afghan women and girls, who had been denied access to education under the repressive Taliban regime. The fact that Condoleezza Rice did not make women's issues a priority during her time may reflect her own or the Bush administration's lack of interest in doing so, or the first lady's desire to do so. Finally, the fact that foreign policy challenges were considerably different for Albright and Rice must be taken into account.

The fact that Hillary Rodham Clinton is currently serving as secretary of state provides additional opportunities to continue examining executive women's leadership. Her route to the office is clearly distinct from her predecessors: She served as first lady for 8 years, a U.S. senator for 8 years, and was the most viable female presidential candidate the United States has ever seen. Her role as secretary

of state will clearly be different from her role as first lady. Preliminary evidence suggests she will be attentive to women's needs and perspectives in her new role. Clinton championed women's issues throughout her tenure as first lady and as a U.S. senator. In addition, in the first few months on the job, Clinton worked with President Obama to establish a new position in the State Department, titled the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues. Clinton's former chief of staff, Melanne Verveer, stepped into the position in March 2009 (Brown, 2009). A more

systematic analysis of her tenure and whether or not she employs feminine leadership or prioritizes women's issues during her tenure will add greatly to our knowledge of women's executive leadership.

## Note

1. I would like to thank James King and James Riddlesperger for sharing these data with me.

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## WOMEN JUDGES AS LEADERS

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The judiciary has often been the forgotten branch of American government. Courts are comparatively low in institutional prestige and visibility, and lack the ability to enforce their decisions. Thus it can be tempting to overlook the role of judges as leaders in the American policy process. Judges, however, have great latitude to determine verdicts in individual cases and to craft broader precedents that shape the course of American public policy. These decisions are, at least in part, shaped by judges' own attitudes, beliefs, and strategic goals.

It should be unsurprising then, that there has been much discussion about how the presence of women in the judiciary affects policy outcomes. Some judges, such as Justice Jeanne Coyne of the Minnesota Supreme Court, contend that gender plays a very small role, and that "a wise old man and a wise old woman reach the same conclusion" (qtd. in Ginsburg, 2003, p. 189).

But, other voices, such as Judge Alvin B. Rubin of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, offer a different perspective. Rubin, and others like him, have argued that women judges offer "a distinctive medley of views influenced by differences in biology, cultural impact, and life experience" (qtd. in Ginsburg, 2003, p. 189).

This chapter explores how women judges alter the course of public policy and change the climate of American courtrooms. After an introduction to the American court system and the role of judges, this chapter considers the history of women in the American judiciary. It then discusses the significant contributions of women judges through their words and actions. The conclusion notes some of the continuing challenges that will face the next generation of women in the judiciary.

### The Role of Judges in the American Political System

Although the courts initially were viewed as little more than a formality in the American political system, today the role of the courts and the judges that preside over them has grown tremendously. The modern American judiciary handles millions of cases each year, crafting an ever-changing body of law and precedent. Judges play particularly significant roles in shaping these policy outcomes.

### The Dual Structure of the American Judiciary

The American courts are often described as having a dual system. Both the states and the national government have their own hierarchical judiciaries, which place trial courts at the bottom and the Supreme Court at the top, usually with intermediate appellate courts. These two judicial systems are joined together only when state supreme court decisions are appealed to the federal Supreme Court. This system reflects the federal structure of American government, which divides power between state and national governments.

#### *State Courts*

State trial courts can take on a number of different forms. These include traffic courts, criminal courts, general civil courts, and family courts. State trial courts function as courts of original jurisdiction charged with hearing the relevant evidence in a case and making a finding of fact, usually regarding the guilt or innocence (in criminal cases) or liability (in civil cases) of the parties to the case.

In most states, trial court decisions can be appealed to one or more intermediate appellate courts. These intermediate appeals courts do not hear the evidence of the case again. Instead, appellate courts consider only errors in the practice of law or dispensation of justice in the lower court.

The state supreme court is the highest court in the state judicial hierarchy. The supreme court reviews appeals from the intermediate appellate courts (or the trial courts, if the state does not have an intermediate appellate court). In some states, all cases appealed to the state supreme court must be heard—this is called mandatory jurisdiction. In other states, the judges or justices of the state supreme court have the authority to decide which cases they want to hear—this is called discretionary jurisdiction.

### *Federal Courts*

The structure of the federal court system is very similar to that of the state court system. The federal district courts function as trial courts of original jurisdiction, hearing evidence and making findings of fact. The U.S. courts of appeals function as intermediate appellate courts, reviewing the judgments of the district courts for errors of procedure or law.

The U.S. Supreme Court occupies a unique position within the American judiciary. It is the highest appellate court in the federal system, but it also has the authority to review the decisions of state supreme courts when a case poses a question of federal law. The U.S. Supreme Court largely has discretionary jurisdiction and hears only a very small percentage of the cases presented to it, giving the justices tremendous power to select the cases and issues that most merit their attention. Because the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court cannot be appealed to any higher judicial authority, the Supreme Court also has tremendous power to shape policy and the agendas of other political actors.

### **Judges and Judging**

Judges' responsibilities vary tremendously with the court on which they serve. In trial courts, judges are often called upon to determine the winners and losers. In civil cases, this responsibility can amount to anything from determining liability in a class action lawsuit to parceling out custody rights to feuding parents. In criminal cases, this task usually means determining the guilt and innocence of individuals suspected of committing crimes. In many cases, if the defendant is found guilty, judges are also called upon to sentence the offender.

Judges play a slightly different role in appellate courts. They review the evidence presented in lower courts, as well as the legal reasoning presented in briefs, and determine the constitutionality or legality of actions taken in a case. This may include reviewing the constitutionality of a statute or considering whether police followed the proper procedures in obtaining evidence used in a trial. Appellate judges often make decisions with broader social consequences, and as a

result, they may have greater potential to influence new precedents and interpretations of the law, as well as to transform social policy.

Judges do not come into these powerful roles by accident. Although there are no universal requirements to serving on the bench, the great majority of judges have had some sort of legal training. Some judges, such as those serving on most local courts and on the majority of state supreme courts, are elected to office. These elections may be partisan or nonpartisan, depending on the system of judicial selection employed in a jurisdiction. Judges running for office face a unique burden of needing to win public support and increase their name recognition. In recent years, judicial elections have become more costly, also making the ability to raise significant sums of money increasingly important.

In contrast, other judges, such as those serving in the federal judiciary, are appointed to office, often with the approval of the legislature. For example, justices of the U.S. Supreme Court are appointed by the president and must be approved by the Senate. Once confirmed, these judges have life tenure with good behavior. The appointment system poses its own unique challenges to potential judges, who must win the support of the appointing and confirming bodies before they can be considered for or seated on a court. A number of characteristics may be particularly important influences on judicial appointments, including ideology, previous judicial experience, race, religion, and gender.

## **The Progress of Women in the Courtroom**

The first women to serve as judges were employed on the lowest ranked and least prestigious courts, such as specialized women's domestic, family, and juvenile courts (Morrison, 2002). Once seated, these women judges were slow to move out of these low-respect, low-visibility positions. One study of women's progress through the judiciary, for example, noted that it took an average of 30 years from the date that the first woman was seated on a state's trial court until the date that the first woman was seated on an appellate court in that same state (Cook, 1984).

Similarly, it is no exaggeration to say that the movement of women judges from state courts to the federal judiciary was sluggish at best. The following paragraphs detail women's gradual progress in gaining representation in the federal courts, highlighting the role of several significant trailblazers for women in the judiciary. They conclude with a note on women's representation in the judiciary today.

### **Women Begin to Serve in Federal Courts**

No women served on the federal courts until 1934, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed Florence Ellinwood Allen to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Prior to her judicial service,



Judge Allen had been an active leader in the women's movement, working in both the suffrage and settlement house movements. When women won the right to vote in 1920, Allen was elected to a seat on a local court in Cleveland, Ohio, and later, the Ohio Supreme Court. Although her name was often mentioned for a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court, she never received that honor, in large part due to the discriminatory beliefs of the other justices (Ginsburg & Brill, 1995).

After Allen's appointment, it took another 15 years for a woman to be appointed to the federal courts. In 1949, President Harry S. Truman appointed Burnita Shelton Matthews to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Matthews, too, had been a suffragist and a role model for women even before being appointed to the federal courts. Among other triumphs, Judge Matthews served as counsel for the National Woman's Party (a women's group integral in the suffrage movement) and was a well-respected attorney in the nation's capital. When the National Woman's Party's headquarters were condemned and claimed by the government to build the new Supreme Court building, Judge Matthews took on the government, winning the largest amount of compensation the government had ever paid in an eminent domain case (Ginsburg & Brill, 1995).

Judges Allen and Matthews were trailblazers in every sense of the word. They faced pervasive discrimination head on, advocating for their own rights and breaking down barriers for future women in the judiciary. But, despite their best efforts, for most of their judicial service, few other women judges joined Judges Allen and Matthews. From 1960 to 1976, for example, just six additional women were appointed to serve on the federal courts. Remarkably, Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, although often noted for their advocacy for civil rights, appointed only four total women to the bench (Ginsburg & Brill, 1995).

By 1979, only 33 women had ever served on the district courts or courts of appeals (Morrison, 2002). Most of these women were appointed by the recent administration of President Jimmy Carter. Carter, a Democrat, was presented with a unique opportunity to increase the representation of women on the bench when, in 1978, Congress passed the Omnibus Judgeship Act. This act, sponsored by House Judiciary Committee Chairman Peter Rodino (D-NJ), created a host of new judicial vacancies, where there were no "incumbent" judges (Cook, 1984). These seats, thus, were not predisposed to be a "man's" seat, a "black" seat, or a "Jewish" seat, allowing President Carter to make appointments without any of the preconditions that had impeded the progress of women in earlier years.

The Carter administration took conscious steps to assure that women and minorities were appointed to these positions. In 1978, Carter issued an executive order forming the U.S. Circuit Judge Nominating Commission. The commission's thirteen 11-member panels, one for each circuit, were charged with making recommendations for each judicial vacancy that arose in their circuit. They were

specifically told to consider "the types of persons that should be added to the court to achieve a balance in judges in professional background and capabilities, geographical distribution, and other factors thought to be significant for a balanced appellate court" (qtd. in Slotnick, 1979). A survey of officials serving on these panels indicates that gender and minority group membership were clearly among these balancing factors (Slotnick, 1979).

At least in part due to the careful considerations of these panels, Carter appointed 40 women to serve on the federal courts. More importantly, he provided an example for future presidents. Although Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush never equaled Carter's total number of women appointees, they exceeded the number of female appointees of all presidents before Carter. It was not until President Bill Clinton's 8-year term from 1993 to 2001 that a president, with the encouragement of his inner circle of female advisors and the American Bar Association, appointed more women to serve on the federal bench than had President Carter (Goldman, Slotnick, Gyski, & Schiavoni, 2007; Segal, 2000). President George W. Bush also followed suit, appointing 71 women to the federal bench during his 8 years in office. Although this number did not surpass Clinton's appointments, it set a record for a Republican president (Goldman, Slotnick, Gyski, & Zuk, 2001).

### Putting a Woman on the Supreme Court

By 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court was the last remaining glass ceiling left for women judges to shatter. Women's rights activists understood the symbolic significance of this position, and pushed the presidential candidates to agree to nominate a woman to the Court. Republican candidate Ronald Reagan, looking to build support among women (a demographic where he had little backing), agreed that if he was elected president, he would heed the groups' demands.

When a vacancy arose on the Court in 1981, the newly elected President Reagan made good on his promise, appointing Arizona appeals court judge Sandra Day O'Connor. Justice O'Connor was relatively unknown at the time of her appointment but proved to be a moderate-to-conservative voice during her nearly 25 years on the Court. Although Justice O'Connor was hardly a radical feminist, she was an able advocate and fine role model for women interested in the law. Her power on the Court was also bolstered by her role as the most moderate "swing justice." For much of her judicial tenure, Justice O'Connor's vote was crucial to building a majority coalition and controlling the final verdict in the case.

During Justice O'Connor's last 10 years on the Court, another woman, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, joined her on the bench. Justice Ginsburg, appointed in 1994 by President Bill Clinton, was very different from Justice O'Connor. Although not the ultraradical liberal she is often painted to be, Justice Ginsburg has been a leader in the women's rights movement for her entire life. As one of the founders



of the American Civil Liberties Union's Women's Rights Project in the late 1960s and 1970s, Justice Ginsburg argued many of the most significant women's rights decisions before the Court.

### Women in the Judiciary Today

At the time of this writing, two women, Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor, serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. That number will increase to a record number of three if U.S. Solicitor General Elena Kagan is confirmed to join Justices Ginsburg and Sotomayor on the Court. The number of women serving at other levels of the American judiciary has also grown in the last 40 years. In 1970, women comprised less than 1% of all judges. Today, they comprise almost 30% of those officials. Moreover, they have gained power and prominence and are no longer relegated to specialized women's courts (National Association of Women Judges [NAWJ], 2009).

By 2005, for example, all but three states had at least one woman serving on their highest court, and more than 50% of states had at least two women serving on their highest court. Fifteen states had women chief justices. This represents significant and rapid progress for women in state courts (Center for Women and Government, 2006).

The data on women in federal judgeships are equally encouraging. By the end of President George W. Bush's administration in 2009, 213 women were serving on the federal bench (Federal Judicial Center, 2009). This figure marks a nearly 650% increase over the number of women judges seated on the federal courts in 1979. And, although these 213 judges represent just 26% of all sitting judges, women today are better represented in the federal judiciary than in Congress or elite presidential appointments. (At press time, President Barack Obama had not made enough appointments to begin to identify a trend in his nominees.)

### Women Judges Making a Difference Through Their Words

The question of how women judges represent the interests of other women through their decisions has received a great deal of exploration in the past 30 years. The results of these analyses have varied widely over courts and issue areas, with differences between male and female trial court judges being less visible, and differences between male and female appellate court judges being clearer. In general, it appears that male and female justices behave most differently when they are presented with so-called women's issues—issues that fall along a gendered divide, such as sex discrimination or equality in employment.

The lack of a consistent difference in the decisions of men and women judges may owe both to institutional constraints (such as sentencing guidelines) and to the legal training and socialization common to all judges. No matter their gender, nearly all judges have been socialized as

lawyers and are well trained in the rules and norms of the legal process. Judges interested in maintaining their prestige and respect among their colleagues may generally defer to these mores, choosing carefully when to allow other considerations such as gender to influence their decisions.

### Trial Courts

Differences between male and female judges are least visible in the trial courts, where judges may be called upon to both determine the winners and losers in a case and to determine the appropriate redress of grievances. Because most of the research in this field has been conducted on criminal justice, the focus here is on the guilt or innocence of a defendant and the severity of his or her sentence.

Research on trial court verdicts has found few substantively significant differences between male and female judges (e.g., Gruhl, Spohn, & Welch, 1981; Kritzer & Uhlman, 1977). The general consensus appears to be that the norms of the legal process and the burden of proof, as well as the significant role of juries in many trials, reduce the effect of gender at this stage of the judicial process (Gruhl et al., 1981).

At the sentencing stage, however, a number of scholars have demonstrated that women judges tend to give harsher sentences than their male colleagues. Cassia Spohn (1990), for example, reached this conclusion in her study of sexual assault cases in the city of Detroit. Darrell Steffensmeier and Chris Hebert (1999) reached a similar conclusion in their study of cases from the Pennsylvania court system. These scholars argue that women's life experiences may socialize them to be less tolerant of criminal behavior than their male counterparts. Women judges may also feel more like other judges, district attorneys, and law enforcement officials are watching their every move. Thus they may purposely avoid making sentencing decisions that could be perceived as "soft" on crime (Steffensmeier & Hebert, 1999).

### Intermediate Appellate Courts

Studies on intermediate appellate courts usually fall into two categories: general studies on a range of issue areas and studies that focus primarily on women's issues. Most general studies have found few significant differences between the decisions of male and female judges (e.g., Davis, 1986). Other studies have found that women judges may actually be more likely to vote *against* their perceived interests, likely in an attempt to insulate their reputation from any potential criticism (e.g., Segal, 2000).

Most analyses focusing specifically on women's issues, however, yield slightly different results. In these cases, gender seems significantly to influence women judges' decisions, perhaps because the subject matter so resonates with their own life experiences. In one study of circuit court sex discrimination cases, for example, Jon Gottschall (1983) found that women were more likely to decide cases in favor of individuals who had been the target of discrimination. And, in their study of the U.S. courts of appeals,



Davis, Hairc, and Songer (1993) and Songer, Davis, and Haire (1994) found that female judges were significantly more likely to favor victims of employment discrimination than were their male colleagues.

## Supreme Courts

The findings of studies of women judges' impact on supreme court decisions parallel those of similar analyses focusing on the intermediate appellate courts. In general, substantive representation of women is more apparent in cases that deal with women's issues than in other types of cases. These findings hold true in both state supreme courts and the U.S. Supreme Court.

In state supreme courts, David Allen and Diane Wall (1987, 1993) and others have demonstrated that women judges are more likely than their male colleagues of the same party to vote in a liberal way in cases involving women's issues. Women judges may also influence the decisions of other justices on the court. Gerald Gryski, Eleanor Main, and William Dixon (1986) have shown that adding a woman to a state supreme court increases the probability that a majority of the court will rule in favor of the victim of sex discrimination. More recent studies by David Songer and Kelley Crews-Meye (2000) have confirmed these results.

Research on the U.S. Supreme Court has also shown that the policy impact of a woman on the court can be seen both individually and in the decision-making dynamics of the court at large. Legal scholars focusing on Justice O'Connor's individual decisions, for example, have noted that she was less willing than other ideological conservatives to permit violations of individual rights, especially in cases involving gender equality (Sherry, 1986). Also, political scientists evaluating the Court's decisions in sex discrimination cases have noted that Justice O'Connor's presence changed the way that the Court evaluated these issues, as well as influenced the Court's final decisions in these cases (O'Connor & Segal, 1992).

For example, during Justice O'Connor's first term, the Court was asked to decide the case of Joe Hogan, a male student who had been denied admission to an all-female nursing program run by the Mississippi University for Women. Hogan charged that a denial of admission to the university solely on the basis of sex constituted an unconstitutional infringement on his rights. The university, however, contended that the courts had supported single-sex education on the grounds that there was a compelling educational reason for such segregation, and therefore, the denial of Hogan's admission was constitutional. Women's rights activists supported Hogan, arguing that single-sex education in fields such as nursing helped to maintain the low status and wages of these positions and impeded the economic and social progress of women.

After hearing oral arguments in the case of *Mississippi University for Women v. Hogan* (1982), the justices went to conference to vote on the outcome of the case. As is the custom on the nine-member Supreme Court, the justices

voted in order of seniority. Four of the more senior justices voted in support of Hogan, and four other justices voted in favor of the university. This left O'Connor, as the most junior justice, as the decisive swing vote. She voted in favor of Hogan and was later assigned the task of writing the majority opinion for the closely divided 5–4 Court. Though the task was a difficult one, she crafted an opinion that held together the majority coalition, yet managed to make powerful assertions about the status of women in the United States. She noted that excluding males from nursing training perpetuated stereotypes about women's status in the United States and that in applying the intermediate standard of review, the state lacked an exceedingly persuasive justification for such discrimination.

O'Connor's opinion was remarkable for several reasons. First, it assured women's rights activists that even though O'Connor was cast as a conservative, she was sensitive to gender issues. And more importantly, O'Connor cast a vote that her predecessor, Justice Lewis Powell, would probably not have cast. In so doing, she cemented the application of the intermediate standard of review and sent a message that the new Supreme Court would examine questions of gender discrimination with a skeptical eye (Biskupic, 2005).

## Women Judges Making a Difference Through Their Actions

The effects of women judges on society do not end with the decisions they make on the bench. Many women judges work diligently to form social networks to lobby for the progress of women on the bench, to influence their colleagues to change the courtroom climate, and to act as role models for young women in and outside of the legal field. These actions have led to a number of significant policy changes and alterations of the norms of the American judiciary. This section considers each of these efforts in greater detail.

### Forming Social Networks

The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) is the largest and most visible organization dedicated to promoting women in the judiciary and providing social networks for women on the bench. The organization was founded in 1979, when a group of about 100 women judges met in Los Angeles. This group resolved to work to increase the number of women on the bench, advocate against sex discrimination, lobby for the ratification of the equal rights amendment, and work to end discrimination in the judiciary (Martin, 1993). NAWJ was also influential in encouraging states to form task forces to evaluate the causes and effects of gender bias in the law (McConnell, 2002).

The most significant goal of NAWJ at its inception was to put a woman on the Supreme Court (Martin, 1993). As noted earlier, this goal was achieved in rather short order, when Justice O'Connor was appointed in 1981. Today, the



group has shifted its focus to other projects that promote women's empowerment and equality, both on and off the bench. It continues to work for equal access to the judicial system, to educate women judges and the general public on evolving issues in litigation, to increase the number and advancement of women judges, and to provide role models for women in the law (NAWJ, 2009).

NAWJ is an important social network for women judges, enabling them to share their common experiences and acting as a de facto support group for women on the bench. The association holds semiannual meetings and conferences and provides a range of opportunities for members to connect through its Web site and other events. These networks are designed to make women feel more comfortable and to imbue them with a sense of belonging on the courts. They can also serve to encourage sitting women judges to aspire to higher positions.

The success of NAWJ has led to the formation of the International Association of Women's Judges (IAWJ). Formed in 1991, many of IAWJ's goals are similar to those of NAWJ. The group's more than 4,000 members from 87 nations encourage the formation of national women's judicial associations, act as mentors, promote the cross-national exchange of information and support, and work to combat global problems facing women, such as sex discrimination and domestic violence. The group has achieved significant policy victories in broadening the application of international human rights laws and fostering international exchange of ideas about the structure and functions of the judiciary (IAWJ, 2010). But, like NAWJ, perhaps its most important role is in connecting women judges with one another, enabling information exchange, mentoring, and knowledge sharing.

### Changing the Courtroom Culture

The leadership of women judges past and present has made an important contribution to changing the courtroom culture for future generations of women interested in serving on the bench. Examples abound of the discrimination faced by these early women judges. For example, when Judge Allen was appointed to the federal courts of appeals, one of her colleagues was so distressed about this perceived injustice that he took ill for several days. Judge Allen was frequently excluded from judicial events and prohibited from hearing the most technical cases for fear that she did not have the intelligence to handle such sophisticated issues (Ginsburg & Brill, 1995).

Judge Matthews was subject to many of the same forms of discrimination when she was seated on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Despite being a well-respected lawyer, she was assigned to the most menial cases facing the court. One fellow judge summarized his views on Judge Matthews thusly: "Mrs. Matthews would be a good judge, [but there's] just one thing wrong: she's a woman" (qtd. in Ginsburg & Brill, 1995, p. 285).

Modern courtroom norms make greater strides to embrace both sexes. For example, justices of the Supreme

Court are no longer called "Mr. Justice," a practice that continued into the 1980s (Martin, 1993). Women justices on the Supreme Court now dress in a bathroom of equal size as their male colleagues' dressing facilities (Ginsburg, 2003). Overt instances of sexual harassment in the courtroom have also declined tremendously (Morrison, 2002).

Furthermore, as a result of the lobbying of women judges and others in the legal community, there have been significant changes in the gender neutrality of many of the documents governing American courts. No longer, for example, are state codes titled "Women, Children, and Idiots" (McConnell, 2002). Rape, sexual assault, child support, and domestic violence victims are treated with greater respect and less skepticism, and their cases are prosecuted more frequently and swiftly than in previous generations (Morrison, 2002). Also, women who are parties to a suit are no longer faced with juries that do not include other women, as they were in many states until the Supreme Court's decision in *Hoyt v. Florida* (1961).

The efforts of women judges have changed the courtroom culture for other women in the law. As a result of the advocacy of previous generations, women lawyers today face less overt discrimination in the courtroom and have greater opportunities to serve in prestigious clerkships and be employed in the best legal jobs.

In short, although the courts are not free from discrimination today, many of the most glaring examples of gender inequality have been eliminated, making the courtroom more inviting for women. The judges of today—like women in other careers—have the trailblazing women that came before them to thank for this more welcoming environment. So, too, do women lawyers, women defendants, and women victims of crime.

### Providing Role Models

Women judges have acted as important role models for all young women, encouraging them to consider careers in politics and public service and even encouraging them to run for office. This role may be particularly important to increasing the number of women in politics, as research has shown that many women are interested in politics but are resistant to the idea of running for a more traditional political office. The stress and frequency of campaigning, as well as the increasing burden to raise substantial sums of money, may be more than many women—especially women with families—are willing to take on. But because many judicial seats are filled by appointment or in less visible, lower-cost elections, and winners serve longer terms, the judiciary may be an attractive place for women to get involved in the political process.

Women judges may also affect the lives of young women already interested in careers in the law and politics by taking steps to bring more young women into the judicial pipeline. One victory has already been won: In the 21st century, women represent more than 50% of law school enrollees (Monopoli, 2004). But, law school is just the beginning. By increasing the number of women clerks on



their own staffs and by helping promising law students get jobs at high-profile law firms, sitting judges can affect the future one woman at a time. A clerkship or a job at a prestigious law firm can often be the gateway to involvement in important political networks and receiving the support and encouragement necessary to run for judicial office or to win appointment to a lower-level judicial seat. These positions, in turn, can be gateways to more prestigious positions in the state and federal judiciary. For example, over half of the judges appointed to the district courts by President Bush had previous judicial experience. This number grew to nearly 60% in the courts of appeals (Goldman et al., 2007).

## Summary and Future Directions

The number of women serving as federal judges today has increased to more than 650 times its 1979 level. Women bringing sexual harassment or employment discrimination suits face a greater chance of being given a fair trial by a jury—and a judge—of their peers. Women serving on the courts are no longer alone in their efforts to strive for greater equality and human rights. Young women lawyers and judges now have female role models to look to within the justice system.

There can be little doubt that the status of women in the courtroom has improved significantly, but women in the judiciary have far to go before achieving full equality. Women today comprise a majority of law school students, win a growing number of competitive clerkships, and compete for jobs in elite law firms. However, after having achieved these honors, women often leave elite law firms

for other positions that allow them to spend more time with their families. Women judges are also slower to progress up the judicial ladder than their male counterparts, and they still face implicit discrimination in the courtroom.

It is up to the next generation of women judicial leaders to rise to the moment in the way of Judges Allen and Matthews and Justices O'Connor and Ginsburg and to face these new and ever-evolving challenges with the utmost intelligence and pluck. No doubt, organized interests such as NAWJ and IAWJ will be important in the ongoing struggle for women's equality on and off the court.

In the coming years, women judges—and their male counterparts—will be called upon to reevaluate judicial selection systems in the states. They will be asked to review statutes that fundamentally impact the rights and equality of women in American society—issues such as equal pay, educational equity, and sex discrimination are far from settled in American life. They will deal with new challenges related to women prisoners, family law, and innocence and guilt. They will have to do all of these things while continuing to act as mentors and role models, addressing the inequities for women in their own profession.

Gender rarely trumps law or reason for women judges. Nevertheless, these women find ways to act as policy leaders and role models, representing other women through their words, their actions, or both. Whether by deciding employment discrimination or sexual harassment cases in a way that acknowledges the pervasive discrimination present in society, or by forming social networks that provide support and encourage the growth of women in the profession, women judges have made a significant impact on society.

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN THE MILITARY

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The military has a unique function. It kills. It does so on behalf of the nation and at the direction of its elected leaders. In addition, many military members take great risks and some sacrifice their lives. On the other hand, although trained for combat, some never engage in it, and others have specialties such as accounting that do not require them to kill and that almost guarantee their safety. Nevertheless, all who wear a military uniform are conscious of what separates them from civilians. That is a mission that can involve the taking of an enemy's life and the sacrifice of one's own.

In U.S. culture many men, and women too, are uncomfortable with women's fulfilling that responsibility. In spite of the difficulty of recruiting enough volunteers for the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and in spite of a general ethic of equality, U.S. women are still barred from ground combat. Further, women have only been allowed to serve in combat aviation since 1993 and on many combat ships since 1994. (They are still excluded from submarines for privacy reasons.) Thus, even if women are in the military, constraints on their full participation continue to exist. If you are not perceived as a full member of a group, it is hard to be its leader.

In 2010, women are about 15% of the U.S. military. That is an all-time high, and a brief history of women's military service is in order. The vanguard were the nurses. Some women served as nurses during the Civil War and more than a thousand served during the Spanish-American War. In World War I nurses served abroad, some near the front line, and the U.S. Navy made some women regular, although temporary, members of the navy. (Many of these were badly needed telephone operators.) World War II brought large numbers of women into the military although they numbered less than 2% of the total. There was a plan to draft nurses, but when this was made public, enough nurses volunteered that a draft became unnecessary.

After World War II women for the first time became regular members of the peacetime force. However, there were limitations. The head of the nurse corps and the director of the women's corps, the WACs (Women's Army Corps members), WAVEs (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service [U.S. Navy], and WAFs (Women in the Air Force), could temporarily hold the rank of colonel (army, air force, Marine Corps) or captain (navy). Otherwise the top rank for women was lieutenant colonel or commander. The total number of women was not to exceed 2% of the force, and no more than 10% of the women could be officers. A 1951 executive order authorized the discharge of any woman who became pregnant or who had any child in her home for more than 30 days a year. Further, by policy (not law), women could not exercise command authority over men. This meant that any formal women's leadership was restricted to the leadership of other women.

The Vietnam War brought changes. The 2% cap was removed although the numbers of women had not even come close to that cap, and women became eligible to become generals and admirals. The first to do so were the heads of the WAC and the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. In addition, the ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) was opened to women and the navy removed restrictions on women holding shore commands.

Even more changes occurred in the early 1970s. The draft ended in 1973. At the same time, ratification of the equal rights amendment looked imminent. (It ultimately failed.) The services suddenly discovered they needed women to fill their ranks. Civilian pressure to make women full participants in the military increased. The navy and army responded by allowing women to fly noncombat planes. Although the air force delayed for several years, it eventually followed suit. Women were allowed to attend the war colleges, which prepare officers for senior ranks, and Congress ordered women's admission to the military

academies. Further, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that discharge for pregnancy was unconstitutional. This increased the likelihood that a woman officer could have the lengthy career needed to reach the ranks of top leadership. By 1980 all the separate women's corps had been abolished and women had to compete with their male peers for promotion.

In the 1980s women moved closer to combat even if they were not assigned to it. Women participated in actions in Grenada and in Panama where one woman military police officer led a group of soldiers and another woman who was flying a helicopter came under fire. Still, it was the Persian Gulf War where a substantial number of women other than nurses first became an integral part of a military operation. More than 40,000 women deployed to the Gulf; 15 were killed and 2 became prisoners of war. Following the war, combat ships and combat aircraft were opened to women. Most recently, many women, including women in the National Guard and in the Reserves, have deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed they represent about 10% of the force there. Although they are not supposed to participate in ground combat, keeping them from harm's way has proven difficult.

In sum, military women have long exercised leadership in what were once all-female nurse corps. However, now the 15% of the force who are women are spread over a variety of specialties although a number of U.S. Army and Marine Corps specialties remain closed to them. Today, except for nurses, any woman military leader is going to be leading mostly men, some of whom believe she should not have her position. Further, combat leadership, where one's mission is to kill and where one risks being killed, is especially valued when it comes time for promotion. Women whose combat service is constrained are thus disadvantaged.

On the other hand, the military is a very hierarchical institution. What is on one's sleeve, shoulders, or hat explicitly locates an individual in the hierarchy. To some degree, one is seen not as a man or a woman, but as a commander, a chief petty officer, a major, a private first class. Further, the military punishes violations of hierarchy. Indeed, the military can very clearly direct a good deal of a service member's behavior even if it cannot dictate opinion. For example, a dramatic change in military practice occurred when President Harry S. Truman ordered an end to racial segregation in 1948. The clear hierarchy means that having achieved a certain rank, a woman who is willing and knows how to use her rank has a tool that civilian leaders do not.

Having established the context for women's military leadership, I consider the differences between the services in the next section. That will be followed by a discussion of leadership within the enlisted ranks and after that, by a discussion of officer leadership.

## The Services

The United States has five military services. The U.S. Coast Guard is under the Department of Homeland Security. Women represent about 12% of that force and

there are no barriers to their participation. Many coast guard "firsts" continue; most notably, the first woman admiral achieved that rank in 2000. However, only the services under the Department of Defense will be considered here. The army and the navy are the oldest services. Until after World War II, their civilian secretaries were in the president's cabinet and they were called the secretary of the navy and the secretary of war. The Marine Corps also dates from the 18th century, but it is part of the Department of the Navy even though it is often perceived as a stand-alone service. Originally its mission was to disembark from ships and fight on land; the U.S. Marines were by definition amphibious. Now they regularly serve in ground combat, have a member on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and have their own war college. Thus the Marine Corps will be discussed here as a separate service even though their commandant reports to the secretary of the navy. The air force is the newest service. It was created after World War II and although its mission is to fight from the air, it has no monopoly on aircraft. All the other services have planes. Indeed, the army has more planes than the air force.

Discussions about military policy often focus on the importance of "jointness." A number of military and civilian experts think that competition between the services is wasteful and can hinder performance. Over the years a variety of initiatives have been taken to increase cooperation between the services and to centralize authority. After World War II, President Dwight David Eisenhower, who, as General Eisenhower, witnessed a lack of coordination and cooperation between the services, was able to win congressional approval for a new secretary of defense and Department of Defense. The civilian service secretaries were removed from the cabinet. One voice, the secretary of defense, now represents the military in the cabinet. In 1986, after a number of disconnects during the Grenada operation, Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which was also intended to increase jointness. One provision was that eligibility for promotion to general or admiral requires a previous "joint" assignment. Efforts to promote jointness continue. For example, some new weapons systems are intended for use by more than one service. Not all efforts are successful; career military personnel typically have a strong identification with their service.

Why is jointness, which is intended to make the various forms of military power work in efficient harmony, so hard to achieve? One reason, of course, is competition. An important part of all military training involves the creation of a team, a team whose members work together, support each other, and feel pride in their unit, their corps, and their service. Creation of that pride can entail a certain amount of disparagement of civilians and of members of the other services.

A second reason that jointness is difficult to achieve is that the services are very different from each other. They have different histories, different traditions, and different missions. When a major military operation is launched today, commanders have a "unified command," one that



may be composed of personnel from all four services. It is important that such a commander understand the capacities of and differences between the services.

Carl Builder (1989) described the services as having distinct personalities and as having profound, pervasive, and persistent differences. He sees their competition as especially strong and self-interested during times of peace, in Washington, D.C., and over claims on the federal budget.

Builder's (1989) analysis does not treat the marines as a separate service, but in some ways it is the most cohesive service. One reason is that it is the smallest service. Further, because its support is provided by the navy, its slogan "every man a rifle man" rightly emphasizes the fact that its job is largely combat. Also, its motto, *Semper Fi* ("Always Faithful") extends beyond one's years on active duty. The claim is that "Once a Marine always a Marine." Indeed, the U.S. Marines have been described as military fundamentalists. Killing and dying are acknowledged as real possibilities by marine "warriors." Again, each of the other services has many members who serve in support. The nurse corps is an obvious example. So is the air force. Only about 6% of U.S. Air Force personnel are pilots, navigators, or air battle managers. Many of the other 95% do the same kind of jobs that civilians do and have a similar level of risk.

Builder contrasted the architecture of the service's academies, the presentation of the services in their Pentagon corridors, the curriculum at their war colleges, their modes of analysis, even the design of their academy chapels. Most importantly, he described the army, navy, and air force as having distinctive core values, as having different "altars."

The U.S. Navy's altar, he said, is tradition and independence of command. Only in the 20th century have commanders at sea been able to communicate with each other and with those on shore on a regular basis. Decisiveness and independence were vital. Today, a capacity for regular communication makes each ship part of a larger picture; nevertheless the spirit of independence remains intact. The navy's measure of success and strength is its number of ships: The current number is between 250 and 300. The U.S. Air Force's "altar" is said to be technology. Its pride is invested in the newness rather than the number of its planes. Pilots who are now being asked to "fly" unmanned missiles tend to feel diminished.

The U.S. Army sees itself as the nation's guardian and protector, and it measures itself by end strength, that is, the number of personnel on active duty. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, active duty personnel were reduced from around 2 million to 1.5 million. After the Iraq War was begun, those numbers were augmented by calling up members of the National Guard and the Reserves. Also, civilian contractors were paid to perform duties once done by military personnel. With the end of the draft and the start of the Iraq War, recruitment became difficult and the army, in particular, had to resort to paying large bonuses to recruits and to reducing its standards for them. Military leaders continue to support the AVF, however. It is much easier to lead individuals who choose to serve even if their motives involve benefits as well as patriotism.

Women can fill 99% of U.S. Air Force positions and more than 90% of U.S. Navy positions. However, even though they can be in 93% of U.S. Army specialties, because they cannot serve in combat specialties, women are eligible for only 70% of army slots (Manning, 2008, p. 15). This makes army (and similarly marine) leadership particularly challenging for women. Therefore, the next sections will emphasize training for and demands on women seeking U.S. Army leadership. One section will consider enlisted and one officer personnel.

## The U.S. Army and Enlisted Women's Leadership

Just as men are 85% of the military, enlisted personnel are 85% of the military. Thus the leadership exercised by enlisted members, in particular noncommissioned officers (NCOs), is crucial. Indeed, throughout the army leadership, training is considered of the highest importance.

The nine enlisted ranks have both names and numbers. Army enlisted ranks 1 through 4 include privates, privates first class, and corporals. Typically individuals move through these ranks quickly and women do as well or better than men. One reason women do well is that they often present higher qualifications than men when recruited. Ranks 5 and 6 include sergeant and staff sergeant. Promotion to ranks 5 and 6 is competitive within one's military specialty and done on an 800-point system (Rush, 2006, pp. 228–229). Points are awarded for performance (150), military education (200), civilian education (100), promotion board evaluation (150), and for weapons qualification, physical readiness, and administrative points, for example, medals, badges, and awards (200). Women compete well through this level although they represent a smaller percentage of E-5s and E-6s because they leave the military at a higher rate than do men.

E-7s, E-8s, and E-9s are called sergeant first class, first master sergeant, and command sergeant major, respectively. These NCOs are a crucial, experienced cadre and are given substantial responsibility. They are selected by a centrally organized board composed of both officers and NCOs, with panels for each occupational specialty. The candidate's full record is reviewed both for performance and for potential. A photograph is required.

Until 1988, women represented less than 4% of senior enlisted personnel. Since then the percentage of women has regularly increased in each service. As FY 2008 began, U.S. Army women were 11% of personnel in paygrades 7, 8, and 9. U.S. Navy women were 7%, U.S. Marine Corps women 5%, and U.S. Air Force women 13% (Manning, 2008, p. 17). The army's 11% women NCOs versus 13% enlisted women overall represents a decrease in the number of women as rank increases. As women are almost 15% of navy enlisted, the navy's low percentage of 7% represents a significant decrease with rank. This may be partly explained by sea duty rotation requirements that may be experienced as more onerous by women than by men. The 5% of senior women NCOs



in the Marine Corps is not too disproportionate to the 6% of enlisted women. However, the air force decrease from 20% overall enlisted women to 13% senior NCOs is a prime example of the phenomenon known as "the higher the fewer." There is not an obvious explanation.

The 314 women E-9s in the army in late 2007 represented almost 9% of those holding that rank. Thus the percentage of women fell even from E-7 to E-9. Navy women were 6% of the E-9s, marine women were 4%, and air force women 10% (Office of the Secretary of Defense, n.d.).

What and how does the U.S. Army teach about leadership? The answer is that it varies by rank. A recruit in any service goes through initial or basic training. This process has been well documented in film, in fiction, in biographies, and in reportage. The U.S. Marines believe their basic training is the most challenging, and it has always been segregated by sex. The other services now train women with men, although making this change was not without controversy. What may seem anomalous is that this first step in training for leadership involves, as it were, compelling followership. The recruit is isolated from civilian life, made dependent on his or her trainers and peers, and challenged physically and mentally. Individuality is suppressed. Orders are to be followed without question. Sometimes the process is described as breaking recruits down and then building them up. In addition to learning to obey orders, the new recruit learns the value of teamwork. This includes helping and taking care of others.

The next step for a U.S. Army recruit involves selection/assignment to a military occupational specialty (MOS) and a period of training. At this stage, emphasis is on learning a skill. Training and education fill much of an enlisted person's time. Just as there is a clear ranking of personnel, there is a clear way to do almost everything and it is written down in a manual or in a regulation. There are publications for each MOS. There are also field manuals, many of them available online, which establish army doctrine. There are also numerous army regulations.

Examples of the many field manuals include titles such as *Operational Terms and Graphics*, *First Aid*, and *Combat Skills of the Soldier*. Examples of army regulation titles include *Enlisted Personnel Management*, *Army Safety Program*, and *Army Leadership*. The point is there is a right way to do almost everything and it is written down. This creates uniformity across the army, it makes jointness easier, and it makes it possible for the diligent soldier to succeed.

In the army ranks E-5 through E-9 are known as NCOs. Ranks E-7 through E-9 are known as senior NCOs. Squads of 9 or 10 soldiers may be led by an E-5 or E-6. Larger units (platoons, companies, battalions, brigades, divisions, corps, armies) are led by an officer with an NCO assistant. Both officer and enlisted ranks increase with the size of the unit for which they have responsibility.

The *NCO Guide* (Rush, 2006) is an independently published, invaluable reference book covering all aspects of an NCO's responsibilities. It does not consider the training of women separately from men, and it does not suggest

women do or should lead differently from men. It does have some references to women: One relates to the combat restriction and another to their uniforms. Personal appearance standards are established for men and for women, but they are not identical; for example, men's fingernails are not to extend beyond the tip of the finger, whereas women's nails may extend a quarter inch. Similarly, men may not wear earrings; women may wear one in each ear, but their dimension, shape, and color are limited. Physical fitness and weight standards are different for women and men and also for different ages. Sexual harassment and gender discrimination merit just one page in the 400-page guide: A definition and examples of each are provided and are similar to federal government definitions related to civilian employees. The NCO is directed neither to practice nor condone harassment or discrimination.

Over half the guide is designed as a reference book. It covers administration, assignments, evaluation, promotions, pay and entitlements, uniforms, awards, customs, military justice, personal affairs, and more. A second section is devoted to training, a principal responsibility of NCOs who are trainers both of individuals and of units and who are also constantly being trained themselves as they progress through the ranks. The first section, and the shortest, is titled "Leading Soldiers."

A leader of character is committed to army values and the warrior ethos but is also empathic. Empathy includes not only the capacity to identify with another's feelings but "the desire to care for and take care of Soldiers and others" (*Army Leadership*, 2006, A-1, A-10). Although there is a substantial feminist literature on the ethic of care, it does not reference military leadership. The army's emphasis on caring should not be surprising, because, while the feminist literature emphasizes women's interconnectedness, the military seeks a similar phenomenon that it calls "cohesion." The job of the NCO is to motivate subordinates both individually and as a team. Setting an example is considered the most effective way of leading.

Lateral entry is a rare event in the military. Virtually every individual enters as an E-1 or O-1. This means that as circumstances such as technology and missions change, personnel have to change. Thus, even though the military is ordered and hierarchical, individuals have to be resilient. Their job, their geographical location, boss, peers, and subordinates change regularly. Adaptability is crucial. Civilians who perceive the military as rigid are mistaken.

Leaders need to be up-to-date. They also need to see the big picture. Thus the *NCO Guide* provides a sketch of the major threat to the United States: terrorism and the jihadist movement. It also provides brief (very brief) reports on a half dozen countries and regions. The army, even more than the other services, records its history, which is used in training for leadership. The *NCO Guide* includes an account of NCOs from 1775 to the present.

NCO responsibilities are clearly enumerated. Responsibilities toward those they command are paramount and myriad. In addition to training individuals in military



skills, monitoring soldiers' appearance and fitness, and maintaining motivation and discipline, the NCO is expected to ensure readiness of his or her unit and its equipment. These duties may not be surprising, but in addition the NCO is expected to counsel and guide soldiers, to know what they do off-duty, where they live, if and why they are on sick call, and if they have family problems. This degree of personal supervision can be nearly parental, and it should be remembered that many enlisted are, in fact, under 21, away from home for the first time, and from small towns and rural areas.

Military leadership is different from leadership taught, for instance, in Girl Scouts or in political training. Great emphasis is placed on "good order and discipline." Thus the NCO is told to take action in the event of quarrels or disorder—even if it requires physical intervention and risk. One should not wait for a military or civilian police officer.

The army's leadership manual discusses leadership at three levels (direct, organizational, and strategic) and identifies four skills (interpersonal, conceptual, technical, and tactical).

Most NCOs are involved in direct leadership: communicating, supervising, and counseling subordinates face-to-face. They are also expected to think analytically and to assess possible unintended consequences. At the organizational level, NCOs assist officer commanders. The NCO is expected to think through programs and policies and their effectiveness. This involves weighing the effects of policies on subordinates and assessing whether particular policies fulfill the purpose intended by officials. NCOs do not have strategic duties.

One would expect NCOs to have technical and tactical skills and would probably not be surprised to learn that understanding concepts is part of leadership. However, some civilians might be surprised by the emphasis placed on interpersonal skills and counseling. They would probably not be surprised, however, to learn there is official guidance on how to counsel and how to respond to issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, spouse and child abuse, absence without leave, and desertion. When counseling someone of the opposite sex, the NCO is advised to ask whether the person would mind if a person of "his or her gender" were present. Particular issues an NCO may encounter are enumerated. They include fraternization, equal opportunity (sexual harassment and gender discrimination), extremism, homosexuality, AIDS—and the media.

The goal of leadership is to get every service member to live up to the "The Soldier's Creed," which is as follows:

- I am an American Soldier.
- I am a warrior and a member of a team.
- I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.
- I will always place the mission first.
- I will never accept defeat.
- I will never quit.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade.
- I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.

- I stand ready to deploy, engage and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
- I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
- I am an American soldier.

The commitment to combat is a critical part of the creed. Army women may not participate in combat. This sets women apart even though they may excel in vital roles and in leadership. It permits critics to argue that women reduce unit cohesion. On the other hand, without conscription the army especially needs substantial numbers of women and many have proven to be excellent, if noncombat, soldiers.

## The U.S. Army and Officer Women's Leadership

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Although U.S. Army women are not allowed to serve in ground combat, women who have served in Iraq were often placed in harm's way. Indeed, women's participation was essential in what were sometimes dangerous home searches and in other situations when troops had to interact with Iraqi women. Practice did not always comport with the principle of "no ground combat for women."

Whereas some army women resent the combat restriction that sets them apart from their fellows, others are content with the limitation. They joined the army knowing that they would be in support rather than on the front line and were content with that role. In general, officer women are more likely than enlisted women to express the view that the combat policy should be changed. Officer women see the policy as creating a ceiling; however, one army woman reached the rank of O-10, general, in July 2008. Ann E. Dunwoody's four stars were the first ever awarded a woman and general is currently the highest rank attainable. (In exceptional circumstances a handful of officers have been awarded a fifth star.) Dunwoody joined less than a dozen men at that rank.

Military and civilian officials have been wary of women "coming home in body bags." Thus far only a small number have done so, and the public has not been unduly perturbed. This is almost certainly because there is no draft. All women, and men too, who have joined the military since 1973 have been volunteers. If there were a draft, and if women were drafted and assigned just as men were assigned (including to the infantry), it is likely that controversy would ensue. It should also be noted that the combat exclusion policy for the army and the marines does not apply to the navy, air force, and coast guard where killing is not face-to-face; this combat "inclusion" policy has not been opposed by the public.

Officer ranks, like enlisted ranks, have both names and numbers. The names that coincide with the numbers O-1 through O-10 are second lieutenant, first lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, brigadier general, major general, lieutenant general, and general. The rate of promotion varies with service need and can be much more



rapid during hostilities, especially if end strength is increasing and retention decreasing.

In “normal” times, promotion from O-1 to O-2 and to O-3 is relatively rapid and noncompetitive. An individual is typically promoted to captain after 4 years in service and 2 years as a first lieutenant. Promotion to major (O-4), though, comes only after 10 years in service and is competitive. Roughly 20% of those eligible (based on time-in-service and time-in-grade) are not selected for promotion. Individuals who are not selected will typically have a second chance for promotion, but if they are not promoted a second time, and most are not, they must separate from the army. Formerly lieutenant colonel, O-5, was the highest permanent rank women were permitted to reach. Even this would not come until after 16 years of service, and some 30% of those eligible would not be promoted. Colonel, O-6, comes after 22 years of service, and the lieutenant colonel has only a 50–50 chance of achieving that rank. Failure to be promoted results in separation.

Officer promotions through O-6 are recommended by a central board based on fitness reports. The “whole officer” is considered and evaluated both for demonstrated performance and potential. There is no elaborate point system by which a candidate can calculate and earn a promotion, and officers who are not promoted are not given an explanation for their failure. Enlisted personnel and some officers see the officer promotion system as “political” in that having a good mentor or being given a choice assignment, one with unusual responsibilities, gives candidates an edge.

In the early 1980s women were less than 2% of O-6s, colonels and navy captains (Manning, 2008, p. 17). Since then the change has been dramatic although not rapid. Remember that it takes more than 20 years to be eligible for promotion to O-6 and that junior women officers had to be “grown” because many of the women senior to them had not had the kind of responsible assignments that would lead to O-6. By 2007, however, army women were about 12% of the O-6s. The navy percentage was only slightly lower and the air force only slightly higher. The Marine Corps’ 3% reflects the fact that the marines are basically an all-combat force.

Flag officers, generals and admirals, O-7 through O-10, are a rather different story. Their number is established by law. As is true of other commissioned ranks, a promotion can occur only when a “vacancy” occurs. However, flag officer numbers are so few that less than 1% of officers are likely to reach the ranks of O-7 and above. The promotion procedure is as follows. Service promotion boards, that would ordinarily include a woman, create a list of individuals recommended for promotion. Then elected officials enter the process. Board lists go to the commander in chief, the president. The president consults with the secretary of defense and the relevant service secretary and service chief of staff. The president then sends his nominations for promotion to the Senate for confirmation. Any women rejected? None that I know of and the Senate rarely does anything but concur.

In late 2007 there were 485 women colonels in the army (Office of the Secretary of Defense, n.d.). There were only

14 women O-7 through O-9—one of whom was Dunwoody, who would soon be promoted to O-10. The data for men (4 months later) showed more than 4,000 colonels and 301 O-7s through O-9s. There were only 11 four-star generals in the whole army.

Leadership is not the same for officers as it is for NCOs. Each E-9 was once an E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, and E-8. Similarly, every officer once held the rank of any subordinate officer. However, officers also command enlisted personnel. In the militaries of some other nations all new recruits first serve in the enlisted ranks. In those militaries, all officers have had prior enlisted service even if only for a limited time. In contrast, in the U.S. military, few officers were once enlisted personnel. They enter service as an officer directly from a military academy or more likely from a university ROTC program. Some with college degrees enter through Officer Candidate School, and professionals such as chaplains, lawyers, and physicians receive a direct commission.

A new officer is likely to find himself or herself in charge of a platoon of up to 44 enlisted soldiers. The platoon’s second in command is likely to be a sergeant, who is likely to be older and more experienced than the officer. The relationship between the lieutenant and the sergeant can be awkward or of great benefit. As organizational units increase in size, the rank of the officers in charge and of their NCO assistants also increases. Thus a company of 62 to 190 soldiers may be led by a captain assisted by a first sergeant (an O-3 and an E-8). A battalion of 300 to 1,000 soldiers might be led by a lieutenant colonel (O-5) assisted by a sergeant major (E-9). Conceivably, a young woman officer could be ordering, but also receiving excellent advice from, a man almost old enough to be her father.

The army uses its field manuals to guide officers in their many and important roles. The most recent version of its leadership manual is FM 6-22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*, issued in 2006 and available online. Much of its material applies to every soldier, although some sections apply principally to officers whose responsibilities are greater. Indeed, there are some offenses only an officer can commit and offenses against the authority of an officer are more serious than offenses against the authority of an NCO.

The army’s long-standing mantra for leaders is “Be, Know, Do.” Its definition of leadership is “the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.”

The more than 200-page manual is doctrinal and provides clear statements about the leader’s competencies, values, attributes, and even “identities.”

Competencies include the following:

- Leading
- Developing
- Achieving



Army values include the following:

- Loyalty
- Duty
- Respect
- Selfless Service
- Honor
- Integrity
- Personal Courage

Attributes include the following:

- Character, including empathy and adherence to Army values and the Warrior Ethos
- Presence
- Intellectual capacity

Identities include the following:

- Warrior
- Servant of the Nation
- Professional
- Leader of Character

Officers lead at each of the three levels mentioned earlier: direct or face-to-face; operational, in which one influences several hundreds to several thousands of troops; and strategic, where actions take place in a large, complex, and uncertain environment. As one goes up in rank, one is expected to become more responsive to change and be able to lead others in change. The purpose of discipline, which is so important to a military organization, has to be understood, not mindlessly enforced. Doctrine also must be understood, not mindlessly followed. Individuals, especially senior officers, must also understand the need for independent and creative thought.

The army recognizes “change” as one of the fundamental challenges for leadership. These include changes in the threat to be met and changes in technology. Another challenge involves working effectively in an operation with allies, with other U.S. services, and even with other army components. The biggest challenge, though, is combat. Death is a part of that experience, death of enemies, death of comrades, and possibly one’s own death.

Stress is experienced at every level, but leaders have the task of preparing others for the stress that is experienced not just in combat but in preparing for combat, demobilizing from it, and redeploying to it. Stress comes not just from one’s fellows being wounded or killed, but from having to kill—particularly so when one is responsible for killing innocent men, women, and children. Post-traumatic stress disorder is treated seriously in FM 6-22, and all soldiers returning from combat are assessed for the condition.

Fear is acknowledged and said to be felt by all. The leader is advised not to deny it but to “battle” it. Again, officers make the decisions about engaging in combat, but the immediate combat leadership is that of junior officers and NCOs who share the risk with their soldiers.

A host of army field manuals discuss combat. The most useful resource, though, may be the *Combat Leader’s Field Guide* (Stoneberger, 2005), which details the variety of combat operations and skills needed in ground combat. Knowing what to do and how to do it, though, does not suffice. Leadership is required. It is worth quoting from FM 6-22 to emphasize that the military leader, especially a combat leader, faces challenges quite different from those of most civilians.

Combat leadership is a different type of leadership where leaders must know their profession, their Soldiers, and the tools of war. Direct leaders have to be strong tacticians and be able to make decisions and motivate Soldiers under horrific conditions. They must be able to execute critical warrior tasks and drills amidst noise, dust, explosions, confusion, and screams of the wounded and dying. They have to know how to motivate their Soldiers in the face of adversity. (“Army Leadership,” 2006, pp. 10–16)

Many members of the military never engage in combat even if they are in combat specialties. Like firefighters who continuously train for the possibility of being called to a fire, military personnel are constantly training. Even those not in combat specialties understand that they are participating in an organization that kills. Knowing what to do in “adversity,” following orders that may result in one’s death, being willing to sacrifice, all these are a part of the warrior ethos shared by those in uniform. The discipline, the importance of bearing and fitness, the emphasis on resilience, are all a part of preparing for what even soldiers hope will not come to pass. Military leaders lead not by appealing to self-interest but to the interest of the nation.

## Summary

Women’s military service and leadership have changed dramatically since 1973. The advent of the AVF led to recruiting difficulties. Increased recruitment of women was a logical response to that problem, and their numbers rapidly increased to around 15%. The number of women in senior enlisted ranks and through O-6 in officer ranks also increased, although their number decreases as rank increases. Although women can fulfill almost any specialty in the U.S. Air Force, their numbers and rank are only slightly higher than those of the U.S. Army, where women’s role is constrained by their exclusion from ground combat. Why the air force does not recruit more women is not obvious.

Women are now distributed across a wide range of specialties, although there is some concentration in medical and administrative specialties. Nevertheless, with the exception of the nurse corps, women are almost always in a male environment. Their leadership, then, is necessarily mostly of men.

Women’s leadership is impeded when they are excluded from the unique function of the organization as they are in

the U.S. Army and Marine Corps. However, their leadership is made easier where rank is respected as it is in all the services. Having rank also enhances the effectiveness of minority leaders. Indeed, more than half of enlisted women are minorities as are more than a third of officers. This is especially true for African Americans, who are 27% of military women and 36% of army women (Manning, 2008, p. 12). For them, military service appears to present more opportunity than does civilian life.

A crucial element of military culture, especially in the army and marines, is commitment to one's team. Although the services are committed to the nation, to the defense of the Constitution, and presumably to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," a member of the military has chosen a way of life that some would call *socialism*. This is because of its emphasis on the community, on a commitment to service, to discipline, to obedience, and, if necessary, to the sacrifice of one's life. Individualism and economic entrepreneurship are civilian, not military, values. In return, service members are taken care of. They receive a variety of benefits, including housing allowances and medical care. Further, some benefits are based on "need"; that is, more is given to those with more dependents.

Enhanced effectiveness is not the only reason teamwork is valued. When soldiers talk about a willingness to sacrifice, it is typically for one's "buddies" more than it is for "the country." Cohesion is important and this has made the military slow to incorporate new kinds of soldiers. Racial segregation was ended only in 1948 and difficulties with integration took some time to iron out. Also, doubts about the effect of women in a unit were widespread until the AVF made women's participation a clear necessity. Women's participation is still being worked on, but it does not seem to lag civilian opportunities. In the same vein, the principal reason given for the continued exclusion of open homosexuals has been a fear of their effect on cohesion, that is, that they will be excluded from the team.

The military is undeniably an organization emphasizing command and discipline, but civilians must not overlook the heavy responsibilities members of the military bear or the emphasis given to the importance of caring for and counseling those they command. Leading by example is

emphasized again and again. So is the importance of empathy and of communication, particularly of hearing what subordinates believe and feel.

Except for the newly enlisted, each member of the military is simultaneously a subordinate and a superior. One needs different skills and responses for the two roles. This is analogous to Jean Jacques Rousseau's description of the citizen whom he described as simultaneously sovereign and subject. Of course, nothing democratic about the military is democratic, but in the United States the military is at the service of an elected, democratic, civilian government. The military is led by an elected official with a partisan base but must be strictly nonpartisan. It may "advise" civilian authority, but it must act as directed.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Niccolò Machiavelli, and many others have placed a high value on the citizen army. Cincinnatus, a Roman citizen who left his plow standing in the field to serve his country, is honored. The citizen army is contrasted to a mercenary army. Currently the U.S. Army is paying bonuses on the order of \$40,000 to many new recruits and re-enlistees. It is also contracting for a variety of services once performed by uniformed personnel. This has led some to suggest that it has become a mercenary army and that a genuine citizen military would be one raised through conscription. Unfortunately, even under a draft perhaps 25% to 30% of young Americans would not meet enlistment standards, largely because of education requirements. In addition, under a draft questions would arise about women's service. Full citizenship would suggest that women be drafted and serve exactly as men serve. Although polls have suggested that the public would not be averse to drafting women, and although women are now serving in combat roles in both the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy, it is doubtful that the public would be prepared to draft, train, and send young women into the infantry or into expeditionary forces.

Women's leadership opportunities and accomplishments have changed greatly in the past quarter century. Women generals and admirals are no longer a novelty. Some, like retired Army General Lieutenant Claudia Kennedy, are telling their stories. However, further change is unlikely without a major change in perceived threats to the nation.

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## WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURES

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Leadership in the public sphere typically has been understood as male. Politics is no different. As political scientists Georgia Duerst-Lahti and Rita Mae Kelly (1995) explain, “Masculinity permeates understandings of political leadership” (p. 24). Consequently, not only have women in U.S. history been barred from many types of political participation such as speech making, voting, and office holding, even today, they are only a small minority of state legislators. Although in 2010 women hold a record number of seats, they still comprise less than one quarter of state legislators (24.3%), or about half their proportion of the U.S. population.

This chapter explores women’s presence in and contributions to state legislatures in light of masculinized understandings of political leadership. After sections on the importance of diverse representation and women officeholders’ historic firsts, the chapter concentrates on their progress in state legislatures over the past 40 years—with primary focus on women’s backgrounds, impact, and challenges.

### The Advantages of Inclusion

A central question underlying women’s level of representation in public offices, such as state legislatures, is why we should be concerned about it, or put another way, why their presence matters. Among the myriad reasons articulated by scholars, politicians, journalists, and others is that bringing diversity to legislatures helps ensure that all points of view are considered in public debate; the deepest pool of talent is available for public service; role models for girls and women are common; and democratic ideals of equality and justice are affirmed and renewed. An

outgrowth of the first point is that, as a result of ongoing divisions of labor in the public and private spheres and perceptions of differential strengths and weaknesses of each sex, women and men tend to have divergent life experiences. These can translate into distinctive ways of relating to politics and public policy. Incorporating those views is essential to responsive polities.

### Women in State Legislative History

Slightly more than a quarter of a century before women gained the right to vote on the federal level, the first women were elected to a U.S. state legislature. In 1894 Clara Cressingham, Carrie C. Holly, and Frances Klock, all Republicans, were elected to the Colorado House of Representatives. The victories came one year after a Colorado constitutional amendment granting women voting rights. These women won their races, in part, due to a record number of women who went to the polls: 78% of eligible women voted compared to 56% of the eligible men.<sup>1</sup> After the three were seated, Carrie Holly became the first woman ever to introduce a bill in a U.S. legislature. The bill, an early version of an equal rights amendment, failed. Nevertheless, legislation sponsored by each of these women was successfully enacted during their tenures. One example was a law authored by Frances Klock that created a Colorado home for delinquent girls.

In 1896, one year after women’s right to vote and to hold office in Utah was written into the state constitution, Martha Hughes Cannon, a Democrat, was elected to the Utah State Senate. She was the first woman state senator in the United States. Cannon, a physician, was a strong supporter of the Utah Equal Suffrage Association and the



national suffrage movement. In the Senate, she focused on both public health and women's issues. In 1986 the Martha Hughes Cannon Health Building in Salt Lake City was dedicated in her honor. The Utah State Capitol Rotunda also features a statue of Dr. Cannon, which was dedicated in 1996, at the centennial of her pathbreaking election.

In 1933, 39 years after Cressingham, Holly, and Klock joined the Colorado House of Representatives, Minnie Davenport Craig, a Republican from North Dakota, became the first female speaker of the house in a state legislature. During her tenure, she focused on the primary challenge of the era, the economic vulnerability stemming from the Great Depression. As a state leader, Craig was selected to serve on a federal committee to oversee the activities of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, one of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal programs.

Republican Consuelo Northrup Bailey, an attorney from Vermont, made history in 1955 as the first woman president of a state senate. Bailey gained that role as a responsibility of her position as lieutenant governor of Vermont. Prior to serving as lieutenant governor, Bailey served as Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives making her the only woman in the United States ever to preside over both chambers of a state legislature. Despite this model of success, it was not until 1987 that businessperson Jan Faiks, a Republican from Alaska, became the first women president of a state senate independent of holding another office. Through 2008, only 15 women had ever served as senate presidents and only 25 women had ever served as speakers of lower chambers of state legislatures.

The first women of color in state legislatures began their service in 1924. In that year Native American Cora Belle Reynolds Anderson was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives. Anderson, a Republican, was also the first woman elected to the Michigan House. She was known for her support of Prohibition and improvements in public health. The Anderson House of Representatives building in Lansing, Michigan, is named in her honor.

One of the first African American women state legislators was Minnie Buckingham Harper, a Republican who was appointed to the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1929 to serve in place of her deceased husband. After completing the remainder of his term, Harper declined to run for another one. Crystal Dreda Bird Fauset, an African American Democrat from Pennsylvania, was elected to the state legislature in 1938. However, she left her position a year later to direct a state branch of the Works Progress Administration, a program initiated by the Roosevelt administration during the Great Depression.

The first Latinas were elected to the New Mexico House of Representatives in 1930—Republican Fedelina Lucero Gallegos and Democrat Porfirria Hidalgo Saiz. In what may be a testament to the invisibility of women in history, despite extensive efforts to locate additional

biographical information about these two women, none is presently available.

Patsy Takemoto Mink (D) was elected to the Hawai'i State Senate in 1962, becoming the first female Asian Pacific Islander to serve in a state legislature. Shortly thereafter, in 1965, Mink became the first woman of color in the U.S. Congress where she coauthored Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In 2002, upon Mink's death, Title IX was renamed as the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.

The first openly lesbian state legislator was Elaine Noble (D), a community organizer, educator, and businessperson, elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1974. Active in the civil rights, gay rights, and women's movements, Noble's status as one of the first openly lesbian or gay politicians resulted in numerous threats and personal violence during her career, as well as extraordinary demands from the gay community for her time and attention. Though the personal costs of serving were high, Noble's two terms in the statehouse paved the way for hundreds of subsequent lesbian and gay candidates and officeholders across the nation.

### **Women's State Legislators Today: Levels of Representation**

In 1971, women comprised 4.5% of state legislators. From that time until the present, they generally have increased the presence only incrementally. At the start of the 1980s, women were 12.1% of state legislatures. In 1991 they were 18.3%, and in 2001 women held 22.4% of state legislative seats. In 2009, the figure is 24.2% (see Table 13.1). Looking beyond women as a group to groups of women, in 1990 women of color were 10.5% of women state legislators, and in 2000 they were 15.1%. The 2010 figure stands at 19.5%. Although the proportion of women state legislators of color is small relative to their proportions of state populations, they hold office at higher rates than women in general and white women in particular. Although representation of all groups of women is vital, no comprehensive information is currently available describing the presence of additional groups of women, including lesbian state legislators.

Despite general increases over time, representational progress over the past 40 years has been neither constant nor irreversible. For the first time since the early 1970s, both the 2000 and 2002 state legislative election cycles produced fewer women in state legislatures than previously. Additionally, the representation of women of color has stagnated at times and suffered one decline: During the years 1994 to 1998, their percentage of women state legislators stood at 14.4%. Also, the percentage of women-of-color state legislators declined from 20.6% in 2008 to 19.4% in 2009.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Women in State Legislatures</i>	<i>Proportion of Women in State Legislatures</i>
1971	344	4.5%
1973	424	5.6%
1975	604	8.0%
1977	688	9.1%
1979	770	10.3%
1981	908	12.1%
1983	991	13.3%
1985	1103	14.8%
1987	1170	15.7%
1989	1270	17.0%
1991	1368	18.3%
1993	1524	20.5%
1995	1535	20.7%
1997	1593	21.5%
1999	1664	22.4%
2000	1672	22.5%
2001	1666	22.4%
2002	1680	22.6%
2003	1645	22.3%
2005	1674	22.7%
2006	1681	22.8%
2007	1732	23.5%
2008	1749	23.7%
2009	1791	24.3%

**Table 13.1** Women in State Legislatures, 1971–2009

SOURCE: Data from the Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, [http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast\\_facts/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/index.php).

NOTES: The total number of state legislators across the 50 states in 2009 is 7,382. In 2009, women hold 22.1% of state senate seats and 25% of state house or assembly seats. The party breakdown for women in state legislatures in 2009 is as follows: 70.7% Democrats, 28.5% Republicans, 0.6% Nonpartisans (in the nonpartisan unicameral legislature in Nebraska), and .0.2% Progressives.

## Uniformity of Representation

Women are not equally represented across states. In 2009, the five states with the highest proportion of women legislators were Colorado, New Hampshire, Vermont, Minnesota, and Hawai'i. Proportions of women ranged from a high of 39% women to 32.9% (see Tables 13.2a and 13.2b). In contrast, the five states with the lowest representation are South Carolina, Oklahoma, Alabama, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania. The range was 10% female representation to 14.6%. Many factors, including partisan composition of the legislature, region, presence or absence of term limits, use of multimember versus single-member electoral districts (those that elect more than one person to a district and those that elect one person per district), professionalization level of the legislatures (days in session, staffing levels, pay levels), political culture of the state, women's educational levels in the general populations, and women's general representation in the workforce, all affect the politics of presence.

Illustratively, as a result of the 2008 electoral cycle, New Hampshire, with the largest state legislature in the nation and the least professionalized (e.g., members receive no compensation and the schedule is part-time), became the first state ever in which women claimed a majority of a legislative chamber. When the new legislative session began in early 2009, the senate was majority female: Women held 13 of the 24 Senate seats (54%). Overall, women comprised 37.3% of the combined New Hampshire Senate and House—the second highest total in the nation.

On the other side of the ledger, during the 2008 electoral cycle, in South Carolina, four female candidates running for the state senate—two challengers and two open seats competitors—were defeated. The only two women in the Senate prior to the 2008 cycle did not seek reelection. Consequently, in 2009, the South Carolina Senate has no female members. It is the first time since 1980 that the state senate had no women members. South Carolina is also the only state in the nation (at this writing) without women in a legislative chamber.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to current correlates of women's presence in state legislatures, over time, women as a group have tended to have the greatest presence in northeastern states (and the least in southern states) and in states with high proportions of women in the labor force, more liberal ideologies, higher levels of Democratic party



identification,<sup>3</sup> part-time legislatures, and less expensive electoral races. In contrast, women of color have been more likely to be present in southern and western states and in states with higher per capita incomes.

Several other factors have also affected women's presence over time in state legislatures. For example, as states have moved from multimember electoral districts to single-member districts, women's overall level of representation has dipped. However, African American women have been more likely to do better in single-member electoral districts than in their multimember counterparts.

Another electoral factor, term limits, has also had complicated effects on women's presence. In the 1990s, 18 states adopted term limits for state legislators (although only 15 are in effect currently). The first year in which any of the laws became effective was 1996, and some only became effective in the 2006. Thus far, states with limits have seen women's overall representation in lower chambers drop.

<i>State</i>	<i>% Women</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>% Women</i>
Colorado	39.0	Washington	32.0
New Hampshire	37.7	Nevada	31.7
Vermont	37.2	Connecticut	31.6
Minnesota	34.8	Maryland	31.4
Hawaii	32.9	New Mexico	30.4

**Table 13.2a** States With the Highest Percentages of Women in the State Legislature, 2009

<i>State</i>	<i>% Women</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>% Women</i>
South Carolina	10.0	Kentucky	15.2
Oklahoma	11.4	Louisiana	15.3
Alabama	12.9	North Dakota	15.6
Mississippi	14.4	West Virginia	16.4
Pennsylvania	14.6	Virginia	16.4

**Table 13.2b** States With the Lowest Percentages of Women in the State Legislature, 2009

SOURCE: Data from the Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, [http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast\\_facts/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/index.php).

However, there has been some improvement in upper chambers as female term-limited house members sought and won senate seats. Similar complexity is apparent regarding the effects of term limits among groups of women. For example, in a recent study of African American women state legislators, in one of two years investigated, their numbers went down; in the second year, they increased by one (Carroll & Jenkins, 2005).

### Women in Legislative Leadership

Women's presence in state legislatures is one measure of success; another is representation in leadership posts. These positions include formal chamber leaders such as speaker of the house and president of the senate, committee chairs, vice chairs and ranking members, party or caucus leaders, fund-raising committee leaders, and leaders of interest caucuses. In general, whereas women have tended to hold committee chair positions in proportion to their representation in state legislatures, they are rarer at chamber level. At the start of the 1990s, women held 16% of leadership posts<sup>4</sup> including two speakers of the house, no senate presidents, and 12.5% of committee chairs. At the start of the present decade, women held 12.2% of leadership posts (including one senate president and one speaker of the house), and 18.8% of committee chairs.

In 2007, the last year for which full statistics are available at this writing, 17.6% of state legislative leaders were women (19.1% of senate leaders and 16.1% of state houses) across 24 state senates and 22 state houses. In contrast, 20 states had no female leaders in that legislative session. As is the case with women's legislative presence generally, women leaders have been more prominent in the Democratic Party: 26.9% were Democrats and 6.6% were Republicans. Illustratively, California Assemblymember Karen Bass, Democrat of Los Angeles, made history in 2008 when she was elected speaker of the assembly. The election made Bass the first Democratic woman speaker in California history and the first African American woman in the country to serve in the powerful role. Prior to her speakership, Bass also served as vice chair of the Legislative Black Caucus, Democratic majority whip, and Democratic majority floor leader. She was also the first woman in state history to hold the latter post.

Women also are unevenly represented in leadership positions across states. Those states with women leaders tend to have the highest proportion of women members, the largest size, and the least professionalized legislatures. As such, the states with highest levels of women leaders in 2007 were Maine, New Hampshire, Louisiana, Vermont, and California. Illustratively, New Hampshire, with its large size (it is the largest state legislature in the nation), high proportion of female

members, and nonprofessional status, had female leaders of both chambers: Senator Sylvia Larsen (D) was president of the senate and Representative Terie Norelli (D) was speaker of the house, both of whom continue in those roles in 2009.

Among the states with the lowest levels of women leaders were those with low proportions of female members: Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. Even the states with the worst records, though, are not without women in some leadership positions. For example, Pennsylvania State Senator Jane C. Orie, a Republican former prosecutor and state deputy attorney general, was first elected to the state senate in 2001. Beginning in 2007, Senator Orie has served as majority whip for the Republican caucus. Before joining the senate, Orie spent 4 years in the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives.

Moving from top leadership positions to committee chairs, women across the states were 22.6% of all chairs in 2007, the last year for which data are available at this writing. They were 23% of chairs in state senates and 22.2% in state houses ranging across 46 state senates and 43 state houses. Here again, Democratic women were better represented than Republicans. Women were 27.1% of chairs in the Democratic Party compared to 16.6% in the Republican Party. However, 27% of nonpartisan chairs were also women. (The Nebraska legislature is the only unicameral state legislature in the nation, and it elects all of its legislators on a nonpartisan basis. Three of 11 leaders in that year were women.) The states with the best records of women committee chairs were Nevada, Maryland, Washington, Colorado, and Vermont; the worst were South Carolina, Wyoming, Virginia, Georgia, and Utah. All the best records were from states with the highest proportions of women legislators. Of those with the worst records, South Carolina and Virginia were among the lowest; each of the remaining three had comparatively low levels of women representatives.

### **Women State Legislators: Distinctive Backgrounds and Ambitions**

Beyond the numbers, who are the women who seek and win state legislative positions? What preparation, experiences, and perspectives do they bring to their jobs? Are there differences between women and men state legislators on these variables and differences among women?

The professional and political profiles that legislative women bring to office reflect the gendered understandings of political leadership discussed earlier. As such, women state legislators tend to come to their positions from somewhat lesser levels of education than men; from different, usually less high-status and high-paying professions; and from less high-status political experiences. For example, men make up a greater portion of state legislators who are

college graduates and who complete graduate and professional school. They are also more likely to come to state legislatures from professional or business/management positions, whereas women are more likely to join legislatures from teaching and social work. With respect to prior political experience, men are more likely to have served on city councils or as mayors, whereas women are more likely to have served on school boards. Although asymmetries between the sexes have diminished over time, these distinctive patterns have not been eradicated entirely.

The general patterns outlined here are often but not always replicated in groups of women rather than women as a group. Comparisons between women and men of color show, for example, that women of color tend to be more highly educated than men of color. African American women, American Indian, Alaskan Native women, and Latinas are more likely than their male counterparts to have a college degree or higher. Only Asian American men are more likely than Asian American women to be highly educated. Additionally, comparisons among women of color show that Asian American women have the highest educational rates, followed by African American women, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, American Indian and Alaskan Native women, and Latinas. California State Senator Gloria Romero is an example of the importance of education in the success stories of women of color. A Democrat from East Los Angeles who was first elected in 1998, Romero earned A.A., B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees all in the public schools. Noting the importance of education, Romero commented, "My mother had a sixth grade education; I have a Ph.D. I understand the transformational power of education and the key it holds to accessing the American Dream" (Romero, n.d.).

The corollary of masculinized understandings of political leadership is feminized understandings of women's appropriate private roles and spheres of labor. Entrenched gender roles have meant that legislative women have been and still are likely to be older than legislative men, less likely to be married, and more likely to be childless. Of legislators with children, women tend to have fewer offspring than do men. Further, delayed entry due to child-rearing is notably more common for women. There is some indication of similar patterns among women of color. For example, research shows that the tension between family responsibilities and political service is especially serious for Latinas with political aspirations (Takash, 1997). In general, women are more likely than men to choose between delayed or constricted public service on one hand and limited family roles on the other.

If women's distinctive life experiences affect their educational, occupational, and familial opportunities and choices, does it follow that women have different levels of political ambition compared to men? The answer is complex. Reflecting the perspectives of women and men holding state legislative offices, early



studies indicate that women were substantially less progressively ambitious (i.e., interested in seeking higher office) than were men. However, among those serving more recently, ambition level differentials have been reduced. This holds true for women generally and for African American women. Further, differences in ambition among women appear to be related to age, the presence of minor children, intentional political careers, and previous office holding. Yet, even with reduced progressive ambition differentials, recent research demonstrates that female state legislators are less likely than men to advance to the U.S. Congress (Mariani, 2008). One example of a state legislator who has tried to make the transition to the U.S. Congress is Linda Stender, Democrat of New Jersey. In both 2006 and 2008, Stender ran in the Seventh District, first against an incumbent and then in an open seat race. Although the first loss was narrow, in one of the closest races of the electoral cycle in the country, the second was by a wider margin. Today, Stender continues to serve in the New Jersey General Assembly where she is deputy speaker.

Recent findings related to ambition levels among women state legislators should not be the last word on this topic. Looking beyond those who are in office to the wider population of eligible women (those with professions that typically serve as feeders to political office), recent research finds that, although women's interest in politics and their receptivity to running for office are equal to men's, they are less likely to pursue campaigns. Explanations of this disconnect include feeling they need to be twice as good as men to compete evenly in the political arena; believing that they are not fully qualified—despite similar qualifications of men who run; receiving less encouragement to run than similarly situated men; and being recruited less often. Critically, these findings hold across age groups: Younger women are as likely or more likely as older women to hold these opinions (Lawless & Fox, 2005). This suggests that the problem is not one of a particular generation; rather, it is one that is ongoing and potent.

### **State Legislative Women: Distinctive Approaches and Impact**

Are women state legislators successful? Do they make meaningful contributions to legislative agendas? Do their distinctive backgrounds and life experiences result in differences from men in the amount of or approaches to their work? Much research over the past 40 years suggests that, all else equal, women have made significant contributions to state legislatures from agenda creation and definition through policy modification to policy outcomes (see Thomas & Wilcox, 2005). Overall, whether by bringing previously private sphere issues to public agendas (such as domestic violence), transforming issues long hidden from public view from whispered conversations to public crimes

(such as sexual harassment), or expanding the education of men and influencing their policy choices on topics with which they are less familiar (such as funding for gender parity in insurance policies), women have made strides in creating space for public consideration of issues that, in an earlier time, were not accorded much legislative attention.

Details of these contributions begin with women's distinctive issue attitudes and voting records. Studies of each reveal that state legislative women tend to be more liberal than men and more attitudinally supportive of women's issues whether defined traditionally or from a feminist perspective (Thomas & Wilcox, 2005). Their voting records reflect these attitudes, even when taking party and ideology into account. Going beyond explorations of women as a group compared to men, research focused on differences among women indicates that African American women state legislators are more liberal than either white women or men and feel more strongly about policies that target the specific needs of women than do white women legislators (Barrett, 1995). Additionally, Latinas consistently express attitudinal support for women's issues (Fraga, Lopez, Martinez-Ebers, & Ramirez, 2006).

Another element of women state legislators' distinctive contribution to legislative work is the energy they direct to constituency work. Studies consistently reveal that women tend to devote more effort than men to communication with and attention to their constituencies (Carroll, 2001, 2003; Thomas & Wilcox, 2005). Further, female state legislators are particularly concerned with the women of their constituencies and beyond. This latter pattern holds when women are compared to men and when women are compared to each other: For example, Latinas pay particular attention to women in their constituencies in contrast to Latinos.

What about law-making activities? Do issue attitudes and ideological distinctiveness translate into equal levels of legislative activity, distinctiveness of activity, and policy success? State legislative women are indeed as active as men in the full array of legislative activities, including bill introduction and passage, committee work, legislative bargaining, and floor presentations.

Although active on the complete range of legislative issues, women set distinctive priorities: They are more likely than men to sponsor bills related to women, children, and the family. Even after accounting for the effects of party and ideology, as a group, women are also more likely to successfully pass these bills through state legislatures and obtain gubernatorial signatures. Examining the same question from a different angle—within a single legislative district over time rather than across districts at one or more points in time—reveals that women representing the same party and the same district as the men who preceded them sponsor more women's issues bills (Osborn et al., 2008). One way state legislative women achieve these goals is seeking and winning places on key committees that allow them to enhance their efforts toward agenda expansion and control.



Looking beyond women as a group reveals more complex patterns, however. For example, African American women are more likely than men to introduce women's issue legislation although the evidence is mixed as to whether they are as successful in achieving passage of that legislation (Adams, 2007; Orey & Smooth, 2006). In comparison, studies of Latina/o state legislators find no difference in policy priorities between women and men (Fraga et al., 2006).

Two members of the New York State Assembly illustrate these policy priority findings. First, Assemblymember Susan Johns, a Democrat from upstate New York who has served in the legislature since 1991, has focused considerable attention on a wide range of women's issues, such as funding for domestic violence shelters, affordable child care, breast cancer outreach and education, rape crisis centers, emergency contraception for rape survivors, family support services, early childhood programs, teen pregnancy prevention, and programs for pregnant and parenting women. She also authored the state's antistalking law and laws to protect women's right to breast-feed in public, require insurance companies to cover pap smears, and require disclosure of the potential hazards of breast implants.

Across the aisle, Republican Dierdre Scozzafava, who has served portions of northern New York since 1999, has also directed considerable legislative effort toward issues of women, children, and families, including her work as chairperson of the SAVE NY Task Force. The task force focused on domestic abuse and sexual violence, and several of its proposals have been enacted. In the 2009–2010 legislative session, Assemblywoman Scozzafava has cosponsored a wide range of bills including ones to supplement the New York children and family services fund, permit single-sex core course academy demonstration projects to address issues of female drop-out rates and underrepresentation in many professions, increase services for autistic children and their families, and abolish the statute of limitations law for sexual offenses against children.

### The Effects of Increasing Representation

Demonstrations of women's influence on legislative priorities and outcomes invariably lead to related questions about whether increasing the proportions of women in state legislatures accelerates their effects on policy. Studies of critical mass ask, all else equal, does the proportion of women in legislatures have a demonstrable effect on policy making and policy outcomes, particularly with respect to "women-friendly" policies? One reason this possibility has earned scholarly attention is that state legislative women appear to subscribe to theories of critical mass. As such, they spend considerable time and effort recruiting and training women candidates, fund-raising to increase their chances of success, and mentoring women who achieve office. This is particularly true for women legislators who self-identify as feminists. Additionally, African American women

legislators strongly believe that women's policy needs are best served when women legislators are present. Says former member and deputy speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives Susan Crosby (D): "I'm convinced that having more women legislators will result in more favorable legislation for women" (qtd. in Mayes, 2003).

Yet, policy-focused research on critical mass has shown mixed results. First, some state legislative studies find that higher percentages of women in legislatures are often, but not always, associated with differences in either policy outcomes or individual-level efforts such as bill sponsorship. Observed effects in early and current studies include increased levels of bill introduction and bill passage, the presence of "women-friendly" policy on various women's issues, or both. Yet, other studies find no differences in either women's legislative action or policy outcomes associated with women's increased legislative presence.

To some extent, inconsistent results are unsurprising as large and meaningful differences are found across studies in measures used, number of states studied, time periods of interest, elements of the policy process targeted, and issue domains explored. However, the validity of the concept itself is also much contested. Skeptics point out that no one "magic" number at which women's behavior is likely to change dramatically is likely to exist. Critical actors in any legislative effort are likely to be more important than any potential critical mass effect; the influence of the mass-level women's movement may affect legislative outcomes to a greater degree than levels of representation; the concept itself may rely on false conceptions of women as monolithic; the influence of feminist legislators of either sex is likely to be more important than larger numbers of ideologically diverse women; and increased numbers of women in legislatures may even result in backlash to women's presence and influence rather than better, policy-based representation.

These arguments are valid. Yet the available empirical evidence, including recent studies, consistent with critical mass explanations, suggests that none necessarily entirely undermines the potential relationship between increasing proportions of women in legislatures and effects on policy. Both critical mass effects and alternative explanations may exist simultaneously. Ultimately, the lesson that might be learned from this vigorous debate is that there is much work to be done to deepen our understanding of the policy-related effects of gender imbalance and balance in U.S. legislative representation.

### Distinctive Challenges of Women State Legislators

Because nearly 4 decades of research demonstrates that women individually and collectively make preeminent contributions to the work of state legislatures, questions have arisen about their future potential. The ability to increase their



numbers, continue to foreground issues of particular importance to women, and to affect or even transform legislative procedures and operations is dependent, in part, on institutional permeability, openness, and adaptability. With permeability, groups new to legislatures have opportunities to influence process and product as did their predecessors. To what degree are state legislatures flexible and open to new representational opportunities? Theories of institutional and societal gendering address this important question.

### **Institutional Gendering**

Theories of gendered institutions recognize that gender and gendered beliefs adhere not only to individuals but also to the organizations and institutions to which they belong and that no set of rules and practices—formal or informal, tacit or explicit—is neutral. Institutional life, including expectations for women and men's attributes, behavior, and perceptions; personal relationships; dominant ideologies; distributions of power; and organizational processes, are all gendered. The result is that structures, behaviors, and perspectives that conform to gendered expectations of institutions are rewarded. Those that do not are likely to be devalued and discouraged.

What sort of evidence points to institutional gendering in state legislatures? After all, that women have entered and succeeded in state legislatures indicates that these institutions possess at least some qualities of permeability. Over time, scholars have uncovered a host of evidence revealing elements of persistent institutional resistance. First, the very slow and nonlinear entry of women into state legislatures and their leadership is an indicator not only of masculinized understandings of political leadership but also of their institutional correlates. Although conventional wisdom has consistently held that, as more women enter feeder professions into politics, such as the law, parity will follow naturally. Yet, as women have made up almost half of law school classes for some time, these arguments have become less credible.

Another indicator of resistance to women's presence and progress in state legislatures comes from legislative women's accounts of discrimination in the forms of sexism, racism, and prejudice—all of which have pervaded the research literature from the early 1970s to the present day. Women state legislators report that they frequently need to prove their qualifications relative to men, work harder and produce more to achieve respect and leadership, battle "good old boys clubs," and confront isolation that results from being part of a political minority, newcomers, and outsiders. These perceptions hold true regardless of party identification, ideology, or region from which women are elected. Jackie Speier, former Democratic California State Assemblymember and member of the California State Senate (and now member of Congress), was quoted during her state legislative years as follows:

"The Legislature is a male bastion. Women are scrutinized closer, and we know that. So, we tend to be better prepared" (qtd. in Block, 1988, p. 281).

Gender differences in legislative styles constitute yet another type of evidence of institutional inflexibility. Women officeholders consistently report feeling out of sync with routine operations. In particular, they are more likely than men to perceive and use power to create solutions to problems and advance others rather than to exert power over situations, events, or people. As such, women prefer standard operating procedures that channel the use of influence toward responsiveness to colleagues and constituents rather than toward personal gain. The structures under which women feel they can achieve optimal effectiveness would place priority on long-range planning, consensus building, enhanced communication, cooperation rather than confrontation, and improved organization. Yet institutional procedures, more often than not, reward the opposite priorities. Says former Oregon Senate Leader Kate Brown (D):

I just don't think there is any question that the women legislative leaders have been much more inclined to stay away from the kind of partisan wrangling that men get involved in. . . . But because they seem to me to be less interested in confrontation, they have more energy left for direction, for coming up with solutions. (qtd. in Boulard, 1999)

These distinctive preferred styles are also evident in the attitudes of women state legislative leaders. Research finds that they are more likely than men to prefer and exhibit consensual rather than a command-and-control styles of leadership. Female leaders also tend to pursue process goals and place more emphasis on getting the job done in a team-oriented way. That is, collaboration and consensus are emphasized over more aggressive tactics. Illustratively, in one study in Colorado, female committee chairs were more likely to facilitate open discussions among hearing participants, whereas men were more likely to use their position to control hearings (Kathlene, 1994). Yet, the more professionalized the legislature is, the less likely that consensual styles of leadership are accepted. The New Hampshire example, discussed earlier, is perhaps the foremost example of a citizen legislature in the nation, which helps explain its high level of women leaders compared to other states.

The intersections of gender and race make women leaders' levels of influence and effectiveness even more complex and contingent. One example comes from recent research demonstrating that, in instances in which African American women serve as chair committees, they are likely to be excluded from informal power networks of leaders. The result is that they possess less influence than formal titles might suggest and less influence than similarly situated



men. As one southern legislator in this study noted, "The way the process works, if you are one of the big boys—on the Go Team is what we call it—you are going to have influence on just about anything. Basically, four legislators run this place because they have a lot of say" (qtd. in Smooth, 2006, p. 9).

In sum, to the extent that institutions rely on outdated, gendered modes of operation rather than accommodating the styles of newcomer groups, women generally and women of color are likely to need to work harder to achieve acceptance and success.

### Societal Gendering

Deeply interwoven with institutional gendering is what might be termed *societal gendering*. Attitudes about women and men's proper roles, dominant characteristics, or expected divisions of labor affect women's public sphere participation and effectiveness no less so for legislative women than for other women. Indeed, masculinized understandings of political leadership flow from societal gendering.

An example of how this phenomenon affects female state legislative representation concerns expectations that women's primary attention will be devoted to private life. In addition to the fact that married women and women with children are less likely than their female counterparts to pursue office, among married legislators a supportive spouse is a much more prominent feature of women's career path than men's. Without them, women are more likely than men to forgo political pursuits altogether. Further, for those who are already in office, women with families are often expected to perform double duty in the home and at work. In specific, state legislative women are dramatically more likely than men to be primarily responsible for everyday household tasks such as cleaning, cooking, shopping, dishes, and laundry. Most centrally, those with children are much more likely to serve as the primary caretakers of the family. Illustrating these points, typical responses by female state legislators to a research question about the obstacles to state legislative careers included "Motherhood" and "Managing child care" (Thomas, 2002). Socialized roles and gendered divisions of labor, therefore, affect the politics of legislative presence and the extent to which women can focus on their legislative life.

Another example of societal gendering comes from public perceptions that women legislators (and politicians generally) are more compassionate, honest, task-oriented, and interested in issues related to education, poverty, health care, the environment, and the welfare of children and families than men. Men, on the other hand, are seen as dominant, tough, decisive, in possession of technical expertise, and stronger on issues of crime suppression and punishment, economic performance, trade, taxes, and agriculture. Because the latter set of issues is foundational in the public sphere, men are generally perceived as

"naturals" in the role of legislator. On the other hand, women may be seen as exceptions to the rule.

The result of societal and institutional gendering is a political playing field that is not level. Although women state legislators can and do achieve success and effectiveness, the need to prove their qualifications and competence, as well as the need to fit public sphere activity around private sphere responsibilities, constitutes a higher cost to them to serve. Many who are interested and qualified for the positions may not desire to battle "otherness" or may feel unable to manage double duties. Further, when costs are assessed among groups of women rather than women as a group, the effects are likely to be even more complex, contingent, and disproportionate. Overall these imbalances may mean that women have more reasons than men to delay entry into politics, decline to enter at all, enter on a very limited basis, or to stay for shorter time periods. Their ability to reverse their minority status in state legislatures, obtain sufficient individual and collective experience, and maximize their impact is consequentially reduced.

A remaining question is whether institutional and societal gendering can be overcome. Conventional answers concerning institutions tend to focus on increasing the proportions and diversity of women in legislatures to their levels in the general population. Conventional answers concerning societal divisions of labor tend to focus on remedies, such as governmentally mandated child care, that provide women with the ability to achieve "balance." It is possible, however, that although increasing the number and diversity of women in office and reaping the benefits of collectivization are necessary conditions to transforming institutions, they may not be sufficient. In any case, as patterns of historical incrementalism and the higher costs for women to serve indicate, large increases are unlikely in the near future. Additionally, solutions such as increased availability of child care do not equalize men's presence in the private sphere so that women may increase their presence in the public one. For both these types of gendered resistance, routine operations may have to be reconceptualized. Business as usual in the public and private spheres may need to be transformed before state legislative women achieve both level institutional playing fields and numerical parity.

### Summary and Future Directions

This review of the research on women in state legislatures explored their historical and current presence as well as their contributions and challenges. On one hand, women's presence is higher than it has ever been in our history. On the other, more than three quarters of state legislators are men. Women's vast underrepresentation is a function of the gendered nature of politics, legislative institutions, and society. Still, the partial permeability of political institutions has created space for



women to join state legislatures and their leadership. And once there, women have been able to make distinctive and meaningful contributions to legislative work.

What does the immediate and long-term future hold? The key question is whether women of the 21st century can make more rapid and uniform progress than has been true in the past. Will the 2008 electoral cycle example of the New Hampshire Senate spur women to accelerated levels of participation and success, or will slow, very small augmentations with occasional reversals continue? Whatever the answer, to forge ahead is the only useful course. Quoting Marie Curie, "One never notices what has been done; one can only see what remains to be done." For women state legislators, there is much that remains to be done.

## Notes

1. In 1893 Colorado became the first state in the nation to approve women's suffrage in a popular election. Although women

had limited voting rights in some other states, it was not until 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that women across the nation gained the right to vote in all elections.

2. At this writing there are 17 women in the South Carolina House of Representatives out of 124 members, or 10% of the total.

3. Democratic women state legislators have outnumbered Republican women during the entire modern era. In some years, including the most recent decade, Democratic women have outnumbered Republican women by more than 20 percentage points; at other times, the difference was less than 10 percentage points.

4. Leadership is defined in this instance to include senate presidents and presidents pro tempore, house speakers and speakers pro tempore, and majority and minority leaders in upper and lower chambers.

5. Women-friendly policies are operationalized differently among scholars. Each definition shares the underlying agreement that women's issues or women-friendly policies are those meant to address inequalities of power between the sexes and increase women's autonomy.

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## WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Despite the glamour and attention given to Washington, it is local governments that have the greatest impact on our daily lives. Local governments develop policy and fund and implement a wide range of programs and services influencing everything from public safety and schools, to recreation and environmental protection. Local politics is also more accessible for participation than any other level of government. The 2007 Census of Governments reported 89,476 units of local government in the United States, including towns and townships, counties, cities, special districts, and school districts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Census of Governments, 2008). Among these, there are a wide variety of elective posts beyond executives (mayors) and legislators (councils and school boards), including sheriff, probate judge, clerk of the court, registrar, and revenue officers. Not only are there more opportunities to participate in local politics, but the opportunity costs are lower. Local elections are typically less time consuming, less competitive, and less expensive than elections at other levels of government. As a result, local office is particularly attractive and open to female candidates, and more women hold office at the local level than at the state or national levels. These women are leaders of their communities, championing representation and policy making to improve the quality of our daily interactions with government.

Despite greater representation of women at the local level, research on women in elective office has focused primarily on state legislatures and the U.S. Congress. Less is known about the backgrounds, motivations, and resources of women leaders in local politics. What draws these women into office at the local level? Do women in local politics confront the same barriers that women face at

<i>General Purpose</i>	
County	3,033
Municipal	19,492
Town or township	16,519
<i>Special Purpose</i>	
Special districts	37,381
School districts	13,051

**Table 14.1** Local Government by Type, 2007

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Census of Governments (2008).

the state level or the national level? Do local politics produce unique issues that women must address? Do women provide a different style of leadership at the local level? The limited data on women serving in local elective office across states, and even within states, continues as a barrier to quantitative research on this topic. States vary in the number and structure of their local governments. Not all states have county governments, for example, and some states have cities that are independent from counties. School boards can be elected or appointed, selected by district or at large. Elections can be partisan or nonpartisan, and it can vary within a state and even between elections. Election times and terms of office are staggered, and there are huge variances in the power and responsibilities of local elected officials, such as strong-mayor versus weak-mayor systems or commissions versus council-manager

structures. Likewise, school boards vary in composition and autonomy. No single or complete source of data exists for the varied types of local governments and the demographics of the people that serve in them.

This developing field within women and politics, however, does offer insight about the role that political socialization and family play in the decision to run for office; the cultural attitudes that may present barriers to women running for office; the role of political parties in recruiting women; the role that local office plays as a breeding ground for candidates to run for higher office; and the different issues, styles of leadership, and goals that women may bring to the table. Local office provides the entry-level political experience that can facilitate a candidacy for the state legislature, statewide executive office, or congressional office. National women’s networks, including EMILY’s List and WISH, recruit candidates for federal office from among women serving in local government. To an extent, the experience of women leaders at the local level serves as a bellwether for increasing gender representation in higher office.

City and County Councils

County government structures typically include an elective legislative body called a board of supervisors or commissioners. Approximately 13% of counties add a council-elected executive and a third hire a professional administrator. Only a few cities use a commission form of government; most use either a mayor-council or a council-manager structure. City councils have professionalized over time, including more committees to process work and increased staff support. At the same time, the time commitment required for many council members has expanded into a full-time job at part-time pay. The National League of Cities (2003) reports an annual average salary range from \$20,000 for council members in small cities working approximately 20 hours per week to \$39,000 in large cities with an average workload of 42 hours per week.

Approximately 25% of county commissioners in 2006 were women, compared to just 3% in the 1970s (MacManus, Bullock, Padgett, & Penberthy, 2006).

Female representation on city councils varies from 25% in smaller cities to 36% in larger cities. Female representation is slightly higher in cities that use a council-manager structure (29.5%) compared to mayor-council cities (26.9%). Significant differences based on the use of districts versus at-large elections, however, no longer exist (Svara, 2003).

Research suggests that women elected to city or county councils have a different approach to leadership than do males. Whether elected to clean up politics or to provide increased or even first-time representation of women in local office in their community, women are both praised and criticized for focusing more attention on their constituents. Susan Abrams Beck (1991) found that female council members spend more time responding to constituents and that male council members view this behavior negatively, suggesting that it leads to policy making based on emotion rather than analysis. In contrast women describe themselves as delegates who do a better job representing their constituents. Denise Antolini (1984) argues that women focus more on constituents to compensate for their exclusion from the inner circles of policy making.

Female local legislators also note differences in workload compared to males, reporting more time spent not just responding to constituents but preparing for meetings and following up on issues. Women perceive knowledge and preparation as both a responsibility to the electorate and a means to increase influence. Their “underdog status” imposes increased pressures to perform (Kanter, 1977; Merritt, 1980). In contrast, males complain that women ask too many questions, spend too much time talking over the issues, and as a result, appear less willing to take a stand that might offend the group. Women respond with complaints about continued discrimination and the “dirty politics” they sometimes encounter (Boles, 1991; van Assendelft & Stottlemeyer, 2009).

Differences in role perceptions are linked to the factors that initially draw women into elective office. In a 2007 survey, women council members frankly stated their motives for running, including “to get rid of a terrible elected official,” out of “disgust” with a city official, and “to save my town from Walmart.” Likewise, another respondent described how “*someone* needed to run, and quickly. A group of citizens were desperate.” And another

	1979	1989	2001
Percentage of women serving on city councils	32%	26%	28%
Small cities (25,000–69,999)	—	21	25
Medium cities (70,000–199,999)	—	25	36
Large cities (200,000 and up)	—	33	36

Table 14.2 Women Serving on City Councils

SOURCE: National League of Cities (2003).



described how “it was people asking me to give them a choice” (van Assendelft & Stottlemeyer, 2009, p. 7). Perceptions of women as less corrupt and more likely to be trusted reflect historical patterns. Traditionally, women’s lack of political experience and limited ties to the political and economic elites in their communities contributed to their “reformist” perspective (Bers, 1978; Lee, 1976; Merritt, 1980). This alternate pathway into office leads to different perceptions of the role that women must fill.

Female council members rank their most important role as an elected official as providing fairness, listening to all citizens, being trustworthy, being accessible, being efficient, and providing advocacy. Examples include “Giving the taxpayers the most efficient bang for their many bucks, and doing what I can to make sure everyone receives equal and fair treatment (no good-old-boy favoritism).” Women also describe a need to feel more competent, for example, “As the first woman on the Board of Supervisors for my county, I have to take seriously the fact that I am a role model. I must be more prepared than any of the men and be more productive” (van Assendelft & Stottlemeyer, 2009, p. 12).

Research on the impact that gender makes on city councils suggests differences in leadership style, but not necessarily on most substantive issues. Beck (1991) found that women and men tend to agree on issue priorities—taxes, economic development, and quality of life in the community—because few decisions on councils are based on gender, or even on political party, given the limited range of issues that are presented and the lack of resources council members can use to respond. On select women’s issues, Boles (2001) found evidence of women reporting more activity than did men, including sexual assault, domestic violence, child care, displaced homemakers, library services for children, and childbirth in public hospitals. Boles found that women were more likely to perceive an issue as a women’s issue, prioritize the issue, and provide leadership on these issues (Boles, 2001). However, it is not necessary to specialize in order to gain influence at the local level. A recent survey of women council members revealed that rather than identifying with a single issue, respondents rated “making my community a better place to live” as their number one goal and/or accomplishment (van Assendelft & Stottlemeyer, 2009).

Whereas initial research on the attitudes and behaviors of women local legislators suggests differences in leadership style and role orientation, more research is needed to measure their impact on policy making. The evidence thus far suggests, however, that as the number of women serving on local councils continues to increase, their leadership will help to sensitize male colleagues and raise awareness of women’s issues.

## School Boards

School boards vary in terms of selection of members (appointed or elected), administrative authority, and

budgetary independence. The vast majority of school boards are elected; only six states (Alabama, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, South Carolina, and Virginia) have more than a minimal number of appointed school boards (Briffault, 2005, p. 27). Women hold more school board seats than any other level of office, and they continue to make gains. Approximately 40% of school board members today are female, compared to just over 25% in the 1970s (MacManus et al., 2006). MacManus et al. (2006) argue that the perception of school board as a low prestige office where women are less threatening to men—because education is considered as a natural extension of motherhood—may help to explain why more women run for these positions. The recent attention on education in the national media, combined with term limits in state legislatures, may actually be increasing the desirability of service on school boards. Women have been more successful at attaining these positions than school superintendent positions, although there are gaps, with higher success rates in larger, urban, and more cosmopolitan school districts (MacManus et al., 2006).

Typically school board members have served an “apprenticeship” in government, civic-business organizations, or education. Potential political leaders are often recruited from local civic and charitable organizations, where the encouragement to run from current board members, civic leaders, or family friends rank higher than recruitment from political party organizations (Zeigler & Jennings, 1974). There are few gender differences in the profile of school board members. Both male and female school board members are upper-middle class, well-educated, white, married, and parents (approximately half have school-age children). Female school board members tend to be younger than the men and twice as likely to come from a background in education (Deckman, 2007, p. 548).

Women and men approach the job of school board member from slightly different perspectives. Like women local council members, women are more likely than men to emphasize representation of the public in their role as a school board member, whereas men are more likely than women to emphasize administrative oversight (Bers, 1978; Donahue, 1997). Melissa Deckman (2007) notes that women school board members, although more liberal than male school board members, rate themselves as moderate leaning conservative. This may help explain why women school board members in Deckman’s survey did not prioritize substantive policy changes that would increase equality for girls in education. School board agendas are also constrained by scarce resources, limited autonomy, and the dominant influence of school superintendents and teacher unions (Deckman, 2007; Donahue, 1997).

Historically the office of school board has rarely led to higher office. Rather, school board service is perceived as “apolitical,” occupying a temporary time period in life constrained by both personal and family needs (Bers, 1978). Early research by Harmon Zeigler and Kent Jennings (1974) found that at the school board level, there is a cultural norm against mixing politics and education



policy that depressed progressive ambition. In their study, only a third of school board members expressed interest in running for reelection. Even self-identified ambitious school board members desired simply running for another local office—a move that most would perceive as lateral rather than progressive. Trudy Bers (1978) found similar evidence, reporting that only 10 % of female school board members joined political parties and most did not seek reelection beyond a second term. Deekman (2007) further notes that neither male nor female school board members demonstrate high levels of progressive ambition.

School board politics do not appear to provide the orientation to electoral politics necessary to inspire progressive ambition. School board elections are often nonpartisan affairs with limited voter turnout and competition. A significant number of school board members do not face competition even in their first run for office, and incumbency reelection rates are high. Political parties are not actively recruiting from this gateway to the political pipeline. School board members themselves do not perceive their office as a stepping stone toward a political career (Deekman, 2007).

## Mayors

In 1887 in the small Quaker town of Argonia, Kansas, the first female mayor in the United States was elected at just 27 years of age. Susanna Salter had led a caucus meeting for the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) where the group nominated a slate of candidates supporting Prohibition. A group of men trying to intimidate WCTU met in secret and planned to humiliate Salter by putting her name on the ballot. When the chairman of the Republican Party went early to vote and saw her name on the ballot, he organized a delegation to visit Salter to explain the trick and to ask if she would serve if elected. When she replied yes, the party went to work and turned out the vote in her favor, electing Salter the first female mayor in the United States (Billington, 1954).

Bertha Knight Landes could not vote until age 51 when suffrage passed, but within 2 years she won a seat on the Seattle City Council and then in 1926 she was elected mayor, starting a long tradition of successful women mayors in King County, Washington. Explaining her passion for public service as her motivation, she ran "to serve the best interests of the city; not to further the political ambitions of any one woman," and believed that "it is not only the right, but the privilege and duty, of women to take part in the administration of public affairs" (Nieol, 2005, p. 16). Landes demanded respect as mayor: "And I threaten to shoot on sight, without the benefit of clergy, anyone calling me the mayoress instead of the mayor. . . . Let women who go into politics be the real thing or nothing!" (p. 16). A 1973 study of five Georgia female mayors found similarities in personality, describing the women as "outspoken, idealistic, and fiercely dedicated to honest and

efficient government" (Georgia Municipal Association, 2008). Current Atlanta Georgia Mayor Shirley Franklin continues this tradition as the first woman and the first African American to serve as mayor of a large southern city. Describing herself as an "unintentional mayor," Franklin has restored trust in Atlanta's city government through aggressive budget and ethics reform. In 2005 she was awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award (Franklin, 2005).

The percentage of women serving as mayors in cities with populations over 30,000 has fluctuated over time from 16% in the late 1980s to highs of 21% in the 1990s, to just over 16% since 2007 (CAWP, 2009). In 2009 women represent 16.2% in cities over 30,000, 15.2% of the mayors serving cities with populations over 100,000, and 11% of the mayors serving in the 100 largest cities in the country (CAWP, 2009; see Table 14.3).

In Massachusetts alone, 11 women representing 25% of the 44 cities that have a mayor-council form of government currently serve as mayors. Not only do they serve as role models encouraging more women to consider running for mayor, but in office they rely on each other for advice and support. As Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll explained in an interview, "It's helpful, frankly, to talk to someone who understands that you had to bathe three kids and put dinner on the table before a council meeting" (Ailworth & Valencia, 2008). Gloucester Mayor Carolyn Kirk said, "I know I looked to Kim Driscoll and said: 'Wow! She's got three kids, I've got two.' She provided that possibility to me that I could make it work in my life, because she was making it work" (Ailworth & Valencia, 2008). Although women are not represented in 37% of localities in Massachusetts, including five of the state's largest cities where a woman has never been elected mayor, these 11 female mayors see progress in the political experience and success of women and in the difference they make by bringing gender to the table (Ailworth & Valencia, 2008).

The power and responsibility of mayors differs across city governmental structures. Mayors are ranked as weak or strong depending on how much formal policy-making authority and independence they are granted. Weak mayors are executive figureheads with no veto power and may be members of their city council. Strong mayors have increased administrative roles, including hiring and firing city officials, budget preparation, and possibly the veto.

Although service as mayor can launch a statewide or congressional career, women mayors continue to find themselves underrepresented in leadership positions in the U.S. Conference of Mayors. In 1983 Senator Dianne Feinstein (then mayor of San Francisco) organized the Women Mayors' Caucus in an effort to advance the involvement and leadership opportunities for women within the Conference of Mayors. Currently chaired by Bowling Green, Kentucky, Mayor Elaine Walker, this nonpartisan group meets twice a year holding seminars where women mayors can network, discuss issues, and learn how to assume greater responsibility within the organization.



<i>State</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Rank</i>
MD	Baltimore	Shelia Dixon	651,154	21
CA	Fresno	Ashley Swearengin	427,652	40
GA	Atlanta	Shirley Franklin	416,474	42
OK	Tulsa	Kathryn L. Taylor	393,049	45
FL	Tampa	Pam Iorio	303,447	59
CA	Stockton	Ann Johnson	243,771	71
NC	Greensboro	Yvonne J. Johnson	223,891	79
TX	Plano	Pat Evans	222,030	81
AZ	Glendale	Elaine M. Scruggs	218,812	83
CA	Chula Vista	Cheryl Cox	203,000	92
AZ	Scottsdale	Mary Manross	202,705	93
WA	Spokane	Mary Verner	195,628	103
TX	Amarillo	Debra McCartt	173,627	123
MA	Worcester	Konstantina B. Lukes	172,648	125
OH	Dayton	Rhine L. McLin	166,179	127
CA	Santa Rosa	Susan Gorin	159,980	130
CA	Pomona	Norma J. Torres	149,473	143
VA	Hampton	Molly Joseph Ward	146,437	149
OR	Eugene	Kitty Piercy	137,893	162
OR	Salem	Janet Taylor	136,924	163

**Table 14.3** Top 20 Women Mayors in U.S. Cities by Population, 2009

SOURCE: Center for American Women and Politics (2009).

for example, by serving on committees and task forces and talking with current leaders. Despite this advice, few women mayors are volunteering for leadership positions, citing the difficulty balancing the demands of public life and family, much less assuming an additional role. Obtaining leadership positions and networking with women in Congress are key to breaking through to higher office (Fonder, 2002). Currently there are 23 women serving in the 111th Congress who include local elective office in their prior political experience. Women comprise 15% of former mayors in Congress, 11% of former school board members, 25% of former board of supervisors, and 27% of former city council members (see Table 14.4).

Women mayors, particularly the “firsts” in their communities, are working hard to break gender stereotypes. Many of them tell stories about constituents rushing up to their husband to shake his hand, calling him “mayor.”

Salem, Massachusetts, Mayor Kim Driscoll refers to the “W-factor,” explaining that there is still an assumption that a male candidate is better suited to serve as mayor (Evich, 2008). Issaquah, Washington, Mayor Ava Frissinger commented in a 2005 interview,

The biggest challenge is—I don’t want to say being taken seriously—but having the authenticity of one’s authority recognized. In part it’s just a difference in communications styles. Men speak with authority whether they actually know something or not. Women don’t or at least I don’t. People take that as a sign of hesitancy or a lack of true knowledge. (qtd. in Nicol, 2005, p. 16)

Women mayors tend to focus on procedure and mediation, gradually learning to use their gender as an advantage. Northampton, Massachusetts, Mayor Clare Higgins commented, “Those skills I learned in a daycare

<i>Name of Member</i>	<i>Political Experience Includes</i>			
	<i>Mayor</i>	<i>City Council</i>	<i>Board of Supervisors</i>	<i>School Board</i>
Representative Judy Chu (D-CA)	x	x		
Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA)	x			
Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA)	x		x	
Representative Sue Myrick (R-NC)	x			
Representative Marcia L. Fudge (D-OH)	x			
Representative Kay Granger (R-TX)	x			
Representative Lyn Woolsey (D-CA)		x		
Representative Laura Richardson (D-CA)		x		
Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)		x		
Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN)		x		
Representative Sue Myrick (R-NC)		x		
Representative Yvette Clarke (D-NY)		x		
Representative Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY)		x		
Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)		x		
Representative Betty Sutton (D-OH)		x		
Representative Kay Granger (R-TX)		x		
Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)		x		
Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)		x		
Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)			x	
Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA)			x	
Representative Mary Jo Kilroy (D-OH)				x

**Table 14.4** Women Local Leaders in the 111th CongressSOURCE: Based on data from Congress Merge database: <http://www.congressmerge.com/online/db/powersearch.htm>.

center I jokingly like to say is the best training for being a mayor, but it actually is true" (Evich, 2008).

Female mayors find similarities between running a family and running a city, and they relish the opportunity to improve their communities for their families. They continue to confront gender stereotypes while serving, and although they reach out and mentor other women and particularly the younger generation, few of them seek higher office. In 2008 vice presidential nominee Alaska Governor Sarah Palin (the first Republican female vice presidential candidate) increased the visibility of women as mayors and the relevance of their executive experience. Palin had served two terms as mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, before being

elected the youngest (at 42), and first female, governor of the state.

In terms of the issues that mayors prioritize, few gender differences emerge. Women, like men, primarily focus on economic development, infrastructure, and physical safety (Tolleson-Rinchart, 2001; Weikert, Chen, Williams, & Hromic, 2006). Sue Tolleson-Rinchart (2001) suggests that the male mayors "looked more like women" in their policy priorities, with a focus on community life. Their approach to leadership, however, differs. Tolleson-Rinchart found that women were more likely to emphasize a hands-on style, collegiality, and teamwork. Lynn Weikert and colleagues (2006) describe female mayors as more inclusive.



Women mayors were more willing to acknowledge and openly discuss fiscal problems and changes in their goals. They expressed greater willingness to change budgetary processes, in contrast to male mayors, who emphasized the need for increasing budgetary controls.

As more women assume leadership positions as mayors of large cities, they accrue executive experience and national exposure that can parlay their careers onto a national stage. Evidence suggests that female mayors bring a different style of leadership, if not different agendas, to the office. Not only do they help shatter negative gender stereotypes, but they provide strong, visible role models for the women they mentor.

## Recruitment of Women for Local Office

There are a number of traditional barriers to women entering politics, including cultural attitudes, career choice and preparation, family demands, sex discrimination, and the structure of the U.S. political system. Women have made gains toward socioeconomic equality and have increased their presence in fields that typically lead to a political career, but have they entered a political pipeline? If so, where does that pipeline begin, and how much ambition do these women have to run for higher office in the future?

Local office is perceived to be the most family friendly, with lower opportunity costs than serving in statewide or national office. Women do not have to relocate their families or change careers in order to hold local office. The policies that local government addresses include “women’s issues,” such as domestic violence, education, and health care. There are more female role models in local politics and fewer cultural barriers and role conflicts. Although the demands of the job have increased over time, typically local office is part-time (Beck, 1991; Boles, 2001; Flammang, 1984).

Perceptions of local offices also tend to be more positive than perceptions of national institutions. A 2001 survey of city council members, for example, reported that the public image of councils was positive. Smaller cities reported more favorable perceptions (87%), compared to medium (83%) or large cities (69%; National League of Cities, 2003). In comparison, approval ratings of the federal government institutions ranked significantly lower. The 2001 Gallup governance polls indicated 58% approval for the Supreme Court, 51% approval for the president and only 42% for Congress (Jones, 2006). Support for the president and Congress declined to record lows by 2008 (Jones, 2008).

In addition to the attractiveness of local office, the “eligibility pool” at the local level may be larger and more diverse than it is for national office. Lawless and Fox (2005) identify an eligibility pool for potential candidates that includes law, business, education, and politics. Although states that have a higher percentage of working women, business owners, and law students and lawyers have more women legislators, state and local government administration has also been identified as a breeding

ground for women candidates (Dometrius & Sigelman, 1997; Sanbonmatsu, 2002). Nelson Dometrius and Lee Sigelman (1997) note growth in representation of women among state and local government officials and administrators but not among the workforce as a whole, suggesting that more can be done to recruit and retain women in local government. Marion Palley (2001) describes these bureaucrats as the “hidden players” in the policy-making process.

The recruitment of women also varies by the size and diversity of a community. Studies show, for example, that women are more likely to win office in cities that are larger and more diverse. The structure of local government also affects recruitment. Historically, localities that use multi-member or at-large districts create more opportunities for women. Women are more likely to think they have a chance of winning these elections and are more likely to run (Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994).

However, even women who have entered the “eligibility pool”—comprising individuals with the characteristics that “qualify” them to run for public office—are still less likely to consider running for office than are men (Lawless & Fox, 2005). Among the factors that Lawless and Fox identify as preventing women from entering politics is that they have not been encouraged to run for office. Women also perceive that they have to be “twice as good as men to compete evenly” (Lawless & Fox, 2005). Although there is no dominant path to local office, family backgrounds, involvement in local political parties, and encouragement from friends are critical factors in the decision to run for office.

There is also some evidence that national trends can influence local trends in female representation. In a study of women in county government and school board positions in two states, MacManus et al. (2006) found that the 1992 “Year of the Woman” corresponded with an increase in the representation of women in elective office in both Florida and Georgia. However, with higher representation of women before 1992, Florida experienced less significant growth than rural and suburban Georgia.

In recent years, interest groups once focused primarily on prestigious statewide or national level office have increased efforts to recruit and train women seeking political office at all levels. Following a decrease in state legislative representation of women in 2000, EMILY’s List launched its Political Opportunity Program (POP) and published a training manual, “Thinking of Running for Office.” Currently employing three regional directors, POP has worked to recruit and train nearly 6,000 women across more than 30 states). In 2008 alone, POP helped to elect 175 women in 32 states (EMILY’s List, 2009). WISH List followed with a similar campaign training program in 2001, now referred to as the Tillie Fowler Campaign Training Program. Since 1994 the Women’s Campaign School at Yale University has provided nonpartisan, issue-neutral political campaign training, including summer programs and special event seminars. The Feminist Majority Foundation provides outreach to college campuses, offering internships and encouraging campus activism in an effort to



engage the younger generation. The National Women's Political Caucus publishes "Women Winning Campaigns: The National Women's Political Caucus Hands-On Guide for Today's Leaders" and a guide to running a low-budget campaign. The White House Project's *Vote, Run, Lead* program offers training and networking. Of the program's 1,400 alumnae, 70% are under the age of 35 and a majority are committed to running for office within 10 years. It is programs like these that help to fill the pipeline with women who otherwise might not receive the encouragement or training needed to run a successful campaign.

### Progressive Ambition Among Women at the Local Level

Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow (D) provides a classic example of how the political pipeline is supposed to work. Stabenow first ran for elective office in 1974 in response to a potential closure of a nursing home in her hometown. She was elected as the youngest and first female Ingham County Commissioner, serving as chair from 1977 to 1978. She was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in 1979, followed by the Michigan Senate in 1991, the U.S. House of Representatives in 1996, and the U.S. Senate in 2000, where she now serves. Other examples of nationally elected women who started their political careers at the local level include Representative Nydia Velazquez, the first Latina appointed to serve on the New York City Council. She ran for Congress and won in 1992. Senator Dianne Feinstein started out in 1969, when she was elected to the San Francisco County Board of Supervisors, serving as the first woman president for two and a half terms. She subsequently was appointed to replace Harvey Milk and then elected to two 4-year terms as the first woman mayor of San Francisco, and in 1992 she was elected to the U.S. Senate. U.S. House Representative Marilyn Musgrave began her political career serving one term on the school board of Fort Morgan, Colorado, in 1991. In 1992 she was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives, followed by the Colorado Senate in 1996 where she served until her 2003 election to the U.S. House of Representatives. There are more success stories, but for the vast majority of women who serve in local office, their political careers start and stop in their hometown.

Attitudes toward women as politicians and attitudes of women as politicians help to explain this leak in the political pipeline. Historically the phrase "petticoat politics" was used to describe the phenomenon where slates of women ran as reformers who left office once their mission was accomplished. Surveys of women local officeholders continue to portray women as more likely to be "public servants" than politicians (Antolini, 1984, p. 24; see also Bers, 1978). As public servants, women are more likely than men to view their role as a representative as a "delegate," or messenger of the people, rather than a "trustee" who votes their conscience (Gross, 1978, p. 361).

This preference for public service over politics continues. In a 2007 survey of local elected leaders, respondents indicated that "making my community a better place to live" was their number one goal and/or accomplishment (74.2%), followed closely by "devoting time to my children" (73.6%). At the bottom of the list fell "rising to the top of my profession" (18.2%) and "earning a great deal of money" (2.5%; van Assendelft & Stottlemeyer, 2009). The focus on good public policy, serving the community, and devoting time to family are important issues that motivate women to serve in local office. The focus on ideas and principles is more characteristic of the amateur politician than the professional, who may be more focused on developing a career in politics.

The motivation to run for office influences political ambition. Whereas Joseph A. Schlesinger (1966) argued that political ambition is the "driving force of politics" and the desire to pursue higher office enhances problem solving, constituency service, and democratic leadership, most reformers associate ambition with corruption. Timothy Bledsoe and Mary Herring (1990) suggest that the different motivational circumstances of women and men create different perceptions and meanings for political ambition. They found male city council members to be more ambitious, self-motivated, and willing to enter political competition with a "single-mindedness absent in women" (Bledsoe & Herring, 1990, p. 221). In contrast, even women who expressed political ambition needed the reassurance of electoral security and the encouragement to run for higher office (Bledsoe & Herring, 1990). Fox and Lawless (2004) likewise report that support from family and friends is a significant factor in a woman's decision to run for office.

The nature of local elections may also depress progressive ambition. District elections, for example, provide less of the visibility and support needed to launch a campaign for higher office compared to at-large elections. Likewise, nonpartisan elections weaken the ties to local party organizations that help to recruit and campaign for higher office. Voter turnout is also typically lower in nonpartisan elections (Schaffner, Streb, & Wright, 2001). These structural differences across localities create barriers for women, who need additional encouragement to run for higher office.

### Summary and Future Directions

The emerging body of literature on female candidates and elected officials at the local level reveals a profile of women leaders characterized by an emphasis on public service over politics. Women local leaders are more likely than men to act as delegates rather than trustees, spending more time working with constituents. Their management style is more inclusive. They are more willing to encourage citizen participation, to openly discuss problems, and to seek alternate solutions. Beyond style of representation, however, few substantive differences in policy outcomes



emerge. Constrained by pressures to keep tax rates low and property values high, the agendas of male and female local elected leaders are often more alike than different, focusing on everyday concerns of roads, garbage, and parks, sharing common goals to improve their communities.

Recruiting these strong community role models to seek higher office, however, has proven difficult. Although the pipeline theory suggests that future women in state legislatures and Congress are getting their start in politics at the local level, women elected officials at the local level express low levels of progressive ambition. Perceptions of

local office as less time consuming, less controversial, and more family friendly may draw into office a more diverse group of amateur politicians, not necessarily recruited by, or active in, their political parties. Alternative “gateway” group affiliations most influential in assisting women seeking higher offices are not systematically organized at the local level, although they are increasing their recruitment and candidate training efforts. While the success stories continue, the key to increasing the representation of women at the local level—similar to the state and national level—remains finding and persuading more women to run.

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## SPOTLIGHT: Shirley Franklin

I think that there are some clear advantages to understanding the unique contributions that women can make. If we use our intuition and we use our imagination and creativity, if we use our ability to balance roles, to wear multiple hats, I think that the country and the cities and states will be better off for that. We have a lot to contribute and our experiences are different. (Franklin, 2007)

Atlanta, Georgia, Mayor Shirley Franklin did not anticipate having a political career. She describes herself as "an accidental politician, an unintentional mayor" (Franklin, 2005). Inaugurated in 2002, Franklin was sworn in as the first female mayor of Atlanta and the first African American female mayor of a major southern city. She quickly emerged as one of the nation's top leaders, earning a 2005 Profile in Courage Award from the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and recognition from *Time* magazine as one of the top five big city mayors. The White House Project, an organization dedicated to the endeavor of electing a woman president, named Franklin as one of eight women who could run for president (Stevens & Fecht, 2008). Currently serving in her second term as mayor of Atlanta, Franklin has faced financial and ecological crises, divided government, racial tension, and the continuing problem of poverty in the inner city, all while maintaining strong bipartisan support. Her path to the mayor's office is an unusual one that sheds light on the many pipelines through which women at the local level can enter into the political arena.

In their research on the recruitment and ambition of women for elected office, Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless (2004) note that family responsibilities continue as a barrier for many women. Indeed, Franklin, a single mother, waited to run for office until her three children were grown and two had graduated from college. As Franklin (2007) explains, "Taking a stock of how my children were doing and how they would relate to my running for office was the first hurdle I had to overcome before I ran." Her commitment to public service, however, was inspired in childhood.

Religion played an important role in Franklin's early childhood. Franklin vividly recalls the sermons of the Reverend Jesse Anderson she heard while growing up in Philadelphia. "His message was clear—we are called to do God's work on earth. Reverend Jesse Anderson sparked my interest in social and economic justice for people of color, the poor and the oppressed around the world. He inspired me to care about others all the time, not just when it is convenient or easy to do" (Franklin, 2005). Franklin gained self-esteem and confidence at an all-girls high school, believing that "women would and could and should rule the world" (Franklin, 2007). She was a teenager when President John F. Kennedy was elected and she credits his call to action for inspiring her choice of public service as a career path. Franklin entered adulthood during the peak of the civil rights movement, traveling with her mother and aunts to participate in the March on Washington where she heard John Lewis and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. speak. Franklin recalls, "Lewis was so young yet powerful . . . inspiring me as a young person to act rather than to watch and wait. And Martin Luther King offered a message of hope, reconciliation, and a vision for America" (Franklin, 2005). She was also inspired by how young people were able to influence public policy through the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), commenting how "that stuck with me even from my twenties well into my fifties when I finally ran for office" (Franklin, 2007).

Franklin worked her way through college as a library aide, telephone operator, and a contract compliance officer at the Department of Labor, earning a B.A. degree in sociology from Howard University in 1968. She earned an M.A. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1969 and began teaching political science at Talladega College in Alabama. In 1972 she married David McCoy Franklin and the couple moved to Atlanta, where they had three sons. Franklin's husband was active in the 1973 mayoral campaign to elect Maynard Jackson. Through that connection, Franklin joined Jackson's team in 1978 as commissioner of cultural affairs. In 1982 newly elected Mayor Andrew Jackson appointed Franklin the city's first woman chief administrative officer and city manager (1982–1990) and then executive officer for operations (1990–1991). Franklin supervised daily operations of the city and capital construction projects, including Hartsfield Airport, a new city hall, and a new municipal court building. Franklin and her husband divorced in 1986. In 1991 Franklin left the mayor's office to join the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games as senior vice president for external relations, acting as a liaison between labor unions, civil rights groups, community organizations, and environmentalists. By 1997 Franklin was CEO (chief executive officer) of a public relations and community affairs management consulting firm, Shirley Franklin & Associates. She also joined the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, serving as vice chair from 1999 to 2000. Two decades of governmental and administrative posts helped Franklin cultivate the skills that would comprise her signature leadership style.

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Franklin's transition to public office was facilitated by the mentorship of Jackson and Young. Franklin describes herself as a "late bloomer" who did not recognize her own leadership potential until well into her 40s (Franklin, 2007). She credits Jackson and Young for convincing her that it was not only the right time but also her duty to run and to serve. It is the extra encouragement and support from mentors, family, and friends that is often needed for women to make the decision to run for office (Fox & Lawless, 2004). As a mentor for young women in Atlanta, Franklin was also motivated by the underrepresentation of women in city government, explaining, "I was telling all these young women . . . that you could do anything you wanted to do. And we hadn't had a woman as mayor. I finally convinced myself that I had an obligation to break through the barrier" (Brush, 2005).

Franklin ran for mayor in 2001 while outgoing Mayor Bill Campbell was under investigation for bribery, tax fraud, and corruption charges. She focused her campaign on restoring ethics to city government. Franklin disclosed all of her contributions and her income tax returns on the Internet, saying, "I decided to establish trust as a centerpiece of my campaign by raising the bar on campaign disclosure" (Sack, 2001). Franklin raised \$3.2 million dollars, 50% more than her main challenger in the general election, Rob Pitts, Atlanta city council president. Ultimately, though, Franklin defeated Pitts by just 188 votes, confirmed in a recount. Franklin had found her political voice, as she later reflected, "It was important to me to represent the African-American heritage we have here in Atlanta in a way that would translate around the world every day. I wanted men and women to see me in this role, so they would not have to explain to their granddaughters why a woman could not be mayor of Atlanta" (O'Connell, 2005, p. 24).

Franklin inherited an \$82 million budget deficit from Campbell. Instead of blaming her predecessor, she openly discussed the city's financial difficulties and tackled the problem with an inclusive decision-making style. She had courted business leaders during her campaign and she returned to them for advice. Whereas her predecessor had once told the powerful Buckhead business group to pay for their own street repairs, for example, Franklin set up a pothole hotline and moved a police station closer to the community's rowdy bar scene (Stodghill, 2007). This approach also helped Franklin transcend racial tensions. Ron Stodghill (2007) credits Franklin for "maintaining ties with black voters" while "she's earned praise from Atlanta's white establishment for leveraging her clout—and the city's resources—to restore some of the luster Buckhead has lost in recent years."

Franklin convinced 75 consulting firms to help audit the city for free. Former Mayor Sam Massell commented, "It's a shocking state of affairs we've handed her, but she's facing up to every one of them" (Schoenberger, 2003). Constant communication with the public also proved to be critical to Franklin's success.

One of the most difficult issues on Franklin's agenda was how to address a leaking sewer system, for which Atlanta paid \$20,000 per day. Dubbed "the pipe dreamer" and even calling herself "the sewer mayor," Franklin spoke relentlessly about the need to overhaul the city's water and sewer system. "I was a one-person chant, a drumbeat for infrastructure," Franklin said (Brush, 2005). Ultimately she convinced the voters to pass her \$3.2 billion dollar project.

Franklin's "no-nonsense, back to basics" leadership style is attributed to her lengthy administrative experience. Silla Brush (2005) explains, "That experience has shortened her learning curve of course. But she had also not had to win votes or score political points in the past, since she had never run for elective office." Although Franklin admits that she enjoys politics, she is more motivated by policy making—solving problems and getting the job done (Brush, 2005).

In an effort to restore faith in the city's government, Franklin took steps that would otherwise be considered political suicide: cutting jobs, raising sales tax and property taxes, and passing a new code of ethics for city employees (Grossman, 2005). She took time to educate the public to understand that the changes were necessary. Franklin earned high praise from the business community for reigning in government bureaucracy—she went so far as to take away cell phones, official credit cards, and government cars. She even cut her own salary by \$40,000. Although Atlanta CEO Charles Loudermilk had voted for Franklin's opponent, he quickly changed his assessment of Franklin, admitting, "I was 100% wrong" (Schoenberger, 2003). The Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce President Sam Williams described Franklin as "an unbelievable breath of fresh air for the business community," noting her unique blend of diplomatic skills and business acumen (Copeland, 2002). Research on women's leadership at the local level has identified this different type of management style among women compared to men. Women are more likely to emphasize transparency and inclusivity in their decision-making process than are men (Tolleson-Rinehart, 2001; Weikert, Chen, Williams, & Hromic, 2006).



Franklin consults Republicans and, unlike her predecessor, participates in the Atlanta Regional Commission, an intergovernmental coordination agency serving the Atlanta metropolitan area, including 10 counties and the city of Atlanta. Franklin's bipartisan inclusivity became a necessity just one year into her administration when Republicans took over both the governor's office and the state senate for the first time in 130 years. Franklin's ally, incumbent Governor Roy Barnes, was defeated by Republican State Senator Sonny Perdue. Agnes Scott College political science professor Gus Cochran notes that Franklin appears "low key, and more comfortable working in a coalition," aiding her attempts to cultivate bipartisan support (Copeland, 2002).

Franklin rose above partisan and intergovernmental conflict in responding to Atlanta's economic crisis, boldly facing down her critics with the promise of a better and more viable city. Despite initiating the painful process of balancing the budget, Franklin won reelection by a landslide with 90% of the vote.

Franklin's few critics deplore her tactics and her perceived indifference to the issues of poverty and homelessness in Atlanta. Indeed, she promised that her second term would focus more on education, homelessness, and economic development. To that end she formed a commission of city leaders to create the "Blueprint to End Homelessness in Atlanta in 10 years." Franklin banned panhandling and opened the 24/7 Gateway Center to provide showers, beds, job training, and medical attention to the city's homeless (O'Connell, 2005). Launching a campaign to crack down on underage prostitution, Franklin publicly discussed how she had been abused as a 10-year-old girl by her friend's father. When asked why she took on such a "repellent" issue in a city that depends on tourism, Franklin replied, "We take the position in my administration that the best way to solve a problem is to face the facts. We know the problem is here. It's happening on our watch. It's unacceptable behavior, and we are not going to stand for it. So look for us to do everything in our power to change it" (Krugman, 2006). As part of her Mayor's Youth Program Franklin met individually with high school seniors, gave out her private cell phone number, and offered to buy stamps and laptops for needy students applying to college (O'Connell, 2005).

Franklin also won a symbolic victory for Atlanta by preventing a family auction and buying a large collection of papers belonging to the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Franklin believed strongly that the papers belonged in Atlanta. She called in favors with business leaders around the city and ultimately secured private funding for a \$32 million loan, choosing to house the papers at Morehouse College, King's alma mater. The media reported her feat as "a classic Atlanta story—like winning the 1996 Olympics—of taking a near impossible challenge and galvanizing city support to make it happen" (Dewan, 2006).

Franklin has scored approval ratings as high as 80%. She is praised by both Democrats and Republicans, business leaders, and even "growly white conservatives." Former Republican Member of Congress Bob Barr describes a "well-deserved reputation for honesty" ("The Well-Dressed Pragmatist," 2005). Maynard Jackson had advised Franklin to dress like a representative during her first campaign, leading to a more conservative fashion style. Franklin now adds a flower pin to her wardrobe to soften her image and symbolize that "she may not be quite as tough as nails as other people think" (Franklin, 2007).

Franklin's relative inexperience in electoral politics initially was perceived as a liability. She sensed that as an outsider, however, she could provide change to "the lack of public trust that seemed to be pervasive. It was in the black community, the white community, the newcomers, young people, older folks. There was a sense that government couldn't do it right" (Brush, 2005). Franklin is praised for her transparency, efficiency, and businesslike approach to government, creating public-private partnerships to address the city's problems (O'Connell, 2005). Her seeming lack of concern for the political wrangling that often occurs in public office has also earned Franklin significant bipartisan support. Bo Spalding, of the famous King and Spalding family owning the largest Atlanta law firm and principal of the Atlanta public relations firm Jackson Spalding, argues, "Franklin is the best mayor that this city has seen in a long time. She has united the business community with the civic community" (LaMotta, 2006). Franklin has transcended partisan, racial, gender, and community boundaries that in the past have limited the success of Atlanta's mayors. She even changed the city's slogan from the segregationist motto, "The city too busy to hate" to "Every day is opening day" (O'Connell, 2005).

Described as a "rampaging reformer," a "skillful and diplomatic negotiator," a "career policy wonk," and "a restorer of faith," Shirley Franklin has made her mark as mayor of Atlanta. Like many women, Franklin entered politics later in life, after her children were grown. Although she lacked experience in public office, she had served behind the scenes under powerful and influential mentors. When she finally made the decision to run, she won. And she has made a difference. She has brought a new style of leadership to Atlanta: increased transparency, inclusivity, and a management style that

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transcends racial and political lines. She has forged public-private partnerships to address chronic infrastructure and economic problems. She has enjoyed the challenge, focusing on policy making rather than politics. Her impact has been recognized at the national level. As Franklin explains, "Mayors [can] attack a problem locally in a way that informs the national agenda" (O'Connell, 2005, p. 28).

In the 2008 presidential election, Franklin endorsed Barack Obama early in the primary season despite widespread support for Hillary Rodham Clinton (Benson, 2008). She served as cochair of the Democratic convention. Although Franklin has not outlined her political future, her understanding and implementation of the managerial style that Atlanta needed has earned her a promising national reputation.

—Laura van Assendelft, Mary Baldwin College

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## VIEWING WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH A RURAL ELECTORAL LENS

### *Canada as a Case Study*

LOUISE CARBERT

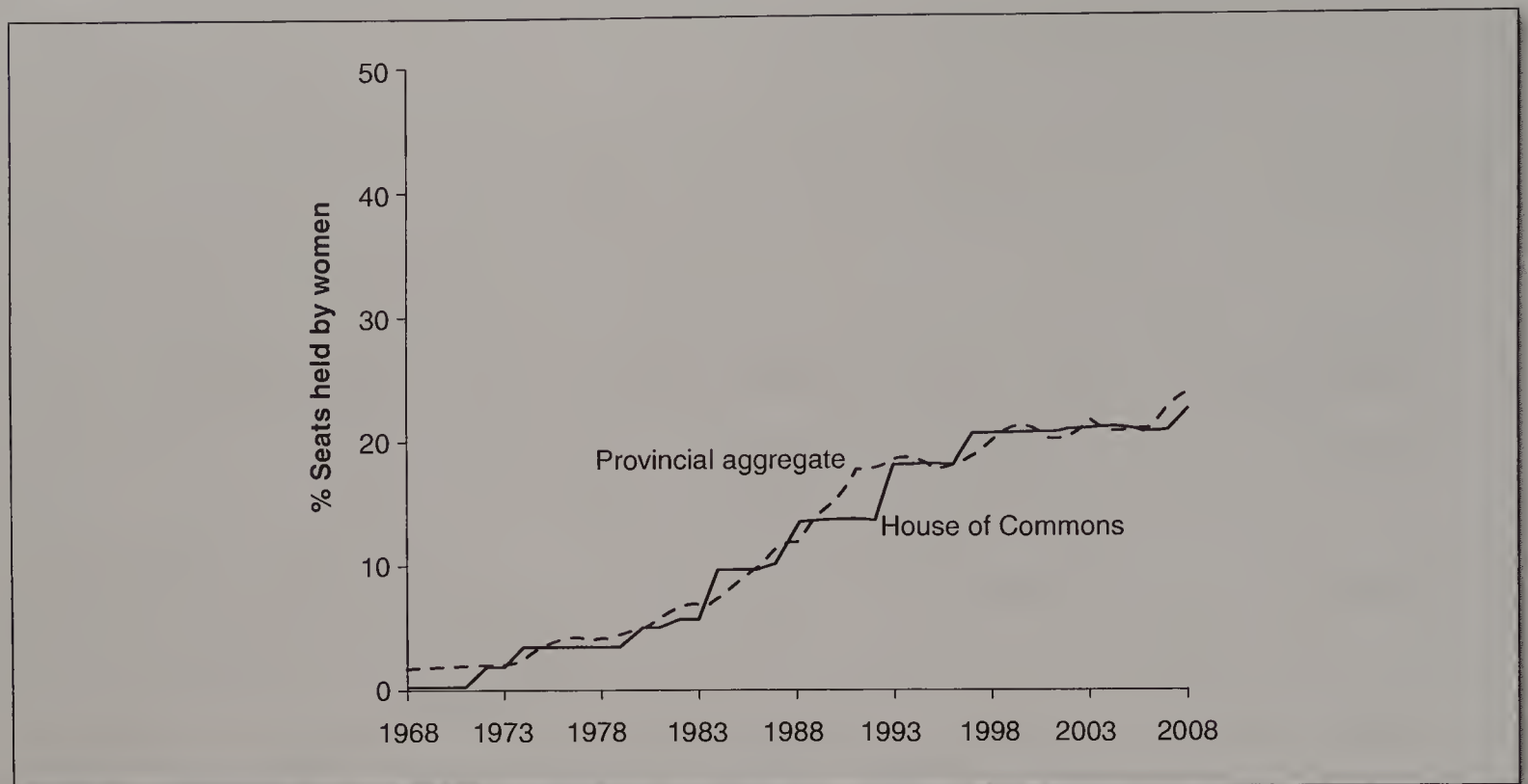
*Dalhousie University*

Urban–rural cleavages go to the heart of the distinctions between more and less women-friendly electoral districts in Canada's national and provincial legislatures (see, e.g., Moncrief & Thompson, 1991). Similar patterns have been reported in the United States (e.g., Palmer & Simon, 2008, p. 213). Much of the effort to understand these distinctions has concentrated on the positive impacts of various attributes of metropolitan settings—high levels of education, a thriving professional class, active women's interest groups, and so forth (Brodie, 1985; Matland & Studlar, 1998). Far less effort has been directed to understanding what it is about rural districts that hinders women's election to public office. Readers are typically left to frame it as an absence of those positive metropolitan attributes, leaving the impression that the tendency to exclude women is a relic of uninformed traditionalist attitudes. Some recent studies have brought a rural perspective to this topic, with results indicating that something far more concrete and ongoing is holding back women's candidacy and election outside major urban centers.

To provide context for a discussion of Canadian women's political leadership, Figure 15.1 illustrates the proportions of seats held by women over the past 4 decades in the House of Commons and in provincial legislatures.<sup>1</sup> Both proportions rose nearly in tandem during this period, from a base of less than 5% during the 1960s. Increases were most rapid during the 1980s, but the rate of growth slowed during the 1990s, as levels reached the 20% mark. Both curves reached a plateau thereafter. The federal election of 2008 brought a small increase, as did the most recent provincial elections, but by no means large enough to declare a breakout from the plateau.

Districts outside Canada's metropolitan centers have played a major role in holding back the numbers. It can be said, as a rule of thumb, that a metropolitan district is at least twice as likely as a rural district to elect a woman. As seen in the next two sections, this ratio has persisted over several decades despite substantial increases in the number of women elected overall. Moreover, the shortfall in women elected is not restricted to remote, highly rural areas but rather extends throughout Canada's towns and small- and medium-sized cities, which, taken together, comprise nearly half of the country's population. It is found in every region, and it crosses party lines. As such it is arguably the largest factor limiting the number of women in Canada's legislatures. Proportions of seats held by women in urban metropolitan districts are now typically higher than 30%, in some cases substantially so. Hence it would be unrealistic to expect large cities to raise the national level significantly in the near future. Canada's more rural districts would need to elect greater numbers of women to break through the recent pattern of stagnation.

It turns out that even in rural districts, the election of women is limited primarily by the low numbers of female candidates running for parties that have a chance of winning. Where are the potential candidates, and why aren't they stepping forward, either on their own accord or at the urging of others? Potential candidates themselves are uniquely positioned to answer these questions but are more difficult to find than elected, or even defeated, candidates (see, e.g., in the U.S. context, Lawless & Fox, 2005). Results of case studies involving interviews with rural women leaders in two regions of Canada are summarized in terms of three categories of barriers to candidacy: a



**Figure 15.1** Proportions of Seats Held by Women in Canada's National and Provincial Legislatures, 1968–2008

SOURCES: Based on data from Parliament of Canada: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Lists/Members.aspx>; <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/compilations/ProvinceTerritory.aspx>.

strong reluctance on the part of the women themselves, intense competition from male rivals, and resistance by local elites to recruiting more women. Insights from the interviews are employed to identify what circumstances make some rural districts more women-friendly than others and to consider the potential for application beyond rural Canada.<sup>2</sup>

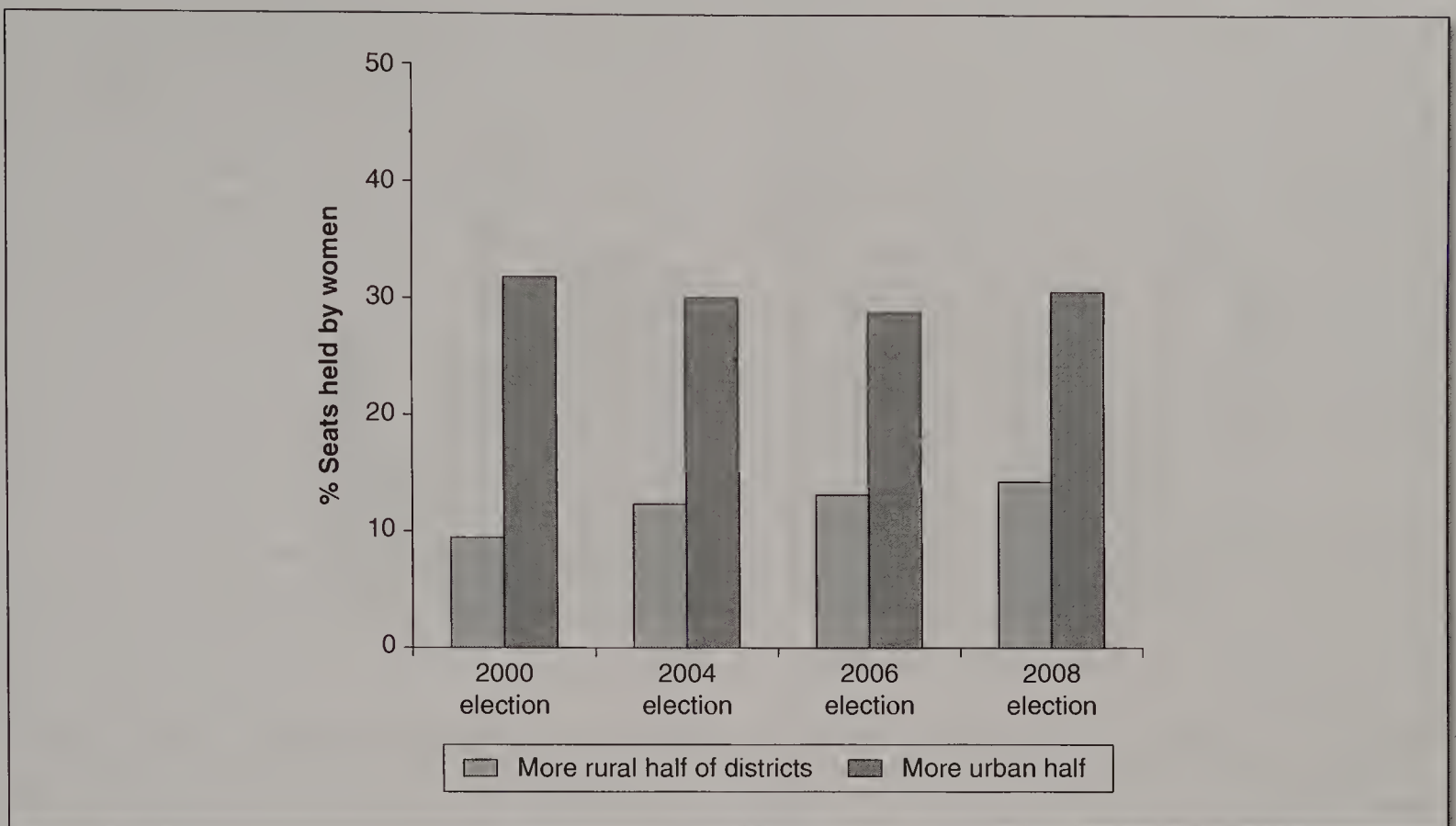
### The Rural–Urban Divide of Women in Canada's House of Commons

Louise Carbert (2009b) tracked the election of women to Canada's national parliament over three consecutive elections from 2000 to 2006, to show that the rural–urban divide is a strong, pervasive, and durable effect that is independent of regional and partisan distinctions. She noted that the electoral boundaries of almost all of Canada's 308 federal districts are drawn in such a way as to distinguish unambiguously between districts that are located in urban metropolitan areas of Canada's largest cities and those that are not. Canada's recent population demographics have resulted in a roughly even split between these two classes of districts. This feature allowed Carbert to order the districts according to population density and compare the more urban half to the more rural half.

Figure 15.2 shows the overall rural–urban comparison of women elected in Canada's 2000, 2004, and 2006 elections and also adds the results from the subsequent election in 2008. All four elections show a stark contrast between the two halves of the list. For example, in the 2008 election, women were elected in 31% (47 of 154) of the most densely populated constituencies in major metropolitan centers. In the more rural half, women won in only 14% (22 of 154) of the districts. This result closely parallels the results found in the preceding three elections. In all cases, the more urban districts were more than twice as likely to elect a woman as were the more rural ones. The robustness of this pattern is underscored by the fact that these four elections produced a wide range of partisan results: a Liberal majority government in 2000, a Liberal minority in 2004, and Conservative minorities in 2006 and 2008. As seen in Figure 15.1, the overall number of women elected did not change very much during this period.

Was it really half of Canada's districts that created this deficit of female members of Parliament (MPs)? Or was the shortfall confined to the most sparsely populated, highly rural areas? To address these questions, Carbert subdivided the two halves of federal electoral districts, again according to population density, and compared the proportions of women elected to each quartile of districts.





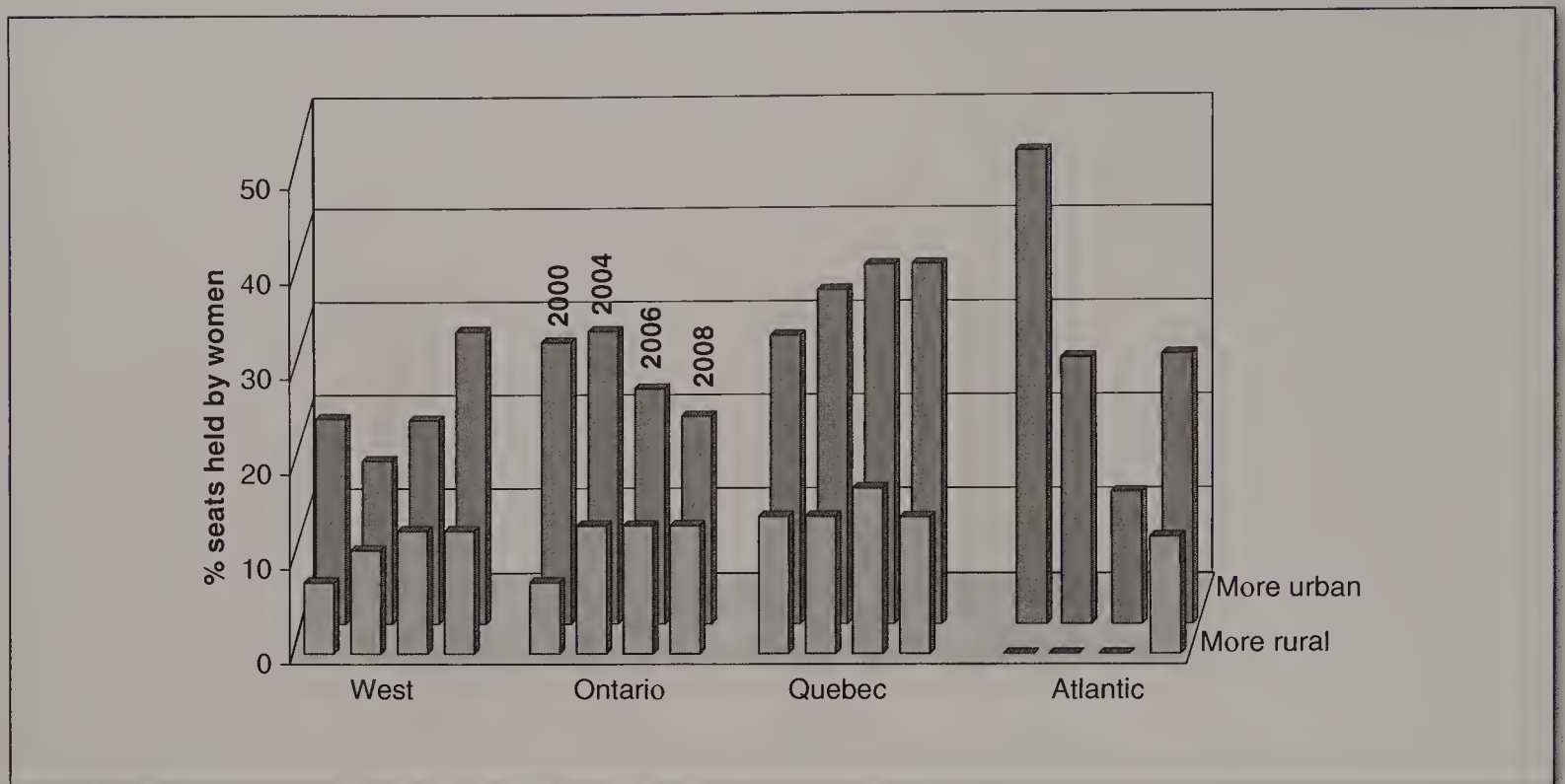
**Figure 15.2** Rural–Urban Contrast in Proportions of Seats Held by Women in Canada's House of Commons, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008

SOURCES: Based on data from Parliament of Canada: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Lists/Members.aspx>; <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/compilations/ProvinceTerritory.aspx>.

In each election, the number of seats held by women increased monotonically as one moves through the quartiles from most rural to most urban. While the most rural quartile elected the fewest women, the shortfall in the second-sparsest quartile was almost as strong, as the number of seats held by women never exceeded half that found in the most urban quartile. Hence the shortfall of women MPs extends throughout the more rural half of districts, comprising 46% of Canada's population. These more detailed tests showed that the probability of a woman being sent to Ottawa during the past decade has decreased with increasing rurality of the district and that breaking down the federal districts into two equal halves yields a reasonable picture of the rural–urban divide.

The enormous scope of the rural shortfall of women elected may surprise some readers who have come to think of rurality as a marginal—and shrinking—component of Canada's population demographics. A well-known census fact from Statistics Canada is that four fifths of Canadians live in urban settings and only one fifth in rural areas. To put it facetiously: How can so few cause so much damage? The answer is that not many people realize that Statistics Canada's definition of rural is so restrictive that communities of just 1,000 people qualify as urban. Within the 80% urban portion, large numbers of Canadians live in towns

with populations between 1,000 and 10,000 and in small- and medium-sized cities such as Quesnel, British Columbia, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, and Truro, Nova Scotia. Another census fact seemingly at odds with a 50/50 split in electoral districts is that nearly two thirds of Canadians live in census metropolitan areas (CMAs). Here it is important to note that all CMAs include substantial rural areas and that some of them, such as Chicoutimi-Jonquière in Quebec, are for many purposes not grouped among Canada's major urban centers. Hence the percentage of Canadians living in urban settings in the major centers is somewhere in the mid-50s, depending on which cities are included.<sup>3</sup> The percentage living outside the big cities is only modestly smaller—in the mid-40s. There is a nearly equal balance of federal electoral districts representing these two groups of voters, because rural voters are somewhat overrepresented in Canada. An average voter in Canada's more rural half of districts has, in effect, about 1.1 votes, compared to 0.9 for the average voter in the more urban half. Carbert considered the impact of rural overrepresentation and estimated that transforming to strict representation by population would likely result in two or three additional women in Canada's House of Commons. However, she also argued that this sort of electoral reform is unlikely to occur.<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 15.3** Rural–Urban Contrast in Proportions of Seats Held by Women in Canada's House of Commons, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008

SOURCES: Based on data from Elections Canada, Voter Information Service database: <http://www.elections.ca/scripts/pss/FindED.aspx>; Historical 301 Electoral Districts database: [http://www.elections.ca/scripts/edwa301\\_historical/Default.asp](http://www.elections.ca/scripts/edwa301_historical/Default.asp).

No analysis of national politics in Canada can ignore regional distinctions. It is true that some regions are more rural than others and that the regions vote differently. These considerations raise the question as to whether regional distinctions might explain away the rural deficit of women elected. Breaking down the election results simultaneously by region and by rurality shows that the answer is “no.” Figure 15.3 illustrates regional results for the same four federal elections. For example, in the four western provinces in 2008, women won 14% (7 of 50) of the seats in the more sparsely populated group, compared with 33% (14 of 42) in the more urban districts.<sup>5</sup>

The overwhelming pattern in this figure is that in every region in all four elections, the proportion of women elected in the more urban districts is far above that in the more rural ones. This means that the rural deficit in the election of women extends to every region of Canada. To be sure, there are regional variations in the proportions of women elected overall. The important point here is that these differences do not take away from the enormous rural–urban divide that has persisted in every region over four elections.

Nor can one ignore the effect of partisan preferences. It is well known that Conservative Party support is concentrated in rural areas, and previous studies have shown that

this party is less hospitable to women candidates than are the other major parties (Young, 2000, pp. 179–182). Do partisan preferences explain away the rural deficit of women elected? To address this part of the puzzle, the parliamentary caucuses of Canada's two leading national parties—the Liberals and Conservatives—were each divided into two groups, according to whether MPs were from the more urban or more rural half of districts.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 15.4 illustrates the results. For example, in the 2008 election, the Conservative Party won 95 seats in the more rural half of districts, and 13 of these were won by women; this yielded 14% for the Conservative rural proportion of female MPs. By comparison the Liberal rural proportion was lower, as only 6% (1 out of 17) of the more rural districts that voted Liberal sent a female MP to Ottawa. The other bars in the figure show that this result was not an anomaly, as in each of the four elections, the Liberal rural proportion was somewhat lower than the Conservative rural proportion. Hence neither of the two parties that have governed Canada has been able to elect high proportions of women in the more rural half of districts. The real difference between the two parties in regard to electing women has occurred in the more urban districts, as the darker bars in the figure show that the Liberal metropolitan caucus has featured much greater gender balance.

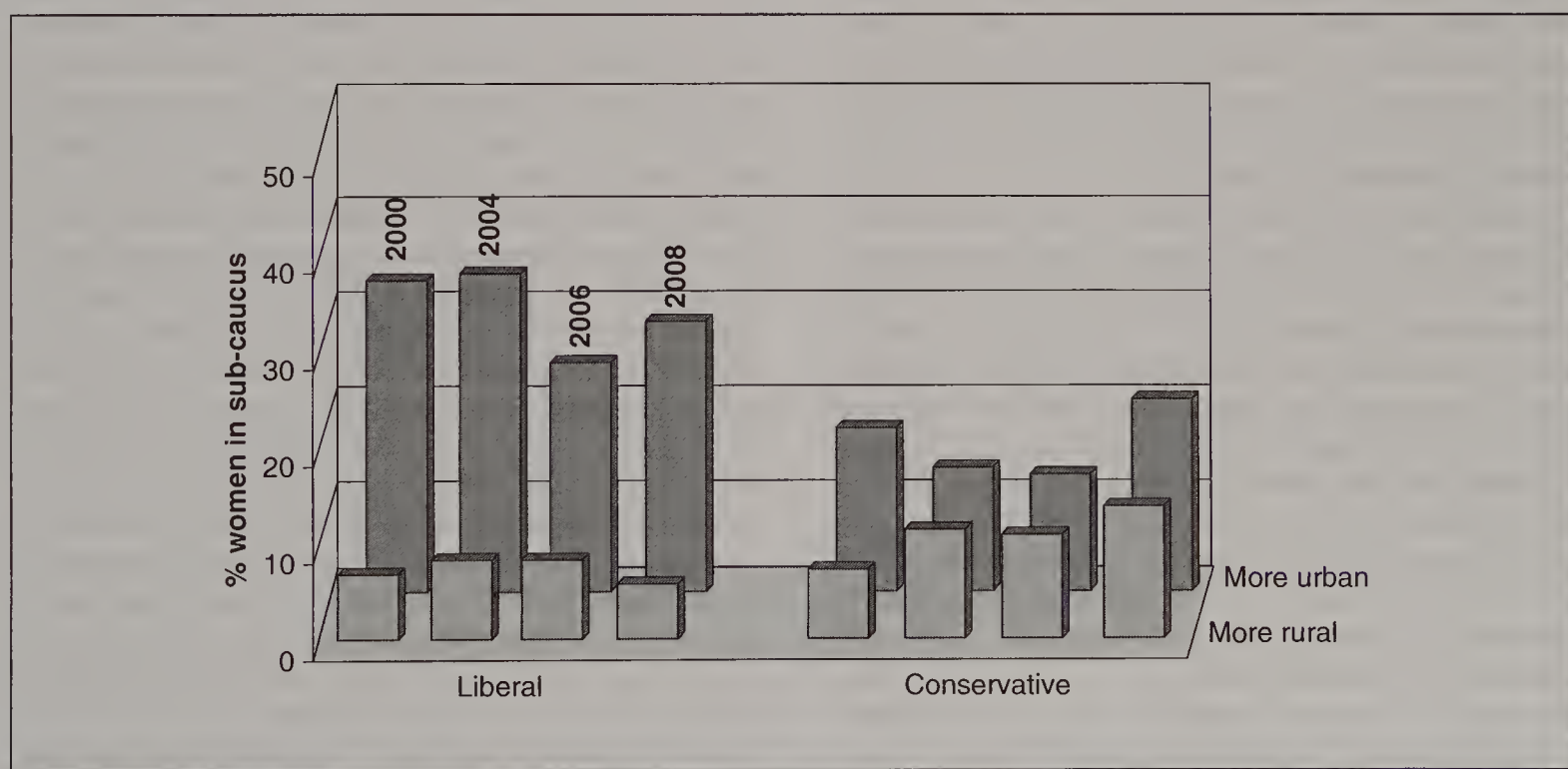


Carbert also analyzed the sub-ensembles of Canada's two other major parties at the national level—the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois. She found that although both of these parties have brought elevated proportions of women overall to Canada's House of Commons, their female MPs too have come overwhelmingly from metropolitan districts. For example, in 2008 nearly half of Bloc's metropolitan seats (10 of 23, or 43%) were won by women, compared to fewer than one fifth of that party's more rural seats (5 of 26, or 19%). Clearly some parties are more hospitable overall to women than others. But it is equally important to recognize the pervasive rural headwind felt by all parties, which has impeded the election of women outside Canada's largest cities.

Does this headwind originate with the voters, or with the parties themselves? To address this question, Carbert divided party candidates into two groups, according to whether the candidate's constituency was in the more or less densely populated half of Canadian districts. She found that it was crucial to take party competitiveness into account, because a disproportionate number of women candidates in the rural districts ran for parties that stood no chance of winning that seat, in part due to the high incidence of incumbents running for reelection in rural

districts. (Why incumbency should be higher in rural districts is an important question, and is discussed later, in the context provided by interview results.) After excluding lost-cause candidacies, a strong rural–urban contrast emerged in women's competitive candidacies, on the same scale as in the election results. Carbert concluded that the election of women is limited primarily by the small numbers of female candidates who contest winnable seats. Voter hostility toward women candidates plays, at most, a secondary role. Numerous quantitative studies over several decades have reported this same effect overall in Canada and elsewhere (see, e.g., Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994, p. 73; Lovenduski, 2005, p. 64; Tremblay, 2009).

One of the main avenues for achieving significant gains for women in Canada's House of Commons would be for the major parties to groom and cultivate women's leadership, particularly in rural districts, with the goal of raising the number of candidates in winnable ridings.<sup>7</sup> As far back as the 1980s, political parties have gone to some lengths in the effort to improve their public image with regard to increasing the number of women candidates (Erickson, 1998, p. 233). However, it is difficult for a party's central leadership to impose affirmative action measures because



**Figure 15.4** Rural–Urban Contrast in Proportions of Seats Held by Women in Canada's House of Commons, for the Two Leading National Parties, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008

SOURCES: Based on data from Elections Canada, Voter Information Service database: <http://www.elections.ca/scripts/pss/FindED.aspx>; Historical 301 Electoral Districts database: [http://www.elections.ca/scripts/edwa301\\_historical/Default.asp](http://www.elections.ca/scripts/edwa301_historical/Default.asp).

candidate recruitment and nomination have traditionally been the purview of local-district party executives. This can lead to tension with central party leadership, especially in rural districts, where a greater focus on local issues insulates riding (district) associations from national agendas (Carty & Eagles, 2005, p. 149).

At first glance, it might seem that cross-party cooperation among elected women should have potential to bring about significant change. However, cross-party cooperation is difficult in Canada's legislatures because party discipline is so strict, and partisan rivalries are so bitter. This helps to explain why it never arose formally until 1990 and why it was so short-lived thereafter. From 1990 to 1993, at the national level, there was a cross-party Association of Women Parliamentarians that was, in some regards, comparable to the bipartisan Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues in the United States.<sup>8</sup> In 1993, the governing Progressive Conservative Party chose a new leader, Kim Campbell, who governed briefly as Canada's first (and to date only) woman prime minister.<sup>9</sup> Her achievement was overshadowed by the fact that her party was already poised for defeat in the national election later that same year (Bashevkin, 2009a, p. 115). During the subsequent 13 years of successive Liberal Party governments, the Women's Liberal Commission emerged as a cohesive and vital force in promoting feminist objectives inside that party (Young, 1997, p. 101). Partly as a result of their activities, three consecutive Liberal Party leaders have publicly targeted at least one third of the party's slate of candidates to be women. As discussed earlier, however, these efforts have had little impact on women elected in rural districts. After 2006, Canada's government was formed by the Conservative Party, which has rejected the principle of targeting or other direct positive measures to increase women's candidacy and election.

In 2006 a group of women legislators established official Canadian representation (region) in the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, which is a network within the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. This organization includes women from provincial legislatures. It enables elected women to cooperate across party lines outside of their home legislatures (L'Ecuyer, 2007).

There has been a surge of nonpartisan (or in some cases multipartisan) activity to promote women's leadership since Status of Women Canada was restructured in 2006 with a greater focus on promoting women's leadership. Various organizations have responded to this funding opportunity by staging campaign schools and workshops across the country, including rural areas. A prominent example is Equal Voice, founded in 2001 by a group of influential journalists, pollsters, academics, and partisan insiders, with a mandate to promote women's election to all levels of government. In Quebec, there is the example of Femmes, politique et démocratie. Both organizations are comparable in some regards to the National Women's Political Caucus in the United States.<sup>10</sup>

## The Rural–Urban Divide of Women in Canada's Provincial Legislatures

The preceding section summarizes the current patterns of women's election at the national level. A brief survey of earlier studies of provincial legislatures shows that much the same patterns have prevailed for some decades at both levels of government, even as overall proportions of women elected have risen substantially. It also summarizes the interpretations that earlier studies applied to explain these patterns.

Brodie's (1977) study of Canadian provincial members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) between 1950 and 1975 found a strong metropolitan concentration among the women elected. She attributed this tendency to a larger pool of well-educated and professional women, and to more cosmopolitan voters (p. 13). She also noted a regional effect, highlighting the barriers to women presented by high rates of male incumbency and entrenched partisan patterns in the Atlantic provinces in particular. She surmised that a traditionalist political culture presents obstacles for aspiring women who wish to enter politics there.

Gary Moncrief and Joel Thompson (1991) performed a quantitative comparison of a 1988 "snapshot" of provincial legislators by categorizing districts according to whether or not they were located in urban communities with populations of at least 50,000 (p. 834). They found that the proportion of seats held by women was more than 3 times as high—19% versus 6%—in the more urban versus the more rural subset. They also broke down their results by political party and found a metropolitan concentration of women among the seats won by each party, despite the fact that some parties were far more women-friendly than others overall (Moncrief & Thompson, 1991, p. 835). Carbert (2006) later performed a similar analysis, using a 2003 snapshot of the Atlantic provincial legislatures, and found the same result—a rural shortfall of women elected, across party lines (p. 13). She found that Atlantic cities elected substantial numbers of women (27%), just as did cities in other parts of Canada. But more people in Atlantic Canada live outside the urban centers than is the case in other regions, so that the rural districts dominate, giving a lower proportion of women elected overall.

Richard Matland and Donley Studlar (1998) attempted to sort out a variety of factors thought to influence women's election at the provincial level. They applied regression models to 20 years of data on female provincial legislators, from 1975 to 1994, divided into five separate time periods. Their strongest result involved rural–urban distinctions. They divided districts into three categories, according to whether they were located in metropolitan communities with populations over 500,000; or in urban settings with populations between 50,000 and 500,000; the remainder being categorized as rural. They found that a strongly significant association with their metropolitan variable in all time periods and also a strong significance



for their urban variable from 1983 on. These results indicate a progression in which increasing numbers of women are elected as one moves through the rural–urban spectrum from most remote to most metropolitan. Their model estimated that metropolitan districts were roughly twice as likely to elect women than were rural districts.

Matland and Studlar surmised that urbanization serves as a proxy for high education levels and high labor-force participation by women. To them, education fosters tolerance for women's aspirations and provides well-qualified women to feed both the pool of potential candidates and women's interest groups that promote women's empowerment. By implication it is the relative absence of these opportunity-creating attributes that constitutes a barrier to women's candidacy and election in rural districts. As will be described in later sections of this chapter, interviews subsequently carried out in rural Canada have revealed that in addition to these absences, there are other important features of rural public life that present substantive barriers.

Another relevant result is that women were significantly less likely to win races in which the incumbent returned to the ballot. Matland and Studlar also tested for a separate Atlantic-region distinction, to see whether a regional traditionalist culture exerts an additional barrier. However, they found that once rurality and incumbency were accounted for, there was no further Atlantic-region distinction. Evidently whatever about Atlantic Canada that impedes women's candidacy and election is largely accounted for by the high degree of rurality and the high levels of incumbency found in that region.

A curious result emerged in relation to electoral systems. Beginning in the 1980s women were much more likely to be elected in districts that sent more than one representative to the legislature, especially in rural districts, such as in Prince Edward Island. Evidently the female pool of potential candidates was not too small to supply these elevated levels of women's candidacy and election, even 20 years ago. The multimember arrangement was subsequently eliminated by electoral "reform" in all provinces. Matland and Studlar concluded that by eliminating multimember districts, Canadian provinces created barriers to women's candidacy and election. They left unanswered the question of why rural riding associations would be eager to gender-balance their tickets in dual-member districts but not consider women equally in single-member rural districts that are otherwise similar. This question is revisited later in this chapter, in light of interview results in rural Canada.

During the lead-up to the elimination of multimember seats in Prince Edward Island, that province's Advisory Council on the Status of Women (a provincial government agency) developed a presentation to submit to the legislative committee. Its members debated whether to recommend that dual-member districts be retained, and they stipulated to elect one man and one woman. However, they could not agree and decided not to address how the

elimination of dual-member districts would affect the number of women elected. Instead, the submission focused on a recommendation to reduce patronage in government hiring, on the grounds that this practice overlooked qualified women (Dianne Porter, former chair of PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women, personal communication, July 6, 2009). More recently, there has been a series of independent and unsuccessful referenda on electoral reform to bring a greater degree of proportional representation through the introduction of multimember districts.<sup>11</sup> Provincial chapters of Fair Vote Canada played a major role in spearheading these proposals, employing the promise of increased numbers of women elected as a central component of their arguments in each case (Pilon, 2007).

## First-Hand Perspectives From the Pool of Potential Candidates

### Interview Studies With Rural Women Leaders

The finding that voter hostility is not responsible for the rural shortfall of women elected turns the focus away from the vote itself, and toward the recruitment and selection process. Asking why a rural riding association did not choose a woman as its candidate invokes issues that go far beyond the closed-door vote that completes the nomination process. Far more to the point are the difficult and open-ended questions about events that preceded the nomination meeting: Who else could have been chosen instead of the eventual candidate? The pool of potential nominees goes beyond those who actually put their names forward. A good deal of research has addressed, and attached varying degrees of importance to, the role of party gatekeepers in excluding women as candidates in different settings (Lawless & Fox, 2005; Niven, 1998; Palmer & Simon, 2008; Sanbomatsu, 2006). Who was qualified and available but was not groomed? Whose qualifications went unrecognized? Far less effort has been directed to the more difficult supply-side questions. Do rural districts produce too few qualified women to supply a significant number of women candidates? Another possibility is that some women might exclude themselves: Who was qualified but unwilling to step forward? Until recently little was known about the pool of potential candidates in rural Canada.

Carbert's field-based research attempted to address this gap in knowledge by gathering together small groups of rural women community leaders and interviewing them about their experiences and perceptions of leadership, public life, and running for elected office. In all she conducted 14 group interviews with 126 women in the Atlantic region, and 19 group interviews with 115 women in the western region, during the period 2000 to 2003. Each session lasted approximately 2 hours. Questionnaires revealed that the



interviewees were well-educated, well-employed women with strong records of leadership and volunteering—in short, just the type of women who would be included in the pool of potential candidates, but who, for the most part, were not running for elected office (Carbert, 2003, 2005, 2006).

Many of Carbert's findings can be organized in terms of the supply of, and demand for, women candidates. The very fact that she was able to go to almost any small town and find several well-educated, well-employed women with substantial experience in public affairs confirms that there exist sufficient numbers of qualified rural women leaders to supply significantly more female candidates outside Canada's largest cities. This helps to explain why riding associations in rural dual-member districts had little difficulty, even in the 1980s, finding additional women candidates for provincial office as soon as they felt like balancing their tickets.

Here one needs to exercise care in defining who is qualified. Certainly there are far fewer women lawyers and other professionals in rural districts than in urban metropolitan districts. The inappropriateness of that measure is exemplified by the fact that two of Atlantic Canada's provincial premiers in 2009 were rural men who worked as physical-education teachers prior to entering electoral politics. A career in politics is not the exclusive prerogative of lawyers and other professionals in rural districts in Canada, either at the provincial or national level.<sup>12</sup> Carbert avoided the pitfalls of assuming that the stepping-stones into politics are the same for rural women as for metropolitan women or men, by asking local organizations to identify prominent women leaders in their communities and by interviewing them. More than half worked in public-sector jobs; others were managers or business owners, but few were lawyers or other professionals.

Although the size of the pool of potential candidates was favorable to increased women's candidacy, the interviews revealed profound constraints, both on the supply side and on the demand side, limiting how many moved from being potential candidates to actual candidates. They provided first-hand accounts of strong reluctance on the part of the women themselves, of intense opposition by male competitors, and of resistance by local elites to recruiting more women. As outlined in the following three subsections, the open-ended focus-group format of the interviews allowed Carbert to probe the underlying reasons behind these constraints, moving beyond stereotypes of rural traditionalism.

### Women's Reluctance to Run

An alarming majority of rural women leaders who were interviewed, especially in Atlantic Canada, expressed strong reluctance to stand for elected office. This reluctance was not typically linked to competing family responsibilities or traditional gender roles. Most had made satisfactory accommodations with their families, which

allowed them to take on jobs and at the same time carry on an astonishing level of voluntary service. Many expressed pride in their energy and their ability to juggle multiple responsibilities. Neither was it framed in terms of self-doubt or lack of personal ambition. Reluctance was more commonly framed by these women in terms of the dangers of partisan affiliation to their careers or to their family's business. Some cited a public-sector prohibition on involvement in partisan politics. Although formal restrictions barring public servants from running for political office have in most cases been lifted, interviewees reported the persistence of an informal barrier, in which partisanship is considered to be unprofessional within public-sector workplaces. This barrier affects women disproportionately, because most of the best jobs for professional women in rural Canada are in the public sector. Even in the private sector, interview comments revealed that running for the wrong party can actually cause a loss of customers or contracts or the loss of a job. Conversely if a government contract is won by a business owned by a politically active woman or her family, community members may suspect that it was won on the basis of partisan connections, to the detriment of that business.

Some of the most strongly articulated deterrents to electoral aspirations involved a pervasive and deeply held disdain for past and ongoing forms of patronage—the giving of employment, grants, contracts, and other government perquisites on the basis of partisan affiliation. Most of the examples cited did not involve illegal behavior such as bribery or other forms of criminal corruption. However, there was a broad consensus among interviewees that they would not make moral concessions to perpetuate what they perceived as an unfair and dysfunctional system. Interviewees especially disapproved of direct intervention by elected officials in the allocation of public funds, a practice that was revealed by knowledgeable insiders to occur regularly in their districts.

The overwhelming sense that emerged from the interviews was just how important politics are in rural Canada and how seriously its residents take issues such as partisanship and the allocation of public resources. To people living in fragile economies with declining populations, these are not games but rather the vital stuff that sustains lives and communities. Rural politicians are often expected to take an active role in attracting external public-sector resources to benefit the local economy and provide subsistence for individual constituents in need. In extreme cases of economic fragility, their role can verge on that of a patron to dependent clients. Although the words *patron* and *patronage* come from the same root, there is an important distinction. The term *patron* is used to capture the durable relationship of obligation with a vulnerable electorate pinning its hopes for economic sustenance on one representative. Although patrons are often in a position to engage in patronage practices in the course of carrying out their responsibilities, and sometimes do so, it is the



dependency relationship with the electorate that makes them a patron (Hopkin, 2006, pp. 406–412).

On one hand, interviewees expressed appreciation for the personal contributions made by these long-serving local male politicians. On the other hand, however, many women leaders—especially those close enough to the center of power to know how it is exercised in their communities—rejected the idea of themselves running for elected office in a system of which they disapproved. For example, some interviewees presented a well-articulated critique of a long-standing jobs-for-votes arrangement, in which they saw the interests of a few well-connected insiders being traded against long-term prosperity, under the guise of community economic development, by effectively trapping young people in unskilled seasonal work to the benefit of local enterprises.

The comments by the women leaders interviewed led Carbert (2009a) to develop a political-economy analysis of rural women's leadership, focusing on the perceived role of elected representatives in the economic context of their particular districts. A common thread in prior election-based research has been to presume that the job of a political representative is the same for all districts, and then infer that there is a rural–urban distinction in judging whether any local woman is suitable for that same job. Carbert's interview results turn this conceptualization upside down. She found no evidence of distinct rural traditionalist attitudes and no evidence of exhaustion of the pool of potential candidates. Rather, she found that the job is very different in rural versus metropolitan districts, in ways that deter women's candidacy. Granted, the patron role is antiquated. But interviews indicate that its persistence in rural Canada, long after it largely disappeared from metropolitan districts, is not due to traditionalist attitudes but rather due to economic circumstances and how they interact with Canada's political system. According to this interpretation, metropolitan districts and rural districts use the same political system to pursue their distinct economic self-interests, with very different results.

### Male Competitors

Interviews with women leaders in rural Canada revealed disdain for the political fray among both women and some men (as revealed in comments about their husbands and male relatives). Reluctance to take on what is expected of politicians in nonmetropolitan districts evidently whittles down the recruitable component of both the male and female sub-pools of potential candidates. Clearly though, there remain sufficient numbers of willing men to fill the available spots. In many cases, the smaller pool of qualified women leaders is effectively whittled down near to zero recruitable members, that is, those who are willing to stand as candidates.

The few women left who are willing to run for elected office often face intense competition from highly motivated men. Some interviewees who had tried their hand at politics

described vicious nomination battles and dirty tactics, which they linked to the prestige of the position. In economically distressed areas, elected representatives hold positions of considerable power and prestige, by virtue of their influence over a substantial proportion of the overall local economy, as well as their relatively high salaries in relation to others in their communities. These features make the job particularly desirable for ambitious men looking for their best opportunities. These results are in accordance with the work of David Lublin and Sarah Brewer (2003) on the dearth of women in southern U.S. legislatures, who found that “women are most likely to win public offices in areas where men do not want the jobs” (p. 391).

To put a personal face on relative salary, consider one of Canada's most glamorous political couples, in the context of the two very different federal districts they represented. Belinda Stronach is heir to the Magna automobile-parts conglomerate, one of the world's wealthiest women, and a personal friend of former U.S. President Bill Clinton. In 2003, while still a complete political novice, without having ever held public office, Stronach contested, and lost, the leadership race for the newly merged Conservative Party. She subsequently held the seat of Newmarket-Aurora, in suburban Toronto, from 2004 to 2008. Stronach became romantically involved with Peter MacKay, who had led the Progressive Conservative Party before it was absorbed in the merger. MacKay had grown up in the party and had effectively inherited his father's seat of Central Nova, in rural Nova Scotia. Their relationship ended dramatically in a late-night crisis in 2006, when Stronach defected to the governing Liberal Party (Bashevkin, 2009b, pp. 74–77). As elected members of Parliament, both Stronach and MacKay earned the same base salary of \$141,200 in 2004 (Parliament of Canada, 2004). Prospective competitors compare this salary to those in other top jobs available to them locally, outside of political office; others view the prestige of the salary in the same light. Although no specific measure of top salaries is readily available by district, they can be presumed to scale with average incomes and asset values. In Stronach's suburban district the average personal income, according to the most contemporary census, was \$41,874, and the average dwelling was worth \$259,482. In MacKay's rural district the corresponding amounts were far lower, at \$23,769 and \$79,838, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2005). Measures of employment earnings paint much the same picture. For example, the average earnings of an employed individual in Aurora, Ontario, was \$49,864, as compared to \$25,464 in Truro, Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada, 2007). These numbers are consistent with the general impression that an MP's salary is at the very top of the spectrum in rural Nova Scotia, but merely competitive with other professional salaries commonly available in suburban Toronto. In this context it makes sense to view MacKay's prestige as deriving primarily from his political office and Stronach's as deriving more from her family's wealth.



The finding that the high prestige of the job plays an important role in preventing women from becoming candidates in rural districts seems at first glance to be at odds with the results of Matland and Studlar (1998), who found a null result for their prestige variable in Canada's provinces (pp. 124, 128). The discrepancy arises in how prestige is defined. Matland and Studlar combined absolute salary and district population to create their prestige variable. In contrast, Carbert's interviews highlighted how high the salaries and perquisites seemed in comparison to other salaries available locally. In addition, the degree of influence and discretion a politician is expected to exercise over the local economy often runs opposite to the number of people in the district.

### Gatekeepers and Incumbency

Openness to change on the part of local elites is also crucial to the chances of a woman being nominated as a candidate, and this too depends on what a politician's role is perceived to be. Interviews in Atlantic Canada in particular revealed a number of conventions that seemed surprisingly old-fashioned and ritualized. One of the most important manifestations is a preference for recruiting candidates for elected office from particular families who had produced politicians in previous generations. Deference to incumbents and leading families can be a convenient way to avoid open feuds arising from excessive competition. It can also help to maintain a consistent flow of jobs and development funds, if those leading families can be counted on to draw on their experience and political networks to that end (Savoie, 2000, p. 119). Its pervasiveness helps to explain high incumbency rates in Atlantic Canada, where it is common for sons to inherit their father's seat.

Leading political families have daughters and daughters-in-law as well. However, interviews described instances in which more promising young women were overlooked in favor of their reluctant brothers. The preference for leading families in rural Canada is typically an expression of a broader aversion to political innovation, and the immediacy of the perceived need to nurture fragile economies attaches a tangible risk to the idea of change, even seemingly minor change. The tendency to inertia is not strong enough to propel a grossly unsuitable candidate into office. It is just strong enough to tip the balance in close races and deter serious challengers from entering a race.

This is not to say that women from leading families are shut out of politics altogether. Some of them have realized their ambitions by moving away to large cities. For example, Anne McLellan represented Edmonton-Centre (a metropolitan district in Alberta) and served as a cabinet minister in the federal Liberal government from 1993 to 2006. She had grown up on a farm in the Maritimes, in an influential Liberal family. As another example, Lisa Raitt was elected to represent Halton (a suburban metropolitan district in Ontario) in 2008 and was selected as a cabinet

minister in the federal Conservative government. She had grown up in the small city of Sydney, Nova Scotia, where her father had been an alderman and a union official. The same profile of small-town girls from politically active families going away to university, and entering public life there, is frequently found among women legislators at the provincial level as well.

While these conventions contribute to a lower probability of women being nominated and elected, it is difficult to argue that they are backward manifestations of traditionalist attitudes, considering that they have demonstrably contributed to the survival of rural communities on the edge. Of course it can be claimed, as did a good number of interviewees, that these same conventions also ensure that those communities remain on the edge and that a different approach might have brought greater vibrancy. Moreover, the quality of democracy is compromised by their persistence. Despite these criticisms, local elites in many rural districts have decided on an ongoing basis that employing a patron-like model for selecting candidates is their best strategy in the current political system. This makes the prospects for increasing women's candidacy and election in rural districts all the more challenging. Traditionalist attitudes can be educated out of people, but the rational judgment that a traditional political strategy continues to be economically functional cannot.

Interviews in rural Canada also help to understand why Matland and Studlar found that dual-member rural districts were far more likely than single-member districts to elect a female MLA. When districts are not asked to pin all of their heightened expectations on one representative, the patron function is necessarily diminished. Indeed one could even suggest that the job was typically split between the patron function and administrative function. A balanced ticket of a man and a woman aligns the interests of a rural district riding association with central party leadership, as all parties seek to improve their image, including, to varying degrees, their overall gender balance.

### Are Some Rural Districts More Women-Friendly?

That her interviews were carried out in two regions allowed Carbert (2009a) to distinguish among different rural areas based on economic circumstances. The economies of most of Canada outside its major centers are characterized by resource-extraction industries. Single-commodity resource reliance makes communities particularly vulnerable to ecological crises and the economic booms and busts that follow the violent swings in commodity prices determined by global markets. A long secular slide in commodity prices beginning in the 1970s left most of rural Canada in economic decline through the 1990s. The timing of this slide matches closely the period when women made



substantial electoral gains in metropolitan districts. Based on what has been learned about economic impact on women's political prospects, it seems likely that bad timing in global markets exacerbated the rural deficit in women elected that emerged during that period.

More recently, resource industries have experienced a series of rapid changes. At the time of the interviews from 2000 to 2003, some industries, such as energy and base-metals mining, had rebounded sharply, whereas others, such as fishing and pulp and paper, continued to languish. Consequently, some rural areas, most commonly in the West, had begun to experience what seemed like an economic boom, while others, both in the West and Atlantic Canada remained relatively stagnant.

Carbert observed that some of the constraints on women's candidacy were less pronounced where the economy was accelerating and reasoned that they may be substantially diminished by a prolonged resurgence of the dominant local industry. First, when public-sector expenditures are relatively less important compared to private-sector activity, community expectations of a representative become less heightened. Furthermore, patronage practices, though always present, become less relevant. A politician's job may come to resemble less of a patron and more of an administrator who tries to keep infrastructure in step with economic growth and who may even set limits on growth. Many of the women leaders interviewed in rural Canada indicated that they would be more eager to take on this sort of role.

A good example of a woman politician taking this approach to her elected office is Melissa Blake, mayor of Wood Buffalo municipality, better known as Fort McMurray—home to the Alberta oil-sands industry. Blake had been working in the private sector, as an administrative professional for Syncrude, when first elected mayor in 2004 at the age of 35. She described in an interview her efforts to expand hospitals, schools, water treatment plants, recreational facilities, and affordable housing, to keep up with rapid population increases. She was not seeking funds to fuel, or even to act as a catalyst for, the local industry and was more likely to seek contributions from the private sector than to provide funds to it. When a rapid decline in the price of oil brought a slowdown to the oil-sands industry in the wake the global financial crisis of 2008, Blake described a sense of relief “to have this opportunity to move our infrastructure forward” to catch up with the overly rapid growth that had taken place in the private sector (Tougas, 2009, p. B1).

Local elites, too, might come to view the role of a political representative as less stereotypically masculine. When development funding is no longer the main focus, it becomes less important for incumbent politicians to remain in office and for their successors to be drawn from prominent political families who have long-standing ties and networks. In any case, an influx of newcomers tends to disrupt established local hierarchies, and so the idea of a “leading family” diminishes in importance. When the

economy is doing well, a greater variety of job opportunities open up for educated women, and promising candidates can be recruited from the private sector, thus escaping the public-service prohibition on partisanship. And when prospective women leaders are cutting their teeth on volunteer projects in a growing community, their efforts are more likely to meet with success and appreciation. By contrast, a number of interviewees in declining communities described a sense of futility in their volunteering efforts. Finally, if the job of a politician were not quite as powerful and prestigious, relative to other jobs available locally, an ambitious woman might be more likely to win the nomination.

That all these effects arise simultaneously, and reinforce each other to promote women's leadership amounts to a positive synergy. Carbert concluded that rural communities with thriving economies and growing populations present opportunities for a motivated political party to break through the stubborn pattern of low numbers of women elected in nonmetropolitan districts.

## Future Directions

Recent studies of women's leadership in rural Canada have detailed how the specific relationship between political representatives and their constituents is influenced by economic circumstances and affects everyone who is involved in determining whether a woman stands as a candidate for elected office. When a politician's role is perceived as more of a patron, and less of an administrator, (a) prospective women candidates are less eager to put their names forward, (b) local elites are less open to change when recruiting nominees, and (c) male competitors find the job more desirable.

A natural question arises whether these findings might be applied outside rural Canada. The contrasts drawn among rural areas with distinct economic circumstances suggest that extrapolation might be possible. One interesting line of inquiry would be to look for variations among all Canadian districts, including metropolitan districts, in how the local economic structure influences the role of their elected representatives and try to relate that to women's candidacy and election.

It is tempting to imagine a quantitative operationalization of the patron perception of a politician's job. One might consider a simple measure such as the ratio of public-sector to private-sector components of the district economy. However, this approach is unlikely to capture the political dynamics described earlier. Cities typically have universities, military bases, government offices, and so forth. For example, the public-to-private sector ratio in Halifax, the largest city in the Atlantic region, is at least as high as in the region overall (Beaudin, 1998, p. 47). Nevertheless most of the expenditures there involve relatively stable program spending. Moreover, individual MPs



and MLAs in Halifax districts are not perceived to significantly influence the expenditures of the Department of National Defense, the universities, or the Port Authority. The continued vitality of these pillars of metropolitan economies does not rest on the choice of elected representative, and the voters and riding associations know it. The crucial issues are whether the representative is seen to influence what public resources come to the district, to what degree he or she controls how they are allocated within the district, and how badly the district needs those resources. Although these concepts are very real to local elites and attentive voters, finding a quantitative operationalization may not be simple.

If economic self-interest is to blame, and not rural traditionalist attitudes, the question arises whether metropolitan districts might elect fewer women if a change in circumstances were to alter what they required from their elected representatives. After all, the patron function largely disappeared from major urban centers before women made substantial electoral gains there, so there is no real precedent for the female patrona. The global financial crisis that emerged in 2008, and the ensuing global economic slowdown, may provide an unhappy opportunity to find out. When entire economies become fragile, when entire industries turn to governments for bailouts to sustain them through a period of instability, and when elected representatives are expected to make tough choices to save one corporation and not another, to set conditions on the allocation of taxpayer-funded support, and to become directly involved in trying to keep as many jobs going as possible and as many people in their homes as possible, are politicians metamorphosing into patrons? If so, and if that process were to filter down to the district level for long enough, recent advances in understanding rural women's leadership suggest a potential for politics in general to become more of a man's game. From that perspective, a timely return to economic and financial stability holds the prospect for yet another benefit: maintaining and building on the gains that women have achieved in political leadership over the past few decades.

## Notes

1. All seats in the 10 provincial legislatures are equally weighted in the provincial aggregate shown.

2. Although the quantitative illustrations of the rural-urban distinction presented here are restricted to national and provincial legislatures, the interview studies have application to local government as well. The rural-urban spectrum of women's election to municipal councils has not yet been systematically compiled across Canada. Limited studies of portions of the spectrum suggest that the same pattern found at the national and provincial levels holds at the local level as well. For example, Trimble (1995) found that significantly higher proportions of women sat on the councils of Canada's 14 largest cities than on the next tier of 74 smaller cities (p. 97). In addition to the general trend of decreasing

presence of women on council with increasing rurality, Elisabeth Gidengil and Richard Vengroff (1997) found a rise at the extreme end of the spectrum representing the tiniest communities in their study of Québec municipalities. They attributed this rise to the fact that the councils of these smallest municipalities control few resources, so that seats on council are not perceived to hold much power. Gidengil and Vengroff highlighted the overall slow progress in rural areas with the warning that "it is easy for the level of representation achieved in a handful of major Canadian cities to deflect attention from the larger picture" (p. 536).

3. Carbert's "more urban" half of districts based on population density comprise 54% of Canada's population, closely matching Statistics Canada's urban metropolitan segment. While her "more rural" half of districts includes people living in technically urban settings of smaller cities and towns, it also contains substantial rural areas. Furthermore the boundaries of these districts are typically drawn to keep away from the urban areas of major metropolitan centers. One could argue that the shortfall of women MPs should not be called a "rural deficit," but rather a "nonmetropolitan deficit" or even a "rural, town, and small- and medium-sized city deficit." However, these terms, in addition to being cumbersome, fail to convey the basic pattern, which is that women's parliamentary representation decreases with increasing rurality.

4. Canadian court rulings have upheld the practice of rural overrepresentation, on the principle of "effective, not necessarily equal representation." Furthermore, some of the most extreme cases of overrepresentation are located in four constitutionally protected districts in Prince Edward Island and a few remote districts with substantial aboriginal populations. Hence any initiative to implement a principle of "one person, one vote" would confront deeply entrenched political and constitutional issues.

5. The western region is somewhat more rural than Canada as a whole. Hence 50 of its 92 districts are in the more rural half of districts nationally.

6. The 2000 election preceded the merger between the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives that formed the Conservative Party. These two caucuses were combined in compiling the 2000 results shown.

7. In Canada the term *riding*, originating from Yorkshire, England, is commonly used interchangeably with *electoral district*.

8. Unlike the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues in the United States, the Canadian Association of Women Parliamentarians did not direct its efforts to policy issues, but instead served as a forum for mutual support and proposed remedies to improve women's access to elected office, notably changes to campaign-finance regulations (Young, 1997, pp. 92–93).

9. The New Democratic Party of Canada has also chosen two women leaders: Audrey MacLaughlin (1989–1995) and Alexa McDonough (1995–2003). Neither served as prime minister because that party has not governed at the federal level. At the provincial level, a larger number of women have led mainstream political parties, including a few that stood a competitive chance to govern. All but one of these parties were defeated; that exception is the Liberal Party of Prince Edward Island, led by Catherine Callbeck, who served as premier from 1993 to 1996. It is cause for concern that there is an emerging pattern for parties led by women to go down in defeat, presenting the potential for claims that women's leadership is, in part, responsible (Bashevkin, 2009b, pp. 44–52; Trimble & Arscott, 2003, pp. 98–99).



10. Unlike in the United States, campaign finance regulations in Canada allow donations only from individuals and thus do not allow organizations like Equal Voice to raise funds for candidates.

11. In 1997 the territory of Nunavut voted on a proposal featuring dual-member districts that would require both a man and a woman to be elected. Prince Edward Island held a referendum on a mixed-member system in 2005. British Columbia held two

separate referenda on a system featuring a single transferable vote in 2005 and 2009. Ontario held a referendum on a mixed-member system in 2007. All referenda were nonbinding, but politically decisive. All were defeated.

12. Bashevkin (2009a) has gone even further, to question whether the occupational pipeline thesis is at all relevant in Canadian public life, for both men and women, whether rural or metropolitan (p. 117).

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## WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AS LEADERS IN FINDING AND SUPPORTING FEMALE CANDIDATES

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Over the past 3 decades, the percentage of women holding elective office has increased considerably. One of the many factors contributing to increases in the number of women holding political office has been the rise of women's organizations (Cook, Thomas, & Wilcox, 1994; Day & Hadley, 2005; Nelson, 1994; Witt, Paget, & Matthews, 1994). These groups, which often champion progressive and feminist causes, but also include those with conservative political leanings, provide vital campaign services to candidates of both major political parties (Ford, 2006, p. 100). This assistance includes programs to recruit and train women to run for office; financial assistance in raising funds and in providing campaign contributions, especially in the early stages of women's campaigns (i.e., "seed" money); strategic advice and polling services; grassroots support; and campaign and issue advertising. These professional services are vital in the "candidate-centered" era of modern campaigns and have helped women wage stronger and more competitive campaigns for public office (see, e.g., Francia, 2001).

The design of this chapter is to explain how women's organizations have become the dominant leaders in finding, supporting, and ultimately electing an increasing number of women. It begins with an overview of the different strategies and political motives of women's organizations. The chapter then covers the political efforts and activities of women's organizations. It concludes with a discussion about the future of women's organizations and considers some unresolved questions about the campaigns of female candidates for new research to address.

### Background and Rise of Women's Organizations

Women's organizations have had a significant influence in U.S. politics dating back as far as the mid-19th and early 20th centuries when groups, such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, fought to give women the right to vote. Of the major women's organizations that are active presently in American politics, the National Organization for Women (NOW) is the largest. NOW claims to have more than 500,000 contributing members (National Organization for Women, 2009a). Founded in 1966 by Betty Friedan, Pauli Murray, Shirley Chisholm, and 25 others, NOW is a feminist organization that was created in response to concerns that the government was not properly enforcing sex discrimination provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (see, e.g., Ford, 2006, p. 99).

NOW pledges to fight for laws and public policies that advance political, professional, and educational equality for women. Throughout the 1970s NOW devoted much of its time and energy to efforts supporting the equal rights amendment (ERA). The ERA cleared the two-thirds threshold in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate in 1972 and won ratification in 34 of the necessary 38 states by 1975. As the decade progressed, however, the ERA stalled, gaining only one more state—Indiana—in 1977. Congress extended the deadline for ratification to 1982, but the ERA failed to gain the remaining three states, marking a major setback for NOW (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2005, pp. 47–51).

In 1983, NOW responded by forming a political action committee (PAC), NOW/PAC. NOW/PAC provides campaign contributions to congressional candidates who defend equal rights for women, the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision (which grants women a constitutional right to an abortion), and the Partial Birth Abortion repeal. The NOW also assists similar-minded state and local candidates through its NOW Equality PAC (National Organization for Women, 2009b).

NOW has not been alone in attempting to advance the cause of improving the status of women. As feminists struggled to pass the ERA in male-dominated state legislatures in the 1970s, other women's groups formed with the purpose of working to elect more women to public office. Two pioneering women's organizations in this effort were the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), which formed in 1971, and the Women's Campaign Fund (WCF), which was established in 1974. The NWPC, founded by Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Myrlie Evers, and others, was especially active in the 1970s, assisting female candidates who were pro-choice, supported the ERA, and supported publicly funded day care. The NWPC worked aggressively at the state and local levels, recognizing that electing women to state legislatures would improve their prospects of winning higher office in the future. Likewise, the WCF (now known as the Women's Campaign Forum) also worked to elect progressive, pro-choice women to all levels of public office. These early women's organizations served as alternatives to the major parties, which many feminists believed did not adequately support or train female candidates (Sanbonmatsu, 2002; Witt et al., 1994).

The lack of support for women running for public office attracted particular attention in 1982 when Democrat Harriett Woods of Missouri ran a spirited grassroots campaign for a seat in the U.S. Senate against the heavily favored Republican incumbent, John Danforth. Running on the Truman-inspired slogan, "Give them hell, Harriett!" Woods lost by less than 2 percentage points despite underwhelming financial support from the Democratic Party. In the aftermath of Woods's defeat, Ellen Malcolm (the great-granddaughter of IBM cofounder A. Ward Ford) and a small group of women activists founded EMILY's List in 1985 to provide pro-choice, female Democrats with access to early money (hence, the acronym EMILY for Early Money Is Like Yeast—early money, like yeast, makes the dough [i.e., money] rise). These early donations were important because they would help female candidates appear viable in the eyes of other potential donors, triggering additional campaign contributions and allowing women to wage stronger campaigns (for more information on EMILY's List, see McLean, 1995, pp. 175–179). In 1986, for example, early financial support from EMILY's List helped Barbara Mikulski of Maryland become the first woman in the Democratic Party to win election in her own right to the U.S. Senate.

Malcolm quickly built EMILY's List into a major financial force by creating a donor network. Members of EMILY's List agree to pay a \$100 fee to the group and to support at least two female U.S. Senate, U.S. House, or gubernatorial candidates with a minimum donation of \$100 each. Members then send their individual checks to EMILY's List. Upon receiving these individual contributions, EMILY's List "bundles" the checks together and forwards them to the candidates with a letter that explains the organization's role in collecting this money. This "bundling" procedure (which was actually first pioneered in 1962 by the Council for a Livable World) allows PACs (political action committees) to direct considerably more money to candidates than what the PAC itself is allowed to contribute (\$5,000 per candidate per election) under federal law.

EMILY's List grew rapidly over the next several years, becoming a critical source of funds for Democratic women running for public office (see, e.g., Nelson, 1994; Seltzer, Newman, & Leighton, 1997). By 2008 EMILY's List had helped raise more than \$9 million in individual campaign contributions from its more than 100,000 members (EMILY's List, 2008a). The success of EMILY's List has helped Ellen Malcolm become a major force in national Democratic Party politics. It also has led to its rivals copying its methods. The Susan B. Anthony List, founded in 1993 to support pro-life female candidates, bundles checks as well from its members to endorsed candidates (although its totals are significantly smaller than EMILY's List). Bundling has made women's organizations, especially EMILY's List, some of the most prolific PACs in the nation at providing fund-raising assistance.

Indeed, from its founding, EMILY's List has not only contributed to and helped raise funds for candidates but also has spent considerable sums of money on various political expenditures (such as television and radio advertising, direct mail, mass telephone calls, and other campaign services). From 1985 through the 2008 election, EMILY's List *raised and spent* more than \$240 million for political candidates (EMILY's List, 2007). Following the 2006 election, it claimed to be "the nation's largest political action committee" (EMILY's List, 2007) with campaign finance records from the Center for Responsive Politics showing that it raised and spent more than \$34 million on its political programs. In 2008, EMILY's List exceeded its 2006 totals, raising and spending more than \$35 million—more than all other liberal women's organizations combined (see Table 16.1).

Aside from EMILY's List, overall financial support from women's PACs to female congressional candidates has increased significantly since the 1970s and 1980s (see, e.g., Day & Hadley, 2005; Nelson, 1994; Witt et al., 1994). Although some research once indicated that female candidates were likely to raise less money than men (Theilmann & Wilhite, 1991), most recent studies have concluded that women have reached parity with their male counterparts



<i>Organization</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>
EMILY's List	\$34,965,661
Physicians for Women's Health	\$677,930
Susan B. Anthony List	\$648,466
WISH List	\$610,255
Women's Alliance for Israel	\$433,845
WomenCount PAC	\$424,517
Concerned Women for America	\$323,185
National Organization for Women	\$241,184
Women's Political Committee	\$207,794
Women's Campaign Forum	\$193,278

**Table 16.1** Top 10 Women's Organizations by Expenditures, 2008

SOURCE: Based on data from the Center for Responsive Politics; <http://www.opensecrets.org>.

(Burrell, 1994, 2005). The increased financial support from women's PACs has helped female candidates erase any fund-raising advantages that men once had (Day & Hadley, 2005; Franeia, 2001; Nelson, 1994; Witt et al., 1994).

The strategies, tactics, goals, and methods used by women's organizations to help female candidates run stronger campaigns vary. A few women's groups work to elect women, regardless of party affiliation. Others make party affiliation a requirement, giving only to Democrats or only to Republicans. Some will assist men provided they pledge to support a pro-feminist agenda. The next section provides an overview of these different strategies and the major groups that follow them.

## Political Strategies of Women's Organizations

Most women's PACs typically follow an electoral (or ideological) strategy in which the goal is to shape the ideological composition of government by electing candidates who support the group's positions. Whereas groups that follow access strategies typically contribute money and assistance to incumbents and likely winners,

electoral (or ideological) groups often contribute to challengers and those in competitive contests. PACs following ideological strategies rarely make cross-party contributions or assist a candidate who is unsympathetic to their interests to gain access (see, e.g., Sorauf, 1988).

EMILY's List follows a particularly aggressive electoral strategy by frequently involving itself in Democratic Party primary contests at all levels of office. In the 2008 presidential primary, EMILY's List was a strong supporter of then-New York State Senator and former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, providing more than \$500,000 in independent expenditures in just the first months of the primary election cycle (McElhatton, 2008). Although EMILY's List could not provide a victory for Clinton, who lost the Democratic presidential nomination to Barack Obama, it was able to help numerous other candidates running for high office. In Massachusetts, for example, EMILY's List helped Niki Tsongas of Massachusetts win a seat in the U.S. House. Indeed, overall, EMILY's List was quite successful in 2008, playing a role in the election of nearly all Democratic women elected to the U.S. Congress.

Similar to EMILY's List, NOW/PAC also follows an aggressive ideological strategy. In 2006, for example, it endorsed Alan Sandals over the heavily favored Bob Casey in the Pennsylvania Democratic primary for U.S. Senate. Despite the fact that Casey was a strong candidate who defeated Sandals and later unseated Republican incumbent, Rick Santorum, NOW/PAC ultimately rejected Casey for his opposition to abortion rights.

Whereas most women's organizations share a general electoral strategy, they do not all share the same ideological goals. Some women's organizations support female candidates only regardless of party affiliation. The Women Under Forty PAC (WUFAPAC), for example, works to elect female candidates in both parties who are 40 years of age and younger in an effort to help women build seniority in Congress by electing them at a young age. Other women's PACs have no gender requirement but do require candidates to support positions consistent with those of the group on issues that affect women. The conservative Susan B. Anthony List, for instance, is committed to supporting pro-life candidates. Although its primary focus is to elect pro-life women, it will support pro-life men who are running against pro-choice women. Finally, several women's organizations have both gender and ideological requirements. EMILY's List supports only progressive female Democrats, whereas the now-defunct WISH List (Women In the Senate and House) assisted only pro-choice Republican women.

Women's PACs differ not only in their political strategies but also in their abilities to provide campaign services. Some women's PACs actively recruit women to run for office and train them to run for office, whereas others mainly provide campaign contributions from the group's PAC. Still others actively seek to influence the campaign agenda toward women's issues by investing heavily in independent expenditures and issue advocacy.

advertisements. The section that follows reviews women's PACs efforts in these areas.

## Recruitment Efforts and Early Financial Support

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One of the largest obstacles preventing a greater percentage of women holding elected positions in government is the problem of recruiting female candidates to run for office. Fewer women than men run for public office, which plays a significant role in the comparatively smaller number of women in government than men (see, e.g., Fox & Lawless, 2005; Gertzog, 1995). Several reasons help explain this. First, women continue to remain the primary caregivers of children and have family responsibilities that make it more difficult for them to pursue public office (see, e.g., Fox & Lawless, 2005). Second, whereas the road to political office for women was once accomplished primarily by succeeding a late husband, most female candidates today no longer depend on the legacies of their spouse to win political office (see, e.g., Gertzog, 1995). As a result, women must assemble their own campaign operations. The expenses to wage a viable campaign, however, can serve as a deterrent for some women from seeking office. Research shows that women express greater concern than men about their ability to raise money, which discourages some women from running for office (Fox & Lawless, 2005).

To encourage more women to run for office and to provide them with the financial support network that they need to run a competitive campaign, women's PACs can play an important role in recruiting women to run for office for the first time. They also work with promising legislators at the local level and encourage them, when the circumstances appear to be optimal, to run for higher office. To convince a female state legislator to run for a U.S. House seat, or even a U.S. Senate seat, women's organizations sometimes commission polls to convince experienced women that they have a legitimate chance of winning higher office. The WCF, for example, sponsors its "She Should Run" campaign, which is aimed at recruiting pro-choice women to run for office (Women's Campaign Forum, 2009). Likewise, EMILY's List has its Political Opportunity Program (POP), which recruits pro-choice Democratic women to run for state and local office. The program began in 2001, following the 2000 election in which the number of women serving in state legislatures decreased for the first time in 3 decades. Since the initiation of the program, POP has hosted 158 trainings in 35 states and trained 5,550 people (EMILY's List, 2009b).

Women's organizations also help train candidates to run for office. The WISH List, for example, began as the Tillie Fowler Campaign Training Program (named after deceased WISH List member and former U.S. House member Tillie Fowler, who represented Florida's Fourth Congressional District from 1993 to 2001) for pro-choice Republican

women. The program provides candidates with advice from the top political consultants on campaign strategy, polling, grassroots organization, and fund-raising. Similarly, EMILY's List holds a comprehensive training seminar for candidates to learn the latest campaign techniques, technologies, and strategies from the top professionals in the industry. Specifically, the seminars cover areas such as writing a campaign plan, creating a budget, raising money, managing staff, recruiting and overseeing a finance committee, targeting donors, planning fund-raising events, generating press coverage, developing on-camera interview techniques, planning phone banks and canvasses, and conducting get-out-the-vote activities.

As noted earlier, several other women's groups, including EMILY's List, seek to help female candidates overcome their concerns of running a viable campaign by promising them early financial support, which often comes even during the primary phase of the election cycle. This early support, especially during the primaries, is significant because most PACs are reluctant to take the risk of backing a losing candidate. As a result, most donors give to incumbents and candidates in safe seats, making investments in challengers, particularly those running against an incumbent in a primary, extremely rare.

However, women's PACs, most of which have ideological strategies and goals, are among the few groups willing to search out promising candidates and offer them early assistance. This can help women overcome the significant barrier of deciding to run for office. Ellen Malcolm, president of EMILY's List, explains, "Whenever we see a potential opportunity, we immediately start talking to women and trying to find strong candidates. This is not accidental. We know when you're in the business of electing new people, you have to seize every opportunity" (Kurtz, 2006).

## Campaign Services

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In addition to recruitment efforts, women's organizations carry out other important campaign services to assist female candidates. As previously discussed, many women's organizations help candidates with their fund-raising efforts. Other assistance can come in the form of in-kind contributions for polls, issue research, or other strategic and professional consulting advice. Some women's organizations, for instance, provide candidates with detailed precinct-by-precinct demographic profiles to help candidates effectively "micro-target" their message. Often instead of a direct contribution, these services are provided to a candidate because they offer the organization more control over the tone and agenda of the campaign, and they leave a more lasting impression with the candidate. Although fund-raising assistance tends to receive the most attention given the bundling success of EMILY's List, women's PACs also provide candidates with significant assistance with get-out-the-vote activities and advertising.



## Voter Mobilization and Get-Out-the-Vote Activities

Women's organizations work to mobilize women to vote by bringing women's issues to their attention. During the 1992 election, dubbed by political observers as the "Year of the Woman," groups such as the NOW drew attention around the problem of sexual harassment. This followed the high-profile 1991 Senate confirmation hearings of Justice Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court in which law professor Anita Hill charged him with making improper sexual advances toward her. Thomas's ability to win confirmation in the male-dominated U.S. Senate, despite the serious charges, helped NOW mobilize women in the 1992 election and resulted in a record number of new women elected to the U.S. Congress (see, e.g., Cook et al., 1994; Witt et al., 1994).

Women's groups have become even more effective at mobilizing women in recent years by using the Internet. Web sites provide political information and resources 24 hours a day, and women's groups have developed e-mail lists to send members up-to-date information about pressing women's issues. Female candidates can also take advantage of Web-based information from women's organizations to learn about training seminars or about how to access consultants and networks of volunteers (Ford, 2006, p. 100).

Women's organizations further help candidates develop voter outreach strategies. These strategies are developed through extensive research of individual voters based on consumer data, vote history, and census data. This allows women's groups to target their grassroots resources—mailings, e-mails, personal calls, and door-to-door contact—most effectively. One of the most committed women's organizations to grassroots mobilization is the group Women's Voices. Women Vote (WVWV), whose goal is to improve single women's participation in politics.

WVWV, a 501(c)3 organization (with a 501(c)4 affiliate known as Women's Voices. Women Vote Action Fund) founded in 2003 by Page Gardner and Chris Desser, has developed a sophisticated "turn-key" voter registration and get-out-the-vote program that, through modeling techniques, allows members to identify and develop accurate lists of single women and to target them effectively with rigorously tested messages and materials. During the 2006 election, it contacted more than 2 million single women through a vast communications program that included targeted mailings, telephone calls, and e-mail. In total, it sent some 2.8 million mailings, generated more than 1 million automated telephone calls, and made roughly 695,000 live phone calls to single women. WVWV conducted a post-election survey of voters that it registered in 2006, and the results indicated one quarter of the respondents cited WVWV materials as a primary reason that they registered to vote. In the 2008 election cycle, WVWV built on its success, claiming through March 2008 that it had registered 20% of all new voters (in the 10 states where new registrant information was available). By the end of the election, WVWV touted statistics showing that unmarried

women were a critical bloc among the 11% of new voters who comprised the overall electorate. Some 20% of unmarried women voted for the first time for president in 2008 compared to only 4% among married women (for more information, see WVWV, 2009).

EMILY's List also conducts one of the most extensive grassroots programs. In 2008 it spent nearly \$7 million on its WOMEN VOTE! program, which is designed specifically to educate and mobilize female voters on behalf of Democratic candidates across the nation (EMILY's List, 2008a). In New Hampshire, for example, EMILY's List developed a voter-modeling project that allowed it to target persuadable voters. In all, it sent more than 730,000 pieces of mail to these voters and made a special appeal to young voters with its "Don't Stop at the Top" campaign, which encouraged support for a straight Democratic ticket from presidential nominee Barack Obama to other down-ballot races. EMILY's List also had volunteers and staff visit more than 15,000 households throughout New Hampshire in the final 96 hours before Election Day. These efforts, according to EMILY's List, helped Democrats throughout the state, including Jane Shaheen, who defeated Republican incumbent John Sununu in New Hampshire's 2008 U.S. Senate contest (EMILY's List, 2008a).

EMILY's List has further developed a grassroots program known as Campaign Corps, which trains young people in a week-long campaign school. The program only accepts recent college graduates who are "passionate about Democratic politics and dedicated to electing progressive candidates" (EMILY's List, 2009a). Acceptance into the Campaign Corps is a highly competitive process, with only 20 to 40 staffers selected each year (EMILY's List, 2009a). Upon completion of the program, the graduates of the program work in targeted races. EMILY's List provides a stipend, free housing, and paid travel. In 2008, EMILY's List Campaign Corps program provided grassroots campaign workers to progressive Democratic candidates throughout the nation.

## Independent Expenditures, Advertising, and Educational Materials

Women's organizations make independent expenditures and run issue advocacy advertisements to assist candidates. Based upon the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), a political expenditure is a form of constitutionally protected free speech and cannot be limited by federal law. As a consequence, PACs are permitted to make unlimited use of so-called independent expenditures, which often come in the form of print, radio, or television advertisements that directly communicate to voters a call for the election or defeat of a candidate. Independent expenditures also include other, less expensive means of communication, such as direct mail and mass telephone calls. These expenditures must be made with hard money (i.e., donations received by the PAC that were made within the confines and restrictions of federal campaign finance law) raised



from the group's PAC and must be disclosed to the Federal Election Commission (FEC).

Unlike independent expenditures, issue advocacy advertisements may not expressly call for the election or defeat of a candidate but rather must advocate on behalf of a specific policy or issue. Issue ads avoid the definition of "express advocacy" and therefore escape federal regulations. In *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), the U.S. Supreme Court held that restrictions on disclosure of contributions and expenditures applied only to express advocacy (i.e., explicitly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate). Issue ad expenditures can be made with either hard or soft money (i.e., donations that do not fall under the restrictions of federal campaign finance law) and do not need to be disclosed to the FEC.

Women's organizations often spend huge sums of money on independent expenditures and issue advocacy advertisements. According to data from the Center for Responsive Politics (2008), the Susan B. Anthony List spent \$291,154 in 2008 in targeted contests to mobilize pro-life voters. NOW was also extremely active in running advertisements through independent expenditures for Hillary Rodham Clinton during her presidential campaign. Campaign finance records show that NOW spent \$62,637 in independent expenditures on behalf of Clinton (Center for Responsive Politics, 2009). Its advertising blitz during the Pennsylvania primary, which included an aggressive "web ad" strategy, likely helped Clinton's victory there ("NOW Says Their Web Ads," 2008).

Women's organizations have also formed and cooperated with other organizations to create so-called 527 groups that can spend soft money on issue advocacy advertisements (the "527" label comes from the section it falls under in the Internal Revenue Code). A 527 group is exempt from taxation, although contributions to these organizations are not tax deductible. It can accept unlimited donations and can spend its donations on issue advocacy advertisements and get-out-the-vote efforts. The 527 groups grew in importance following the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2003 (BCRA), which prohibits political parties from raising unlimited soft money donations for expenses such as party building activities, get-out-the-vote drives, or issue advocacy advertisements. However, BCRA does not ban 527 organizations from accepting unlimited donations from unions, corporations, or wealthy individuals or from spending their donations on issue advocacy advertisements and get-out-the-vote efforts, just as national party organizations could do prior to BCRA. As a result, BCRA has helped make 527 organizations an increasingly important vehicle for interest groups in federal elections.

In 2008, several women's organizations—including EMILY's List, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the Women's Campaign Forum, and Women's Voices. Women Vote—became partners in the 527 group, America Votes, which worked to increase progressive voter registration and turnout. America Votes was the second most active 527 in

the 2008 election, spending more than \$20 million (see Table 16.2). EMILY's List formed its own 527 group and spent \$11 million, ranking fifth among all 527 groups in the 2008 election. It used some of this money to mobilize progressive women to vote through issue advertisements that attempted to influence the issue agenda of the election in a manner that was beneficial to Democratic candidates. In 2008, the issue most favorable to Democrats was the economy. EMILY's List, not surprisingly, focused on several economic themes, notably economic pressures facing single women and those in families.

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>
Service Employees International Union	\$25,819,624
America Votes	\$20,749,364
American Solutions Winning the Future	\$19,594,558
The Fund for America	\$12,014,130
EMILY's List	\$10,848,170

**Table 16.2** Top Five Federally Focused Organizations (527s), 2008

SOURCE: Based on data from the Center for Responsive Politics: <http://www.opensecrets.org>.

EMILY's List and its WOMEN VOTE! program also targeted young voters through a series of radio advertisements and Internet outreach. In North Carolina, for example, EMILY's List targeted young voters with Internet banner ads that emphasized supporting the entire Democratic ticket of Barack Obama, Kay Hagan (U.S. Senate), and Beverly Purdum (governor), and offered a link to a landing page with information on all three races (EMILY's List, 2008b). Exit polls later showed that Hagan and Purdum, who both won election, were very successful in winning in lopsided majorities of young voters in North Carolina.

Likewise, NARAL Pro-Choice America was active in attempting to mobilize voters and provide them with information about the voting records of Barack Obama and John McCain. NARAL Pro-Choice America made a particularly concerted effort to target pro-choice Independent and Republican women. In the final weeks of the election, NARAL Pro-Choice America announced plans to contact more than 300,000 pro-choice households in eight battleground states: Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia (Miller, 2008).

On a smaller scale than mass advertising campaigns, women's organizations seek to provide political information through voter guides. The League of Women Voters (LWV), for instance, has a long history of providing a nonpartisan



voter guide in each election that contains candidates' responses to various questions covering a range of political issues. The LWV's voter guide is accessible on the Internet at the web site VOTE411.org. In addition to the voter guide, VOTE411.org also provides voters with information about voter registration deadlines, the location of polling places, applying for absentee ballots, and other election subjects.

Many other women's groups, such as NOW/PAC and Feminist Majority PAC, issue formal endorsements. These are often important because they provide "information shortcuts" for voters. Few voters have enough time to learn about the positions of every, or even most, candidates on a typical ballot. An endorsement, however, can provide quick and meaningful information to a voter.

Likewise, scorecards and voter guides women's organizations provide information shortcuts by evaluating candidates' support for the group's policy agenda. Scorecards and voter guides are sometimes organized with ratings that look like a report card, presenting the candidates' positions on the group's primary issues of concern. NOW, for example, listed 16 high-profile votes on bills ranging from the global gag rule on abortion to hate crimes legislation in its guide to the 110th Congress. The guide records the votes for all 16 bills for each of the 100 U.S. senators, listing a "+" for each vote consistent with the position of NOW and a "-" for each vote against. These scorecards, ratings, and voter guides can have an important impact in mobilizing the group's membership on behalf of candidates who receive the best evaluations (Rozell & Wilcox, 1999).

## Summary and Future Directions

Women's organizations have an obvious impact in the electoral arena. They provide vital campaign support for female candidates. They help recruit women to run for office, which expands the pool of female candidates. Women's organizations also provide important financial and professional services, as well as vital grassroots assistance, allowing female candidates to wage stronger campaigns. They also play a role in shaping the issue agenda through campaign and issue advertisements. These services and activities, taken together, have provided women with increased opportunities to win public office and ultimately have expanded their numbers in government.

Women have made significant progress in the electoral arena. Yet despite these gains, major challenges remain. The question "Is Feminism Dead?" appeared on the cover of the June 29, 1998, issue of *Time* magazine. This foreboding story illustrated a growing perception that the women's movement, and its leading organizations, were in disarray. Recent polls have since reinforced the notion that women's organizations have failed to stem declines in public opinion toward "feminism." As a 2002 Gallup report concluded, "Over the last 30 years, the public has become somewhat less willing to accept the 'feminist' label" (Robinson, 2002). More recently, a *Time/Abt SRBI* national poll, conducted in

Organization	% to Democrats	% to Republicans
EMILY's List	100%	0%
Women's Campaign Forum	100%	0%
Women's Political Committee	100%	0%
WISH List	0%	100%
National Organization for Women	100%	0%
Feminist Majority Foundation	100%	0%
Women's Health Foundation	100%	0%
National Women's Political Caucus	100%	0%
Minnesota Women's Campaign Fund	100%	0%
Women Under Forty PAC	93%	7%

**Table 16.3** Partisan Distribution of Contributions by Top 10 Women's Organizations, 2008

SOURCE: Based on data from the Center for Responsive Politics: <http://www.opensecrets.org>.

NOTE: Totals include contributions from PACs and individuals giving \$200 or more.

September 2008, asked likely women voters, "Do you consider yourself a feminist, however you wish to define it?" Just 35% responded "yes" compared to 62% who answered "no" (*Time and Abt SRBI*, 2008).

Clearly, the ability to improve the "feminist" label, especially to a new generation of women who were not alive or do not remember the early struggles of the 1960s and the ERA movement of the 1970s and early 1980s, will likely have significant implications for the future strength and influence of women's organizations. Indeed, how best to lead the women's movement into the future is an issue that members of NOW had to consider when they cast their votes for a team of leaders in June 2009. In a closely contested election, former law professor and 56-year-old

activist Terri O'Neill defeated 33-year-old Latifa Lyles (who had been endorsed by outgoing president Kim Gandy and by Eleanor Smeal). O'Neill pledged to reenergize NOW through tactics fashioned after social movement and grassroots activism. Lyles, an African American, campaigned as the candidate who represented youth and diversity and who could best reach a new generation of women by taking advantage of outreach efforts through the Internet (Rein, 2009). The O'Neill-Lyles contest underscored the types of strategic issues that women's organizations will have to consider as they position themselves for the future.

O'Neill's comments about how she intends to lead NOW may signal a return to the "outsider" strategies of the organization's early days. Yet, "insider" strategies are likely to remain an important part of the overall strategic picture for women's organizations, and as a result, familiar issues, such as selecting which candidates to support, will remain part of any larger political strategy. Because women still remain underrepresented in proportion to their percentage in the general population for various institutional reasons (see, e.g., Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994; Newman, 1994; Palmer & Simon, 2008), women's organizations will likely remain vigilant in their efforts to elect more women to public office.

However, even the goal of electing more women to public office can present some difficult strategic decisions.

Most women's organizations give disproportionately to Democrats (see Table 16.3). Although conservative groups such as WISH List and the Susan B. Anthony List have made efforts to assist Republican women, their efforts pale in comparison to those of EMILY's List (Day & Hadley, 2005; Francia, 2001). Thus the sweeping victories of Democrats in the 2008 election provide, on the one hand, a favorable environment for promoting "women's issues" from the perspective of most progressive women's organizations. Women's groups comfortable with "substantive" representation (i.e., electing candidates, regardless of gender, who will represent women's issues) have a strong interest in defending the status quo. On the other hand, with fewer Republican-held districts, there are also fewer opportunities for progressive women's groups to elect more women to office. Those seeking to advance the "descriptive" representation of women (i.e., electing more women to office regardless of ideology) will therefore need to continue to seek ways to challenge the status quo so that more women are elected to office. Future research could certainly examine how progressive women's groups reconcile these conflicting goals in upcoming elections, while also considering how the larger women's movement utilizes insider and outsider political strategies to influence legislation and policy affecting women.

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## ROADBLOCKS ON THE PATH TO POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

### *Women's Roles in Congressional Elections, Incumbency, and Parties*

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On January 5, 2007, after being sworn in as the first female Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Representative Nancy Pelosi announced, "Today, we have broken the marble ceiling" ("Pelosi," 2007). Yet, she presides over a Congress that is only 16% female. In the history of Congress, only 2% of all members have been women (Center for American Women and Politics, 2010). Why is the integration of women into Congress taking so long? This is the fundamental research question for scholars whose interests focus on women as congressional leaders and influential policymakers.

Our narrative begins by tracing the history of women as candidates for the U.S. House and Senate; it shows that the history of electing women to Congress is one of "fits and starts" and not steady progress. Next, we show that those women elected to Congress face a number of major barriers on the path to political leadership. These barriers are a product of the desirability of long-term careers and the importance of seniority in Congress. Our discussion then focuses upon two contemporary barriers: the electoral power of incumbency and the role of political parties in congressional elections. The unique electoral rules in the United States play a large role in determining who wins a congressional seat and who does not. For example, U.S. elections are really three steps: A candidate must

(1) decide to seek a seat in Congress, (2) win a primary contest for the party nomination, and then (3) win a general election contest. In addition, the use of "single-member districts" means that a candidate who wins the most votes, not necessarily a majority, represents a designated geographic area. These rules create and perpetuate advantages for incumbents and entrench the two-party system in the United States. As this chapter will show, these rules are not gender neutral and have impeded both the entry of women into Congress and, ultimately, the path to leadership for those women who serve in Congress.

### **The History of Women and Congressional Elections**

Elizabeth Cady Stanton is best known for her leadership in the 19th-century women's movement and fight for women's suffrage. Much less is known about her campaign for the House in 1866, making her the first woman to ever run for Congress. She received 24 votes (Parsons, Beach, & Dubin, 1986, p. 126). The first woman to run for Senate was Mary Elizabeth Lease in 1893, who earned the nickname, the "People's Joan of Arc." She was an active member of the Populist Party in Kansas and gave more than 150 speeches as a fierce advocate for farmers (Orr, 2006–2007). The first



woman to ever win election to Congress was Jeannette Rankin, a Republican from Montana, who was elected to the House in 1916. Though it would be 4 more years until the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified (guaranteeing women the right to vote nationally in 1920), Rankin was active in the suffrage movement and worked hard to convince the Montana State Legislature to grant women the right to vote in her home state in 1914 (Office of History and Preservation, 2006, pp. 37–41). The first woman to serve in the Senate was Rebecca Latimer Felton, a Democrat from Georgia, who was appointed in 1922 to replace her husband. Felton served for 2 days, setting a record for shortest Senate career in history (Office of History and Preservation, 2006, pp. 53–55). After her swearing in, she made a very short speech, remarking, “When the women of the country come in and sit with you, though there may be but a very few in the next few years, I pledge you that you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness” (Office of History and Preservation, 2006, p. 55).

Since these pioneering women first began running in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the growth of female congressional candidates has not been a steady march forward. In fact, the number of women serving in Congress remained the same for almost 70 years. This lack of progress was a product of numerous cultural norms that made it clear that “politics is a man’s game” (Palmer & Simon, 2008). It was not until the early 1970s that the number of women running and winning began to increase. Between 1970 and 1974, the number of women running in House primaries jumped from 42 to 105, the number of women winning primaries increased from 24 to 43, and the number of women winning the general election went from 12 to 18 (Palmer & Simon, 2008, pp. 22–26). This increase coincides with the dawn of the second wave of the women’s movement, marking the beginning of changing attitudes toward women as candidates and officeholders (Freeman, 1975). For the next 20 years, the number of women in the House slowly increased by one or two each election cycle. Then another major spike in the number of female candidates occurred in 1992. Dubbed the “Year of the Woman,” 209 women ran in primaries, 104 women won primaries, and 47 women were elected to the House. Twenty-four new women were sworn in on January 5, 1993, doubling the number of women in the House (Cook, Thomas, & Wilcox, 1994). Since then, in a typical election cycle, the net gain in the number of female House members has been four or five (Palmer & Simon, 2008).

Only 38 women have served in the Senate. Most of them obtained their seats in the past 2 decades. When Senator Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME) retired in 1973 after serving for 24 years, there were no women in the Senate until Muriel Humphrey (D-MN) was appointed in 1978 to complete the term of her deceased husband, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D-MN). Only two women were elected to the Senate in the 1980s: Paula Hawkins (R-FL) in 1980 and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) in 1986. Then in 1992, there was

a similar spike in successful female candidates: The number of female senators jumped from two to six.

There are actually two paths to the Senate: election and appointment. Whereas all House seats that become open due to unscheduled vacancies created by death or resignation during a member’s term must be filled by special election, Senate seats that become vacant are filled temporarily through gubernatorial appointment until the next election cycle. Seventeen of the 38 female senators initially obtained their seats through gubernatorial appointments. Eight of these women, such as Humphrey, were appointed after the death of their husbands. Jean Carnahan (D-MO), for example, became senator after her husband, Mel, was killed in a plane crash 3 weeks before the November election in 2000. It was too late to remove his name from the ballot, so Democratic Party leaders convinced Jean to accept the appointment if Mel won. He did, making him the first deceased candidate to win a Senate election. It is only in recent times that the example of Jean Carnahan has become the exception rather than the rule for women who become members of this “most exclusive club.”

This summary reveals that for most of the 20th century, the success rate for female congressional candidates was remarkably flat. In fact, during the 1960s, the number of women seeking and winning seats actually declined. It was not until the early 1970s that we begin to see successive increases in female candidacies, with net increases of one or two women in each election cycle. It is important to emphasize that the sizable increases during the “Year of the Woman” was the political equivalent of a “perfect storm.” This was an election cycle that featured an unprecedented combination of “women-friendly” factors: a campaign environment in which “compassion issues” advantaged female candidates; a mobilizing event based upon the televised hearings of the Senate Judiciary Committee and its investigation of sexual harassment charges lodged against Clarence Thomas by his former colleague, Anita Hill; and an inordinately large number of open seats resulting from the retirements and primary defeats of members involved in the House banking scandal (Palmer & Simon, 2008). Since the “Year of the Woman” (1992), the net gains for women have increased to four or five in each election. Such gains are still quite modest and suggest that the integration of women into Congress is not marked by a trend of gradual or persistent progress. Instead, it is a story of fits and starts.

## Leadership and Seniority in Congress

It is essential to understand that these fits and starts influence the number of women who travel the road to leadership in Congress. This is because positions of leadership, as well as the distribution of authority in Congress, are grounded in seniority. After winning their first election, members are dominated by seniority; on the day they are sworn in, the new “freshmen” are given a seniority ranking. Everything from office space to leadership roles is a function of seniority. For



example, before becoming Speaker, Representative Pelosi served for 20 years. Seniority plays an especially important role in the committee system. Committees are central to understanding how Congress functions, because this is where most of the work is done. Thus committee assignments, particularly in the House, can involve a great deal of maneuvering and “scrambling.” Although the popularity of particular committees in both the House and Senate has varied over time, in general the most powerful and desirable committees are the ones that control the federal “purse strings.” These include the spending committees (the House and Senate Appropriations Committees) and the taxing committees (the House Ways and Means Committees and the Senate Finance Committees; Davidson, Oleszek, & Lee, 2008). These committees often have waiting lists. During the 111th Congress (2009–2010 session), on the House Appropriations Committee, 10 of the 60 members were women, or 17%, which was in proportion to their overall membership. Eight of these 10 women have served in the House for more than 12 years. Only 4 women served on the 41-member Ways and Means Committee. In the Senate, 4 of the 23 members on the Finance Committee were women, and 2 of the 23 members on the Budget Committee were women. All of these female senators have had more than 12 years of service.

Committee chairs wield a great deal of power, because they control the committee's agenda, schedule hearings, determine the budget, and hire and fire staff. Most importantly, the chair determines the fate of all legislation assigned to the committee (Davidson et al., 2008). In the 111th Congress (2009 session), 3 of the House's 20 committees and 3 of the Senate's 21 committees were chaired by women. In the history of Congress, only 9 women have served as House Committee chairs and only 10 women have served as Senate committee chairs (Center for American Women and Politics, 2009). As all of this suggests, longevity is the key to leadership and power in Congress.

The seniority system, however, poses a particular challenge for women. Women tend to be older when they first run for Congress (see Burrell, 1994; Kirkpatrick, 1974). Because women are still the primary caregivers for children, they wait until their children are older before pursuing full-time political careers (Lawless & Fox, 2005). Moreover, women who take their small children on the campaign trail are often condemned for being bad mothers. For example, during her first campaign in 1972, Pat Schroeder (D-CO) was constantly asked how she could run for House with two small children. She finally told one reporter, “Jim and I get up very early—about 6 a.m. We bathe and dress the children and give them a wonderful breakfast. Then we put them in the freezer, leave for work and when we come home we defrost them. And we all have a wonderful dinner together” (Foerstel & Foerstel, 1996, p. 114). Twenty-five years later, Representative Cathy McMorris Rogers (R-WA) chose not to announce her pregnancy until after her reelection in 2006. This bias is not restricted to congressional elections. During the 2008 campaign, for example, Governor Sarah Palin was

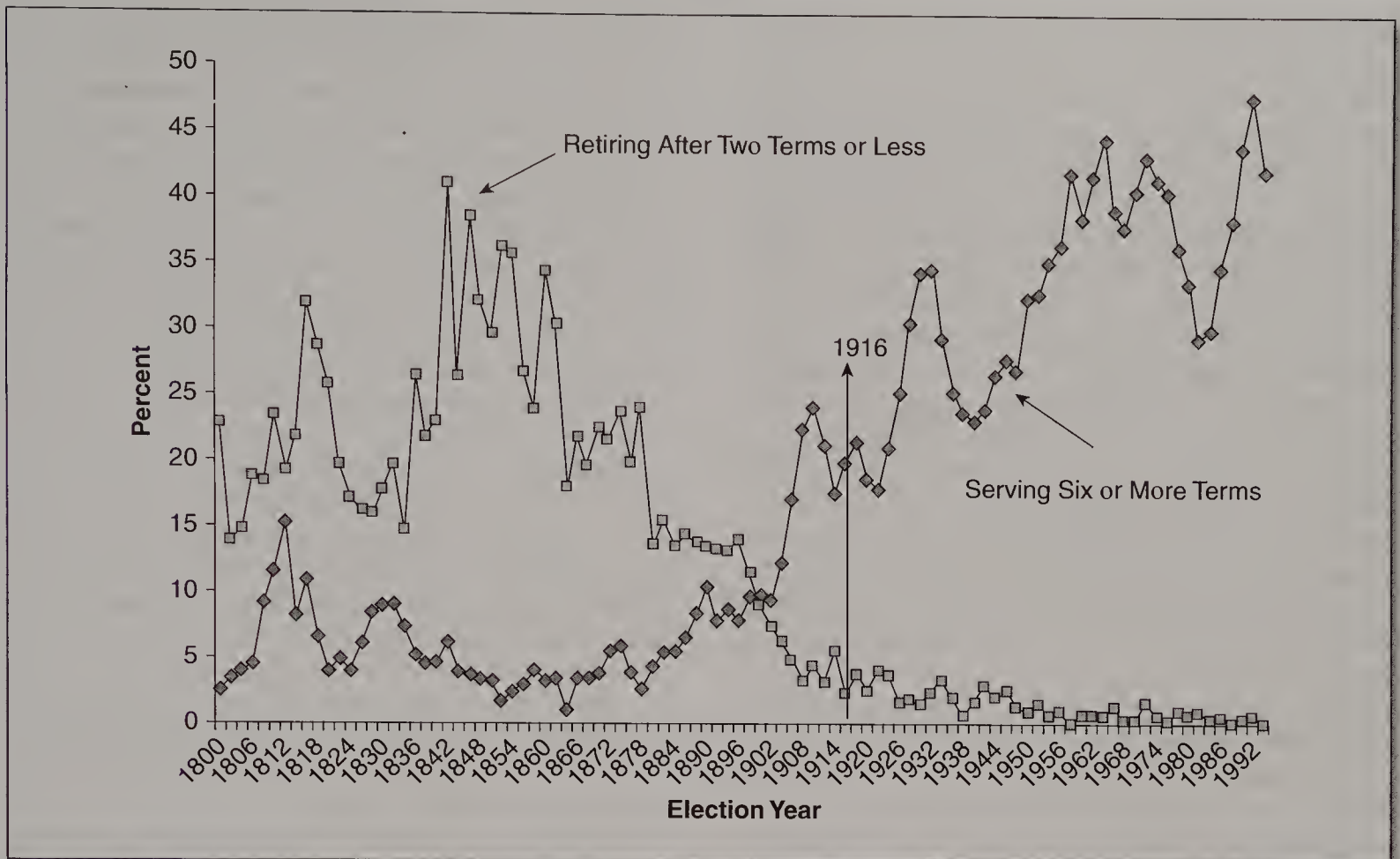
often questioned as to why she accepted the vice presidential nomination in light of her responsibilities to care for an infant son with Down syndrome.

Very few young women have served in Congress. Only 38 women under the age of 40 have served in the House. The first woman to win election to the House, Jeannette Rankin (R-MT), was 36. The vast majority of the young women to serve in Congress, however, have been elected in the past 2 decades. Only two women under age 40 have served in the Senate. Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AK) ran in 1998 at the age of 38, making her the youngest woman ever elected to that body. In 2009, at the age of 42, former Representative Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) was appointed by Governor David Paterson to fill the vacancy left by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), who became secretary of state, making her the youngest senator in the 111th Congress. Even after the departure of Senator Strom Thurmond, who retired at the age of 100 in 2003, the average age of Congress has been steadily increasing. The 111th Congress set new records. The average age in the House was 57, and the average age in the Senate was 63 (Amer, 2008). The essential connection between seniority and leadership in Congress means that women face a catch-22. If they run when they are younger and have small children, they often face criticism that their male counterparts almost never have to deal with, but if women wait for their children to grow up, they may not be around long enough to move into the leadership hierarchy.

## The Power of Incumbency

The seniority system that exists today developed along with the rise of careerism in Congress. It is important to keep in mind that the idea of a career in Congress is a 20th-century phenomenon. For the first one hundred years of American history, being a member of Congress was actually viewed as a rather dreadful obligation. Long-term service in particular meant long periods away from families and even possible financial ruin. Moreover, Washington, D.C., was not a pleasant place. It was hot, humid, undeveloped, and rampant with disease. There were few social or cultural diversions, with no museums, no monuments, and cows grazing in front of the White House (Young, 1966). Congress itself could be equally unpleasant—crowded, noisy, smelly, and occasionally violent. One of the most notorious examples occurred in 1856, when Representative Preston Brooks (D-SC) beat Senator Charles Sumner (R-MA) senseless with a cane on the Senate floor because of their differing views on the issue of slavery. Duels were not uncommon (Davidson et al., 2008). Consequently, for almost a century, continuous reelection was not pursued. As Figure 17.1 shows, from 1800 to 1860, nearly one fourth of all members retired from the House after one or two terms. Very few members, 5.6%, served for more than five terms. Well into the 1870s, more than half of all members were freshmen.





**Figure 17.1** Roadblocks to Leadership: Careerism in Congress

SOURCE: From Palmer and Simon (2008, p. 49, Figure 2.5).

Around the turn of the century, these trends begin to change, and during the 1920s and 1930s, the number of House members serving six or more terms tripled. In the 111th Congress (2009 session), the average length of service in the House was more than five terms, an average that is steadily increasing with each successive Congress (Amer, 2008). Early retirement, either by choice or by losing an election, is now a rarity.

Recognizing the historical development of a career-oriented Congress is essential for understanding the context in which women emerged as candidates. As Figure 17.1 reveals, the timing of these developments is of particular importance. Jeannette Rankin won election to the House in 1916 just as the idea of Congress as a career was beginning to take hold. The movement of women into the electoral arena began in an era when careerism and incumbency rates were climbing to historic highs. In effect, Figure 17.1 documents the formation of one of the major roadblocks to political power and leadership; it was created just as the first women ran for Congress. It was firmly in place by the 1970s, when the number of women seeking election to the House began to steadily increase. Women began entering the electoral arena in an era when the opportunities for success were the lowest (Palmer & Simon, 2008).

Without doubt, incumbency is a tremendous barrier for anyone interested in serving in Congress. Since the 1950s, the reelection rate of House incumbents has been approximately 95%. Reelection rates for senators have ranged from 75% to 92%. And once women overcome this barrier, they too, reap the benefits. In fact, female incumbents win reelection at slightly higher rates than their male counterparts. From 1956 to 2006, the reelection rate for male House incumbents was 94.5%, and the reelection rate for female incumbents was 95.8%. From 1982 to 1990, female House incumbents achieved a perfect record; all 101 female incumbents who sought reelection won. In addition, female House incumbents win by slightly larger margins. On average, from 1956 to 2006, male incumbents won with 64.5% of the two-party vote, while female incumbents won with 67.3% of the two-party vote (Palmer & Simon, 2008).

This suggests that once women initially get past this electoral roadblock, there is equality with regard to their ability to win reelection along with their male counterparts. However, looking beyond these success rates in general elections suggests that this is not entirely the case. For example, female House incumbents are more likely than male incumbents to be challenged in their own primary. In

addition, competition in the opposition party primary is much more intense when a female incumbent is running for reelection. In general elections, male incumbents are much more likely than female incumbents to run unopposed; from 1956 to 2006, 16.2% of male incumbents had no opponent in the general election, whereas only 9.8% of female incumbents had no opponent in the general election. Male incumbents are twice as likely as female incumbents to face no competition at all; in other words, they earn a “free ride” with no opponent in their own primary and no opponent in the general election (Palmer & Simon, 2008).

A remarkable illustration of these trends is found in the eight-term career of Representative Connie Morella (R-MD). Morella was first elected in 1986 from Maryland's Eighth District, a district that had always tended to vote for Democratic candidates, especially for president. In four of her eight reelection campaigns, she was challenged by at least one opponent in her own primary. Moreover, there always was a great deal of competition within the Democratic primary; on average, in a given election, six Democratic candidates fought for the opportunity to run against her. In 1996, for example, there were nine candidates in the Democratic primary, even though Morella won the previous election with over 70% of the vote. This level of competition is surprising given her consistently high margins of victory. Morella was a moderate Republican in a Democratic district, and she was quite popular among her constituents. Until 2000 she consistently won reelection with at least 60% of the vote. During the redistricting cycle in the wake of the 2000 U.S. Census, Maryland's state legislature substantially redrew her district, making it even more Democratic. As a result, in 2002, Maryland State Senator Chris Van Hollen won a four-way primary that included one woman, and then went on to defeat Morella in one of the most expensive and highly contested races of the year. He won with 51.7% of the vote (Palmer & Simon, 2008, pp. 156–157).

Whether the goal is to increase the number of young people, people of color, nonlawyers, or women, incumbency is a roadblock that all new candidates must navigate around. Once new candidates have succeeded in winning their first election, they very quickly begin to benefit from incumbency advantages. Chris Van Hollen, for example, has had no problems getting reelected and was serving his fourth term in the 111th Congress (2009–2010 session). These advantages, however, are not gender neutral. Female incumbents win at slightly higher rates than their male counterparts, but they face a much more competitive environment. In other words, they have to work harder to hold on to their seats.

## The Parties as Gatekeepers

Incumbency is not the only barrier that candidates face. Political parties play an important role in candidate

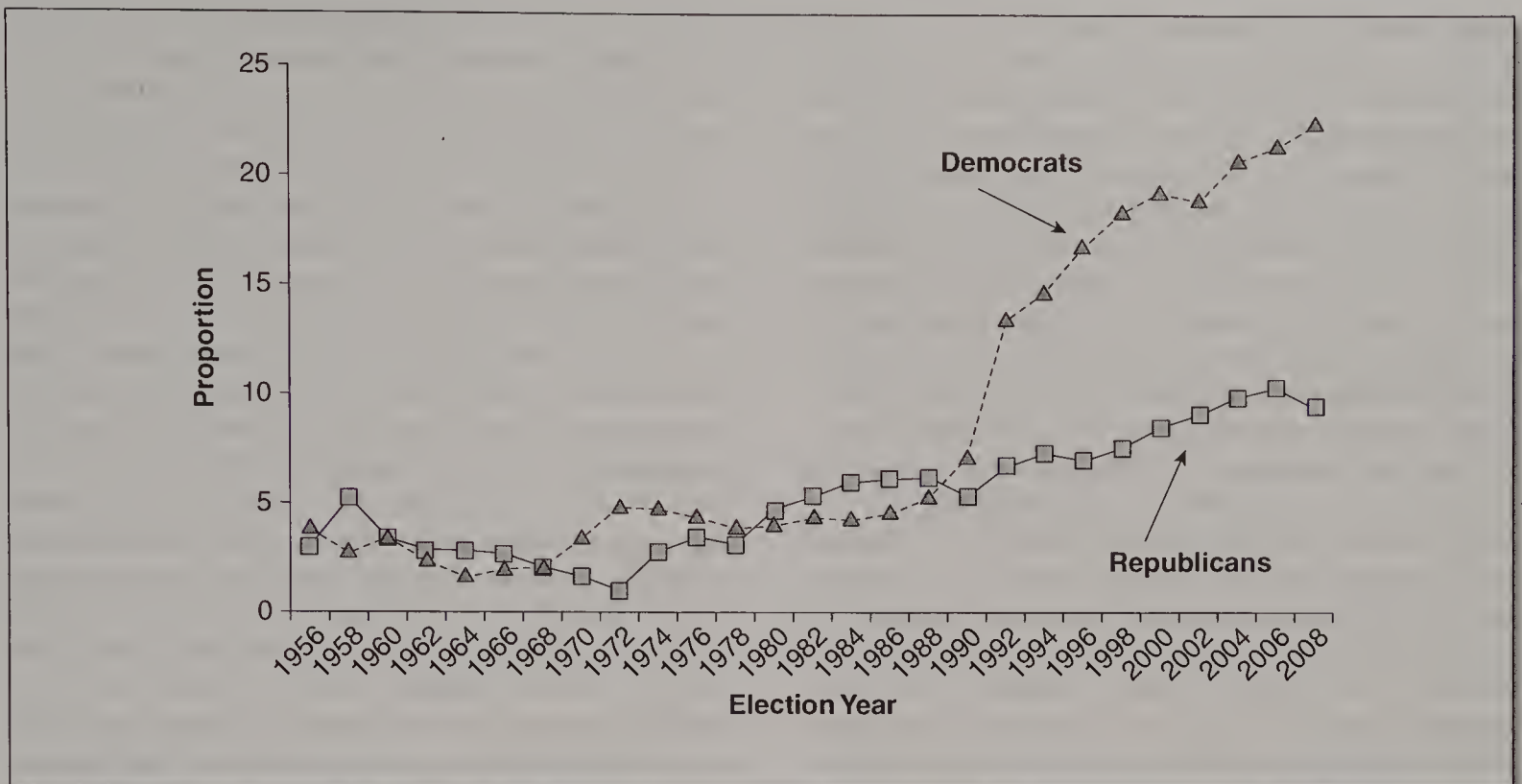
recruitment and providing support services (Maisel, 2005). If the numbers of women serving in Congress are disaggregated by party, some interesting trends emerge. In 1968, of the 10 women in the House of Representatives, 6 were Democrats and 4 were Republicans; Democratic and Republican women made up an equal proportion of their party's total membership in the House. In 2008, among the 74 women who won election to the House, 57 were Democrats and only 17 were Republicans; 22% of the Democratic delegation was female, whereas only 10 % of the Republican delegation was female (Palmer & Simon, 2008). These “party gaps” among the women in Congress were the largest in history.

These gaps, however, are a relatively recent development. As Figure 17.2 shows, from 1956 to 1990, women made up virtually equal proportions of their party's members in the House. In fact, in 12 of the 18 election cycles during this time period, the difference in the proportions of women that both parties sent to the House is less than 1%. The difference between the parties appears in 1992, with a substantial spike among Democrats, with the proportion of women in that party's membership nearly doubling from 7.1% to 13.7%. Since then, the proportion of Democratic women has continued to climb. Since 1992, Republican women have made much more modest gains, and in 2008, their proportion of the party's delegation declined. Consequently, the increase in the number of women in Congress for the past 2 decades has largely been a Democratic phenomenon.

Prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, political party leaders worried that if women had the vote, they would form their own parties or act independently, creating a “petticoat hierarchy which may at will upset all orderly slates and commit undreamed of executions at the polls” (Chafe, 1972, p. 25). When passage of the amendment looked like a foregone conclusion, both Republican and Democratic parties responded by making changes in their party organizations, attempting to give women leadership roles in the mobilization of new female voters (Anderson, 1996).

In 1916 the Democratic National Committee (DNC) established a Women's Bureau, but almost as soon as it started, the party suspended the bureau during World War I. In the wake of the overwhelming defeat of the Democrats in 1920, the DNC was nearly dismantled. During the 1920s the Democratic Party's very survival depended on the women who volunteered through the new Women's Division, created in 1922 by Emily Newell Blair, who had been active in the suffrage movement and was one of the founders of the League of Women Voters. From 1923 to 1924, the Women's Division held 24 conferences, or “Schools of Democracy,” that taught organizational skills, public speaking, and Democratic policy positions to thousands of women across the country (Freeman, 2000, pp. 86–87). In 1924, when the DNC shut down, the Women's Division merged with the Women's National Democratic





**Figure 17.2** Women as a Proportion of Their Party's Members in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1956–2008

SOURCE: Updated from Palmer and Simon (2008, p. 166, Table 6.3).

Club (WNDC), created in 1922 by Florence Jaffray Harriman, a suffragist and social reformer from New York, who would eventually be appointed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to be ambassador to Norway. For several years, the WNDC provided office and storage space for the national party committee, in addition to organizing and training women to be active in Democratic Party politics (Freeman, 2000, pp. 87–88).

Because of its electoral success during this era, the Republican Party was “better financed, more thorough, and more effective” than the Democrats at attracting women as potential voters and as active party members. In 1918 the Republican National Committee's Executive Committee was expanded to 19, in order to add 8 women (Freeman, 2000, pp. 96–97), and a Women's Division was created as a permanent part of the Republican National Committee, chaired by Christine Bradley South, who came from a prominent family in Kentucky politics (Freeman, 2000, pp. 82–83). That same year, Ruth Hannah McCormick, who had been active in the suffrage movement in Illinois, became chair of the new Republican Women's National Executive Committee (RWNEC), with the purpose of developing a strategy for fully integrating women into the party (Freeman, 2000, p. 82). Over the next 2 years, the RWNEC would place women in local party leadership positions in 30,000 precincts in 1,700

counties in 38 states (Freeman, 2000, p. 96). In 1928, capitalizing on the local Republican women's organizations she had created, McCormick successfully ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in Illinois (Office of History and Preservation, 2006, p. 86). In 1930, she gave up her House seat and ran for U.S. Senate, but an investigation of her primary campaign expenditures led to her defeat; she had spent approximately \$252,000 (or \$3.2 million in today's dollars), 10 times what her opponent had spent, which did not go over very well with voters during the developing Depression (Office of History and Preservation, 2006, p. 86).

One of the ways women quickly became involved in party politics was as delegates to the national conventions. From 1932 to 1968, the proportion of women delegates to the Democratic Party's national convention fluctuated around 12%. At the Republican national convention, women gradually increased from 6% of the delegates in 1928 to 18% of the delegates in 1968. However, women activists in each party had pushed the goal of having equal numbers of men and women as delegates beginning in the early 1920s (Freeman, 2000). For the Democrats, this would not happen until reforms were advocated by the McGovern-Fraser Commission in the wake of the disastrous 1968 convention in Chicago. The commission's report recommended that women, racial minorities, and

youth should be represented in state delegations “in reasonable relationship to their presence in the population of the state” (qtd. in Burrell, 2006, p. 147). In 1972, 40% of the delegates at the national convention were women. In 1980 the Democratic Party changed its rules to mandate gender equity in state delegations, and women have been approximately 50% of all delegates to the national convention since then. Although the Republican Party did not adopt a similar mandate, it did yield to pressure for increasing the number of female delegates. In 1972 the proportion of female delegates increased to 30%, and in 2004, women were 40% of the delegates (Burrell, 2006).

Although campaigns have become increasingly candidate centered over the past 30 years, parties still play a critical role in recruiting and providing assistance to candidates (Sanbonmatsu, 2006). In 1974, for example, the Democrats created a “Campaign Conference” for women, with the goal of electing more female Democratic candidates. Twelve hundred women attended (Burrell, 2006). In 1982, Senator Richard Lugar, as chair of the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee (RSCC), said, “The full political participation of women is a moral imperative for our society and intelligent political goal for the Republican Party,” and vowed to provide the maximum campaign contribution that the RSCC could give to any Republican woman running for Senate in the general election (Burrell, 2006, p. 151). In 1989, the Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series was created, providing political leadership development programs for Republican women in Indiana. There are now affiliated programs named after prominent Republican women in several other states, such as the Whitman Series in New Jersey, named for Christine Todd Whitman, former governor and head of the Environmental Protection Agency; and the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute, named after a former city council member and the first woman to serve as the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives (see <http://www.lugarseries.com/links/php> for a complete list). The Democrats began a similar training program, *Emerge America*, in 2002, which runs in nine states (see <http://www.emergeamerica.org/affiliates>). For the most part, however, national party commitments to recruiting and running women for public office have been mostly rhetoric (Burrell, 2006).

As it turns out, at the state level, “candidate gender is one piece of information that party leaders may use to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of a potential candidate” (Sanbonmatsu, 2006, p. 183). In states with strong party systems, in other words, states where parties had substantial control over the recruitment of candidates, women were less likely to run for state legislature and more likely to drop out of campaigns (Sanbonmatsu, 2006). State party leaders are still overwhelmingly male, and there is increasing evidence that “political elites continue to value men’s political leadership more than women’s” (Niven, 2006, p. 473). But even this does not necessarily explain the gap that has developed in the proportions of Democratic and Republican women in elective office. In fact, “the two

parties exhibit . . . fairly similar levels of recruitment and gate keeping activities” (Sanbonmatsu, 2006, p. 197). In other words, state Democratic parties, for the most part, have not been putting any more effort into recruiting female candidates than have the Republicans.

For state party leaders, “the main criterion driving the recruitment process is finding the candidate who can win. Even among party leaders sympathetic to increasing women’s representation, winning remains the primary goal” (Sanbonmatsu, 2006, p. 196). However, party leaders are not gender neutral in their assessments of male and female candidates and their ability to win. In fact, they “do not necessarily think that women are electable in all state legislative districts” (Sanbonmatsu, 2006, p. 184). In some instances, women may have an advantage, because they are perceived by voters as being more honest or better on an issue relevant to a particular constituency. In other instances, women may be at a disadvantage. The bottom line is that party leaders take into account what they believe to be the “hearts and minds” of voters in assessing a candidate’s chances of winning. This clearly suggests that political parties serve as gatekeepers. Although the number of Democratic women in Congress has continued to increase, particularly relative to Republican women, neither the Democratic Party nor Republican Party at the national or state level pays any systematic attention to recruiting women. In fact, there is evidence that in some instances, Democratic and Republican Party officials make it more difficult for women to run (Burrell, 2006; Freeman, 2000; Niven, 2006; Sanbonmatsu, 2006).

In light of this, another option for candidates who feel excluded by traditional party politics is to run under a third-party label. Traditionally, academic research on U.S. congressional elections and political parties all but ignores third parties or “fringe candidates.” Because so few third-party candidates have actually won electoral office, very little research exists on third parties (Gillespie, 1993). However, for the first half of the 20th century, more women ran for Congress as third-party candidates than under the two major party labels combined (Palmer & Simon, 2010). From 1900 to 1950, approximately 200 women ran as Democrats and Republicans, but more than 300 ran as third-party candidates. Beginning in the 1950s, the number of female third-party candidates began to decline relative to the two major parties, but female third-party candidates still made up almost half of all the women who ran for Congress well into the 1980s (Palmer & Simon, 2010). Without doubt, very few third-party candidates, male or female, have ever won a congressional election. But during the early part of the 20th century, female third-party candidates, such as the Populist Mary Elizabeth Lease from Kansas, ran sophisticated campaigns. Many of these women were prominent political leaders in their home states. These women did not see themselves as “sacrificial lambs” or hopeless fringe candidates, which is typically how third-party campaigns are viewed today. This suggests that third-party candidacies are an alternative path



to political leadership experience and have shaped how women have engaged in politics for the past 100 years.

## Summary and Future Directions

All of this suggests that the future of women candidates and their integration into Congress is likely to continue to be a long, arduous struggle. Members of Congress are unlikely to pass legislation or reforms that would jeopardize their ability to win reelection. In the 1990s, several state legislatures tried to impose term limits on their members of Congress, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that these restrictions were unconstitutional in *U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton* (514 U.S. 779, 1995). Because American parties are so decentralized and national parties have relatively little control over who runs in a particular congressional race, it is difficult to implement effective nationwide recruitment programs. For the most part, this will have to be done at the state level. Although all of this suggests that there is little hope of removing these barriers, there is some evidence that change can happen quickly given our existing electoral rules. Under certain conditions, the number of women in Congress can increase dramatically in a single election cycle, as it did in 1992. This suggests that the path to leadership is not always predictable, but it is clearly possible, particularly when women themselves are motivated to run.

Women interested in pursuing political careers and leadership positions in Congress face a variety of barriers.

The power of incumbency has created an electoral system with little turnover and few opportunities for success. Few things, outside of death and scandal, entice sitting members of Congress to leave. Moreover, incumbency advantages began developing just as women first began seeking office in the early part of the 20th century. By the time women began running in serious numbers in the 1970s, this roadblock was firmly in place. And incumbency is not gender neutral. Although female incumbents may win at slightly higher rates than their male counterparts, they face a much more competitive electoral environment; female incumbents have to work harder to keep their seats.

As Susan Carroll (2005) of the Center for American Women and Politics points out, “There is no invisible hand at work to insure [*sic*] that more women will seek and be elected to office with each subsequent election” (p. 25). For example, after the tremendous gains in 1992, there was no net gain in the number of women in the House in 1994. Since 1992 most of the gains in the number of women in Congress have been Democratic gains; 67% of the new women have been Democrats (Palmer & Simon, 2008). Interestingly, these gains among the Democrats have not been the result of any commitment by the party to recruit women. In fact, neither party at the state or national level has made any systematic programmatic efforts to increase the number of women. But if only one party is a real channel for female candidates, then the road to political leadership becomes all the narrower.

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## THE MENTOR GAP

### *A Barrier to Women in Legislative Leadership*

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On Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the country, every political leader has a story illustrating the significance and value of a mentor. For African American women in Washington, D.C., that powerful resource often comes dressed in red and wearing the sorority pin of Delta Sigma Theta (Coller, 2009). Being a Delta opens doors to political and social opportunities, helps new arrivals to D.C. in connecting to influential people, and fosters emotional support when challenges arise. The Deltas claim a virtual “who’s who” of accomplished black women political leaders including former Representatives Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), Barbara Jordan (D-TX), Carrie Meek (D-FL), and Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH); former Senator Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL); Clinton Labor Secretary Alexis Herman; and a host of black congressional female staffers.

The network of Deltas embodies the essence and benefits of mentoring. In the words of Representative Marcia Fudge (D-OH), past national president of the sorority and Tubbs Jones’s chief of staff and ultimately successor to Congress,

It’s an organization of leaders, and we expect to continue to bring leaders along. We think that’s our responsibility and our obligation. . . . We really focus on political awareness and involvement. We talk about why it’s important to have our own members in positions of authority. And we start out by saying, “anybody can run for school board or city council. Be the head of your PTA, be involved in some policymaking arena that will allow us to get our agenda out.” So we really do try to start people at the most basic level, and then hopefully continue to move them forward. (Coller, 2009, p. 2)

The legacy of the Deltas underscores the career, social, and personal benefits that protégés gain from mentoring relationships.

Although much has been made of these positive effects on the careers and opportunities available to young leaders and executives, mentoring may be even more critical for women and minorities specifically to overcome obstacles to leadership. Protégés report a greater sense of inclusion, increased job satisfaction, and more rapid career advancement (Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988; Ragins, 1997; Roche, 1979). Management scholar Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) asserts that whereas sponsors are important for the success of men in organizations, “they seem absolutely essential for women” (p. 183). A survey of 461 women business executives conducted by Catalyst (1996) bore out Kanter’s assertion; these women attributed their success in exceeding performance expectations principally to two factors: (1) making their male coworkers comfortable and (2) having a mentor.

In the world of politics, however, women may not have equivalent access to powerful mentors. A 2004 survey of women state legislators sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures’ Women’s Legislative Network revealed that women lawmakers see the lack of women in legislative leadership as an impediment to their careers (Rosenthal, 2004). Specifically, the survey asked, “How would you assess the impact of having few female mentors in leadership on different aspects of your legislative career?”

Significant numbers of the 174 respondents reported that the absence of a woman leader as a mentor has had “some negative impact” or “a significant negative impact” on various dimensions of legislative life, including inclusion in leadership decisions (53.5%), progress up the leadership ladder (48.1%), and productivity in passing legislation (40.3%).<sup>1</sup> Beyond the personal effects of mentorship relationships, these women state legislators, by

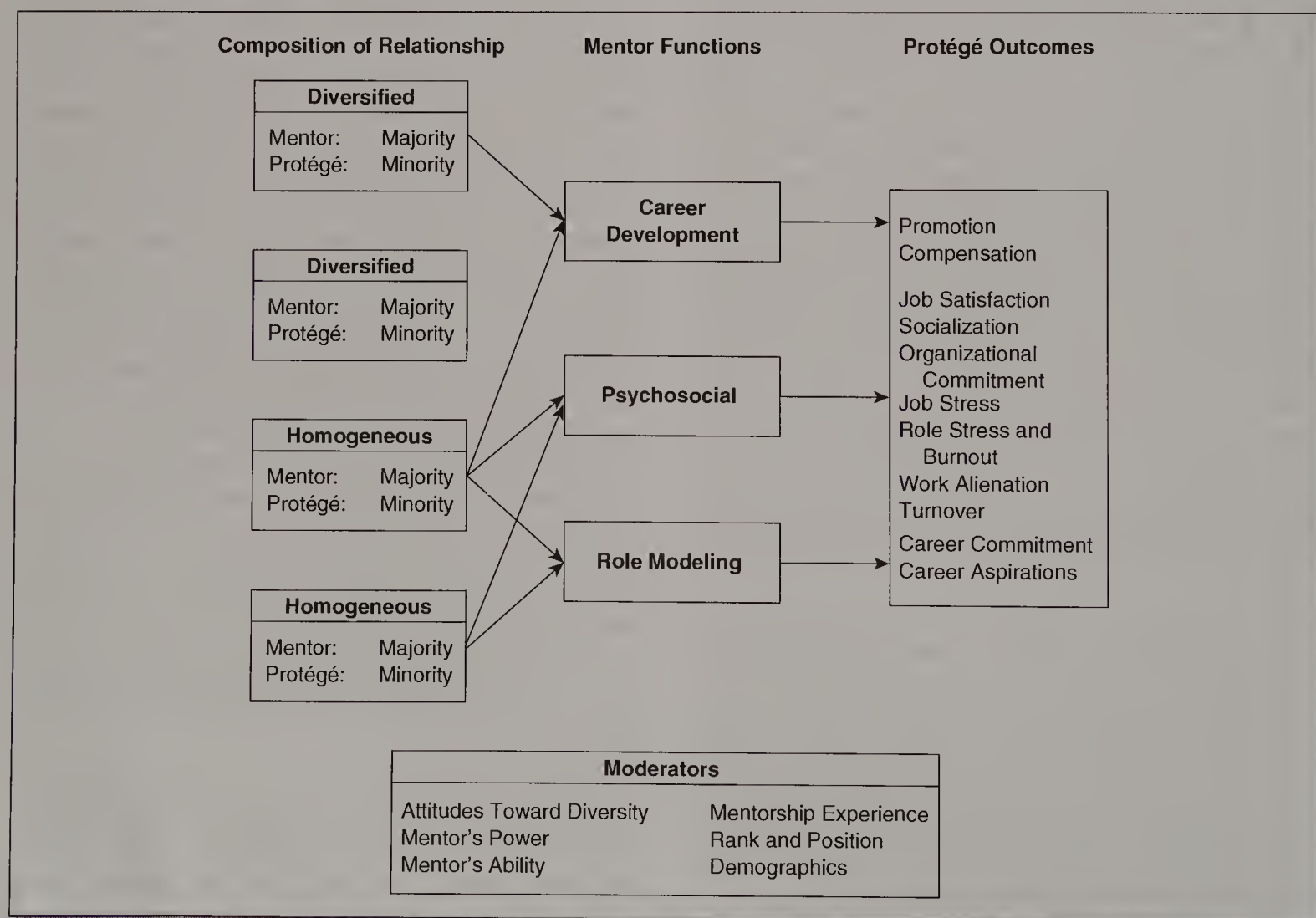
overwhelming majorities, said “too few women legislators” (83.9%) and “too few women in leadership” (77.6%) contribute to a systemic phenomenon of “women [being] less likely than men to be included in leadership consultations on important decisions.”

As these survey results illustrate, mentoring is both an individual phenomenon and an institutional reality. In gendered institutions, gender is “present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life” (Acker, 1992, p. 567). Sally Kenney (1996) advocates that scholars focus on the different ways that men and women experience institutional life.

With respect to mentoring specifically, Belle Rose Ragins (1997) offers a typology of mentor relationships that suggests the individual benefits as well as systemic aspects of mentoring. In essence, her model suggests that not all mentorships are created equal. Ragins argues that diversified mentoring relationships must be understood from an organizational power perspective, taking into account the differential resources of majority and minority groups within an organization. She defines diversified mentoring as relationships where the mentor and protégé are members of majority and minority groups who possess unequal power and different resources (p. 482).

Figure 18.1 illustrates the differences between diversified and homogeneous mentoring relationships. Ragins (1997) argues that when mentor-mentee pairs are between persons from the same majority power group, the full range of mentor functions and protégé outcomes are realized (p. 505). By contrast, in diversified mentorship relationships, where the mentor is from the majority power group and the mentee from a minority status group, and in minority-minority pairs, only some of the mentor benefits and protégé outcomes materialize. Where the mentor is from a minority power group, the diversified mentorship relationship yields none of the protégé outcomes. While the type of mentorship relationship is critical, Ragins argues that other factors may moderate or influence the mentoring relationship, such as the mentor's power position and resources, attitudes toward diversity, and other demographic factors.

In this chapter I reanalyze a unique survey of state legislative committee chairs. In my analysis, I use Ragins's model to develop insight into mentoring and gender on political leadership. Most prior research on mentoring has been carried out in the fields of education, general management (both public and private), and selected professions such as nursing. Thus state legislatures offer a unique (and unexplored) setting in which to ask about mentoring



**Figure 18.1** Composition of Relationship, Mentor Functions, and Protégé Outcomes

SOURCE: Adapted from Ragins, Belle Rose. 1997. "Diversified Mentoring Relationships in Organizations: A Power Perspective," *The Academy of Management Review*, 22 (2): 482–521. Used with permission.



because many political careers begin at that level. Committee chairs are a particularly appropriate group because they represent an important middle-level leadership cadre whose appointment often depends upon successful relationships with leaders and more senior members. Committee chairs also provide a level of male and female representation to allow for some exploration of mentorship and gender in politics.

In this chapter, I describe gendered and unequal patterns of mentoring in state legislatures. Those patterns of mentoring mean that women experience fewer opportunities for the most optimal homogeneous mentorships. Ragins's model predicts that in homogeneous mentorships mentoring will be positively associated with career development, psychosocial benefits, and the role-modeling function. I offer evidence that diversified mentoring relationships in state legislatures yield different protégé outcomes than homogeneous mentorship. Female protégés have similar career development opportunities, but they enjoy fewer psychological and social benefits compared to male protégés. Finally, I explore whether mentoring is associated with gendered styles of leadership. Again Ragins's model would suggest that role modeling is most likely to occur in homogeneous mentorships, where both the mentor and protégé are from similar status groups.

## What Is Known About Mentoring?

No single definition of mentorship has been used in research, and thus conclusions drawn from the literature are somewhat problematic (Noe, 1988, p. 66). Kathy Kram (1983), who has made a central contribution, defines a mentor as "anyone . . . who has taken a personal interest in you and your development" (p. 612). In one of the earliest studies of business executives, G. R. Roche (1979) defined a mentor as "a person who took a personal interest in your career and who guided or sponsored you" (p. 15). Others have defined mentors specifically in organizational terms, for example, "higher ranking, influential, senior organization members with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to a protégé's professional career" (Ragins, 1989, p. 2). "Sponsors," as Kanter (1977) called them, extend power to others by advocating for younger colleagues, cutting through bureaucratic procedures, sharing insider information, and signaling their endorsement or backing of protégés (pp. 181–183).

Gender is evident even in defining the mentorship relationship. Early research posited that such relationships were necessarily hierarchical, paternal, and involving those with power and those without it. As Joan Acker (1990) notes, "Hierarchies are gendered because they also are constructed on these underlying assumptions: Those who are committed to paid employment are 'naturally' more suited to responsibility and authority; those who must divide their commitments are in the lower ranks" (p. 150).

In this research, I use a definition of mentoring that has guided multiple studies of state public administrators (Kelly & Guy, 1991). The survey defines a mentor without some of the problematic language of hierarchy or paternalism: "Often key people play an important role in shaping one's career. Such individuals are mentors who may have 'taught you the ropes,' provided advice and support, or endorsed the progress of your career (Guy, 1992, p. 235).

Mentorship must be understood within the realities of professions or institutions where it occurs. Not all organizational settings are alike in fostering or valuing career-building relationships (Kram, 1985). For example, in open systems, communication across hierarchical levels is valued and encouraged, and it develops with frequency and intimacy (p. 197). In more closed systems, mentoring is limited in frequency, depth, and type (p. 197). The availability of higher-level opportunities, the extent of competition for those positions, and the climate of trust among individuals in the organization all contribute to whether the organizational culture fosters or impedes mentoring relationships (pp. 15–17). The nature of the work itself also shapes mentoring: Highly individualized tasks invite less interaction whereas collegial, interdependent work fosters mentoring (pp. 17–18). Finally, the quality of the mentoring relationship and satisfaction with that relationship is more important in shaping work attitudes than the presence or absence of a mentor (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000).

Several themes emerge from the empirical literature on mentoring. First, not every successful public and private executive has had a mentor, but those who do on average earn more money at a younger age, find mentors early in their careers, follow a discernible career plan, and become mentors to others (Henderson, 1985; Roche, 1979). Second, mentoring relationships move through distinct phases of initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition (Kram, 1983). Third, mentors make several contributions to those whom they sponsor. Mentors advance the careers of protégés through nomination, coaching, and creating opportunities for exposure and challenge (Kram, 1985). Protégés also reap psychosocial benefits—a sense of inclusion, feedback, and informal support and counseling—that increase overall job satisfaction. Protégés also benefit from role modeling as a way to learn new job skills and reinforce career commitment and goals (Ragins, 1997).

The research on gender and mentoring reveals men and women are equally likely to be in mentoring relationships, but the composition of those relationships differs with men more likely to have same-gender mentors (O'Neill, 2002). Research on benefits and outcomes of mentoring remains somewhat mixed with no clear pattern based on gender (O'Neill, 2002). Studies of public administrators, however, suggest that women derive different benefits than their male colleagues (Hale, 1992; Kelly & Guy, 1991; Reich, 1986; Vertz, 1985).

Women encounter particular barriers to successful mentoring relationships (Ragins, 2002). First, and perhaps most obvious, women have fewer opportunities to find mentors



because they are perceived as less powerful organizational actors (Kanter, 1977). Because both mentor and protégé benefit from the relationship, each is motivated to seek out relationships with powerful (or potentially powerful) individuals to secure those benefits. Second, women also confront complications involved with opposite-sex mentorships (Bowen, 1985; Noe, 1988). Opposite-sex mentorships raise taboos about potential sexual involvement, prompt peer resentment and jealousy, and stir up sex-role stereotypes and biases (Noe, 1988, pp. 67–71; see also Bowen, 1985; O'Neill & Blake-Beard, 2002). The participants in opposite-sex mentorships invite heightened public scrutiny (Kanter, 1977), and some male mentors are reluctant to sponsor female protégés (Ragins, 1989, pp. 8–10). In sum, women not only are less likely to develop homogeneous mentoring relationships but also are more likely to be involved in peer mentorships or the more complicated opposite-sex mentorships (Hale, 1992; Kanter, 1977).

It is not the case that only men can or should mentor other men or only women can or should have female protégés. But differences in mentorships illustrate Kenney's (1996) point that "the experience of participants within an institution will vary according to gender. Not only will women most likely have fewer opportunities than men, but their perceptions of the obstacles and the existence of circumscribed opportunities will vary by gender" (p. 456).

### What Mentoring Opportunities Are Available to Political Women?

Data for this chapter are reanalyzed from a 1994 mailed survey of male and female committee chairs from 50 state legislatures and more recent interview and survey data from women state legislators (Rosenthal, 1998). The original questionnaire covers demographic characteristics, legislative career history, identification of important mentors, and traits of behaviors associated with committee chairs' leadership styles. The respondents totaled 289 committee chairs. With respect to race, state and party, the committee chair respondents match the characteristics of state legislators generally.<sup>2</sup>

Women legislators and committee chairs differ from their male colleagues in ways that complicate traditional mentoring relationships. Some of the demographic differences are well known to scholars who have studied women state legislators (e.g., Carroll, 2001; Thomas, 1994). For example, women committee chairs on average are older than their male colleagues when first elected (39.8 years compared with 43.7 years old,  $p < .001$ ). Women chairs are less likely to have young children at home—only 20.0% still had children under 18 living at home compared with 42.5% of the male committee chairs ( $p < .001$ ). Only 13.4% of women committee chairs compared with 35.1% of their male colleagues have obtained professional degrees (e.g., M.D., M.B.A., and J.D.). More of the women reported no employment outside of the home (22.0% compared with

4.1%,  $p < .001$ ). These differences in life experiences lead to unequal status between mentors and protégés typical of diversified mentoring relationships.

In terms of their legislative careers, women chairs also differ in important ways from male committee leaders. Women committee chairs are significantly more likely to consider themselves full-time legislators: 64.9% of the women compared with 37.3% of the men ( $p < .001$ ). Women chairs on average have fewer total years of legislative service than their male colleagues (10.2 years compared with 13.1 years,  $p < .001$ ). Women on average are appointed chair after fewer years of legislative experience (5.1 years compared with 6.1 years for men,  $p < .10$ ). In sum, the typical male committee chair is younger, is more likely to have a professional degree and work outside of the home, and has more legislative experience than the typical woman serving in that capacity. These are significant social status differences in addition to gender.

When committee chairs are asked to identify significant mentors, the gendered nature of mentoring in state legislatures becomes even more apparent. Chairs in the survey could identify mentors from five categories, including speaker or party leader, senior party member, legislative peer, colleague in another profession, and friend or political advisor. Table 18.1 reports the gender differences in mentoring opportunities.

The most common mentoring experience for legislative women is a diversified mentorship with a male colleague. By contrast, the most common mentoring relationship for a male committee chair is with a male colleague. In terms of the traditional mentorship with a legislative leader or senior member, 68.9% of women committee chairs report diversified mentorships compared to only 11.7% of the men; by contrast, 74.7% of the men reported homogeneous mentorships compared to only 24.4% of the women. Only two of the survey respondents reported having only women mentors in either of the categories of leader or senior party member.

Among the respondents, 171 reported having only men as a senior/leader mentor, 49 reported both male and female senior/leader mentors; and 67 (35 women and 32 men) reported having no senior/leader mentor. Totaling all categories of mentors, each chair on average reported having only one female mentor (mean = 1.03) and the modal response among committee chairs was no female mentors ( $N = 120$ ). By contrast, committee chairs on average reported having 2.27 male mentors and the modal response was 2. Looking just at legislative mentors, the contrast is even starker: 60.6% of the whole sample identified male mentors in the category of party leader or speaker compared to only 6.9% who identified female mentors in the category of party leader or speaker. Only in the category of legislator peer were women identified as mentors in any number: 40.8% of the chairs identified a female legislator peer compared to 61.2% who identified a male legislator peer as a mentor.

Women do not appear to have fewer or less well-positioned mentors overall than their male colleagues. Almost identical



	<i>Committee Women</i>	<i>Chair's Sex Men</i>
% in Diversified Mentorship with:		
Speaker/party leader***	57.8%	5.2%
Senior legislator***	33.3%	7.1%
Legislator peer***	58.5%	26.0%
Professional colleague***	24.4%	6.5%
Friend/political advisor***	45.2%	15.6%
% in Homogeneous Mentorship with:		
Speaker/party leader	8.9%	63.0%
Senior legislator	17.0%	32.5%
Legislator peer	57.8%	63.6%
Professional colleague	20.0%	19.5%
Friend/political advisor	47.4%	53.9%
% with Leader/Senior Legislator Mentor by:		
Diversified	68.9%	11.7%
Homogeneous	24.4%	74.7%

**Table 18.1** Mentors Identified by Committee Chairs

NOTES: \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .010$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Significance levels are based on the  $\chi^2$  statistic.

percentages of men (77.3%) and women (76.3%) committee chairs identified a senior legislator or leader as a mentor. However, diversified mentorship arrangements are the norm for female chairs and homogeneous mentorship arrangements are far less frequent; for male chairs, diversified arrangements are rare and homogeneous mentorships are the norm. Women chairs were 6 times more likely to be in diversified mentorship relationships than men, and male chairs were 3 times more likely to be in homogeneous mentorships.

### Does Mentoring Affect the Advancement of Committee Careers?

According to Ragins's model, career advancement occurs whether a protégé is in a diversified or a homogeneous relationship, so long as the mentor comes from a majority status group. To test this assertion, I analyzed the length of time before a committee chair gets his or her first committee post. Table 18.2 reports the results. As might be expected, committee chairs who have a senior legislator or

legislative leader as a sponsor move more quickly up the leadership ladder of committees than do chairs who report no senior legislative mentor. The difference is not statistically significant but is in the expected direction. The data are of substantive significance, as a half- to full-year difference in tenure at the helm of a committee can make a difference in the passage of legislation and in the electoral benefits of committee leadership bestowed on a legislator.

Both men and women seem to reap career advancement benefits of having a leader/senior member mentor. Among women, the presence of a mentor on average shortens the time before appointment as a chair by 6 months, and among men, having a mentor on average shortens the amount of time before one's first committee chair assignment by almost a year. In analysis of variance, the main effect of sex appears to be stronger and statistically significant ( $p = .097$ ) than the main effect of having a senior mentor. Using OLS (ordinary least squares) multiple regression to test whether it makes a difference having a male or female leader/senior mentor, I found no significant relationship was evident. In other words, the type of mentoring makes no distinct effect on the years a member

Years of Legislative Service Prior to Winning Committee Leadership Post			
	Mean Number of Years		
	<i>All</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Chairs with leader/ senior mentor	5.5	5.0	5.9
Chairs with no leader/senior mentor	6.2	5.5	6.8
Means for total sample ( <i>N</i> = 291)	5.7	5.1	6.1

**Table 18.2** Career Development and Mentoring in State Legislatures

serves before career progression to a committee leadership post. Similarly, no association was found between mentoring and the likelihood of chairing what some scholars call “prestige” committees or more powerful committees.

Why do women move more quickly through the committee system if not due to mentoring and the influence of a powerful sponsor? Some women legislators speculate that they get to chair committees more quickly because they work harder than other legislators (Rosenthal, 1998, pp. 46–47). Others note that initial committee assignments may reflect traditional gender roles with fewer women vying for assignments to human service committees and more men competing for positions on traditionally masculine-oriented committees. Another explanation for the shorter time before women gain their first committee leadership position reflects an unspoken form of affirmative action based on legislative leaders’ effort to make women visible among the ranks of committee chairs even though they are represented in fewer numbers. These data do not provide the answer to why women chairs get their first boost up the committee leadership ladder, but they do suggest that the type of mentorship is not consequential.

### How Does Mentoring Affect Psychosocial Rewards for Committee Chairs?

Does the type of mentorship have a positive association with a committee chair’s sense of satisfaction, success, and feelings of inclusion in the process? Again Ragins’s model suggests that the answer to these questions is affirmative. Diversified mentor-protégé relationships do not yield the same job satisfaction and social benefits as do homogeneous mentorships. To see whether this relationship was true for state legislators, the survey of committee chairs posited a series of questions about their sense of job satisfaction, success, and closeness to the leadership. Two questions asked chairs to “indicate *how successful* and *how satisfied* you feel about your experience as a committee chair.”

The 7-point response scales range from “not at all successful” to “extremely successful” and from “extremely dissatisfied” to “extremely satisfied.” The last indicator of closeness to the leadership is made up of three questions. Using a 5-point scale ranging from “almost never” to “almost always,” a chair reported how often (1) “I am included in leadership discussions where important decisions are made”; (2) “The leadership provides me with strategic information on a timely basis”; and (3) “My advice is sought by leadership on major issues outside my committee.” The three items produced a scale with high reliability that the items measure the same construct (Alpha reliability = .871).

Table 18.3 summarizes the results of these three dimensions of psychosocial benefits and mentoring from a series of multiple regression tests. The multiple regression analyses included a variety of control variables, including age, total years of legislative service, professionalization of the legislature, percentage of women in the legislature, and a chair’s perceptions of the reasons for his or her appointment.

The type of mentorship appears to have little association with a committee chair’s sense of success. Both chairs with and without leader/senior mentors report high levels of personal success (mean = 6.06 and 6.00, respectively, on a 7-point scale). These results may be reflective of the nature of legislative service from which a member can derive a sense of success from his or her efforts, independent of a mentorship relationship and other factors.

In terms of job satisfaction, committee chairs without mentors report lower overall job satisfaction than those with mentors (mean = 5.39 compared to 5.72,  $p = .089$ ). Contrary to expectations, the regression analyses did not reveal any significant difference in satisfaction based on a diversified or a homogeneous mentorship for men and women. In other words, any type of mentoring relationship with a more senior legislator or leader seems to increase the job satisfaction of both men and women serving as committee chairs.

A committee chair’s closeness to the leadership shows the expected associations predicted by Ragins’s model of mentoring. Table 18.3 reveals a differential impact for men



	<i>Types of Mentorships</i>			
	<i>Female Chairs</i>		<i>Male Chairs</i>	
	<i>Diversified</i>	<i>Homogenous</i>	<i>Diversified</i>	<i>Homogenous</i>
The association with:				
Feelings of personal success	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect
Feelings of job satisfaction	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Closeness to the leadership	No effect	Negative	Negative	Negative

**Table 18.3** Summary of Psychological and Social Benefits Associated With Mentoring of State Legislative Committee Chairs

NOTE: The associations compare committee chairs in a diversified or homogeneous mentorship with a leader or senior legislator with those committee chairs who did not report having a senior legislator or leader serving as a mentor.

and women chairs. Male chairs feel much more included by the leadership when they have a male mentor (a homogeneous relationship). Women on average feel less close to the leadership, and having a male mentor (diversified relationship) has no significant impact. Female mentoring shows a negative relationship with closeness to leadership for both male and female chairs, with the stronger and statistically significant effect being evident among male committee chairs. Among both men and women, it should be noted that those who perceive their appointment is based on merit also felt significantly more positively about their closeness to leadership.

Both the survey of committee chairs and the 2004 survey of women state legislators suggest a continuing sense of marginalization among women serving in state legislatures. Again, even the presence of a significant male mentor does not seem to alter that underlying isolation.

### Does Mentoring Affect Leadership Styles of Committee Chairs?

Finally, I turn to the role-modeling aspects of mentoring, particularly as it may affect one's leadership styles. A significant body of research suggests that men and women may differ in their leadership styles. On average, women tend to be more inclusive, to foster the participation of others, and to eschew a "command" style of leadership preferred by some men (e.g., Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Helgeson, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Rosenthal, 1998). As role models, mentors may instill in their protégés the leadership behaviors that they prefer and practice. Therefore we might

anticipate that female mentoring will be positively associated with a participatory style of committee management, and male mentoring will be positively associated with a style of dominance.

Table 18.4 summarizes the pattern of results of several multiple regression analyses with participative and dominating leadership styles of committee chairs as the dependent variable. Unlike in the previous tables, these analyses were based on a broader definition of mentoring, which included any male or female mentors, not just leaders or senior legislators. This definition was used because leadership style might be considered to be a cumulative phenomenon. This table also compares women committee chairs as a group with men who reported one or more female mentors and men who reported no female mentors.

Table 18.4 suggests that mentors and their protégés share gendered leadership behaviors. In sum, female mentoring has a positive and significant association with a chair's participatory style, while male mentoring has a positive and significant association with a dominating style of leadership. What cannot be discerned from the survey data is the causal relationship of other leadership influences. While mentors may model certain behaviors, committee chairs may also learn different approaches to leadership as a result of their occupations, from the norms of their legislature, and as a consequence of age and socialization experiences. For example, chairs serving in more professionalized legislatures are significantly less likely to adopt a participatory style, and professionalization shows a positive but not significant relationship with the dominating style of leadership. Legislators with more years of legislative experience and those serving with a higher percentage of women in the legislature also subscribe to a more participatory style.

<i>Committee Chairs</i>	<i>Leadership Style</i>	
	<i>Participatory</i>	<i>Dominating</i>
Women ( <i>N</i> = 134)	Positive	No association
Men identifying one or more female mentors ( <i>N</i> = 62)	Positive	Negative
Men identifying no female mentors ( <i>N</i> = 91)	No association	Positive

**Table 18.4** Summary of Associations Between Mentoring and Leadership Styles

## Summary and Future Directions

For political women, the experience of mentoring is gendered. Unlike women in business and public administration, women committee chairs do not lack for mentors overall. They are just as likely as the men to report having a senior legislator or leader advising and guiding them. Mentoring clearly helps political leaders advance in their careers and enhances job satisfaction. Women chairs get their first committee assignment more quickly on average than do the men, but mentoring increases the prospects of chairing a committee more quickly for both women and men.

Nonetheless, women's experiences with mentoring are quite different from their male colleagues. Men committee chairs rarely lack for other males to serve as mentors, and almost two thirds of the men report having no experience with a woman as a significant mentor. Women, by contrast, are more likely to identify other women as mentors but are 6 times more likely than the men to be in diversified mentorships. Although this survey did not shed light on the substantive content of legislative mentor-protégé relationships, one might safely assume that some topics of appropriate behavior and legislative norms never enter into the mentor-protégé conversation for women chairs.

Perhaps the most striking finding is that mentoring does not seem to overcome women's sense of being on the periphery of leadership. Male chairs feel much more included by the leadership when they have a male mentor, but women chairs on average feel less included by the leadership regardless of whether or not they have a mentor. Having a woman mentor appears to have little psychological or social benefit for protégés in the state legislative context. The general pattern of results fits Ragins's model of the differences between diversified and homogeneous mentorship arrangements. Women reap fewer psychosocial rewards as a result of diversified mentorships, while men enjoy homogeneous mentorships, which result in closer relationships to leadership.

Has the situation improved for women serving in state legislatures since this survey was done? Unfortunately, the number of women legislative leaders has changed only modestly over the past decade. In 1997, women state legislators held 16.4% of committee leadership positions and 7.1% of

top leadership positions (Rosenthal, 1998). In 2007, women state legislators held 22.6% of the committee chairs and 17.6% of top leadership positions (Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], 2007, 2009; Rosenthal, 1998, 2005). Certainly, this represents progress in women's representation, but as the 2004 National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) survey of women legislators shows, the sense of marginalization and exclusion from leadership circles remains a persistent concern of women legislators (Rosenthal, 2004). The lack of women in leadership and the norm of male leadership still pervade the legislative environment and may result in an unspoken preference for masculinity in leadership norms (Duerst-Lahti, 2002).

It is clear that, as a gendered organizational process, mentoring affects women in leadership by (a) embodying unequal access to leadership opportunities and power, (b) transmitting gendered behavior and norms, and (c) perpetuating preferences for masculine power. At the same time, mentoring may be a force for change in state legislatures. The results on leadership styles suggest that women officeholders may be having an important impact on legislative leadership behavior. Women mentors may serve as role models for a more participatory style of leadership for their protégés. The association between male mentoring and more dominating styles of leadership is also apparent, but taken together it would appear that a diversity of leadership styles exists in state legislatures.

Understanding mentoring in the context of organizational power can provide insight into the consequences for women's leadership. Many organizational processes, although presumed to be gender neutral, in fact can only be properly understood by analyzing their "gendered substructure that is reproduced daily in practical work activities" (Acker, 1990, p. 147). For women in state legislatures—and I would argue in political leadership more broadly—the relative paucity of female mentors in powerful positions represents a challenge. Like the Deltas and the many women state legislators who responded to the NCSL survey, mentoring alone can only go so far in opening opportunities for women to political leadership. Until the basic composition of legislatures and legislative leadership approaches greater equality, the sense of isolation from leadership circles, which many women in politics experience, likely will continue.



## Notes

1. Although the response rate for the survey was not high enough to claim a statistically valid sample, the basic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, years of service, race, party affiliation, percentage of women legislators, and type of legislature

reflect prior research and current data collected by the Center for the American Woman and Politics and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

2. The sample is reflective of the population of state legislative committee chairs on a wide variety of organizational (Kurtz, 1992), partisan, demographic, educational, and marital variables (Woo, 1994).

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## PART III

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### WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS





## OVERVIEW: HISTORY OF WOMEN LEADERS IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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From Susan B. Anthony to Sojourner Truth to Dolores Huerta to Eleanor Smeal, female leaders have been at the core of many social movements pressing for greater rights for women and other disadvantaged groups. Their involvement in movements for African American civil rights (Robnett, in this handbook), Hispanic rights (Patterson, in this handbook), lesbian rights (O'Connor & Yanus, Chapter 26, in this handbook), domestic violence (Fulcher & Goodman, in this handbook), and sex trafficking (Loar & Ardito, in this handbook) has been essential in ensuring more equal rights for all people. These women have distinguished themselves by their intelligence, political savvy, connections, familial support, or money, among other factors. Though the movements vary widely, these characteristics remain consistent identifying features of the women leaders discussed by many of the authors in Part III of this handbook. Thus we begin our exploration of women as leaders in social movements by considering why leaders—of any gender—are so necessary to the creation and long-term survival of social movements or social movement organizations as discussed by many scholars (Back, 1989; Olson 1965; Mancillas, this handbook; Salisbury, 1969; Walker, 1983). We then turn to a consideration of the role that women have played at the helm of a variety of social movements in the United States, from abolition to progressivism to women's rights. We conclude with a note about the state of women's leadership in a variety of social and political movements in the 21st century as well as the role

of social context (Back, 1989) and discuss failures that must be remedied for a true women's rights movement to continue to exist.

### The Importance of Leaders in Social Movements

Scholars argue that there are several basic conditions necessary for the emergence and success of a social movement. Among these are a mobilizing event, organizational support, a communications network, and, of course, leadership (Freeman, 1975; McAdam, 1988; McGlen & O'Connor, 1983; Oberschall, 1973; Olson, 1965; Wilson, 1973).

Each of these factors is important for a number of reasons. Mobilizing events give prospective activists an idea or occurrence around which to rally, and they provide opportunities to broaden the net of people as well as groups interested in the goals and issues that are important to activists. They may include the formation of particular organizations, the triggering of governmental activities, or the creation of new political strategies. Organizational support, which often comes in the form of funding from individual patrons (Walker, 1983), the government, or other institutional backing such as foundations (Back, 1989), can also be an important way for a group to build and broaden its activist base (McGlen, O'Connor, van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2010).

A communication network is important for similar reasons: It provides an opportunity for the dissemination of information across a broad space and set of people. This may come in any number of forms, including a group's magazine, a book (such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* [1852], Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* [1963], or Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* [1962], which served as a call to action for environmentalists), e-mail communications, or growth in free media attention. For example, *Ms. Magazine*, published for the first time in 1972, became the voice of the second wave of the women's movement and continues to do so today, although with much less force as many women, especially younger women, turn to forms of new media.

Most germane to the focus of this specific analysis, leaders are intrinsic to the success of movements because they provide the movement with a host of attributes critical to attract other adherents. Among these attributes are a sense of vision, a set of goals and the ability to place them within societal values (Back, 1989). Outside the immediate movement, leaders also provide a reference point for the media and government officials and someone who can speak with authority on behalf of the movement. As discussed by Ronnee Schreiber (in this handbook), Phyllis Schlafly became "the" voice of the anti-ERA movement and was always available as the attractive, well-spoken representative of the conservative women's movement. The best leaders are closely associated with the movement and add to the movement's clout in the eyes of the public (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). This allows social movements to raise their visibility, to increase the salience of political issues of interest, and to attract new members. In short, leaders provide the guiding light and the energy that help to keep a movement cohesive, adaptive to changing times, and welcoming to new adherents.

### **"Working 9 to 5": It Takes More Than That to Forge a Movement**

At least one woman has been among the leaders of nearly every social movement begun since the creation of the United States. Even during the Revolutionary War, women played a significant role in codifying revolutionary sentiment through their social circles and organizations such as the Daughters of Liberty. Here, we provide a review of some of these movements and discuss their leaders. Although many of these movements centered on the attainment of greater rights for women, women also have been at the fore of other movements whose goals often have been for the betterment of society in general, as discussed in this handbook. We choose to move in chronological order, beginning first with the abolition movement and then discussing suffrage, Progressivism, civil rights, and then the second wave of the women's movement and the backlash to it.

### **The Abolition Movement**

One of the first large-scale instances of women as leaders in an American social movement occurred in the pre-Civil War abolition movement. This movement coincided with a growth in the belief that men and women should work to improve the living conditions of those less fortunate than themselves. This was particularly true of people with the Quaker faith, who espoused that the views of men and women were to be given equal worth. Moreover, when Quaker women were "moved" to speak at regular meetings of the faithful, they became the first white women in America to speak in public without public disapprobation. Nevertheless, the role of women in the abolition movement initially was minor, but the more liberal wing of the movement, headed by William Lloyd Garrison, encouraged greater involvement and equality for women (DuBois, 1978).

Sparked by this encouragement, citizens began to form local antislavery societies in the mid-1800s. In these organizations Quaker women as well as others were encouraged to speak publicly for the abolition of slavery. At a time when public words from women were uncommon, individuals such as South Carolinian sisters Sarah and Angelina Grimke and Maria W. Stewart began to take the opportunity to speak out against the social ills of slavery at every opportunity. Stewart's addresses, later along with those of Sojourner Truth, were particularly notable not only because they were women but also because they were African American women.

Women's activism in the abolition movement continued throughout the Civil War. Activists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony formed groups, such as the National Loyal League, which were dedicated to assuring rights for both women and African Americans. Similarly, the newly created American Equal Rights Association (AERA) was formed in 1866 shortly after the end of the war with the stated goal of assuring voting rights to both women and newly freed slaves.

### **The Suffrage Movement**

The roots of the suffrage movement lie within the abolition movement. Two active women abolitionists, Stanton and Lucretia Mott, were among the six women who traveled to London to attend a meeting of the World Anti-Slavery Society in 1840. Upon making the trans-Atlantic journey, the women arrived only to find that they could not be seated as delegates or speak at the convention because they were women. Stanton and Mott were struck by this blatant discrimination and began to ponder whether their own status was that much different from that of the slaves they sought to free.

In an attempt to redress these differences, Stanton and Mott called a convention in 1848 in Stanton's hometown of Seneca Falls, New York, to petition for greater social and political rights for women. The people in attendance at this



conference adopted a Declaration of Sentiments based on the U.S. Declaration of Independence naming the pervasive discrimination against women in all walks of life. They also passed a series of resolutions demanding the end to economic, legal, and social discrimination against women. The only provision that failed to garner unanimous support was the call for woman suffrage, which, ironically, was soon to become the focal point and eventually the unifying cry of the first women's movement.

The meeting at Seneca Falls led women across the country to hold similar meetings calling for equality. At one such meeting in Akron, Ohio, in 1851, a former slave and mother of five, Sojourner Truth, delivered her famous "Ain't I a Woman" speech, which called on women in the movement to recognize the intersectionality of race and gender in the women's rights and abolition movements, a problem discussed by Wendy Smooth (in this handbook).

Despite these efforts and those of the National Women's Loyal League and AERA, women did not win the right to vote in the wake of the Civil War. When the AERA endorsed first the Fourteenth Amendment, which interjected the word *male* into the Constitution for the first time, and then the Fifteenth Amendment, which specifically enfranchised former male slaves, Stanton and Anthony were furious and vowed to devote even more resources to ensuring the full political equality of women in American life. In 1869 they responded by founding the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), which was dedicated toward working for greater social and economic equality for women and for state constitutional amendments to enfranchise women. They later were to see the need for a federal constitutional amendment.

Other activists within the women's movement, however, did not think that a multi-issue focus was the best way to win the right to vote. They saw issues such as divorce reform and the discussion of prostitution as far too controversial and as taking away from a focus on the vote. Thus, later in 1869, a group of women led by Lucy Stone, formed the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), which pursued the lone goal of winning the right to vote on a state-by-state basis. This goal led AWSA to work far more closely with state affiliates than NWSA, which had state chapters as far away as California (Clift, 2003).

In the earliest days of the suffrage movement, both the AWSA and the NWSA struggled to attract members and support. In an attempt to appear more conventional and to work within the political system, NWSA attempted to win the right to vote for women using test case litigation, most notably in the case of *Minor v. Happersett* (1875). However, in *Minor v. Happersett*, the U.S. Supreme Court continued to rule that suffrage was not a universal right of citizenship and refused to extend the privilege to women via the privileges and immunities clause in the new Fourteenth Amendment.

After this defeat, NWSA continued to view litigation as important but returned to working for a broad range of economic, social, and political changes, including seeking

the right to vote for women. AWSA continued to lobby to change state constitutions and for the vote alone. But, from 1875 to 1890, neither group had much success. NWSA's failures stemmed from a lack of a sufficiently large cadre of members to work on pursuing the groups' goals, and AWSA found its efforts at the state level limited by a lack of public support. Thus, in 1890, Alice Stone Blackwell (the daughter of Lucy Stone) brokered a deal for the two groups to merge and become the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

This merger prompted more women and auxiliary groups to become involved in the suffrage movement. First, the members of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, led by Frances Willard, became convinced that suffrage would help them to achieve their Prohibitionist goals. Later, members of the National Council of Women and the General Federation of Women's Clubs joined the movement; these women were largely middle to upper class and well educated. Several Negro women's groups also were formed to seek the vote but were never welcomed into NAWSA due to its increasingly racial and anti-immigrant positions. Its leaders read the political climate and recognized that stressing the fact that well-educated white women, unlike "ignorant" immigrants and slaves, made no political sense (DuBois, 1978).

Still, state-by-state progress in achieving the right to vote was slow, at best. By 1912, fewer than 10 states had granted women the right to vote, and opposition was increasing at every turn. The election of Alice Paul to the board of NAWSA in that year, however, marked a turning point for the suffrage movement. Paul filled a leadership vacuum that had existed among the groups' leaders for quite some time. In a few months time, she organized a 5,000-woman march through the streets of Washington, D.C., to push for the right to vote the day before President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration.

Paul soon expanded her efforts to other ventures, founding the nonprofit Congressional Union for Women Suffrage to fund the activities of her NAWSA Congressional Committee (later, and more notably, known as the National Woman's Party after leaders of NAWSA rejected her right to fund-raise for her committee) to work exclusively for a constitutional suffrage amendment. NAWSA had gained a new leader in Carrie Chapman Catt, who crafted a "Winning Plan" to win a suffrage amendment by 1922. The women not only worked to organize support in the states but also lobbied to defeat the amendment's biggest congressional opponents in the 1918 elections. By 1920 the groups had achieved their goal, winning ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, illustrating the importance of individuals willing to take on leadership responsibilities as a priority over friends and family.

## The Progressive Movement

Suffrage was not the only issue on the agenda of politically active women in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



As the Progressive Era dawned, women became involved, important leaders in a number of different causes, as described by Camille Stivers (in this handbook). One such cause was the Settlement House movement, whose most notable leader was Jane Addams, a Chicagoan who cofounded Hull House in 1891 with Ellen Gates Star as a place to provide social and economic opportunities to the working class. The center held events, classes, and entertainment, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Its residents, most notably Florence Kelley (who went on to head the National Consumers' League and serve as a NAWSA officer, as did Addams), also conducted research about the long hours of work at low pay earned by immigrant women who lived within the neighborhood.

Hull House was later a template for almost 500 similar centers across the country, which also had their own newsletter to help spread new ideas about social and political action. Stivers (in this handbook) notes, however, that most of these women leaders, as evidenced by how many lived at Hull House over time, were more interested in the organization and less interested in leading. Nevertheless, leaders emerged in a way not experienced by women in the consciousness-raising movements discussed earlier.

Women were also active in a number of early labor movements. In 1903, for example, the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) was formed. Its members were both working class and upper-middle class; many of them had previously been involved in the Settlement House movement. Although its initial goal was to organize women workers, it achieved most of its success in securing protective maximum-hour and minimum-wage laws for women workers.

A better-known group, the National Consumers' League (NCL), joined the WTUL in working for protective legislation. Unlike many of the more liberal women's groups during this period, the NCL was an organization whose members valued the traditional women's roles of wife and mother (Vose, 1957). The vocal, local lobbying efforts of these women led to several state laws limiting the number of hours a day women could work at any one job.

Employers, however, did not like these laws, and quickly moved to challenge them in court. It was through this litigation and the work of their chief counsel, Louis Brandeis (who later served as a Supreme Court justice), that the NCL achieved much of its notoriety. In the landmark case of *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), for example, the Court upheld an Oregon law that limited women workers to 8 hours a day. They based their decision on a body of sociological evidence that showed that women workers were not physically capable of meeting the demands of their job for more than 8 hours a day.

### Civil Rights and the Protest Movement

After the successes of the suffrage and Progressive movements, the attention of most Americans was largely redirected to the Great Depression and World War II.

Women were no different; the efforts of women to both maintain the home and work in factories during World War II, for example, are well documented. It was, thus, not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that the next wave of women leaders in traditional social movements began to emerge (Friedan, 1963).

One area where women emerged as important leaders was in the civil rights movement. The most visible example of this leadership is Rosa Parks's resistance to segregated bussing in the South. But the efforts of women to become more fully involved in groups such as the Southern Christian Leadership Council, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were met with significant resistance. Stokely Carmichael, the leader of SNCC and a well-known Black Panther, is often quoted as having said, "The only position for women in SNCC is prone" (King, 1987).

Opinions such as this led radical women such as Jo Freeman and Shulamith Firestone to found their own groups to work for both racial equality and civil rights. Seeing their work underappreciated much in the same way as had Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton at the World Anti-Slavery Association Meeting, these new groups, often referred to as consciousness-raising groups, encouraged not only refugees from the civil rights and student antiwar groups but also a new group of largely young women to become advocates for women's rights.

### The Modern Women's Movement

Although many older women agreed with the fundamental ideas expressed by Freeman and Firestone, they found other ideas, as well as their approach, to be too radical. Many of these women had been members of traditional groups such as the League of Women Voters, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the National Council of Negro Women. They had long been activists for greater equality but were more interested in pursuing legislative or judicial solutions to inequality than they were in staging protests that rejected widespread social norms and mores.

However, until a series of events in the early 1960s, nothing (since the suffrage movement) had galvanized all of these women to leave their home groups and come together for a larger national purpose. The publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and the issuance of a report by President John F. Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women, both in 1963, began to get the attention of some women. But it was the ratification of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) subsequent failure to enforce that provision of the act that truly gave women a common cause to rally behind.

What is now known as the National Organization for Women (NOW) was founded in 1966, when a group of attendees at the Third National Conference of



Commissions on the Status of Women were displeased that they could not pass a resolution demanding that the EEOC treat sex discrimination complaints seriously. These women were all excellent leaders, but they lacked the skills and knowledge necessary to truly organize a social movement. Thus, for the first years of its existence, NOW grew relatively slowly and made only small progress toward achieving its goals.

In 1970 the salience of women's rights issues began to increase tremendously, creating a window of opportunity for these activists. NOW's rally to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Nineteenth (woman suffrage) Amendment, for example, increased its membership tremendously. Suddenly, women across the nation were aware of the economic, educational, and social discrimination they faced and, more importantly, had an interest in doing something about it.

At the same time, women's rights litigators, most notably Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the American Civil Liberties Union's Women's Rights Project (ACLU WRP), had begun to make progress for women's rights in the courtroom. In 1971, for example, the Court ruled in *Reed v. Reed* that unreasonable discrimination on the basis of gender was unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. Although Ginsburg and her fellow litigators were unsuccessful in elevating gender to the highest level of constitutional review, strict scrutiny, in 1976 in *Craig v. Boren*, the Court assigned gender to its own intermediate level of constitutional review. In so doing, the Court stated that any statutory sex discrimination must, "serve important governmental objectives and must be substantially related to the achievement of those objectives." This progress was swift and remarkable; 1971 was the first year in which the U.S. Supreme Court found that the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause could be read to protect women, and by 1976 it was articulating a new rule by which to invalidate state laws discriminating against women.

Taken together, the legislative lobbying of NOW and the judicial work of the ACLU WRP fueled a campaign for the proposed equal rights amendment (ERA) that lasted through most of the 1970s and early 1980s. Although the amendment had first been endorsed by NOW in 1967, the wheels of progress really began to turn in 1972, after Congress passed the amendment and sent it to the states for ratification.

Women's groups such as NOW, the League of Women Voters, and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women were at the forefront of this ratification campaign. Their members wrote letters, held media events, and supported pro-ERA candidates in their efforts to win reelection. These early actions were highly successful. Between March 1972 and January 1973, 28 states ratified the proposed ERA. Meanwhile there were signs that the movement was not sustainable. Despite the large number of groups interested in the campaign, there was no clear leader or strategy. Indeed,

only five states ratified the proposed amendment after 1973 and none after 1977.

By 1977, NOW, under the leadership of then-president Eleanor Smeal, realized that someone had to take the lead in the ERA campaign if the proposed amendment was to be enacted. Smeal and her colleagues devised a strategy to achieve ratification. This strategy was two pronged: (1) NOW would economically boycott states that had not ratified the amendment, and (2) it would lobby for an extension to the ratification deadline, which was set as March 1979. Under Smeal's leadership, NOW was successful on both fronts, at least in the short term.

The long-term success of the amendment, however, was not nearly as guaranteed. Despite NOW's efforts to support ratification, the amendment was defeated once and for all on June 30, 1982. In retrospect, most analysts agree that the sometimes questionable protest tactics of the group, as well as the fact that they employed a national, rather than a state, strategy, spelled the death knell for the ERA. Another important factor that cannot be overlooked is the development of a well-organized countermovement led by women who were vehemently opposed to the ratification of the ERA (Boles, 1979; Gray & Conover, 1983; Mansbridge, 1986; McGlen & O'Connor, 1983).

## The Countermovement

Although NOW broadened its base of support, it certainly did not represent the beliefs of all American women. Conservative, Republican, and religious women, in particular, often disagreed with the political beliefs of NOW and its members, as well as the way that they went about achieving their goals. Phyllis Schlafly began to mobilize these women to form a group called STOP ERA. The group was later reorganized, and continues to exist today, as the Eagle Forum.

Schlafly, a charismatic former political speechwriter and expert grassroots organizer, took her cue from Catt's Winning Plan, organizing a grassroots network of activists across the states. She recognized that many men and women were upset with changing social values and the balance of power between men and women (Burns, 2005). She, and others who supported her vision, were able to convince significant proportions of women, particularly in the South, that ratification of the ERA would lead to a range of social ills, including coed sex education, government-funded abortion, homosexual marriage, and even unisex toilets (Lec, 1980).

## Future Directions

Since the rise of the interest group state in the 1970s there are more opportunities than ever for women to become involved as leaders of American social movements (Schlozman & Tierney, 1986). Indeed, a number of notable women have served as the head of a variety of visible



interest groups and social movements in the late 20th and early 21st centuries and can serve as bridges to the next generation. Many women, for example, have been active in the environmental and global peace movements: Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976 for their efforts to bring about peace between Ireland and Northern Ireland. In the United States, these movements have not attained the visibility of many earlier movements discussed in this chapter.

However, there still remain leadership vacuums to be filled. One area where there is truly a need for a dedicated, enthusiastic, and visionary woman to lead a social movement into the new decade is the modern women's movement. It is incumbent on leaders of current groups to take action to "bridge" to the next generation and not simply hold conferences to discuss young women's leadership. Most young women are unable to name a woman highly identified with the contemporary women's rights movement, and as a result, there is no one to coordinate a message, design a lobbying strategy, or bring greater visibility to the movement.

This vacuum should not be mistaken to suggest that a number of groups advocating for women's rights and equality do not exist. In fact, a number of traditional women's groups continue to litigate and lobby for greater pay equity, an end to sex discrimination, and policies that allow women to balance work and family. These include NOW and the Feminist Majority Foundation, which was founded and led by former NOW President Smeal with the patronage of Peg Yorkin, who gave millions to Smeal to begin the foundation.

Groups advocating for women have also grown in the electoral sector. At times over the past 40 years, the National Women's Political Caucus, the Women's Campaign Fund, and perhaps most visibly, EMILY's List, as noted by Jamie Pimlott (in this handbook), have played important roles in encouraging women to run for office and in funding their campaigns. But even the founders and leaders of these groups—a legendary list that includes Gloria Steinem, Shirley Chisholm, and Ellen Malcolm—do not play much of a role in coordinating a broader movement. Chisholm is dead, and Steinem now advocates for the end of the legalization of guns as key to the success of the women's

movement. Ellen Malcolm, an IBM heiress, was able to bring about the election of record numbers of Democratic women, a Democratic majority in the House and the Senate, and see the election of the first woman Speaker of the House. Yet, all of her efforts and strategic spending could not bring about the election of a female president (Clift, this handbook), and she resigned her role as president of EMILY's List in late 2009.

Other women's groups, too, are facing not only a crisis in leadership but a crisis in funds and membership. The National Women's Political Caucus no longer supports a working office in Washington, D.C.; the Women's Campaign Fund has now become the Women's Campaign Forum and has struggled under a series of new leaders; and even NOW faced a major leadership fight in 2009, opting to elect Terri O'Neill (in her 50s) over a young African American woman (Latifa Lyles, in her 30s, and supported by Smeal and outgoing president Kim Gandy). And, within gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender (GLBT) organizations, women have all but been shut out of leadership positions in recent years, as noted by Karen O'Connor and Alixandra Yanus (Chapter 26, in this handbook).

The most obvious coalition designed to pursue the goal of uniting women for a common goal is the National Council of Women's Organizations, but this organization struggles for financial resources, has trouble bringing its member groups together to work for common goals, and is little known outside the nation's capital. Its greatest moment of visibility occurred in 2003 when its former chair, the independently wealthy Martha Burk, staged a protest event during the Masters' golf tournament against Augusta National Golf Course's exclusion of women from its membership roster, an event that garnered only a handful of women.

The challenge, then, is to find a woman leader—or leaders—who can bring these groups together under a common umbrella to increase their visibility and relevance among the younger generation as well as to strive for greater inclusion reflecting the importance of Hispanics, in particular, in a renewed movement (as discussed by Patterson, in this handbook). This is not only necessary for the groups to continue to have an impact on public policy but also for the groups' very survival as political entities.

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

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In the early 20th-century United States, women in the Progressive movement offered a different image of leadership from the ones found in today's guidebooks. Most of today's leadership thinking focuses on key individuals who shape organizations and drive them forward. Conventional wisdom says that leaders are found at or near the top in the management hierarchy of the modern organization or the political hierarchy of government. It is said that society needs leaders to set goals and keep the rest of us on the path to reaching them. Leaders are seen as visionaries, decision makers, strategic managers, and motivators—but always as individuals who influence others (“followers”). Books and articles offer guidelines on how to be an effective leader, despite the lack of scientific evidence linking particular leadership styles to results. In addition, contemporary leadership—despite some strides—still often reflects masculine images: the warrior, the hard-charging executive, the tough no-nonsense businessman. Discussions of gender and leadership ask whether women can and should adapt themselves to these masculine images or whether they possess (and can be successful at) their own leadership style.

In the Progressive Era, women reformers developed and practiced a form of leadership quite different from today's mainstream model. Three differences stand out. First, women's leadership ideas were expressed in deliberately gendered terms, based on belief in fundamental differences between women and men. Second, women's model of leadership developed not in large corporations, where today's models took shape, but in small nonprofit and voluntary groups. Many were composed largely or entirely of women. Among these Progressive women, leadership was practiced

by the organization itself rather than by a leader at the top, not to advance corporate or institutional goals per se but to improve society through social action—in other words, women's organizations were formed to lead society toward change. Third, Progressive women thought of leadership much more as a collaborative effort among committed members of the association than as a matter of individual take-charge or charismatic behavior. All three differences contributed to the emergence of a distinctive model of leadership based on reform activities of Progressive women. This chapter gives details of the model, reasons why it failed to last, and lessons it offers for today.

### **Progressivism, Women's Organizations, and the Influence of Gender**

The Progressive Era (1890–1920) was a time of rapid and fundamental change: the growth of big cities, waves of immigration, rise of large corporations, and construction of railroads and telegraphs that wove together once isolated areas. Urban workers and farmers alike struggled against economic cycles of boom and bust. A new middle class of professionals, technicians, and managers became salaried specialists in engineering, teaching, social work, and planning; norms of professionalism and management centered on efficient use of organizational and societal resources. The times spawned two impulses: one in the direction of order, rationalizing and regulating organizational and societal processes, the other toward justice, ameliorating the worst effects of capitalism. Both impulses drew on and were influenced by science, which became a



watchword of the era. Leading reformers considered themselves social scientists, and whether for order or for justice they believed that scientific knowledge could be applied to improve the human condition.

## Women's Organizations

In the late 19th century, women used the growth of social—especially urban—problems to move beyond their roles as wives and mothers into what they called “municipal housekeeping.” Long seen as the guardians of society’s virtue, women now argued that if they were to fulfill that duty adequately, they could no longer limit themselves to the household. As a contemporary chronicler of women’s reform activities noted,

In years gone by, women would have stood by the tub or faucet and thanked bountiful providence for water of any amount or description; but now, as they stand there, their minds reach out through the long chain of circumstances that connect the faucet and tub with the gentlemen in aldermanic conclave. (Beard, 1915, p. 206)

Barred from men’s reform groups, women formed their own clubs. Made up mainly of white middle-class homemakers, the clubs began with neighborhood clean-ups and beautification but soon expanded into efforts aimed at clean water, better schools, parks, garbage collection, eradication of flies, playgrounds, child labor regulations, and better factory conditions. In addition to voluntary action, clubs became advocates for local ordinances and the allocation of government funds to civic improvement.

Other women, unmarried and college educated, spearheaded the settlement house movement. Beginning in the late 1880s, groups of women, and some groups of men, established residences in poor urban neighborhoods. Inspired by the example of London’s Toynbee House, established on Christian Socialist principles, the American settlers were stirred by the social action potential of living and working with poor people. From the beginning, the Americans put less emphasis than the British on cultural uplift and more on teaching neighborhood residents practical skills and influencing urban policies. From the first, the Americans saw their primary mandate as understanding the conditions and causes of poverty. By becoming neighbors of the poor, they would gradually become their friends; by sharing or at least witnessing the experiences of the poor on a day-to-day basis, they would be able to transmit information about neighborhood problems to public officials. They saw their own social change responsibility as bridging the gap between poor neighborhoods and the wider world. They documented problems and provided information to policymakers and other influential people, while establishing services and institutions that their communities wanted and needed.

Although both women and men were involved in settlement work, 60% of the settlers were women; women

residents spent an average of 10 years in the work, in contrast to the men’s average of 3 years, and many women spent their entire adult lives as settlement residents. The most visible head residents were women, including (Chicago) Hull House’s Jane Addams (New York City) Henry Street’s Lillian Wald and (Chicago) University Settlement’s Mary McDowell. Others in the forefront of advocacy included Hull House’s Julia Lathrop, who in 1912 became the first woman to head a federal agency (the U. S. Children’s Bureau), and Florence Kelley, who headed the National Consumers League and fought on a national level for workers’ rights.

## The Influence of Gender

Both women’s club members and female settlement house residents thought of their work in distinctly gendered terms. They assumed that women had a special place in society as preservers of civic virtue, nurturers, and municipal housekeepers. They argued that this role gave them the moral authority to act directly on urban problems and to advocate government action. As Jane Addams (1910/1981) said, women saw their work not as philanthropy but as fulfilling “the duties of good citizenship” (p. 10). Clubwomen argued that they had “the power to make, of any place in which [they] may happen to live, a home for all who come there” (Bowlker, 1912, p. 863). Thus Progressive women built a justification based on gender for their expanded role in public affairs. Reform activities aimed at social change became an opening into public life women would have otherwise lacked, one they argued was consistent with their accepted role as wives and mothers.

Historical evidence suggests that there was a great deal of interaction and cooperation between men’s and women’s reform groups. Both believed that they were reforming urban society generally and municipal government in particular. Both envisioned the improvement of urban life. Many members of the two reform efforts knew one another, interacted regularly, belonged to some of the same organizations, and read the same newsletters and journals. Yet they took distinctive stances on what social change should consist.

In general, male Progressives concentrated on structural reform of city governments, such as introducing merit systems to get rid of the party loyalists they thought of as hacks and replace them with trained experts. They fought for home rule for cities, putting authority in the hands of mayors or city managers, and efficient administrative techniques. They saw their own role as providing disinterested and expert advice to elected officials and bureaucrats. Their vision of civic improvement was cities run like businesses, imitating the corporation’s bottom line mentality, its singleness of purpose, and its discipline and focus. They saw city government not as a political mechanism for dealing with conflicting interests but as an administrative mechanism for coping with urban



problems—hence their emphasis on scientific management and their faith in one best way (usually defined in terms of least cost) to tackle any issue. This emphasis on business as the model for government, and science as the principal management tool, gave their work a decidedly masculine quality, as there were few women in business or science and both were widely seen as masculine activities. The scientific manager was viewed as the “man in control of affairs” (Stivers, 2000, p. 26).

In contrast, Progressive women reformers spoke of the city as a home for its people. Particularly after witnessing the cruel economic crisis of 1893, many women came to the conclusion that most people were poor not because of their own laziness but because of broad social forces beyond their control. Women were much more likely than men to interpret reform as a matter of expanding government functions rather than shrinking them to lower taxes and save money. Government had a responsibility to care for its people, to be guided by “human well being under conditions of justice, freedom, and equality,” a goal toward which they did not believe businesslike administration could strive (Breckinridge, 1927, pp. 366–367). This care-work was simply an extension of domestic values into public life. Family became a metaphor for the wider society. Women, who were accustomed to handling the many details necessary to the smooth running of a home and aware of the importance of family comfort and cleanliness, were well prepared, they argued, to take on activities aimed at improving how governments ran. As “natural enemies of dirt” they would be experts in cleaning up government (Bagley, 1904, p. 41).

Thus Progressive women rejected the model of the city as a business. Although settlement women shared the interests of male reformers in science, they defined it in culturally feminine terms. They saw their physical location in the neighborhoods as making possible a different kind of science than the distanced, objective model of male reformers. They defined the science of the city as a detailed study of lived experience. Trustworthy, accurate knowledge came from minute familiarity with the terms of everyday life, drawing on the expertise of neighborhood residents and transmitting it to policymakers. Fully as empirical as the statistical techniques of reform men, the women's approach amassed facts about the lives of people gathered from the people themselves and used them to influence public decision making. But these facts were different from the statistics gathered by male reformers, because they were arrived at by connection with life rather than investigative objectivity. The men aimed to impose their views on those who were conducting city business inefficiently; the women wanted to let understanding emerge from direct contact with neighborhood situations. As the authors of a survey of conditions in Pittsburgh said, “We want to make the town real to itself”—not by means of a “formidable array of rigid facts” but rather through “piled up actuality” that would raise the “great, grimed” question: “What are

American standards anyway?” (Stivers, 2000, p. 78). Facts became the foundation and platform for social advocacy.

Thus, as a group, Progressive women understood the need for efficient administration but they placed it within the context of improving the lives of city residents. Administrative processes were important not for themselves but as means to make the city a more comfortable home for all its residents. Equally vital were new programs and services to respond to unmet needs and ameliorate big city living conditions—in other words, to make the city home-like.

## Leadership as Organizational Action

The words of women Progressives reflect a striking emphasis on their organizations as instruments in service to social change rather than ends in themselves. Armed with a rationale for expanding their role beyond the confines of the household into municipal housekeeping, they put together an analysis of the connection between the needs and potential of individual women and the problems of urban society. In doing so, they developed a group, or organizational, understanding of leadership rather than one that depended on the qualities and actions of uniquely qualified individuals. In this respect, their understanding of leadership is distinctive. It was the organizations themselves that the women regarded as leaders in the social change effort rather than particular individuals, even prominent ones like Jane Addams and Lillian Wald.

## From Individual to Organization

College-educated women flocked to settlement houses because society offered them little or no meaningful work that required the knowledge they had acquired. Having been taught the value of ideals such as democracy and brotherhood, they found no avenues open to women to put these ideals into practice. Many had learned the details of what Addams (1893/2002) called “the great social maladjustment” (p. 21), that is, the plight of the poor and the immigrant working class, but saw no way to change it and therefore felt useless. Many were also stirred by the desire to apply the teachings of Christianity to social wrongs, following the promptings of what was known as the Social Gospel. The settlement movement blossomed because it was fed by educated women's desire to do something concrete about social ills, to put their feelings of solidarity with other classes into action. As Henry Street's Lillian Wald said, reading about city problems “must bring a sense of fairness outraged. . . . Is there a wrong in our midst, what can I do? Do I owe reparation?” (Stivers, 2000, p. 61).

As already noted, women were attracted to civic work because they saw the connection between their domestic roles and the wider world. Once they became aware of the



problems of city living, they concluded that to be effective, to make their individual sense of duty count, they would have to join in organized efforts. As one reformer noted, throughout history women had seldom had the chance to lead the mass of unorganized individuals. Their place was behind men, where they were protected and in return were expected to support masculine efforts. But times had changed. Women were emerging into the front ranks outside the home. Not that this was a radical change, as some had suggested. If women had ever been as shallow and helpless as they had been described, they would never have been able to assume broad responsibilities so quickly and effectively. "Women are now doing openly and frankly what they formerly did stealthily and in secret." Most importantly, they realized the necessity of emerging from obscurity and acting "in organization." They would be most effective if they worked through "organized groups of citizens" such as women's clubs and settlement houses. "Women cannot go back to the old individualistic conceptions, even if they would; what was an experiment is now a duty" (Deardorff, 1914, pp. 71–73). This vision of leadership is the leadership of the organized group, not the unique individual.

The need for organized action was especially keenly felt because women did not yet possess the national franchise, and the local franchise was scattered; in some cities women could vote for local offices and issues, and in others they could not. They realized that they could influence policy only by joining together and making their voices heard, first on the local level but soon on the national level as well—hence the founding of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Federation of Settlements. Granted, Progressive women often relied on person-to-person connections between individuals to make sure their messages reached those they wished most to influence, and given their lack of the franchise sometimes the messenger to the powerful was a sympathetic man, in the hope that the voice of someone who actually had a vote would carry more impact. This has been called "a politics of indirection . . . with women educating the public, men proposing the law, women arguing the case, men claiming the credit" (Wiebe, 1995, p. 53). Still, the existence of organized groups behind the individual spokesman or woman gave the message weight it would not otherwise have had.

## Organizational Leadership

Women's organizations led the fight to solve urban problems and demonstrated their worth by experimenting with new programs and building institutions where governments refused to act. On the municipal level, many government officials came to rely on women's groups and organizations to test new approaches to social welfare and municipal services. Once these pilot projects had proved their effectiveness, the women involved would lobby city

governments to take them over, on the theory that the need was greater than any voluntary association could possibly handle over the long run. Progressive women thought of this approach as furnishing governments with object lessons from which they might learn, a way of thinking in sharp contrast to the self-image of many men's groups as investigators and systematizers of existing administrative inefficiency. City officials often credited women's groups with proving the effectiveness of innovative approaches to urban problems, which were then taken over by city governments. In 1914 the president of the New York City Board of Aldermen said, "There is hardly a function of the settlement twenty years ago that has not passed into the hands of progressive city governments today. The settlement will always show the way, for it and the social worker represent the advance line of our progress" (Stivers, 2000, p. 58). Showing the way was an organizational form of leadership.

Women's clubs claimed successes in improving the quality of city life by turning schools into community centers, getting slaughterhouses cleaned up, and organizing free medical clinics for the poor. One club reported, "We have been the direct and sole agents in individual drinking cups in the schools." Another club noted that it was the first to study the condition of city stables and garbage disposition and press the sanitation and health departments to do "their sworn duty." Still another boasted, "The city council did everything we asked" (Ely, 1902, p. 51).

African American women made notable institution-building efforts in their segregated neighborhoods. Racist practices and laws prevented them from exercising the kind of direct influence on policymakers that well-to-do white women were able to. Therefore they established institutions that governments could have sponsored but did not: homes for the aged, hospitals, nursing schools and colleges, orphanages, libraries, and gymnasiums. Barred from public life not only by their sex but also by Jim Crow laws that restricted African Americans from nearly all participation in public life, black women constructed a network of institutions that met the needs of their communities and fulfilled ideas of public service and the common good that society at large claimed to honor but in the case of African Americans failed to uphold (Higgenbotham, 1993). In Chicago, the Ida B. Wells Club, the first African American women's club in the city, founded nurseries, kindergartens, and homes for working girls (Flanagan, 2002).

## Settlement Neighbors Versus Friendly Visitors

As noted, settlement houses provided a meaningful life to individual women in search of a framework within which they could put to use both their educations and their ideals. The settlement philosophy took it for granted that an individual life of significance could only be had through affiliation and joint effort with other



like-minded people. Worth noting is their choice to live together in a poor neighborhood and, by sharing as much as possible the lives of the poor, come to understand their problems. This was a big change from the existing practice of "friendly visiting" by individual well-to-do women who went into poor communities bearing baskets of food and used clothing along with what they intended as good advice. These individuals could be driven in their carriages to poor neighborhoods, spend an hour with a poor family, and return home in time for dinner.

Adopted by urban charities, friendly visiting became the type of casework that formed the nucleus for professional social work. Charity organizations, however, were quite different from the organized social action of women settlers. The friendly visitor-caseworker acted individually to reform poor people and families, one by one. In contrast, settlement women worked together to improve the quality of life for all the members of the municipal community. The friendly visitor saw the cause of poverty as individual laziness and irresponsibility; the settlement resident saw the plight of particular families as part of large economic forces beyond the control of individuals but susceptible to social action. Settlement residents viewed poor people as fellow human beings from whom, by living next door, they could learn more about the causes and effects of poverty; social workers saw personal contact with poor people as justified by their own moral superiority. Eventually charity organizations recognized that such condescension had failed to improve community conditions, and social work turned to a quest for scientific expertise. The focus on individual pathology and individually proffered advice gave charity efforts something of a medical flavor. In contrast to the settlement houses, charity associations rarely trained their attention on social policies and the potential for government action (Stivers, 2002b). As a result, they contributed little to the model of leadership as a form of organized social action so visible in the work and thinking of the settlement houses and women's reform clubs.

### Leadership as Solidarity and Collaboration

The organizational form of leadership visible in Progressive women's groups had its foundation in a deep commitment to solidarity with working-class and poor people and to the value of collaborative effort. As such it contrasts with conventional understandings of leadership as being at the top of a hierarchy or out in front of an army of followers. Because of their understanding of leadership as organizational, they usually credited the collaborative work of organizations with successes rather than individual women associated with the effort. This was the case even where key individuals obviously played

important roles in whatever their organizations accomplished, as was the case with Addams and Hull House or Wald and Henry Street Settlement.

### The Philosophy of Democratic Process

It is clear from the historical record that Addams's genius was the spark that produced Hull House, and money she inherited from her father helped to give it a fiscal autonomy that other settlements never attained. Yet her belief in democracy and the developmental potential of the human being was joined to a vision she shared with other women, of society as "a process consisting of groups rather than a static contractual arrangement among individuals" (Sklar, 1995, p. 183). These beliefs shaped an approach to managing Hull House that put the community of women who were its members ahead of herself when it came to the image the settlement presented to the world. As head resident, Addams held weekly meetings of residents where work was divided up, new programs were explored, and cooperation with other reform groups was discussed. Some of the actions Addams proposed were rejected by the group. A fellow resident referred to her in writing as a "co-worker" (Knight, 1991, p. 131). Addams was possibly the most democratic head resident in the settlement movement; she was thoroughly committed to democracy not just as a political mechanism but as a way of living. There is evidence suggesting that some other houses were managed more conventionally. Still, the aura of community pervaded most of the settlement houses and a democratic philosophy lay at the root of their work.

### Class- and Race-Bridging Solidarity

One belief shared among Progressives who otherwise took diverse paths to social change was the desirability of solidarity between themselves and working-class and poor people. A number of historians have emphasized that the root of this belief was concern for the maintenance of social order in the face of enormous changes in U.S. society. Successive waves of immigrants from various European countries and their concentration in noisome urban neighborhoods raised fears among the better-off that living and working conditions in the slums were so terrible that they would eventually be the cause of social upheaval. Progressive writers warned of the dangers of neglecting urban problems. Many new services pioneered by reform groups of both sexes were justified, at least in part, by the importance of calming discontent among the poor. For example, the playground movement was offered as a means of reducing class antagonisms. As one reformer put it, "To sit idle is to rest on a volcano while underneath the fire burns" (Kirschner, 1986, p. 73).

Repeatedly, Progressives stressed the importance of unifying a society divided by class and ethnicity. For example, Robert Woods of South End House argued that reformers had to go beyond common ties as human



beings and take active steps to break through religious, cultural, and class differences (Kirschner, 1986, p. 78). A sense of large divisive forces in society is one of the factors that led settlement houses and reform clubs to focus on the neighborhood, where the smaller scale made unification and effective action seem possible.

### Women's Class-Bridging Potential

In the case of women's groups, the strong agreement across classes and ethnicities about women's proper role in society favored the perception of what has been called a class-bridging social action potential. Clubwomen and female settlement residents believed that whereas men's interests diverged and conflicted with one another, women of all classes converged on the basis of maternal values; this supported a strong feeling of solidarity on the part of reform women with their less fortunate sisters. The creation of neighborhood spirit became the centerpiece of their efforts to bring people of different nationalities together. To say this does not imply that reform women were free from racial, ethnic, and class prejudice. There is clear evidence that many were not. In important respects, they were "missionaries for the American way" (Crocker, 1992, p. 213) and supporters of the need for social order. Existing economic and political structures remained in place, though their worst effects on the poor were tempered by reformers' programs and advocacy. Yet on balance their work had greater impact because they genuinely saw themselves to be linked in a fundamental way with poor and working-class women by the gender role they all shared.

### Collaborative Community

These feelings of solidarity, which are visible among both settlement residents and the members of women's reform clubs, expressed themselves in a sense of collaborative community that not only bridged the class divide (at least in the eyes of the reformers) but blurred the line between public and domestic work. Having justified their reform activity as simply another form of housekeeping, they could argue that they were simply exercising citizenship and statesmanship on the neighborhood level. Neighborliness, to them, was made real by their collaborative activities with the poor and working classes. In his biography of Mary McDowell, H. E. Wilson (1928) wrote that her life had become so interwoven into the life of the neighborhood behind the stockyards in Chicago that "she does not *stay*, but she *lives*, . . . and is learning to say 'we' unconsciously" (p. 25). In a summary of women's club activities, Mrs. T. J. Bowlker (1912) argued that women of different classes could converge around neighborhood improvement because they realized how the well-being of their loved ones depended upon it. In fact, uneducated women might even have greater

commitment to reform because they felt even more sharply than the well-to-do "their own personal responsibility for making of their city a home. . . . This [is] the spirit of a true democracy" (p. 863).

One supporting factor for this spirit of collaboration was the reform women's view of science. As noted earlier, they did not share the men's distanced, objective approach but rather acted upon the belief that "only that which is lived can be understood and translated to others." Accurate knowledge came from "minute familiarity"; science demanded not only alertness but the kind of sympathy that came from intimate knowledge of life and thought in poor neighborhoods. Mary Simkhovitch (1938), of New York's Greenwich House, argued that the settlements "let life, not theory, lead the way" by constant association with the people to get "the slant of the neighborhood" (p. 100). This philosophy helped them to avoid the posture of the expert who talks down to the ignorant, since in their eyes neighborhood residents were the true experts.

In sum, settlement houses and women's clubs were a way around women's political exclusion and a strong institutional framework in which they could encounter like-minded people and engage in collaborative practices in public. Progressive women were unwilling to settle for the passive citizen role that many reforming men had in mind for those who were not elite experts like themselves. Yet women's distinctive vision of leadership in public was unable to sustain itself. As the Progressive period gave way to the 1920s, and women finally got the vote, the reform impulse waned and a new set of factors came into play.

## The Disappearance of the Progressive Women's Leadership Model

Several factors contributed to the gradual disappearance of the leadership model developed by women in the Progressive Era. The politics of difference lost persuasiveness, the vote replaced social advocacy, professionalization weakened the group approach, and centralization of fund-raising put new priorities in place.

### The Politics of Difference

Women's belief in housekeeping and motherhood as natural instincts legitimated their societal leadership in building new institutions and advocating social policies. Over time, however, this image of distinctiveness began to work against them rather than in their favor. To accomplish its purposes, the female public sphere had to work in collaboration with the public world of men. The more this took place, the more a politics of difference and indirection became a handicap rather than a workable strategy. Once it became clear that women did not vote as a bloc but tended to vote like their husbands or

fathers, support for agencies established through women's efforts dwindled. Male politicians who had passed a federal law authorizing state maternal and child health programs began to ridicule women reformers as "celibates" and "bespectacled ladies" who intruded into private homes in order to investigate living conditions. The maternal and child health law was repealed in 1929 and the federal Children's Bureau failed to win responsibility for aid to families with dependent children in the Social Security Act of 1935 (Stivers, 2000, p. 102).

### The Impact of the Vote

Exclusion from ordinary politics had promoted a limited form of women's action in public, which depended on stereotypes of feminine virtue and the help of sympathetic men. But with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the vote, entry into the political mainstream turned out to be a mixed blessing. Granted formal equality, women could no longer sell their concerns as special or justify the value of their unique qualities in public life.

In addition, voting is a deeply individualistic action, which works if not in opposition then certainly in separation from the collaborative action at the center of women's societal leadership. Having been among the earliest interest groups, perhaps even pioneers of the form, women's reform organizations languished in the 1920s, in many respects a conservative time inhospitable to social change values. Some women began to feel that perhaps exercising the franchise was enough of a commitment to public life.

### Professionalization

Another factor that weakened Progressive women's leadership model was the professionalization of social work. Growing emphasis on science as understood in the (male) mainstream eroded feelings of friendship and neighborliness, which began to seem classist and paternal (or maternal). Reformers began to argue that good motives were not enough unless they were exercised by trained experts. The Progressive determination to downplay class divisions and assert values that united all people made expertise seem like the "only valid form of superiority in a democracy" (Stivers, 2000, p. 113). Social workers took this mandate toward expertise and transformed it into the practice of professional casework based on the growing science of psychology. This had a drastic narrowing effect that weakened the model of social advocacy and action at the center of Progressive women's leadership. No clearly defined and objective body of scientific knowledge seemed possible on which to base social change, which by definition is value oriented rather than neutral. The assertion of expertise also

canceled out values of collaboration and solidarity that had been so significant to Progressive women's understanding of the nature of their work.

### Systematic Charity

As forces strengthened that were aimed at making charitable work more systematic and efficient, so-called community chests were established (the forerunners of today's United Way), and fund-raising began to be centralized and taken out of the hands of individual organizations, including settlement houses. The houses found themselves having to satisfy the priorities and demands of administrators who had little or no direct knowledge of particular neighborhoods or interest in the kind of experimentation and advocacy that were the heart of settlement work. Those who came to hold the purse strings appeared to be more attuned to the relatively conservative interests of wealthy donors than to the reforming impulses of Progressives (Trolander, 1975).

### Future Directions

The fate of the model of leadership developed and practiced in Progressive Era women's organizations offers food for thought today. For one thing, the belief that women, based on their innate qualities, have a distinctive contribution to make to society or an especially valuable way of leading has become highly debatable. Research on the existence of a "women's way" of leading is equivocal at best and on balance seems highly situational rather than innate. The lesson the Progressives learned, about the impossibility of being "equal" and "different" at the same time, is clear, yet today's women are still struggling to balance the two (Stivers, 2002a). The historical record shows that the collaborative organizational form of social action practiced by so many Progressive women's groups was vulnerable to outside pressures such as the demands of funders and the relentless emphasis on measurable but marginal results. No one seemed to want to pay for nourishing the collaborative process itself or a deep commitment to social change. Few funders encouraged change-oriented social action, and the reformers' focus on policy rather than on casework has never coalesced around a knowledge base that would support its professionalization.

Perhaps the strongest legacy Progressive women have left behind is clear evidence that today's hierarchical models of leadership and the limits placed on visions of organizational effort are not the only possibilities imaginable. It may be that we are entering an era where the need for concerted social action is great enough that society will once more make room for the Progressive women's form of leadership—but this time, perhaps, practiced by women and men together.



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## WOMEN LEADERS IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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Women's participation in the civil rights movement is well documented (e.g., Barnett, 1993; Evans, 1980; McAdam, 1988; Payne, 1994; Robnett, 1996, 1997), so the purpose of this chapter is to provide a systematic analysis of the social and organizational constructs that shaped the nature and context of their participation. The complex interplay of race, class, gender, organizational structure, and culture has not received the attention it deserves, thus rendering only a partial understanding of women's myriad leadership roles in the movement.

### Redefining Leadership in Social Movements

There is some debate over the extent to which women served as organizers or leaders during the civil rights movement. In his study of activism in the Mississippi Delta, Charles Payne (1990) suggests that "men led, but women organized" (p. 158), whereas Bernice McNair Barnett (1993) and Belinda Robnett (1996, 1997) argue for a reconceptualization of what constitutes leadership, albeit in different ways. Barnett suggests that organizing is an important form of leadership, while Robnett emphasizes the ways in which women's participation extended beyond organizational skills to provide the ideological foundation and mobilization infrastructure of the movement. Moreover, Robnett argues that race, class, gender, organizational structure, and culture defined the positions of participants in the civil rights movement. She shows that

many so-called grassroots "followers" or "organizers" operated as "bridge leaders" who fostered ties between the social movement and the community, between strategies (aimed at individual change, identity, and consciousness) and political strategies (aimed at organizational tactics designed to challenge existing relationships with the state and other societal institutions). Bridge leaders were able to cross the boundaries between a movement organization and the private spheres of potential participants.

One's position as a bridge leader was socially constructed and largely determined by one's race, class, age, gender, and culture. Women comprised a large portion of those in this category of leadership and were underrepresented in the formal leadership sector even though their rates of participation exceeded those of men (Payne, 1994, p. 266). Bridge leaders were not always women, but it was the most accessible and acceptable form of leadership available to them. In general, women were excluded as formal leaders because of their sex, but this did not deter their leadership efforts in the movement. Women were not simply organizers within the civil rights movement but, as bridge leaders, were critical mobilizers of civil rights activities. Gender, which operated as a construct of exclusion, produced a particular context in which women participated. This gendered power structure served to strengthen the informal tier of leadership, thus providing a strong mobilizing force within the grassroots sector.

There were four types of bridge leaders which are distinguishable from one another. Women, as professional organizers, were not privy to the formal leaders' inner circle, as were men of their status. Rather, because of



their gender they could only obtain power and high status as bridge leaders, which was usually the highest position attainable for women. These women, professional bridge leaders, may be distinguished from their sisters, the community bridge leaders, the indigenous bridge leaders, and the mainstream bridge leaders (Robnett, 1997). *Professional bridge leaders* were generally middle-aged women with significant civil rights experience prior to the rise of movement activism. They often held positions with primary formal organizations and generally had worked with more than one civil rights group. Their vision of movement mobilization extended to concerns beyond the local level. Had they not been a part of a group excluded from formal leadership, they undoubtedly would have served as formal leaders, professional organizers, or within the inner circle.

*Community bridge leaders* worked primarily through a specific movement organization. Many were drawn to the movement because of their local level civil rights experience. Prior to their civil rights movement organization participation, many of these women were formal leaders in their local communities. Within the movement organization or movement sector, however, they acted as community bridge leaders whose primary task was to bridge local communities to the movement. For these extraordinary women, especially those who were young, this was the highest level of leadership attainable. Many community bridge leaders, because of their extraordinary courage and skills, “acted” as formal leaders during moments of crisis when formal leaders were unwilling or unable to do so. These leaders are often the decision makers during this temporary period, which is characterized by spontaneous, emotional events, when planned activities go awry.

The *indigenous bridge leaders* worked in concert with community bridge leaders, but many tended to float among the movement organizations, simultaneously working with all of them. These women were the community bridge leader’s contact upon arrival in a local community. Sometimes indigenous bridge leaders had previous contact with a civil rights movement organization and were active, trusted women in their communities. These women generally had no formal position with a local organization but were well-known as solid, outspoken and trustworthy individuals, who often took the initiative during community crises.

The *mainstream bridge leaders* were usually white women, and this was the highest position available to them in the movement. They generally worked alongside community bridge leaders, forging ties between mainstream white institutions and organizations and the movement.

How might bridge leadership be contrasted with formal leadership? The primary difference is that formal leaders possess institutional and organizational power. In contrast, bridge leaders make similar decisions except their organizational and mobilization skills are performed within what Sara Evans and Harry Boyte (1986) term “a free space.” Such a free space might be defined as a niche that is not

directly controlled by formal leaders or those in their inner circle. It is an unclaimed space that is nevertheless central to the development of the movement because linkages are developed within it. Moreover, bridge leaders operate through one-on-one community-based interaction. Although formal leaders may also work in this manner, it is neither a sufficient nor efficient means of mass mobilization. Someone needs to draw together the masses and to represent them at the state level. It is equally important to mobilize them through an interactive one-on-one approach. Although formal leaders are often the most recognized, and considered the most legitimate by adherents, media, and the state, both types of leadership are important to a social movement’s success (Robnett, 1997).

## Gendered Leadership and Organizational Structures

The context in which women participated often impacted their roles as leaders within the civil rights movement. In general, women who participated in hierarchical organizations with centralized leaders, such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), founded by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., experienced considerable resistance as professional bridge leaders and were often constrained to other bridge leadership positions. In contrast, those women participating in organizations that were antihierarchical, with decentralized leadership, such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), experienced greater leadership mobility (Robnett, 1996, 1997). However, SNCC was not without sexism, as Mary King (1987), one of SNCC’s mainstream bridge leaders, noted: “In breaking open difficult and unasked questions on the role of women, we through a decentralized SNCC would be better able to respond” (p. 48). She and a fellow mainstream bridge leader, Casey Hayden, would write a position paper calling for the greater inclusion of women leaders in the movement, but both white women agreed that “the organizational structure of SNCC,” one of democratization and decentralization was well-suited to their belief in the “freedom and self-determination of women” (p. 460).

## Free Spaces: Avoiding Hierarchy and Centralized Leadership

So, how did women navigate hierarchical organizations so as to still serve as leaders? The events that sparked the beginning of the civil rights movement attest to the critical importance of women’s bridge leadership to its success. As women, they would never be considered leaders of the masses, but, of special significance, is the fact that, though women were excluded as formal leaders, women understood their own power to move the community to action. It is this understanding that characterizes the relationship between the formal and bridge leadership.



On their own initiative, women pressed male leaders to act against the system of segregation long before the formal organization of the Montgomery Improvement Association and the SCLC, organizations central to the origin and success of the civil rights movement. The Montgomery Bus Boycott is associated with the beginning of the civil rights movement, and the organization centrally responsible for its development was the Women's Political Council (WPC) of Montgomery, Alabama, which was founded in 1946 by Mary Fair Burks, a scholar and professor at Alabama State College. From the very beginning, the WPC was an organization designed to combat the institutionalized racism of Montgomery, Alabama (Robinson, 1987).

Throughout 1954 and 1955, the women of the WPC met six times with the mayor and city bus officials in an effort to negotiate better terms on the buses. Their opportunity to wage a previously planned bus boycott emerged on December 1, 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to relinquish her bus seat to a white man. Accounts of the civil rights movement (e.g., Branch, 1988; Garrow, 1986; Morris, 1984) make clear that Rosa Parks was not simply tired from long hours of work when she refused to relinquish her seat on the bus. Her decision to resist this system was based upon years of civil rights activism. Parks had been an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for 15 years and, at the time of her arrest, was secretary to the local chapter. Additionally, Parks had attended Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, during the summer of 1955. There, at this unique interracial facility, she had been trained in activism (Clark, 1986).

When Jo Ann Robinson, president of the WPC, and the membership heard of Parks's arrest, they decided to call a bus strike. By the time the meeting of community leaders took place at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, most of the members of the congregations, who comprised mainly women, were in support of the boycott (Robinson, 1987, p. 53; see also Gilkes, 1985, and Payne, 1990, for a discussion of women comprising the majority of church participants). The women of the WPC had achieved their goal.

The civil rights movement continued to gain momentum, and soon the NAACP's national leaders, Roy Wilkins and attorneys Wiley Branton and Thurgood Marshall, would turn their attention to the integration of schools in Little Rock, Arkansas. Three years after the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that separate educational facilities for blacks and whites were inherently unequal, Little Rock's Central High School became integrated. In 1957, there were 75 black applicants to the school, and the board only accepted 9, which precipitated mass hysteria with white parents refusing to send their children to school with blacks. The Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist groups organized meetings to plan how to stop blacks from entering the school (Bates, 1962).

Daisy Bates, an active member of the NAACP and owner of a local and highly political black newspaper,

became involved in the controversy. Bates had served as cochair of the NAACP's State Conferences Committee for Fair Employment Practices and was president of the Arkansas State Conference of NAACP branches (Dallard, 1990). Even as president of the NAACP State Conference of Branches, Bates operated much as a community bridge leader, sustaining the efforts of the students and their families.

On September 2, 1957, prior to the black students' entry to the high school, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus announced that he would not allow integration in Little Rock and ordered the Arkansas National Guard to surround the school to prevent their attendance (Bates, 1962, p. 61). On September 23, 1957, Bates arranged for the students to meet at her home so that they collectively proceeded to the high school and entered through a side door while the white mob blocked the front entrance. Eventually, the black students would flee as the mob entered the school. Roy Wilkins, president of the NAACP, and Martin Luther King Jr., leader of the SCLC, would join forces to meet with Eisenhower and to castigate his administration for not being more forceful and supportive during the crisis. However, successful integration of the Little Rock schools would not take place until 1962 (Bates, 1962). The Little Rock case illustrates the complexity of movement mobilization that stems not only from the efforts of national-level formal leadership but also from the efforts of community bridge leaders who were rarely included in national-level negotiations.

Bates's actions, as a community bridge leader, were not unique. So, too, Ruby Hurley, an NAACP leader in Alabama, escorted Autherine Lucy, the first black student to integrate the University of Alabama, to school (Giddings, 1984, p. 269). In Oklahoma City, a successful effort to desegregate public facilities was launched by Clara Luper, a community bridge leader, high school teacher, and local leader of the NAACP Youth Council (Luper, 1979, p. 7).

As the movement's momentum continued, the SCLC was formed in 1957, with Martin Luther King Jr. at its helm (Morris, 1984, p. 84). Ella Baker was appointed the acting executive director while King and his fellow ministers searched for someone more "suitable." A seasoned activist, Baker served as the NAACP National Director of Branches in 1943, a freelance consultant to civil rights groups during the 1950s, and, by 1957, a cofounder of In Friendship, a northern organization that raised funds to send to activist groups in the South. Few scholars would disagree that her leadership role was critical to the foundation and infrastructure of the civil rights movement (Barnett, 1993; Morris, 1984; Payne, 1989; Robnett, 1997).

The SCLC's first project, the Crusade for Citizenship, proved ineffectual when the ministers failed to sustain registration efforts in their own communities and would not take direction from Baker (Branch, 1988, p. 231).



Feeling frustrated, she turned her attention to a citizenship education program designed by Septima Clark at the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee. As several scholars have pointed out, Baker's leadership ideology of building leadership from the ground up rather than from the top-down was at odds with that of the Black Baptist ministers, including Dr. King (Barnett, 1993; Grant, 1998; Payne, 1989; Ransby, 2003; Robnett, 1996, 1997). By teaching literacy and by connecting people's personal concerns to the strategic politics of the movement, Clark's Citizenship Education Program built an indigenous leadership base (Clark, 1986), and according to a 1961 memorandum from SCLC staffer Andrew Young, trained 82 teachers to work in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. A report compiled by Clark shows that in 1 year, black voter registration was increased substantially (Robnett, 1997, p. 92).

Still, because of the hierarchical nature of the SCLC and the male-dominated leadership, Baker and Clark felt their leadership restricted (Robnett, 1997, p. 94). Even when they were privy to board and executive staff meetings, women found their contributions to organizational or structural decision making and to discussions of strategies for the future stifled (Robnett, 1997, pp. 93–95). Most notably, Baker was consistently frustrated by the dominance of the Baptist ministers and their lack of confidence in her skills. In commenting on why she decided to leave SCLC, she replied, "In the first place, I had known, number one, that there would never be any role for me in a leadership capacity with SCLC. Why? First, I'm a woman. Also, I'm not a minister" (qtd. in Robnett, 1997, p. 94). At the executive staff level, there were only two areas in which women actively participated: the Citizenship Education Program and the Fund-Raising Department. Until 1965, the board of directors included one woman at most and often no women at all (Robnett, 1997).

Clark considered the SCLC to be a man's domain in which "men didn't listen to what I have to say," had no "faith in women," and constantly questioned why she was on the staff (qtd. in Robnett, 1997, p. 94). At most of the SCLC conventions the only women to regularly participate were Clark, Dorothy Cotton (an SCLC staffer), and Diane Nash (the youth group coordinator). Although Baker chose to leave the SCLC and Clark remained, as leaders, they can be credited with building the SCLC's mass-base of support.

## Weakening Traditional Boundaries to Leadership

Baker was significantly responsible for the mobilization foundation of SNCC. She began the process of bridging the students to one another and to the movement by organizing a conference which was to take place on April 15–17, 1960, at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. Dr. King wanted the students to form an arm

of the SCLC, but Baker did not agree, stating, "I wasn't one to say yes, because it came from the Reverend King. So when it was proposed that [SCLC] influence what [the students] wanted done, I was outraged. I walked out" (Dallard, 1990, p. 81). The issue of student sovereignty was hotly debated, but the student organization would form independently of the SCLC, but with SCLC consultants.

Tensions arose over who would be the chairman and the group debated whether or not to split. Baker intervened, and with her guidance it was decided that rotating the chairmanship would ease some of the tensions among groups and would prevent a single contingent from usurping power. Influenced by Baker, there were rotating chairs and an executive committee—a structure that supported her belief that "strong movements don't need strong leaders" (Mueller, 1990). Baker's emphasis on group-centered leadership through group consensus created an environment in which everyone was expected to participate fully, even women.

Even so, SNCC was dominated by, and women aligned themselves with, formal male leaders. The women often avoided titled positions as these generally meant secretarial positions. However, titled positions failed to reflect women's authority in the movement which is clearly illustrated by those given to Nash, Baker, and Ruby Doris Smith Robinson. In Nash's case, her titled position of office manager did not reflect her repeated leadership during moments of crisis. Baker was an outside consultant, though clearly her influence was instrumental to the creation of SNCC's structure and philosophy. Like Baker, Robinson's position as personnel manager and bursar was uniquely buried, placed in the "others" category (Robnett, 1997). By 1966, Robinson was elected to the position of executive secretary although "she had already been performing most of the duties of the executive secretary long before she was elected to that post" (Fleming, 1998, p. 163). Thus women's titles in SNCC did not adequately convey their positions of power and leadership.

Taken as a whole, women had greater access to organizational power than in groups where power was centralized around one key figure. SNCC possessed many powerful women leaders and Nash was one. Nash became an important leader in the development of SNCC and the movement in general. Committed to the philosophy and principles of nonviolence, she and fellow Fisk student, Peggi Alexander, outlined the purposes of SNCC in a paper titled "Non-Violence Speaks to the Movement" (Robnett, 1997, p. 102). Nash set the tone for the strategies and tactics employed by SNCC's membership. She also served as a temporary formal leader during moments of crisis. For example, in 1961 the Congress of Racial Equality, a northern-based civil rights movement organization, began the Freedom Rides in which a busload of black and white activists would ride from Washington, D.C., to New Orleans and test the desegregation of local bus and transportation facilities.



The goal was to force the southern states to comply with the 1960 Supreme Court decision banning segregation on interstate trains and buses (Zinn, 1964). The first ride took place on May 4, 1961, and when they reached Birmingham, Alabama, a mob tore into the riders, beating them severely. In spite of the reluctance of SCLC leaders to continue the rides, Nash organized a group of Nashville students to begin a ride from Birmingham (Branch, 1988, p. 430). Spontaneous decisions were often made by community bridge leaders during moments of crisis when they were propelled into temporary formal leadership positions (Robnett, 1997, p. 104).

In addition to their spontaneous leadership during moments of crisis, community bridge leaders also took on more formal leadership positions as the movement grew. By the summer of 1964, SNCC had begun its Mississippi Freedom Summer program to educate citizens about black history and civil rights (King, 1987, p. 437). Although Baker, Robinson, and Nash were always considered a part of the leadership and Prathia Hall, Muriel Tillinghast, Gwen Robinson, Cynthia Washington, Lois Rogers, and Mary Lane, as community bridge leaders, were considered essential to SNCC operations, the sharp increase in demands upon leadership resources placed these respected and capable women in new positions of responsibility and power as formal leaders (Robnett, 1997, p. 108). Between 1964 and 1965, of the 50 field staff in Mississippi, 12 were women. Some of the women received the position because no man was willing or able to take it on. Tillinghast, for example, would become project director in Jackson, Mississippi, when the project director announced he was leaving immediately. In 1963, under extremely dangerous conditions, Hall became project director in Selma. Hall took over because all of the men working for the project had been jailed (Robnett, 1997, p. 110).

### Race, Class, Culture, and Gender Converge

Whites, regardless of their sex, were not formal leaders in the civil rights movement. The highest level of leadership for whites was either the community bridge leadership tier, of which there were very few, or the mainstream bridge leadership tier, which comprised the majority of white participants. The tasks of the latter were to provide a bridge to the mainstream, primarily through white institutions, that is, universities, service organizations, and affiliates.

Several accounts of women's movement participation have emphasized the degree of sexism within the organizations, especially SNCC (Evans, 1980; McAdam, 1988; Rothschild, 1982). Whereas some women did not enjoy leadership visibility and experienced some degree of sexism within SNCC, other women felt empowered by their participation (Robnett, 1996, 1997). Much of the disagreement may benefit from

historic perspective and analyses of the interplay of race, class, gender, and culture.

It is important to remember that the civil rights movement occurred prior to the second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s, so in many ways the movement opened doors to leadership possibilities previously unavailable to women. Casey Hayden and Mary King, both white women and long-time SNCC mainstream bridge leaders, produced a paper, in 1965, outlining sexism in the organization (Evans, 1980; McAdam, 1988, p. 11). The paper was presented at a group retreat in Waveland, Mississippi, and is generally referred to as the Waveland Paper by scholars. This paper, in fact, was not a product of their concerns over their status, as both women have acknowledged that they had little difficulty with their treatment as women in SNCC (Polletta, 2002, pp. 155–156). King (1987) elaborates the misconceptions of several authors who viewed SNCC as a sexist organization.

This is not correct and is not an explanation of Casey's and my protests. Our status in the movement was never the issue. Furthermore, this distortion overlooks the truly significant roles women played, the responsiveness of SNCC to women leaders before such an issue had been articulated, and the fact that, by and large, the movement was peopled by women; worst of all, it belies the seriousness and earnestness with which women in SNCC were involved and denies the important debate within SNCC that gave rise to our two documents. (p. 459)

Hayden agrees with this perspective, stating, "I was in the interworkings. I had really privileged status. I didn't have any real argument about my place in SNCC" (qtd. in Robnett, 1997, p. 119). "What I recall experiencing in SNCC was the great lifting of sex role expectations and the freedom that ensued" (Hayden, 1989, p. 14). This perception was repeated by both black and white women in SNCC (Robnett, 1997). Although SNCC chairman Stokely Carmichael's statement that "the only position for women is prone" provides some historians (e.g., Evans, 1980) with evidence of SNCC's sexism, King and Hayden, who recall his comment, maintain that the quote was taken out of context and agree that he "was one of the most responsive men at the time of our anonymous paper" (King, 1987, p. 452). Hayden and King's position paper was developed because of the great opening of gender roles in SNCC. Its consensus-seeking nonhierarchical organization provided free spaces in which women acted as leaders. Given the context of the 1960s that predated the second wave of feminism, women did not feel oppressed. Recalling events at a post-civil rights conference, Constance Curry, a white mainstream bridge leader, recounts that when it was suggested that Casey was "discriminated against and just didn't know it," [Casey replied,] "It looks like there was male domination but we didn't feel that. I would have known it. It just wasn't part of the ball game" (qtd. in Robnett, 1997, pp. 124–125). Similarly, Betty Garmen, a white mainstream bridge



leader, felt that there were far fewer gender restrictions in SNCC as compared to her experiences in the antiwar group, Students for a Democratic Society (Giddings, 1984, p. 303). As Paula Giddings (1984) summarizes,

Men usually held the top spots, but the charge that women were shut out from decision-making or leadership positions didn't really hold up. Women . . . were in SNCC's inner circles. Others . . . had been assigned the non-sex-stereotyped roles of project directors in the South—by [Stokely] Carmichael himself. (p. 302)

The Waveland Paper, then, “centered on the inherent contradictions within SNCC that professed democratic egalitarian principles of racial equality yet did not fully extend these to gender” (Polletta, 2002, p. 155). This, along with the publication of Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, stimulated Hayden and King to push the boundaries of egalitarianism for women. Additionally, the issue of women was the issue of structure within the organization. Membership had increased considerably and many called for the development of a hierarchical and more centralized structure, which Hayden and King felt would undermine women's leadership roles in the organization.

Although the white women participants who joined SNCC prior to 1964 did not feel oppressed, several factors converged to impact their mobility as well as the mobility of white women who came South after 1963. In the summer of 1964, SNCC began the Freedom Summer project in which volunteers, mostly white, spent time in the South and assisted in voter registration and the Freedom School. This increased the number of SNCC workers, and the majority of SNCC participants were now white. Unlike the white men and white women who came to SNCC prior to 1963, the newer volunteers often lacked sensitivity to their class and race privilege. This combined with gender to especially restrict the leadership potential of white women (Robnett, 1997). First, their presence in a black community provoked anger among local whites bent on protecting the virtue of white women. Second, it was crucial for volunteers to understand that the civil rights movement was led by blacks even though the new volunteers often possessed higher levels of education than those in rural communities. Many of the new recruits were insensitive to these issues, which eventually contributed to the expulsion of whites from SNCC. Thus, except for a few white women, most were not accepted into the field which was where one's acts of courage and relative autonomy as a community bridge leader gained black women formal leadership positions (Robnett, 1997).

White women's knowledge was often used for fundraising or for offering information or support to the Friends of SNCC groups outside of the South. All three northern coordinators, Hayden, Constancia (Dinky) Romilly, and Garmen, were white women who generally worked out of SNCC's Atlanta office. Such positions, which bridged white institutions and students to SNCC,

often necessitated office duty. There were exceptions, however. Faith Hocscart and Penny Patch were field workers in Mississippi and operated as community bridge leaders in ways other white women did not. Patch, who organized sharecroppers and demonstrations, also did a fair amount of housework. She acknowledges the limitations that race placed upon her mobility but nonetheless felt empowered by her participation in the movement; she stated, “I was a white woman and even given that I was able to do so much more than anywhere else in society” (qtd. in Robnett, 1997, p. 124). Thus, although white women community and mainstream bridge leaders experienced gender constraints in SNCC, given the context of the times, they often felt a lifting of sex role expectations.

In 1965, Hayden and King would distribute a paper, similar to that presented at Waveland, to women on the left (Polletta, 2002, p. 155), which is thought to have been a catalyst for the women's movement (Evans, 1980). The wide distribution of the paper led to women walking out of the antiwar group's Students for a Democratic Society national conference in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, and spurred the organization of a “women's workshop at a December 1966 antidraft conference” by former SNCC member Heather Booth (Polletta, 2002, p. 157). That same year, the leftist women would be joined by the National Organization for Women members to push for women's equality (see Giddings, 1984, p. 404).

## Women Indigenous and Formal Leaders

Mobilization could not have succeeded without the efforts of indigenous bridge leaders, who were unaffiliated with civic or movement organizations. As trusted community leaders, they facilitated the connection between civil rights organizations and the local community. SNCC workers entered a community and contacted local indigenous leaders, often women such as Thelma Leweller of Moscow, Tennessee; Julia, Beverley, and Delois Polk of Byhalia, Mississippi; Willie Ruth Dougherty of Benton County, Mississippi; and Annie Raines of Lee County, Georgia. Three such women, Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Devine, and Victoria Gray, would eventually become elected delegates of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) organized by SNCC on April 26, 1964, to counter voter discrimination (Robnett, 1997; Zinn, 1964).

Hamer, in particular, was a visible and charismatic indigenous leader who would become a formal leader in the MFDP. The daughter of Mississippi sharecroppers, she defied existing laws prohibiting blacks from voting and registered to vote in 1963. She joined SNCC's voter education program, serving as an instructor, and had previously attended one of SCLC's voter education workshops developed by Clark. For her efforts she and Annette Ponder, also a voter education instructor, were severely beaten, but this event did not deter Hamer, and she often



spoke out publicly, encouraging rural blacks to fight against racial injustices (Giddings, 1984).

Hamer and 67 other MFDP elected delegates and representatives traveled to the Atlantic City Democratic National Party Convention in 1964 to challenge the seating of white, illegally elected officials. They were met by formal black civil rights leaders, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., Bayard Rustin, and Roy Wilkins, as well as long-time, white activist, attorney Joseph Rauh. President Johnson appointed Minnesota Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey to reach a compromise with the black leaders and representatives of the delegation, which led to the offer of two seats as at-large delegates. Hamer and the MFDP delegation decided that the compromise was unacceptable. However, King and most of the other formal black leaders were swayed by Humphrey's private promise to wage war against racism in Mississippi, so they accepted the compromise. The delegation felt betrayed (Mills, 1993). The split between the formal male leaders of the movement organizations and the formal women leaders and most of the delegates further illustrates the degree to which women were not considered formal leaders.

The lack of acceptance of women's formal leadership by male formal leaders is also evident in the case of Gloria Richardson, cochair and eventually chair and adult advisor of the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC), in Maryland. Richardson served as a formal leader of CNAC between June 1962 and August 1964 and sought changes in public accommodations. On July 22, 1963, a conference was convened in Washington with the Civil Rights Division, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, and Robert Weaver, head of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (Brock, 1990, p. 130). A referendum to ratify the town charter making it illegal to refuse service to blacks in restaurants, motels, and other places of public accommodation was proposed (Brock, 1990). Richardson and the CNAC refused to endorse the measure because she believed that the issue of equality for black people required an amendment to the U.S. Constitution rather than local- and state-level amendment ratification. The amendment failed and rioting ensued. Local and national leaders blamed Richardson, and the NAACP broke all ties with her and CNAC (Focman, 1996). In keeping with many black women bridge leaders, Richardson's position was much more uncompromising than that of the formal black male leaders. Their leadership position as marginal and with fewer acknowledgments from both civil rights organizations and state actors rendered them more likely to adhere to the wishes of their constituents.

## Summary and Future Directions

What is abundantly clear is that movement participants cannot be conceptualized in a dichotomous fashion as simply leaders and followers. Neither can it be suggested that women's civil rights movement participation was primarily

of an organizing nature, as has been suggested by previous scholars. Although formal leaders are crucial to the success of social movements, they do not always provide the local leadership necessary to bridge the movement's message to potential recruits. It is clear that central to the success of a social movement is an intermediate layer of leadership, whose tasks include bridging potential constituents as well as potential formal leaders to the movement. Women, as bridge leaders, performed these tasks.

Unlike the SCLC, which was hierarchical with centralized leadership, SNCC's consensus-seeking, decentralized leadership served to facilitate the inclusion of women leaders. This model of organization had less success, however, in facilitating women's leadership in the antiwar group, Students for a Democratic Society, which formed in 1960 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Much like SNCC, and with several of its former members, it advocated a participatory democracy in which everyone was encouraged to participate. However, women found it difficult to gain respect and authority in the informal structure with its entrenched male-dominated friendship circles (Polletta, 2002, p. 157). Future research might systematically examine the conditions in which nonhierarchical models support or impede gender egalitarianism in leadership.

This analysis of women's participation in the civil rights movement also provides examples of the ways in which mobilization does not always occur in a linear fashion, that is, formal leaders mobilizing followers. Rather, women, as bridge leaders, recruited men as formal leaders as in the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Moreover, they and the movement's followers extended and transformed the movement's message so that conflict sometimes existed between their desires and that of the formal leaders. Bridge leaders, as the lead voices of the movement's followers, were not afraid to challenge the power of the formal leaders.

Gender—which overlaps with the constructs of race, class, and culture—was a significant construct in determining one's position in the movement, but it had very different meanings for the social construction of the positions of black and white women. Moreover, the cultural milieu in which these women and men worked was also significant in that white women's activities were more restricted because of the southern social mores governing white womanhood.

Given the context of the times, the period 1954 to 1965, women who participated in the civil rights movement experienced unprecedented power as purveyors of political consciousness, in which they were able to lead relatively autonomously and in which they were able to bring about group solidarity and social change. It is only in hindsight that we may observe their positions as limited by their gender. Although recent work suggests African American women's leadership in the post-civil rights era is less constrained to bridging work in free spaces (Springer, 2005), much more research is needed to assess the extent to which women are fully incorporated as formal leaders in civic and activist organizations.



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### SPOTLIGHT: Anita Hill

Years have passed since October 1991. My world has been forever changed by the events that culminated in the "Hill-Thomas hearing." I am no longer an anonymous, private individual—my name having become synonymous with sexual harassment. To my supporters I represent the courage to come forward and disclose a painful truth—a courage which thousands of others have found since the hearing. To my detractors I represent the debasement of a public forum, at best, a pawn, at worst, a perjurer. Living with these conflicting perceptions is difficult, sometimes overwhelming.

—Anita Hill in *Speaking Truth to Power*

#### Feminist Theory and the Multicultural Debate: Representations of Anita Hill

Having lived vicariously through the treatment of Anita Hill as she testified before the all-male U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee in October 1991, the nation was provided with considerable reason to think about the dictates of feminist theory and the example of feminist praxis. I remember being quite confounded by the media debate that portrayed Hill as simultaneously helpless and cunning, as innocent and untested yet deceitful in intent and action, and simultaneously manipulator and manipulated. In short, she was portrayed as a woman who was not to be trusted. We were reminded that this woman was, in relation to President George H. W. Bush's nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court, Clarence Thomas, quite young in age at the time she testified. We were to believe that she was either mistaken, a liar, or particularly vulnerable to exploitation by the liberal left. If we were to believe the latter, we were then reminded that Hill was complicit in her exploitation. Anita Hill was complicit in that she had continued to work with the subject of her derision, Clarence Thomas, for more than 10 years and she tolerated his sexually harassing behavior, apparently without comment, during that time.

One thing was clear. Anita Hill, a law professor at conservative Oral Roberts University prior to her experience in 1991, was no feminist—at least not by conscious design.

Had Anita Hill been an advocate of feminism, mild or militant, she would have brought to the hearings the kind of feminist thinking and awareness that would have enabled her to face the reality that white supremacist patriarchy had already chosen Thomas. It would have given her the wisdom to understand that to challenge that choice, either by creating powerful opposition or by exposing his true character, she would need to subvert the system. Subversion requires strategy. Simply stating the case was not enough. (hooks, 1992, p. 80)

On a short trip home during graduate school, shortly after the Thomas hearings, one of my aunts, long retired from her career at a local tire factory, asked me: "So what do you think of this Anita Hill and this sexual harassment talk?" During the discussion that ensued, she shared with me her own understanding of, and experiences with, sexual harassment in the workplace. This informed her firm belief that whether or not Hill was telling the truth about the events she reported was absolutely irrelevant to the whole confirmation hearing process. Although she believed what Hill said was true, she also believed that it made perfect sense that she continued working for Thomas and that she had remained in touch with him once she left his employment. Work was about work and sexual harassment at work was something Hill had properly dealt with on her own at the time. In fact, my aunt felt that she was wrong to have brought the Senate or the rest of the country into the discussion of these events because she should not have mentioned it to the FBI during their investigation of Thomas's candidacy for the U.S. Supreme Court at all. Shortly after the Senate confirmation hearings were concluded, Beverly Grier, Professor of Government at Clark University, spoke with a number of black women in the Boston area in both formal discussion groups and less formal conversations with friends and college students. Grier learned that many of these women felt the same as my aunt. In fact, Grier (2001) reports having learned that more than a few of the women she spoke with "felt that [Hill's] experience of being sexually harassed by Clarence Thomas was a trivial matter. . . . Most were very angry, and many were ashamed that Hill made her charges public. . . . As it turned out, only a minority of African American women I encountered warmly embraced and defended Hill" (p. 159).

This dilemma illuminates the problematic issues that still pervade much feminist theory and practice. Many believe that feminist theory has firmly broken away from the moorings of its more provincial concerns with female subordination that used to auger that all women live under the same oppressive conditions. Feminist theory has more recently, many argue, begun to embrace a more nuanced emphasis on heterogeneity, diversity, and difference. I am relieved to observe this move



taking place. I worry, however, that a critical mass of feminist theorists are not yet fully committed to this goal. This more nuanced emphasis has now resulted, in part, from a backlash against criticism that the hegemonic feminist theory of the 1970s and 1980s specifically ignored, and in some senses erased, the experiences of nonwhite and non-Western women of color. We are reminded by June Jordan (1992) that this was certainly the case for Anita Hill:

[For w]hen and where was there ever a white man lynched because he was bothering a white woman?

When and where was there ever a white man jailed or tarred and feathered because he was bothering a black woman?

When a black woman is raped and beaten or mutilated by a black man or a white man, what happens? (p. 123)

In hindsight, it seems fair to say that Hill attempted to place race and gender politics aside; she must have depended on the confirmation process to shield her from the harsh realities of what it means to bring a claim of sexual harassment against any man. In this sense we might posit that she formulated a practice for rendering her testimony, neglecting any type of praxis. More specifically, unlike Thomas, Hill does not appear to have formulated a strategy before answering *any* questions, giving *any* statements, and rendering *any* testimony concerning her experience as an employee of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under the direct supervision of Clarence Thomas. This is despite the fact that several lawyers helped her prepare her testimony prior to her appearance before the Senate committee. Indeed, Hill has been cited repeatedly as having said that she could not keep silent in her opening statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee. At a later date, she said,

I was not happy about what I felt I had to do ten years before—keep quiet—nor was I happy about what I must do now—speak out. There was no joy, no sense of righteousness or vindication. At best, I felt some small relief. . . . I had carried the burden of the secret for so long that I trained myself to ignore its existence. The shame I felt should never have been mine, but I had taken it on by my own silence. (Hill, 1997, p. 110)

Based on these sentiments and the brutal treatment she received during the Senate confirmation process, many women vociferously aligned themselves with her in what they perceived as a feminist challenge against oppression.

### Anita Hill in 1991: The Necessity of Praxis

On Friday, October 11, 1991, Hill testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee. As she did so, many saw nothing in her words or actions that presented the unquestionable portrait of a conscious act of feminism purposefully aimed at ending sexist oppression. The tone of portions of Hill's testimony was almost apologetic. There was absolutely no evidence that Hill entered this process with the clear and concerted purpose of making others see *her perception* of the danger that Clarence Thomas posed to the future of this nation if appointed an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Hill answered questions that she had been asked prior to appearing in public at the confirmation hearings and many more bearing upon her credibility and veracity rather than Thomas's. It appeared, therefore, that she had not formulated a strategy for framing her responsive testimony so that the Senate committee members could not use the information she provided in any way they saw fit. One might say that she permitted herself to be led, like a lamb, to the slaughter.

Certainly it is clear that Hill recognized the danger of placing someone like Thomas on the Supreme Court. The great pains she took to remain anonymous during the confirmation process led many to believe that Hill would not have come forward but for having been summoned by the committee. This does not jibe with any meaningful form of feminist praxis; indeed, it is in direct contravention of the strategies posited by just about any feminist activist one can name. Compare this to the example of Anna Julia Cooper, who called for racial and gender equality as she argued against lynching at the turn of the 19th century in *A Voice From the South*, or Sojourner Truth, who ardently questioned the politics behind the cult of true womanhood at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1854.

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Juxtaposing Hill's experience with that of these women, both former slaves, is a potent reminder that we have to examine the events prior to and during Thomas's Senate confirmation process from the perspective of gendered race relations in U.S. history. From this perspective, one can more readily analyze the horrible treatment Hill suffered at the hands of the Republican senators as well as Senator Ted Kennedy's (D-MA) inability to effectively come to her assistance because of his own tainted and fatal history of womanizing. It really cannot be stressed enough that Thomas's assertion that he was "a victim of a high tech lynching" really catapulted Hill's testimony out of the arena altogether. Unlike Clarence Thomas, Anita Hill had no metaphor she could evoke that would call forth anything close to the power of the lynching metaphor referenced by Clarence Thomas (Crenshaw, 1992). By playing "the race card" in this fashion, Thomas tacitly reminded the all-white, male members of the Senate Judiciary Committee that Hill was only a black woman and thus her word was insignificant in the face of their collective interests in getting him appointed to the Supreme Court.

So why has Anita Hill been championed as a feminist who fought against sexist oppression, thereby blazing the trails for others to follow after her? The response is quite simply: because she did. While we acknowledge that Hill should have told the FBI and the Senate Judiciary Committee about Thomas's professional misconduct, we also confront the belief held by many that the gendered racial complexities inherent in such a stance was downright irresponsible; this because it seemed to reflect Hill's naive belief that the senators would receive her account with the gravity that resonated with millions of men and women across racial ethnic lines. At the same time, Anita Hill became the symbol of male oppression for many women, including women in the House who were refused entry to the hearings. As Hill began to be honored by feminist groups, she became a feminist and she now teaches and writes about women's issues at Brandeis University as a professor of social policy, law, and Women's Studies.

In the final analysis, many agree with bell hooks's (1992) assessment that

Hill was never disloyal to the patriarchy or, for that matter, to the institution of white supremacy. Instead she expressed her loyalty consistently by the manner in which she appealed to the system for justice. By appropriating her as a feminist hero, women, and white women in particular, show that they are more interested in positioning Hill in support of a feminism that she never espoused [prior to the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings]. (p. 83)

More importantly, there was no true recognition of the intersections of experience from which Hill emerged as she was forced to wage this battle.

### Anita Hill in 2007: A New Attitude in Theory, Words, and Action

A much more assertive and confident Anita Hill emerged in the wake of publicity surrounding the release of Clarence Thomas's 2007 memoir and his statement that Hill had been "a mediocre employee who was used by political opponents to make claims she had been sexually harassed" ("Anita Hill," 2007). On October 2, 2007, Anita Hill published an op-ed in *The New York Times*, emphatically stating, "I will not stand by and allow him, in his anger, to reinvent me." She opined further:

Regrettably, since 1991, I have repeatedly seen this kind of character attack on women and men who complain of harassment and discrimination in the workplace. In efforts to assail their accusers' credibility, detractors routinely diminish people's professional contributions. Often the accused is a supervisor in a position to describe the complaining employee's work as "mediocre" or the employee as incompetent. Those accused of inappropriate behavior also often portray the individuals who complain as bizarre caricatures of themselves—oversensitive, even fanatical, and often immoral—even though they enjoy good and productive working relationships with their colleagues. (Hill, 2007, p. A25)

Anita Hill, at this point in history, clearly exemplifies many of the qualities she was given credit for espousing in the early 1990s. This is not to say that she is a different person today than she was 17 years ago, but then again who among us has not changed in perspective, thought, and action in the past 20 years? Even so, Anita Hill now speaks as someone who clearly means to educate us about sexual harassment and what it means to be caricatured rather than respected. Her words and actions now, however, are self-determined and freely given, borne of her own will. This is in stark contrast to the testimony elicited during the Senate Judiciary hearings and much of the publicity that followed.



## Feminist Praxis for the 21st Century

Feminist scholars of color have noted that many white women, in their struggle against patriarchal oppression, discovered their need for the support of other groups of women but at the same time neglected to recognize how different their lived experiences were from many of these women. The predictable result of this dilemma has been the discovery and inclusion of the complexities of life for women of color both inside and outside of the United States, but this has still been presented within the context of Western feminist theoretical concerns.

Transnational feminists such as Chandra Mohanty, Chela Sandoval, and Aida Hurtado have pointed out that this mode of feminist theory as applied to other cultures has continued to be largely shaped by Western insights rather than those of the cultures in question. In response to this form of theoretical segregation, Sandoval has proposed a transnational approach to feminist theory that stands in opposition to feminism as a clear, monolithic political agenda and requires us to define feminist praxis by identifying current situations of power with which we are faced and, only then, to self-consciously select the ideological form best suited to push against that form of power's current configurations. This approach is most useful in attempting to identify the feminist praxis involved in this situation, or the lack thereof, because of the focus on identifying oneself in relation to others. This mode of consciousness calls for a meaningful process of self-examination that requires more commitment to the development of pragmatic feminist theory. Any inability to confront this question head-on should be understood as a willful refusal to see the harm that the continued silence on this wrinkle of the issue represents and a denial of how difficult it can be to negotiate a racialized identity within such gendered constraints. This is the sociopolitical terrain that Anita Hill encountered in 1991. Moreover, it was because of the most simplistic notions of feminist theory that she was championed as a feminist, even as many ignored the racist narrative that was used to delegitimize the experiences she recounted.

Other feminist scholars such as Elizabeth Spelman, Ruth Frankenberg, and Margaret Anderson have addressed this necessity of articulating the importance of "defamiliarizing" that which is taken for granted in favor of rendering visible the structural constraints that define one's current position. This feminist methodology takes the question of individual women and racial ethnic considerations well beyond that of the individual (and her beliefs or attitudes) to something much broader and more grounded in the material world. This theoretical stance forces all of us to examine our agency with respect to social and political awareness and to understand how unconscious attitudes about gender and race found therein have powerful effects on our life choices and situations. One of the most significance points of this change in perspective becomes, then, the implicit recognition that women can be agents of patriarchy—even as, in the case of Anita Hill, they seek to accomplish the very opposite.

—Marla H. Kohlman, Kenyon College

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN THE LATINA/O MOVEMENT

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Latinas and Latinos are *mestiza/o*, or a mixed people. In the United States, this population combines a mixture of indigenous heritage from pre-Columbian times, European ancestry from the Spanish invasion of the Americas, and African roots from the enslaved people taken to the Americas.<sup>1</sup> This segment of the U.S. population has linkage to more than 20 countries and is rich in diversity and complexity (Martinez, 1995, p. 1019). Differences among these people include class, socialization, location, and ethnicity. In this chapter, to simplify terminology, Latina/o, Chicana/o, and Hispanic<sup>2</sup> will be used interchangeably to refer to people who can trace their ancestry to Spanish-speaking countries.

Currently, the Latino population is the largest minority group in the United States and accounts for more than half of the overall population growth in the nation. In 2008 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that of the 30.1 million Hispanic adults in the United States, 14.4 million (48%) were women. Since the 1960s, U.S. Latinas have acted as agents of change in the battle against racism, sexism, and class inequality in society. Yet, these women have had the extra burden of fighting against gender oppression central in the Hispanic culture, also referred to as *machismo* (Hispanic male chauvinism). In general, Latina contributions have been ignored in the historiography of the U.S. Latino movement. In the 1980s and early 1990s, feminist scholars disputed the male-centered historical accounts that portrayed Latinas in a submissive and subordinate manner. This chapter will highlight the unique struggle Latinas face, important leadership developments, and moral agency achieved by North American women of Spanish-speaking heritage since the 1960s.

### The Latino/Chicano Movement

During the civil rights era of the 1960s and 1970s, along with other minority groups, people of Spanish-speaking heritage mobilized to address discrimination and exploitation. They formed pressure groups and became politically active. For example, César Chávez and Dolores Huerta cofounded the Farm Workers Association, which eventually became the United Farm Workers (UFW). Although Huerta was fundamental to the success of the UFW, only in the 1990s did she begin receiving any credit for her key role in the labor movement.

As the principal negotiator and lobbyist, Dolores Huerta advocated for improved working conditions and fought for social justice for migrant farmworkers. One of her most notable contributions was the coordination of the 1968–1969 East Coast effort in the grape boycott, an organized campaign to eliminate the use of dangerous toxic chemicals affecting farmworkers and their families. This event brought national attention to the UFW. Huerta's notion of family was at the core of the UFW's campaigns to improve the lives of farmworkers. Dolores Huerta is only one illustration of how Latina history has been revised. Many Latinas risked conflict as they faced down power and domination in order to advance their lives and communities. For Latinas, the civil rights era and the Latino movement provided access to the public world and to politics. As Latina activism began, they wanted a more prominent role in the Latino movement's decision-making process. Latinas started challenging male-dominated sex roles and *machismo* culture by questioning prevailing societal traditions. However, Latino male leaders resisted their efforts and relegated women to cooking,

secretarial duties, and housekeeping activities (Medina, 2004, p. 41). Latinas contested the male leadership by forming female-oriented networks and interest groups (Hardy-Fanta, 1997). Consequently, organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC, the oldest national Hispanic organization), La Raza Unida Party, the Mexican American Youth Organization, Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional (National Mexican Women's Commission), the Mexican American National Association, and Centro de Acción Social Autónomo were training grounds for Latina leadership development.

Female members began holding their own national conferences, retreats, workshops, and community meetings, as well as publishing newsletters, poetry, and music. These activities collectively broke the silence surrounding the subordinate status of Hispanic women. With their growing involvement in rights movements, Latinas challenged social institutions from the public workplace to the private home, which contributed to and were responsible for their oppression and inequality.

When Mirta Vidal (1971) wrote her article "Chicanas Speak Out," she chronicled the emerging Latina movement. She began with the three Chicano Youth Liberation Conferences held in 1969, 1970, and 1971 in Denver, Colorado, where women's workshops were presented. In 1970, the Mexican American National Issues Conference in Sacramento, California, included a women's workshop. Women attendees voted to become the Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional (National Mexican Women's Commission) and functioned as an independent organization affiliated with the Mexican American National Issues Conference.

Through community outreach and service, some women gained leadership positions at both local and national levels. Women such as María Lopez de Hernandez worked for the improvement of educational and socioeconomic opportunity for Mexican Americans. In 1970, she played a large role in the creation of the politically active La Raza Unida Party, which advocated for welfare rights and immigrant services. Hernandez cofounded Orden Caballeros de América, a civic and civil rights organization, and battled against the segregated and inferior education provided to Mexican American children (National Women's History Project, 2008).

In 1971, the Latina movement coalesced when women participating in the United Farm Workers Statewide Boycott Conference formed a caucus and addressed the conference (Vidal, 1971). The women warned male members that sexist attitudes and opposition to Latina rights would divide the farmworkers' struggle. That same year, Latinas from Los Angeles organized a regional conference attended by more than 250 Chicanas in preparation for the upcoming first national Chicana conference to be held in Houston, Texas. They raised funds to send representatives from the Los Angeles area. In May 1971, more than 600 Chicanas attended the first conference of Raza women (Vidal, 1971).

In 1974 the Chicana Rights Project, established by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF),<sup>3</sup> furnished Latinas the opportunity to increase leadership skills (García, Martínez-Ebers, Coronado, Navarro, & Jaramillo, 2008). The project was a feminist civil and legal rights program that served to encourage Chicana self-sufficiency in education, employment, health, and housing. The Chicana Rights Project initiated major discrimination litigation, conducted research, and performed community education in reproductive choice, forced sterilization, child care, mental health, welfare rights, immigrant rights, and employment. Notably, MALDEF's litigation, research, and community education revealed the gendered nature of legal rights ignored by the Chicano movement. This platform gave several contemporary Chicana civil rights leaders a start to their careers. Vilma Martínez established Chicana Rights Project offices in San Francisco and San Antonio and worked to protect the rights of traditionally underrepresented people. Martínez graduated from Columbia University with a law degree. In 1967 she began her career at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as a staff attorney. She served as president of MALDEF from 1973 to 1982 and is credited with building the organization into a powerful national civil rights organization (National Women's History Project, 2008). In 1976, on behalf of Mexican women, the Chicana Rights Project filed an administrative complaint against the city of San Antonio's implementation of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program. After this complaint was filed, the number of women and minorities in the CETA programs rose from 20% to 50%. Also, the Chicana Rights Project filed a class-action suit against the Texas Employment Commission seeking unemployment compensation benefits for pregnant women. Lawsuits were filed in California and Texas challenging sterilization abuses and reduction of health services. The Chicana Rights Project obtained compliance reviews and audits of San Antonio's five largest banks, ensuring equal employment opportunities for women. In addition, Graciela Olivarez chaired MALDEF for several years. She and Vilma Martínez were the first women on the board. Olivarez served as director of Community Services Administrations under the Carter administration in 1977. While a law professor at the University of New Mexico, she served as director for the Institute for Social Research and Development (National Women's History Project, 2008). From 1985 to 2004, Antonia Hernández headed MALDEF. She had also served as Democratic staff on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. She is Trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation and sits on the Senior Advisory Committee of the John F. Kennedy Institute of Politics at Harvard University, the Pacific Council for International Policy, and the Commission on Presidential Debates (National Women's History Project, 2008).

Beginning with Dolores Huerta, Latinas have been active in labor, and labor unions have been an important source of their political development. For over 20 years, Helen Chávez, wife of César Chávez, managed the UFW's



credit union, and Antonia Gonzales administered the union's Agbayani Village Retirement Home. Also, many women activists were vital to the UFW and managed family obligations, work, and activism. For example, Maria Luisa Rangel moved her family of nine to Detroit, Michigan, to advance the grape boycott in 1968. In 1970 Juanita Valdez moved her eight children to Cincinnati, Ohio, to help direct the lettuce campaign. And in 1973 Herminia Rodriguez relocated her family of six to Washington, D.C., to assist in reviving the grape, lettuce, and Gallo wine boycotts.

Additionally, Linda Chavez-Thompson rose through the ranks of the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations). In 1995 she became the first person of color (non-Caucasian, including Latino and black) and the first woman elected to the position of the executive vice president of the AFL-CIO. After serving for 11 years, she retired in 2007 (National Women's History Project, 2008).

MANA, A national Latina organization, was founded in 1974 by Mexican American women. Its mission is to empower all Latinas through developing leadership, providing advocacy opportunities, and promoting community service. Since 1999, Alma Morales Riojas has been MANA's president and chief executive officer (CEO). Previously, she was national executive director of Federally Employed Women, Inc., and executive director of the National Alliance of Veteran and Family Services. Morales Riojas was an expert consultant for personnel and equal opportunity with the Pentagon's Washington Headquarters Services, where she developed the first Affirmative Action and Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Plans for the Offices of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff. She has received the Tomas Rivera Leadership Award from the National Hispanic University and the President's Outstanding Achievement Award from the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives. Morales Riojas has been advisor to Lifetime Network, PBS, HBO's *Real Women Have Curves*, and Harvard University *Women's Policy Journal* and is a board member of the National Women's History Museum.

## Latina Liberation

Historically, Latinas have faced several forms of oppression—racism, sexism, and cultural traditions that encourage passivity, submissiveness, and silence (Anzaldúa, 1987; Montoya, Hardy-Fanta, & Garcia, 2000). As early as 1971, Chicanas were using the concept of “triple oppression” to describe the intersection of class, race, and gender for Latinas (Vidal, 1971). *Feministas* (or *femenistas*) is the term used in the early 1980s to capture this unique socioeconomic situation of Latinas (Córdova, 1999; Gomez, 1997). Due to the intersection of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and culture, Latinas have suffered varying degrees of domination and social inequality. Although many of

these women may not self-identify as Western feminists, the goals they seek are feminist in nature and include female agency, empowerment, equality, recognition, political representation and social change (Córdova, Cantú, Cardenas, García, & Sierra, 1993).

Because Latinas are, generally, less educated and less skilled than white women, they are economically disadvantaged and at risk of exploitation in the workplace (Gonzales, 2008). Latinas political and sex role socialization are affected by community customs and values that may hinder political consciousness (Fox & Lawless, 2003; Hardy-Fanta, 1997). Elma Barrera, organizer of the first national Chicana conference held in May 1971 in Houston, Texas, claimed that for Latinas, this means learning how to best please the men at home and in the church<sup>4</sup> (Vidal, 1971). Latina author Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) calls patriarchal man-made Latino traditions “cultural tyranny.” She claims that these rules can be “unmade” by using feminist logic to resist and transform the lives of women. Consequently, as Latinas' efforts to challenge the prevailing structures increased, they were cautioned to stay away from women's liberation because it was a “Gringo or a white thing” (Vidal, 1971). They were often accused of being anti-male and of dividing the Chicano movement. Latinas responded to critics by contending that chauvinistic adherence to preserving *la familia* and “cultural heritage” was no more than maintaining the age-old concept of keeping the woman barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen (Vidal, 1971). They asserted that as long as there was female subordination, there would be no unity in the movement. Through community-based organizations and activities, many Latinas gained the training to become more public women (Hardy-Fanta, 1993). Importantly, Latinas learned to use their multiple identities as women and as women of color. The intersection of identities has furnished Latinas with the resources and skills to negotiate, form coalitions, and adapt to diverse social and political environments (García et al., 2008).

As a sign of Latina consciousness-raising in the 1970s, numerous articles and publications began to appear. A special section in the newspaper *El Grito del Norte* was published by *Regeneración*, dedicated to and written by Chicanas. Also, a regular Chicana feminist newspaper was published and circulated by *Las Hijas de Cuahtemoc* in Long Beach, California (Vidal, 1971). In the 1970s, Latina scholars such as Marta Cotera and Ana Nieto Gomez (the latter a leading feminista founder of the first Chicana feminist scholarly journal, *Encuentro Femenil*) began advocating for the inclusion of feminist writings in higher education. In the 1980s and 1990s, female writers gained national recognition with their popular accounts of living and being Latina in America. These award-winning authors expressed the uniqueness of their cultural upbringing and the distinctiveness of their individual experience. Among the authors who brought their gendered Hispanic stories to the American public was Mexican American lesbian Gloria Anzaldúa, who was a renowned feminist poet and scholar.



Anzaldúa's works contributed to the construction of "queer theory," demanding inclusion in the feminist movement. Julia Alvarez was born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New York City. Alvarez's writings concern integration of Hispanic and U.S. culture from the perspective of women of color (Day, 2003). Chicana Sandra Cisneros was a child of poverty born in Chicago into a family that constantly migrated between Mexico and the United States. Cisneros's works explore the isolation of being the only female child among six brothers and the search for identity within the two cultures. In the academic arena, Latinas in universities organized against ethnic and racial marginalization and promoted a Latina agenda. In 1970 the women of the Mexican American Political Association formed a caucus at their annual conference. In 1984 the National Association for Chicano Studies conference resulted in the book *Chicana Voices: Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender*. Also, Latina scholars from the Chicana Studies organization, *Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social* advocated for social change in their communities and in higher education (Córdova, 1999). In 2001 a group of Latinas in academia formed the Latina Feminist Group and published the book *Telling to Live*, a collection of *testimonios* of Latinas in the academy (Burciaga & Tavares, 2006). Through private and collective testimonies, this book traces the development of political and intellectual "sisterhood," focusing on alliance and solidarity among a group of Latinas at Harvard University.

Religious oppression is another front where Latinas have called for change. For Latinas, religious oppression came in the form of traditional gender roles that glorified motherhood and kept women in the home rearing numerous children (Medina, 2004, p. 41). For women of the church, this meant a "sanctified" male-dominated and hierarchical structure that kept nuns subordinate to male clergy and refused to allow women to be ordained into the priesthood (Medina, 2004, p. 44). Las Hermanas was the first national politically active religious organization formed by Roman Catholic Latinas and Chicanas (Medina, 2004). This group included Puerto Ricans and Cuban laywomen as well as clergy women of the church. These "sisters" collaborated to defy long-standing stereotypes of Latina Catholics as "apolitical and asexual passive bearers of their faith" (Medina, 2004, p. 2). From 1971 to 1985, Las Hermanas successfully influenced policy making. Yet, the Roman Catholic Church has persistently remained antifeminist, patriarchal, and hierarchical, and continues to resist addressing institutional and ideological gender inequalities. In the 1980s Las Hermanas began to focus on goals pertaining to Latina personal empowerment rather than the church's power structure. The Latinas of Las Hermanas offered a courageous legacy of seeking agency in a church that persists in its marginalization of women (Medina, 2004, p. 150).

Consequently, the trailblazing Latinas of the 1960s and 1970s were the first to address the complexity of the Latina experience. The early leaders tackled issues that continue to

face Latinas living in the United States, including reproductive freedom, workplace and pregnancy discrimination, equal pay, lack of education, domestic violence, and oppression by the church (García et al., 2008; Vidal, 1971).

## Latina Politics

In politics, gender dynamics have hampered Latina success, and relatively few Latinas have occupied elective office. Still, as grassroots activists, Latinas continue to display the capacity to overcome many social barriers by bridging traditional and community motivations into their politics. Latina politics consists of cultural identities based on religion and spirituality, as well as advocating for the needs of family and local community. Many Latinas tend to demonstrate a participatory and inclusive view of politics in their use of networks, resources, and relationships based on traditional family-oriented culture (García et al., 2008, p. 10).

Many Latinas have been motivated to solve problems on the local level in their neighborhood, schools, and community (García et al., 2008). In Texas in the 1970s, Texas Latinas began to mobilize into action. In Pharr, Texas, Chicanas protested police brutality that took place during a demonstration and demanded the resignation of the city's mayor. In Crystal City, where La Raza Unida Party had won major victories, women organized on their own for the right to be heard. Also, to protest the all-male decision-making body of Ciudadanos Unidos (United Citizens), Latinas demanded recognition as equal members and won (Vidal, 1971). In addition, other notable groups—such as the former Hispanic Steering Committee of the National Women's Political Caucus, the National Hispana Leadership Institute, the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project, and others—have offered significant leadership education to Latinas (García et al., 2008).

In the 1980s Latinas began to achieve higher elective offices. In 1982 Cuban American Ilena Ros-Lichtinen (R-FL) was the first Latina representative elected to the U.S. Congress. Representative Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY) is serving her eighth term in New York's Twelfth Congressional District. In February 1998 she was named ranking Democratic member of the House Small Business Committee. She is the first Hispanic woman to serve as ranking member of a full House committee. In 2006 she was named chair of the House Small Business Committee, making her the first Latina to chair a congressional committee (Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, 2009).

In 1992 Mexican American Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1996 Loretta Sanchez, an Orange County, California, businesswoman, defeated her Republican incumbent. Within a short period of time, three more Democratic Latinas from California were elected to the U.S. House of Representatives: Hilda L. Solis, Grace Napolitano, and Linda Sánchez.

Women labor leaders such as Dolores Huerta have steadily worked for more Latina representation. In the early



1990s, Huerta was southwest coordinator of the Feminist Majority's Feminization of Power: 50/50 by the Year 2000 Campaign. She traveled around the country for 2 years and helped inspire a record-breaking number of women to run for office. In 1992 she served as national chair of the 21st Century Party, founded on the principles that women should make up 52% of the party's candidates and that the nation's ethnic diversity must be represented. For her activism, Huerta has received numerous awards, among them the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award, presented by President Clinton in 1998; the Creative Citizenship Labor Leader Award from the Puffin Foundation; the Ohtli Award from the Mexican government; and Smithsonian Institution's James Smithson Award. She was also named by *Ms.* magazine's as one of the most important women of 1997 and by *Ladies' Home Journal* as one of the 100 most important women of the 20th century.

Linda Chavez is chair of the Center for Equal Opportunity, a nonprofit public policy research organization. Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1947, Chavez received a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Colorado in 1970. Chavez has held a number of appointed top-level positions, including chairman of the National Commission on Migrant Education (1988–1992), White House director of Public Liaison (1985), and staff director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1983–1985), and was a member of the Administrative Conference of the United States (1984–1986). Chavez was the Republican nominee for U.S. senator from Maryland in 1986. In 1992, she was elected by the UN Human Rights Commission and served a 4-year term as U.S. expert to the UN Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Chavez was editor of the prize-winning quarterly journal *American Educator* (1977–1983), published by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), where she was assistant to the AFT president (1982–1983) and assistant director of legislation (1975–1977). As a weekly syndicated columnist, Chavez appears in many newspapers and is a political analyst for Fox News Channel. Chavez authored *Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation* (1991), *An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal* (2002), and *Betrayal: How Union Bosses Shake Down Their Members and Corrupt American Politics* (2004).

In 2000, Linda Chavez was honored by the Library of Congress as a "living legend" for her contributions to America's cultural and historical legacy. In January 2001, Chavez was President George W. Bush's nominee for Secretary of Labor until she withdrew her name from consideration. Chavez has served on the board of directors of ABM Industries, Inc., Pilgrim's Pride, and IDT Capital, a subsidiary of IDT Corporation, as well as on boards of several nonprofit organizations. Chavez is active in the Republican Party and chairs the Latino Alliance, a federally registered political action committee.

Since the early 1990s, Anita Perez Ferguson has been actively involved in politics. She served as the vice president

of the National Women's Political Caucus from 1991 to 1999 and as president from 1995 to 1999. Perez Ferguson was the Democratic nominee for the U.S. House of Representatives from California in 1990 and 1992. She was the White House liaison to the U.S. Department of Transportation in 1994 and has served as director of training for the Democratic National Committee. Perez's other public service positions includes Planning Commissioner, Affirmative Action Commissioner, and chair of the Ethnic Advisory Board for Education in California. In 1999 Perez Ferguson authored *A Passion for Politics* and has been a visiting lecturer for the Woodrow Wilson Foundation at Princeton and a frequent contributor to National Public Radio. In 2001 Perez Ferguson was sworn in as chair of the board of directors of the Inter-American Foundation<sup>5</sup> and served on the board of directors for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the YMCA. Perez Ferguson was named one of the 100 Most Influential Hispanics in the United States by *Hispanic Business* magazine.

In 1994 Judge Vanessa Ruiz, the first Hispanic judge to sit on the District of Columbia's highest court, was appointed to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by President Bill Clinton. In 2001 Judge Ruiz was named Hispanic National Bar Association's Judge of the Year for her commitment to serving the Hispanic community. She served as president of the National Association of Women Judges and in 2009 was a recipient of the prestigious Margaret Brent Award, bestowed by the American Bar Association Commission on Women. Also, the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia endorsed Judge Ruiz appointment to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. In 2008, Ramona E. Romero, president of the Hispanic National Bar Association, created the Commission on the Status of Latinas in the Legal Profession. The commission's goal is to identify and document the obstacles facing Latina lawyers.

Between 1998 and 2003, former state legislator Grace Napolitano won a seat in the House, former state senator Hilda Solis became a U.S. Representative, and Representative Loretta Sanchez's sister, activist attorney Linda Sánchez, was also elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The sisters were the first "sister act" in Congress (García et al., 2008). In 2009 six Latinas were serving in the House of Representatives (Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], 2009).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) is one of the leading Hispanic organizations in the country. CHCI was established in 1978 by Congressman Edward Roybal and Congressman Baltasar Corrada to increase Hispanic participation in the U.S. policy-making process. In 2004, after years of male leadership, Esther Aguilera became president and CEO of the CHCI. Aguilera has served on the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, National Council of La Raza, and in the Department of Energy. Aguilera was recognized as one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in Washington, D.C., and was presented with *Hispanic*



magazine's 2006 Latina Excellence Award in Education. She was featured in *Latino Leaders* magazine's 2007 women's issue for her positive impact in the Hispanic community.

Nationwide in 2004, Latinas held 27.4% of all Hispanic elected positions (García et al., 2008, p. 5), and in 2005, there were approximately 6,000 elected and appointed Hispanic officials (National Association for Latino Elected and Appointed Officials [NALEO], 2010). Since 2004, the total number of Latino voters has doubled: Out of the 17.9 million currently eligible to vote, Latinas account for 9.1 million (Gonzalez-Rojas, 2008). Still, despite the significant differences in the quality of life issues, Latinas had the lowest voter turnout of any group in the country in 2006 (Bowen, 2007). In 2007 the number of Latina elected officials serving at the local, state, and federal levels increased by 74%, compared to 25% for male Latinos. The female share of all Latino elected officials increased from 24% in 1996 to 31% in 2007 (NALEO, 2007). In 2009, 75 women serve in statewide selective executive offices; of these 75 are 7 (9.3%) women of color: 3 Latinas, 3 African Americans, and 1 Native American (CAWP, 2009).

## 2008 Election

During the 2008 election, Hispanics comprised approximately 15% of the U.S. population. However, their electoral influence could have been weakened because many were ineligible to vote: They either were not citizens or they were not 18 years old. Still, in the 2008 presidential race, Hispanics were seen by many as a potential "swing vote" (Taylor & Fry, 2007). At that time, Latinas made up 5% of the total voter turnout and Latino men made up 4% (Gonzalez-Rojas, 2008). The largest increase in Hispanic voters occurred in the three battleground states of New Mexico (9 percentage points higher), Colorado (5 percentage points higher), and Nevada (5 percentage points higher). Hispanics voted for Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden (67%) over Republicans John McCain and Sarah Palin (31%) by a margin of more than 2 to 1 (Lopez, 2008). With the goal of increasing the Latino electorate, Hispanic organizations galvanized and launched *Ya es Hora, ¡Ve y Vota!*—"It's Time, Go Vote!" The coalition included the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest U.S. Latino civil rights and advocacy group. Since 2005, Janet Murguía has served as president and CEO of the NCLR. She is the organization's first female president. Prior to joining NCLR, she was executive vice chancellor for university relations at the University of Kansas and had been deputy assistant to President Bill Clinton and deputy director of legislative affairs. Also, she was deputy campaign manager and director of constituency outreach for the Gore-Lieberman presidential campaign. In 2005 *Hispanic Business* magazine named Murguía as a finalist for its Women of the Year Award.

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was also a member of the Hispanic coalition. In

2006 LULAC elected Rosa Rosales national president. Rosales was one of the first Mexican American women involved in the labor movement. She had served as the organization's national vice president of the Southwest.

Leaders such as Karina Cabrera, chair of the Latina Political Action Committee, a New York City-based bipartisan political action committee, set out to change the statistics on the Latina vote in the 2008 elections. Cabrera understood that many Hispanic women are heads of households and are constantly confronted with unaffordable education, insufficient health care, unemployment, and overall economic hardships. The New York PAC's mission was to empower Latina voters. For the 2008 election, the national exit polls revealed that 68% of Hispanic females and 64% of Hispanic males supported Obama.<sup>7</sup> In Colorado, 78% of Latinas supported Obama, compared to 73% of Latino men. In New Mexico, the gap was even wider, with 72% of Latinas voting for Obama, compared to 65% of Latino men. And in Texas, where McCain won, 71% of Latinas favored Obama, compared to 55% of men—a gender gap of 16 percentage points (Aleccia, 2008).

According to the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts, Latinas are increasingly more engaged in politics (Montoya et al., 2000). Zurava Tapia, an Obama organizer of Virginia Hispanics, speculated that Obama's emphasis on health care and education, his emotional investment in the community, and heavy advertising on Spanish language television are what resonated with Latinas. Tapia asserted that women in Latinas feel responsible for their families and community, and they felt Obama better understood their needs (Aleccia, 2008). Additionally, activist and first vice president emeritus and cofounder of the United Farm Workers, Dolores Huerta had coined the phrase "*Si se puede*," or "Yes we can," long before it became the mantra of the Obama campaign (Bowen, 2008). Like many Latinas, Huerta had backed Hillary Rodham Clinton by emphasizing Clinton's connection to the Hispanic community during the primaries. In the primaries, Latinas contributed to Clinton's crucial narrow wins in Texas, New Mexico, and California. At that time, approximately 71% of Hispanic women in Texas and 54% of Hispanic men there supported Clinton (Bowen, 2008).

Political science professor Gretchen Ritter, director of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, said that many Hispanic women were attracted to Hillary Rodham Clinton's pro-family and pro-children emphasis. However, like many in the non-Latino population, many Latinas later altered their support for Clinton, turning instead to Obama. The New York-based Latina PAC endorsed Hillary Rodham Clinton but later threw its support to Obama. Latina PAC board member Elizabeth Caldas said that it was a difficult transition because Latinas adore Clinton (Bowen, 2008).

In June 2008 Barack Obama named a prominent Latina, Patti Solis Doyle, to the position of chief of staff to the vice presidential campaign (Stein, 2008). She had been



Hillary Rodham Clinton's former campaign manager, and her selection helped draw in a much sought after political constituency: Latinas and Clinton supporters. After Obama's presidential victory, the National Latina Organization of the Mexican American National Association praised him for appointing Juliet V. Garcia, president of the University of Texas at Brownsville, to his administration's transition team. On the Republican side, actress Rosario Dawson cofounded the nonpartisan *Voto Latino* to register voters. Speaking at the Republican Convention, Dawson stressed the importance of government policies that target women and asserted that Republicans would have a grim future if they did not focus on the concerns of women. In particular, she suggested that Republicans focus on addressing poverty and domestic and workplace abuse issues, to which Hispanic women are especially susceptible (Bowen, 2008). Republican supporter Laura Drain, cochair of the Virginia chapter of Latinas for McCain, called on undecided voters in her area. Drain and friends formed the Hispanic Professional Women's Association, a Washington-based group of female business executives. According to member Maricruz MaGowan, all types of professional women came together in a nonpartisan discussion group focused on the presidential candidates, all solidly supporting McCain (Bowen, 2008). Many Hispanic Professional Women's Association members supported Republican policies on antiabortion, traditional marriage, national security, and a strong military. Another Republican Party supporter, Leslie Sanchez, was named one of America's top 100 most influential Hispanics by the *Hispanic Business* magazine. Sanchez is the former executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and frequently lectures on issues of importance to women and the Hispanic community. Sanchez served as congressional aide to Representative Henry Bonilla (R-TX) and was codirector of the Congressional Border Caucus. There, she worked on immigration and border security legislation as well as other issues before the House Appropriations Committee. In 2000 she developed and executed the Republican Party's first multimillion-dollar advertising campaign aimed directly at Hispanic voters.<sup>8</sup>

Latina leader Rosalee Montoya-Read, former University of New Mexico development director and a past president of the Hispanic Women's Council of Albuquerque, stated that the economy had left women of color desperate for a way out of a very tough situation. She felt that women wanted the new Democratic administration to focus on health care policies related to obesity and diabetes that are widespread among the Hispanic population (Aleccia, 2008). Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas (2008), director of policy and advocacy for the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, stated that there are three major requests for the new Obama administration: A repeal of the Hyde amendment, which denies low-income women access to abortion services; an end to discriminatory, militaristic, and inhumane immigration enforcement practices that are destroying Latino communities; and support of

equitable, affordable, and comprehensive health care for all. Gonzalez-Rojas proclaimed that Latinas had cast their ballot for hope and justice instead of fear. In 2008 Cristina López, president of the National Hispana Leadership Institute, joined a coalition of organizations calling for the establishment of a Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. López had worked with women, farmworkers, and immigrant-led groups and had served as deputy executive director of the Center for Community Change, a national social justice organization. She was also vice president for institutional development at the NCLR. In response, President Obama established the White House Council on Women and Girls to coordinate federal response to the challenges confronted by women and girls.

Although the Hispanic population votes more often for Democrats, this group is not homogenous. Like most groups, Latinos have divergent political views on a wide range of issues. The 2008 election cycle's emphasis on the Hispanic vote provided many Latinas the pivotal opportunities to become activists in the political area.

## Summary and Future Directions

In December 2008, President-Elect Obama formally nominated Representative Hilda Solis to serve as the next secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor. Solis was confirmed in January 2009 and pledged to fight for working families by promoting environment-friendly job growth, fair wages, and workplace safety. Additionally, President Obama appointed Cecilia Muñoz of Bolivian heritage as his director of Intergovernmental Affairs. Muñoz has worked for the Legalization Outreach Program for Catholic Charities and was senior vice president for the Office of Research, Advocacy, and Legislation at NCLR. Her career has been dedicated to advocating for immigrants and developing immigration policy.

Additionally, Nancy Sutley was confirmed as chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Of Argentinean ancestry, she is the first prominent gay person to earn a senior role in Obama's new administration. Sutley had served as special assistant to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner during the Clinton administration. Before the Obama appointment, she was deputy mayor for energy and environment in Los Angeles. Therefore, the new Democratic administration is offering new areas for Latina leadership.

On May 26, 2009, President Obama nominated 54-year-old federal judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court and she was confirmed by the Senate on August 6. Justice Sotomayor is the first Hispanic appointed to the Supreme Court, the third woman, and the sixth person on that nine-member panel with a Roman Catholic background. Sotomayor was born to a Puerto Rican family and grew up in a South Bronx public housing project. Her parents moved from Puerto Rico to New York during World War II. Her mother served in the Women's Auxiliary Corps and her



father was a factory worker with a third-grade education who died when Sotomayor was 9 years old. Her mother, Cclina, raised Sonia and her brother, Juan, now a physician in Syracuse. Sotomayor was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes (Type 1) when she was 8 and spoke mostly Spanish until she was 9. In 1976 Sonia Sotomayor graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University, was a Phi Beta Kappa, and was a corecipient of the M. Taylor Pync Prize, the highest undergraduate honor awarded at Princeton. In 1979, she earned a law degree from Yale Law School and was editor of the 1979 *Yale Law Journal* and managing editor of the *Yale Studies in World Public Order*. From 1979 to 1984, she served in the New York County District Attorney's Office. Sotomayor was in private practice in New York City from 1984 to 1992, specializing in civil, trademark, and copyright litigation. She also served as an adjunct professor at the NYU School of Law in 1998 and as a lecturer at Columbia Law School in 1999. In 1991 Sotomayor was nominated by President George H. W. Bush to serve as a federal judge and was confirmed in August 1992. President William J. Clinton nominated her in June 1997 to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and she was confirmed in 1998, after a delay by Republicans. She served as a member of the Second Circuit Task Force on Gender, Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts and was formerly on the boards of directors of the New York Mortgage Agency, the New York City Campaign Finance Board, and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund. Judge Sotomayor belongs to the American Bar Association, Association of Hispanic Judges, Hispanic Bar Association, New York Women's Bar Association, and the American Philosophical Society. During the confirmation process, Judge Sotomayor defused Republican attacks by defending the following statement, which she made in a 2001 speech: "I would hope that a wise Latina woman, with the richness of her experience, would more often than not reach a better conclusion than a white male who hasn't lived that life." According to President Obama, Justice Sotomayor brings more federal judicial experience to the Supreme Court than any justice in 100 years and more overall judicial experience than anyone confirmed for the Court in the past 70 years. During her 30-year career, Judge Sotomayor has worked at almost every level of the U. S. judicial system (Mears, 2009; Murray & Shear, 2009).

Latinas have overcome many forms of oppression. In the 1960s Latinas started questioning discrimination in their culture and in society at large. They believed that cultural traditions and backward ideology kept Hispanic women subjugated. In an effort to make their voices heard, Latinas challenged male leaders of the Latino movement organizations. As they became more empowered, Latinas began to actively seek equality in every aspect of society, including the home, education, employment, politics, and the church. Over time, Latina leadership has improved community life. Through Latina activism, individual Latinas continue to be empowered and grow with experience in all areas of society. This chapter highlighted some of the Latina women who have showed leadership skills by bravely fighting for social justice for themselves and their communities.

## Notes

1. This latter group consisted of nearly 200,000 taken to Mexico alone.
2. *Chicana* refers to females, *Chicano* refers to males and to the Mexican American population. Some believe that the term *La Raza* or The People, suits this population best. Mexican Americans coined the term *Chicana/o* during the 1960s, and it is widely used by those who see it as an affirmation of their heritage. The classification of *Hispanic* has been imposed by the U.S. Census Bureau and (to many) is a "politically distasteful label" (Gimenez, 1999, p. 168). *Latino* refers to the Hispanic population or to Hispanic males.
3. MALDEF was founded in 1968 and funded by the Ford Foundation to address the needs of poor Mexican women.
4. Catholicism is another part of Hispanic culture that tends to oppress women and will be addressed in this chapter.
5. In 1969 Congress created the Inter-American Foundation to provide American assistance to the poor of Latin America and the Caribbean by financing self-help projects.
6. State senator Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles) publicly stated that she was interested in pursuing Hilda Solis's House seat (Larrubia, 2008). Democrat Judy Chu won the seat in 2009.
7. According to Pew Hispanic Center exit polls from Edison Media Research published by CNN.
8. In 2000 the Republican National Committee indicated that it was prepared to spend \$10 million on Latino vote turnout (Sierra, Carrillo, DeSipio, & Jones-Correa, 2000).

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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Despite numerous obstacles facing them, many ordinary women around the world have achieved extraordinary feats by tackling environmental problems. However, the countless contributions of women in the environmental movement have often been overlooked. Glenda Riley (1999) notes that customary accounts of early American environmentalism mistakenly equate visibility with significance and focus on policy shapers, such as John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, and Theodore Roosevelt. Focus on such figures typically has discounted the ways in which women have been the center of grassroots environmental activism.

Often to their detriment, women also historically have been associated with the realm of "Mother Nature." This supposed connection has had some troubling tendencies. For example, nature has been feminized and women have been naturalized; both have been constructed as dangerous and unruly forces that need to be controlled and subjugated for man's needs. This supposed connection has sparked controversy that is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, I will focus on the myriad ways in which women have been leaders in environmental movements, motivated by concerns for the health and well-being of the earth and of the earth's inhabitants. Women shape the direction of the contemporary environmental movement, utilizing a wide range of strategies and techniques for transforming the world at the grassroots level. The positive global impact of women who have struggled against environmental degradation is undeniable, and their settled determination and strength is a source of inspiration for activists everywhere.

### Early Pioneers and Education

#### Ellen Swallow

Women historically have encountered many obstacles to attaining leadership roles. For example, women have faced barriers that block their access to higher education. One of the early leaders of the environmental movement, Ellen Swallow (who married and was known later as Ellen Richards) faced many challenges as a "reformer." Known as the "first lady of environmental science," Swallow was the first woman to receive a science degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (Breton, 1998, p. 52). During the late 1800s, the urban Northeast of the United States was suffering from extreme environmental problems. Industrial waste, coal smoke, sewage, and loss of trees were among the many challenges facing the public's health. Swallow focused on chemistry as the scientific means to handle the pressing environmental problems surrounding her. Her work on water analysis contributed to an emerging branch of chemistry, led to the world's first water purity tables, the nation's first water quality standards, and the first modern sewage treatment systems and also established the public health movement in the United States (Breton, 1998, pp. 50–51).

Swallow developed a science, *oekology*, that focused on health, water and air quality, and nutrition and connected life sciences, earth sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences; *oekology* eventually became known as ecology (Breton, 1998, p. 59). Swallow had an expansive definition of the term *ecology*, which included the goal of improving the environment for people. She faced many obstacles in



her groundbreaking research and her account of ecology was met with resistance from some scientists who believed ecology related only to plant and animal life. In response, Swallow began substituting the term *domestic science* in place of *ecology* in her work. As a groundbreaking researcher and dedicated teacher, Swallow functioned as a dean of women at MIT. Despite her contributions to inaugurate the world's first comprehensive sanitary engineering course and numerous other teaching responsibilities, Swallow was not paid by MIT. Her many contributions to the environmental movement continue to influence campaigns today. For example, in recent times, MomsRising generated a campaign for healthy air around schools, and in many ways Swallow forged the way for such environmental public health campaigns.

### Conservation Movement

In the early 20th century, women played a significant role in the American Progressive conservation crusade for the environment. Conservation groups promoted the efficient use and development of natural resources, and this particular form of environmentalism was firmly established during the early 1900s during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency. Gifford Pinchot, leader of the conservation movement, acknowledged work done by women in this movement, including Laura Lyon White, wife of banker Lovell White. The California Federation of Women's Clubs, led by White and Mrs. Robert Burdette fought tirelessly for the conservation of California's forests (Merchant, 1996, p. 112). An active supporter of women's suffrage, White organized a campaign to purchase the Calaveras Grove of Big Trees to be preserved as a national park, and she personally campaigned to lobby every senator and representative in Congress (Merchant, 1996, p. 112). As president of the Sempervirens Club (later known as the Save the Redwoods League), White worked with women's groups, such as the Women's Club of San Jose, and created the Big Basin State Park, saving many large stands of Sequoias from the saw (p. 113). She worked tirelessly to promote an education campaign through newspapers, schools, civic groups, and women's clubs, and the California Federation of Women's Clubs came up with a plan to establish a School of Forestry at the University of California, Berkeley, at a time when the only three schools of forestry were located on the East Coast (p. 113).

Women's organizations, such as the Women's National Rivers and Harbor Congress and the General Federation of Women's Clubs across the United States, pushed for the conservation of natural resources and worked toward the creation of parks, preserves, and gardens (Merchant, 1996, p. 136). For some women involved in the conservation movement, such as Overton G. Ellis of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the role of women as mothers was the driving force behind their involvement in environmental concerns. Ellis claimed women's roles as mothers afforded them

"special claims to protection not so much individually as for unborn generations" (qtd. in Merchant, 1996, p. 130).

### Rachel Carson

One of the best-known women in the modern environmental movement, Rachel Carson, once said, "We still talk in terms of conquest. We still haven't become mature enough to think of ourselves as only a tiny part of a vast and incredible universe" ("Rachel Carson," 1964). Known as the "godmother" of the modern environmental movement, Carson helped shift the ways in which the environment and hazardous substances were viewed by American society. Carson's famous work, *Silent Spring*, first appeared as a series in *The New Yorker* in 1962, and her research focused on the deadly effects of chemical pesticides. At the time, there were few agencies and institutions in place to protect the environment (Rodda, 1993, p. 104). The powerful agricultural chemicals industry tried to block publication of *Silent Spring*. This industry invested a quarter of a million dollars in a propaganda campaign to discredit Carson (Breton, 1998, p. 72). The Monsanto Corporation and magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Science* disparaged her work, and *Time* accused Carson of being "hysterically overemphatic in her emotional and inaccurate outburst" (Breton, 1998, p. 73). This commonly used tactic to dismiss women's environmental concerns as hysteria continues to operate today.

Carson's *Silent Spring* exposed the dangers of long-lasting pesticides such as DDT, chlorinated hydrocarbons, and organophosphates and drew attention to how these pesticides impacted the entire food chain. Now, scientific evidence confirms that at least 51 synthetic chemicals, especially those made from chlorinated hydrocarbons are disrupting the endocrine systems of wildlife and human beings, and many of these nondecaying chemicals will persist for centuries (Breton, 1998, p. 76). These chemicals concentrate in the food chain, contaminating and poisoning life, and they continue to pose risks for future generations (Merchant, 1996, p. 140). Global pollution and persistent poisons in the fatty tissues of living animals stem from the widespread use of these chemicals. Carson is now highly regarded by many to be the spark that initiated the contemporary environmental movement in the United States. Her recommendations for integrated pest management and a shift away from monoculture in agriculture have been influential in the organic farming movement, although the overall widespread use of pesticides continues to rise.

Carson left a legacy that continues to inspire people to move toward a healthier way of living. One example of her lasting impact is the work of the Silent Spring Institute, which is named in her honor. This institute draws from the collaborative efforts of scientists, physicians, public health advocates, and community activists to identify the links between women's health and the environment, particularly breast cancer, which was the cause of Rachel Carson's death.



## The Origins of Tree-Hugging: Activist Strategies

Environmentalists are often called "tree huggers." The term *tree hugger* derived its meaning from a legend about events dating back hundreds of years ago in Rajasthan, India (Breton, 1998, p. 3). A local woman, Amitra Devi of the Bishnios religious sect, was determined to stop the maharajah's crew from cutting down a forest. According to her beliefs, trees were sacred. She put her arms around the khetri tree trunk and tried desperately to stop the felling of the first tree. The crew did not listen. She was killed while embracing the tree. Then, her daughters took her place, one by one. They were killed, one by one. Hundreds of villagers were killed that day trying to save the khetri trees (Breton, 1998, p. 3). When the maharajah heard about the massacre, he called for the crew to stop and promised that the trees would never be cut (Breton 1998, p. 4). This day marked the beginning of the Chipko movement.

Vandana Shiva's work, *Staying Alive*, draws attention to the history of the Chipko movement as a history of the ideals and actions of courageous women (Shiva, 1989, p. 67). Shiva discusses how the contributions of these women were overlooked, despite their insights into ecological issues and their resilient moral fortitude. Hundreds of years later, in the 1960s and 1970s, women staged protests against commercial felling of forests across India. In the Chamoli district in Uttar Pradesh in 1974, village women went into the forests, joining hands and circling around the 2,000 trees that were to be felled by commercial contractors (Rodda, 1993, p. 11). The movement spread quickly and was led by local women who connected through songs and message "runners" who travelled from village to village (Shiva, 1989, p. 73). There was no formal structure or headquarters, and this nonviolent resistance movement was locally autonomous and community based (Breton, 1998, p. 6). Shiva argues that the Chipko movement was explicitly an ecological and feminist movement in which peasant women openly challenged the commercial forest industry as well as local men who were planning to fell the trees (Shiva, 1989, p. 77). This movement shifted from a focus on saving trees to a wider ecological vision, and the model of the Chipko movement continues to influence environmental activists in India and throughout the world (Breton, 1998, p. 10).

### Judi Bari and the Trees

Like the Chipko activists in India, the environmental group, Earth First! is well-known for putting its members in the way of chainsaws and bulldozers. Earth First! is a direct-action group committed to saving the ancient redwoods of northern California in the Pacific Northwest temperate rainforest, particularly Headwaters Forest (Breton, 1998, p. 26). Some of these trees are 2,000 years old and have diameters of more than 15 feet. These forests are the home of the endangered spotted owl and marbled

murrelet, and more than 97% of these old growth redwoods have been cut (Breton, 1998, p. 26).

Earth First! has utilized a wide range of tactics such as rallies, demonstrations, blockades, pranks, and tree sitting as well as tree spiking and "monkeywrenching" by the founders back in the early 1980s (Breton, 1998, p. 27). Monkeywrenching is a form of resistance against industrialization and includes acts such as pulling up survey stakes and dumping sand into the crankcases of bulldozers. Judi Bari was a carpenter, labor unionist, and environmentalist. She became actively involved in the movement after working on a luxury home for an executive and finding out that the redwood boards came from trees that were thousands of years old. She dramatically influenced the male-dominated Earth First! group and encouraged more women to become involved. Actively opposed to tree spiking and monkeywrenching, Bari influenced the group to shift away from widespread use of these controversial tactics (Breton, 1998, p. 27). She was an outspoken leader and through lawsuits, tree sittings, blockades, rallies, and demonstrations, she raised national awareness about the plight of these redwoods and these communities (p. 28). Bari did not believe the conflict was between the activists and the timber workers. Instead, she identified the conflict as the entire community versus the timber corporations after the Maxxam Corporation took over Pacific Lumber and tripled the logging rate (p. 27). Bari was known for forming alliances with workers inside companies by teaching the workers to form unions that protected their health and safety and to file complaints with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (p. 28). As the momentum of the campaign grew, Bari became a target for violence and received numerous death threats.

Bari, her children, and a couple of other Earth First! activists survived an incident involving a timber truck. One day after a blockade, a timber worker rammed her car with a log-hauling truck that sent her car off the road (Breton, 1998, p. 29). The death threats and violence escalated. She survived another act of violence when she was in the midst of organizing a massive drive called Redwood Summer and a bomb exploded in her car (Breton, 1998, p. 28). Prior to the car bombing, Bari had received multiple death threats, yet 3 hours after the bombing, she was arrested while in surgery for a shattered pelvis and a paralyzed lower body (Breton, 1998, p. 26). She was charged with transporting illegal explosives, but after 2 months, the FBI and Oakland police dropped the case against her (p. 29). Despite pain and disabilities resulting from the bombing, Bari continued her leadership work, organizing a rally and delivering a petition with 12,000 signatures to the president of Maxxam/Pacific, John Campbell (p. 32). An agreement was reached in which Maxxam/Pacific Lumber stopped logging on 7,500 acres in Headwaters (pp. 31–32). Although Bari died months later from cancer, her influence continues to shape the current movement to protect redwoods, and her motto, "Don't mourn, organize!"



from the Joe Hill song reflects the overall resilience of these tree-saving campaigns.

### **Lois Gibbs**

The first Earth Day in 1970 marked a new awareness of environmental health threats posed by industries, and in the wake of this, U.S. citizens were energizing the contemporary environmental movement. An excellent example can be found in the accomplishments of Love Canal housewife Lois Gibbs. Concerned about an overwhelming odor and oozing sludge rising to the surface of people's backyards, Gibbs organized a committee of Love Canal, New York, neighbors in 1,200 homes in the Niagara Falls area in 1978 (Breton 1998, pp. 116–117). Her child was suffering from health problems, and the community had unusually high rates of cancer, birth defects, and miscarriages (p. 117). Gibbs had not previously been an environmental activist, but she became motivated to investigate further into the causes of the health problems in her own family and community that seemed to be linked to the degraded environment.

City and county authorities had a long history of failing to address the environmental hazards, despite problems dating back to the 1950s. Gibbs and her neighbors did not know when they had purchased houses by Love Canal that these homes were located next to a toxic waste dump used by Hooker Chemical Corporation to dump benzene, toluene, lindane, dioxin, PCBs, and chloroform between 1942 and 1953, and that the company often released toxic gases into the air and pesticides into the city sewers (Breton, 1998, p. 117). Three toxic waste dumps in the area had more than 2,000 pounds of dioxin alone from Hooker Chemical. The city mayor and state and federal agencies did not deal with the risks posed from the toxic waste, and when the state appointed a task force to handle the issue, it did not include any physicians, scientists, or women (p. 118). When Gibbs asked the school superintendent to allow her son to transfer to another school because of his illnesses, the superintendent refused, stating that he did not believe the area, including the playground, was contaminated.

Gibbs went door-to-door in her community, asking her neighbors to sign her petition demanding to close down the school. Many neighbors told her about their illnesses, which prompted Gibbs and other housewives to conduct a survey about the health problems of community members (Mazur, 1998, p. 80). This survey revealed that in the community, only 1 healthy baby was born out of every 15 pregnancies (Merchant, 1996, p. 157). Initially, this survey was not taken seriously because it was conducted by housewives, but when the New York State Health Department finally did its own inspection, the department made a public announcement that the dump was a serious threat to the health of the community (Breton, 1998, p. 120). The New York Department of Environmental Conservation tested the air and soil from houses, took blood samples from

residents, and monitored basements (p. 120). In April 1978, the state reported that 5 out of every 24 children had been born with defects and that the rate of miscarriages was 50% higher than the average (p. 120). Residents were told to stay out of their own yards and basements and to avoid eating homegrown vegetables. In August 1978, the elementary school was closed, the Health Department recommended that children under age 2 and pregnant women be temporarily evacuated, and President Jimmy Carter declared Love Canal to be a federal disaster area (p. 120).

Gibbs was quickly becoming the new poster child of environmental activism as the media grabbed hold of the story. She appeared on national television, held press conferences, and testified before Congress (Mazur, 1998, p. 81). Gibbs and some of her neighbors formed the Love Canal Homeowners Association and pressured local politicians to permanently relocate all residents who wanted to leave. In August 1978, 237 families living closest to the dump site were able to relocate, leaving behind another 710 families, including Gibbs (Breton 1998, p. 123). Demonstrations continued, Gibbs was thrown in jail for several hours for picketing to halt the containment work so everyone could evacuate, and she continued to push for permanent relocation for all of the families. These residents could not afford to move away on their own and eventually, the state bought all of the houses at fair market price (p. 123). In 1980, when a report of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) disclosed that some residents had chromosomal damage, the community panicked. Gibbs and some other residents issued an ultimatum to the White House, holding two EPA officials hostage (p. 124). In response, President Carter visited the area, declared it a federal disaster area once again, and ordered emergency funds for temporary relocation for all residents, marking the first time that FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funds were used in a human-made disaster (p. 124). Gibbs's story is a compelling testament to the ways in which the courage and determination of one individual can move powerful politicians, including the President of the United States to acknowledge and deal with the dangers of environmental degradation. Despite her lack of formal education and experience, in a relatively short time, Gibbs radically transformed attitudes about hazardous waste disposal. In 1981 Gibbs formed the Center for Health, Environment & Justice. More than 30 years after the Love Canal events, Gibbs continues to work tirelessly with thousands of grassroots groups around the country to organize to protect their communities from risks posed by soil, air, water, or food contamination.

### **Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement**

Native Kenyan and creator of the Green Belt Movement, Wangari Maathai has transformed landscapes, empowered women, and inspired tree-planting movements in more than 30 countries around the world. Beginning in



her backyard, Maathai planted seven trees with a few other women in June 1977. This was the first step in a chain of events that led toward environmental restoration in Kenya. Kenya's farmers are mostly poor rural women. As a leader of the National Council of Women of Kenya, Maathai recommended tree-planting as a way to empower these women. The women started to collect seeds and plant these harvested seeds as well as free seedlings. The project began by planting nurseries around schools, and the term *green belt* was used to describe the narrow strips that were planted around schools (Rodda, 1993, p. 111). Eventually these locally managed tree nurseries all over Kenya began to provide income for these women; produce food, fuel, shade, and medicine; and restore the local environment by providing oxygen and combating soil erosion and desertification (Breton, 1998, p. 12). The Green Belt Movement illustrates multiple ways in which environmental issues are connected with issues of economics, power, and politics. In a relatively inexpensive, simple, and locally managed process, Maathai is able to deal with environmental destruction and provide women with opportunities to thrive in a sustainable way.

Valuing local expertise and resources, Maathai's Green Belt Movement only plants indigenous species that enable the regions to avoid misuse of the land. Before any trees are planted, the women and Maathai and her coworkers discuss the risks posed by desertification and the needs of the local community (Breton, 1998, p. 13). The general goal is to plant more trees than needed for fuel and to compensate women for the trees that survive. National Council of Women of Kenya is responsible overall for distributing the seeds, and the women are responsible for the management of seed collection (Rodda, 1993, p. 111). Courageous, outspoken, and willing to stand up for her beliefs at all costs, Maathai has been arrested, suffered from violent attacks, and has had her passport impounded. Widespread support from groups all over the world help to fund the Green Belt Movement, and Maathai has earned international recognition. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 and is widely regarded as the creator of one of the most successful environmental projects.

### Winona LaDuke

Anishinaabe writer, environmental activist, and lecturer, Winona LaDuke was named by *Ms.* magazine as "Woman of the Year" in 1998. LaDuke has worked tirelessly on Native American, environmental, and women's issues. She ran twice on the Green Party's vice presidential ticket (in 1996 and 2000) and was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2007. She is founding director of White Earth Land Recovery Project and is the program director of the Honor the Earth Fund. In her written and activist work, LaDuke is focused on human rights and she challenges the colonialist and industrialist forces that have contributed to the degrading health of all

communities and the planet as a whole. In her words to the NGO Forum in China in 1995, "Simply stated, if we can no longer nurse our children, if we can no longer bear children, and if our bodies are wracked with poisons, we will have accomplished little in the way of determining our destiny or improving our conditions" (LaDuke, 1995, p. 527). Calling attention to environmental health hazards posed by nuclear waste dumps and toxic wastes on reservation lands, she has brought global awareness about the connection between the environmental impact of development on reservations and the environmental health impact on Native women's bodies, adversely affecting the status of indigenous women and the overall status of indigenous societies. Her long list of awards does not fully capture the extent of her contributions to the environmental movement and to the causes of indigenous communities worldwide.

### Philosopher Val Plumwood

Another environmental writer known for putting her theories into practice, Val Plumwood was a highly accomplished ecofeminist philosopher, activist, and leader in the environmental movement. Her philosophical work emphasizes the links between social inequities and environmental degradation. She calls attention to links between the oppression of nonhuman animals and nature and the oppression of groups of humans, such as women. There are many similarities in terms of the ways in which oppressed groups such as nonhuman animals and women are often subject to objectification and radical separation that she illustrates in her expansion upon the feminist critiques of Self-Other dualistic ways of domination. For example, Plumwood (1993) noted, "The category of nature is a field of multiple exclusion and control, not only of nonhumans, but of various groups of humans and aspects of human life which are cast as nature" (p. 4). Sexism, racism, and colonialism rely upon conceiving of the Other as closer to nature and less than fully human. Examining the history of Western philosophical thought, she argues how understandings of reason, nature, and human identity are closely connected to deeper political views of domination. Connecting feminist theory with environmental theory, Plumwood (1993) argued, "a critical ecofeminism can draw an understanding of many of the processes and structures of power and domination" (p. 40).

Plumwood lived in the heart of the Australian temperate rainforest, living a life that embodied her theories and calling into question prevailing ideas of separation of nature and humanity. She recognized the beauty and agency of nature and devoted herself to environmental causes, such as the battle to save the eastern Australian rainforests. As Freya Mathews (2008) wrote,

Whether it was for wildlife killed on local roads, rare orchids destroyed by mowing in the cemetery near her home,



or crocodiles threatened with hunting in northern Australia, she [Plumwood] always made her voice heard. In this way, she showed how philosophy could not only diagnose the world's ills but become something more than a charade of words—a way of life. (p. 32)

In addition to her fine scholarship and activism, many know Plumwood as the woman who survived the jaws of a crocodile. During a canoe trip in rugged Australia, a salt-water crocodile tipped her canoe. Plumwood was dragged underwater in a “death roll” three times, and she endured multiple wounds. She drew upon this near-death experience and related the following: “After the crocodile, I started writing about how we see ourselves as outside nature, about the power of nature and our illusions that we can control it, that we’re not embodied beings and are apart from other animals” (Plumwood, 2004). Plumwood died from a stroke in 2008. Her philosophical work continues to strongly influence scholars working on environmental issues. Her life is an example to inspire others to live life as a synthesis of theory and practice.

### **Beyond Mainstream Environmental Groups: The Movement to (Re)Define the Environment**

The larger societal gender disparity in positions of power is reflected in the leadership in mainstream environmental groups. Some of the best-known environmental groups, such as the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Greenpeace, and the National Wildlife Federation, have had few women in leadership positions. Although the president of NRDC is Frances Beinecke, the majority of the leadership and staff positions at the NRDC are men. In 2006–2007, the board of directors and officers of Greenpeace were 72% men and 28% women. Kathryn Fuller was once the president of the World Wildlife Fund organization, yet the majority of leadership positions in this organization continue to be held by men. Although many of the well-known mainstream environmental groups are led by men, there is significantly more female leadership in the growing grassroots environmental groups focused on environmental justice issues.

### **The Environmental Justice Movement**

Diverse leadership in these environmental justice organizations reflects the roots of the environmental justice movement in the United States that began to flourish in the 1980s and 1990s as a means to respond to the cases of environmental racism being documented all over the nation. Calling into question the ways in which certain groups were targets of environmental degradation and exposure to risks from environmental hazards, community members, activists, and scholars transformed the way in

which the very concept of the “environment” was to be understood. Shifting the focus to urban environmental issues such as toxic waste, industrial pollution, incinerators, and sewage, this movement broadened the concept of environment to represent concerns of communities that had often been ignored by the mainstream environmental movement.

The release of a study by the United Church of Christ in 1987 documented environmental racism in which communities of color faced disproportionate risks from environmental hazards. Women such as Peggy Shepard, Dollie Burwell, and Hazel Johnson were instrumental in the environmental justice movement from the beginning and they fought for social justice and environmental justice at the grassroots level. Women of color occupy leadership positions in the environmental justice groups. For example, Dorceta Taylor’s research shows that 49% of 205 people-of-color environmental justice groups had women as founders, presidents, or chief contact persons (1997, p. 56). Taylor notes, “Much lower percentages of the women are listed as occupying leadership positions in the traditional, mostly mainstream, predominantly white organizations” (p. 56).

A pivotal moment in the environmental justice movement occurred in 1982 when local citizens demonstrated against the building of a PCB landfill in Warren County, North Carolina, one of the poorest counties in the region. Led by Dollie Burwell, this demonstration drew national attention to the environmental racism that impacts communities of color. Burwell organized citizens to protest against the location of this landfill where the soil was highly permeable. The landfill would pose significant health risks to the predominantly African American community in Warren County because there was not enough clay and the water table was only 7 feet below the bottom of the landfill (Taylor, 1997, p. 44). According to Temma Kaplan (1997), Burwell “turned to her church and to the civil rights groups of which she had been a part since her childhood” (p. 56). Her pastor, Reverend Leon White of the United Church, called on allies to help her mobilize against the landfill (p. 56). Civil rights leader, the Reverend Benjamin Chavis, joined the protest. Choirs from local churches joined in the rallies, chanting, “Oh Lord, don’t let ’em drop that PCB on me” (p. 57). Burwell and others lay down to form a blockade in front of trucks attempting to dump contaminated toxic soil into the landfill.

Faye Bush is another African American activist, known for her commitment to environmental justice in the community of Newtown in Gainesville, Georgia. Bush and other members of the Newtown Florist Club generated their own healthy survey of the community, finding shocking rates of cancer and lupus (McConahay, 2003). When the predominantly white Gainesville City Commission members failed to respond to the survey, Bush organized local citizens to hang black ribbons around the neighborhood and do “toxic tours” to draw



attention to the chemical emissions endured by residents living in this community (McConahay, 2003).

### Pam Tau Lee and Immigrant Workers

The environmental justice movement has redefined the notion of environment to further examine issues of workers' rights as they are connected to environmental issues. Coordinator of Public Health Programs and part of the Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP) at the University of California, Berkeley, Pamela Tau Lee has focused her research on women, immigrant workers, and workers of color and the links between workplace and community health and safety. She writes health and safety handbooks and conducts workshops for unions and nonunion workers about issues of environmental justice, occupational health, and safety. Her community outreach project provides technical assistance to communities suffering from the impact of environmental racism, and LOHP has collaborated with the Southwest Network for Economic and Environmental Justice, the Indigenous Environmental Network, and the Asian Pacific Environmental Network.

### Women's Voices From the Movement

Many women active in the environmental movement have pursued media attention to launch their campaigns and, in so doing, have inspired numerous documentaries and films. Lois Gibbs states, "We always saw to it that our protests had coverage because that was really the only thing we had going for us" (qtd. in Kaplan, 1997, p. 38). Some women, such as Julia Butterfly Hill, drew attention as a result of their unwavering commitment to environmental issues. Julia Butterfly Hill became a poster child for tree sitting when she fought to save majestic redwoods in the late 1990s. She lived in the redwood known as Luna for 2 years and was the subject of the film *Butterfly*, which documented her efforts to stop the Pacific Lumber Company from cutting down these giant trees. Some already well-known celebrities, such as Julia Roberts, have drawn attention to the work of women environmentalists. Roberts's award-winning role as an environmental crusader made Erin Brockovich a household name. Other celebrities such as Daryl Hannah and Joan Baez have used their fame to promote environmental causes. One of the best-known figures in the movement to stop global warming is Laurie David. She founded the virtual march to stop global warming, wrote a best-selling book, *Stop Global Warming*, and produced *Earth to America!* and Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*. She embarked on a college campus tour on a biodiesel bus with musician Sheryl Crowe to raise awareness about global warming, and her blog is regularly featured in the *Huffington Post*.

Many women who have been responsible for leading the environmental movement initiated locally based actions by organizing community members, and these coordinated efforts later inspired global momentum on such issues. These women have often been portrayed as irrational and hysterical. Some of these women have been subject to acts of violence. At times, they have cleverly turned such hostilities to their advantages. Kaplan (1997) notes that for the women from Love Canal, "portraying themselves as housewives helped otherwise ethnically and religiously disparate neighbors forge themselves into a community" (p. 23). These women used the media to play up the image of them as caring, protective den mothers who were fearful for the lives of their children. Indeed, Kaplan (1997) states, "The homeowners did not have to feign their fears; all they had to do was show them—preferably on camera" (p. 24). In addition to harnessing the media for their purposes, many of these activists relied upon the energy that came from canvassing their own neighborhoods in order to generate community involvement in solving environmental problems. Many of these individuals used their connections to organize political groups, academic institutions, and churches in order to bring more allies to their causes.

### Future Directions

Through grassroots activism, sheer will, and determination, many women are serving as leaders of the environmental movement and responding to environmental challenges around the world. Some women in the environmental movement have suggested that their efforts have been informed by their position as women and that they view similarities between the status of women and how the natural world is typically viewed. Some have suggested that occupying the position of motherhood has extended their idea of citizenship to a notion of global citizenship. Some may not view themselves as environmentalists, feminists, or ecofeminists. The common bond that they share is a moral commitment to justice for all. They provide insight into the pressing environmental issues that must be addressed and remind us that we must respond effectively to ensure the future of all of the earth's inhabitants. For example, consequences of global climate change found in severe weather patterns, destruction of habitat and wildlife, and food shortages demand immediate action. I conclude with the words of Rachel Carson (1962):

We stand now where two roads diverge. But, unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road—the one "less traveled by"—offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth. (p. 276)



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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN LIBERAL PACs

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Created by women and largely funded by women to elect women, women's political action committees (PACs) epitomize women's leadership in many ways. These organizations were formed by women, many of whom were already leaders, to elect women and ultimately make them leaders. Furthermore, donations to women's PACs, at least historically, have largely come from another type of female leader—those who have enough money to give.

This chapter explores the topic of women's leadership through the lens of progressive women's PACs. These organizations have existed for more than 30 years with varied success. After a brief overview of the history of women's PACs, this chapter will then discuss the key progressive women's PACs active in current electoral politics, highlighting their goals, activity, and influence. It will end with a discussion of the ways in which the success of these organizations is intricately tied to the characteristics, experiences, and influence of its leadership.

### The Emergency of Progressive Women's PACs

The first official progressive women's PAC was the Women's Campaign Fund (WCF), created in 1974 by Ann Zill and Sandra Kramer, both of whom had ties to philanthropists and Washington politicians. From its inception, the WCF was bipartisan and focused exclusively on electing women. Several years later the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC)—which had been created in 1971 by a small group of women, including Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Jill Ruckelshaus, and Lupe Anguiano—created an affiliated PAC named the National Women's Political Caucus Campaign Support

Committee (NWPC-CSC; L. Flores, personal communication, June 2008).

Although the NWPC and the WCF enjoyed several successes in the mid- to late 1970s, including pressuring the Democratic and Republican Parties to make the delegate selection process for the national convention equitable, the organizations faced several hurdles (Burrell, 2004, p. 68). Organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) faced a divided membership, as some within the organization did not feel that NOW should be involved in mainstream electoral politics. Thus it was not until the early 1980s that NOW/PAC formed. But by far the biggest hurdles that women's PACs faced during the period were a lack of money and a lack of candidates.

In assessing a PAC's strength, two key indicators should be assessed: receipts and candidate contributions (Sabato, 1984). Records from the Federal Election Commission (FEC), which requires active PACs to file monthly reports, indicate that the WCF, NWPC, and NOW/PAC were small-time players. In fact it was not until 1992 that the NWPC showed receipts of more than \$50,000 (below this figure the organization does not have to report receipts) while the WCF brought in over \$1 million in receipts per cycle starting in 1986. From 1980 to 1984 the NWPC and WCF obtained an average \$509,284 in receipts and gave an average of \$114,000 in candidate contributions per year (Table 24.1). Comparing these data to data for the AFL-CIO's PAC (COPE) and the National Federation of Independent Business PAC (NFIB PAC) during the same time period provides some perspective on the size and strength of NWPC, NOW/PAC, and WCF. According to records from the FEC, the AFL-CIO and NFIB PAC averaged \$1,131,545 in receipts and gave an average of \$1,285,010 per cycle in candidate contributions during the 1980–1984 time period. These data



Year	WCF PAC		NWPC-CSC	
	Receipts	Contribution to Candidates	Receipts	Contribution to Candidates
1980	\$ 459,830	\$ 72,763	\$ 31,677	\$ 11,500
1982	\$ 593,099	\$ 53,975	\$ 14,080	\$ 4,300
1984	\$ 957,642	\$ 128,200	\$ 71,750	\$ 30,500

**Table 24.1** Receipts and Candidate Contributions of NWPC-CSC and WCF, 1980–1984

SOURCE: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission.

make it clear that progressive women's PACs did not bring in huge receipts and could only provide candidates with a small amount of campaign money; however, as Burrell (1994) and Francia (2001) argue, the money these organization did provide was often critical in helping female candidates be competitive during this period.

WCF, NWPC, and NOW/PAC remained small but important players in electoral politics in part because of the close connection between the goals of these early women's PACs and the goals of the liberal feminist movement. By the late 1970s liberal feminist organizations had focused their attention on state ratification of the equal rights amendment (ERA) that passed Congress in 1972. Many leaders and activists in the liberal feminist movement and leaders of the progressive women's PACs realized that ratification in some states required more women to be present in political office, and so these progressive women's PACs put more of their resources into female candidates running for state and local office with some success. In 1974, 1,161 women were elected to political office at the state level; that number rose to 1,677 by 1982 (Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], 2008).

At the mass level, more and more progressive women became engaged in politics. In 1980 the gender gap in participation finally disappeared; that is, the 1980 election brought roughly the same percentage of women and men to the polls on Election Day (CAWP, 2009b). Although women equaled men at the level of mass participation, few women ran for office, even with progressive women's PACs there to help. The help these organizations could offer was limited. The Federal Election Campaign Act, passed in 1971 and amended several times thereafter, mandated that a PAC could only give \$5,000 to a candidate per election; this translated into \$10,000 for the primary and general election campaigns (FEC, n.d.). This was not enough to enable a female candidate to run for office. This cap on PAC donations required her to obtain considerable funding from individuals, from other PACs, or from the parties. However, most of these other entities would not give valuable donations to a candidate who had little chance of winning.

Another obstacle WCF, NWPC, and NOW/PAC faced was the financial position of women. Whereas more women

were going to college and entering the workforce than ever before, the gender gap in pay meant that a woman had less disposable income than her male counterpart, which made her less likely to donate money to the PACs or directly to the candidate. Furthermore, by 1980 the divorce rate in the United States had increased to 4.8% (from 1.8% in 1960), and many of those divorces resulted in an increase in the number of female-headed households (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). Few single women or single mothers would or could choose to donate to a PAC over providing for her family. Consequently, while many of these PACs were working to change public policy to make women's lives better, to protect women's rights, or both, the majority of the potential beneficiaries of these changes were unable to provide the PACs with enough money or resources so that the PACs could become more influential and successful.

### The 1980s and the Emergence of EMILY's List

Many things changed in the early 1980s. The presidential election of Ronald Reagan ushered into office the first anti-ERA, pro-life president, and the increasing conservatism of the Republican Party concerned many women and progressive women's organizations. That same election saw the end of the gender gap in participation but marked the beginning of the gender gap in vote choice. From 1980 until the present, there has been a gap in the percentage of women and men voting for any given presidential candidate (CAWP, 2009a). In 1982 the ERA failed to be ratified by the requisite number of states. Many in the liberal feminist movement blamed the failure of the ERA on sexist male legislators, claiming that the only way to protect and promote progressive women's issues was to increase the number of women in public office (Mansbridge, 1986). And, as mentioned earlier, more women had the skills to run because of higher rates of college education and employment (see McGlen, O'Connor, Van Assendelft, & Gunther-Canada, 2005, for a discussion of factors affecting women running for office).

The convergence of several life-altering events (election of Ronald Reagan, increasing conservatism of the Republican Party, and the failure of the ERA), a change in the opportunity structure (the increase in the number of women running for office after 1982), and witnessing firsthand the limitations and ineffectiveness of NOW/PAC, NWPC, and WCF led to the emergence of an entrepreneurial female leader (Ellen Malcolm) and the formation of EMILY's List.

### EMILY's List Takes the Lead

EMILY's List, which stands for "Early Money Is Like Yeast, it makes the dough rise," was formed in 1985 in



reaction to the events of the preceding decade. The early members of EMILY's List were close friends of the organization's founder Ellen Malcolm. At the time of the organization's formation, Malcolm had been active in Democratic politics for more than 10 years, first at Common Cause, then in NWPC, and in the Carter White House, not to mention her work on a host of campaigns. At the end of the Carter administration, Malcolm took a hiatus from formal work in politics to pursue her master's in business administration from The George Washington University. However, she remained active behind the scenes. At a friend's encouragement she created the Windom Fund, through which she funneled considerable funds to causes she was passionate about, such as the NWPC or the Women's Legal Defense Fund<sup>1</sup> (Spake, 1988). Malcolm's wealth may have been an accident of birth but, guided by her entrepreneurial personality and political acumen, she put it to good use.

Malcolm and the "founding mothers" were aware of the problems and limitations faced by NWPC, women's organizations, and female candidates more generally. Malcolm and JoAnne Howes were formerly part of the leadership of NWPC, Judy Lichtmann founded Women's Legal Defense Fund (now the National Partnership for Women and Families), and Howes and Marie Bass served as consultants on Geraldine Ferraro's 1984 presidential campaign (Clift & Brazaitis, 2003). These women knew they had to create EMILY's List in a way that would avoid the mistakes of the past. When asked about the factors that led to the formation of EMILY's List, founding mother Howes stated, "The National Women's Political Caucus was bipartisan. Most of us were Democrats and we wanted to put our energy and resources in something partisan. [Furthermore] women did not have the kind of support [they needed] from the Democratic National Committee" (J. Howes, personal communication, April 15, 2008).

Malcolm initially set membership criteria at \$300: \$100 directly to the organization and a promise to donate \$100 to *two* candidates the organization endorsed. This was a far cry from the dues to membership organizations such as NOW/PAC. In this way Malcolm ensured that those who became members would be able to afford to give and thus the organization would not crumble from lack of resources.

Second, Malcolm knew from her experience on the Harriet Woods for Missouri Senate campaign that female candidates were losing because traditional sources of money (e.g., the political parties and PACs) were access oriented and tended to give to incumbents; that is, they gave in the hopes that the candidate would be elected and she or he would be more supportive of the preferred policy of that group (Souraf, 1992, p. 68). Because few women were incumbents, this meant that women didn't benefit from these funds. The result was that women running as challengers or for open seat races lost—not because of voters but because they didn't have enough money to run a full, competitive campaign. Third, EMILY's List had strict endorsement criteria: pro-choice, pro-ERA, Democratic women running for House or Senate who were *viable*. Unlike

NWPC, WCF, or NOW/PAC, EMILY's List would not endorse a Republican even if she was pro-choice. Similarly, although EMILY's List was aiming to give money to candidates who others thought were too risky, it was not going to give money to every pro-choice, pro-ERA, Democratic woman running for House or Senate. Rather, a candidate had to prove that she was viable, that she could raise money, that voters liked her, and so forth.

Malcolm's carefully constructed plan and her considerable political connections and experience (she was an organizer for Common Cause, press secretary for the NWPC, and press secretary to Esther Peterson, who was special advisor to President Jimmy Carter) ensured the organization's slow and steady growth from 1985 through 1990 (EMILY's List, n.d.). In 1991, political events would offer Malcolm the opportunity to marshal her resources and make EMILY's List into *the* women's PAC. When Anita Hill went public with accusations of sexual harassment against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, women across the country were outraged. Their outrage was not necessarily focused on Thomas per se, but rather on members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who conducted Thomas's nomination hearings. News coverage of the hearings, as well as coverage of seven female members of Congress attempting unsuccessfully to enter the committee hearings to offer their male Senate colleagues some perspective on the subject of sexual harassment, set off a firestorm among feminist activists and made a strong impression on women across the country (Burrell, 2004; Carroll, 1994; Cook, Thomas, & Wilcox, 1994). Leaders of various women's groups used this moment to point out the necessity of women in elective office, especially Congress. One of these leaders was Ellen Malcolm, whose participation in a *60 Minutes* segment, followed by interviews by various other news outlets, made EMILY's List a household name (Burrell, 2004, p. 148). Membership and donations to EMILY's List skyrocketed, from 3,500 in 1990 to over 23,000 in 1992, as irate women across the country joined the organization as a way to turn their anger into action (EMILY's List, 2009). More broadly, the Hill–Thomas controversy prompted many women to run for office. Thus EMILY's List benefited from this incident not only in terms of money and membership but also in terms of increasing the pool of candidates to support.

Malcolm was not the only leader to turn the Hill–Thomas controversy into a call to arms; the NWPC placed a cartoon in *The New York Times* mocking the fact that no women were part of Thomas's confirmation hearings, and others used it to launch a variety of other women-focused initiatives (Burrell, 2004, p. 36). Why then did EMILY's List benefit the most from this incident and the resulting outrage? The answer is Malcolm's leadership. Because of her slow strategic approach to organizational growth, EMILY's List had a strong financial foundation and a solid membership base that allowed Malcolm and the staff of EMILY's List immediately to mobilize the organization's resources to take full advantage of the opportunity.



Furthermore, unlike other progressive women's PACs, EMILY's List was self-consciously partisan and women-focused. EMILY's List used partisan language in its appeals for members and in its support of candidates, and because of its partisan orientation and connections, the leadership of EMILY's List was able to push the Democratic Party to do more to recruit and support female candidates.

### "The Year of the Woman" and Its Impact on Women's PACs

The 1992 congressional election ushered in the "Year of the Woman." In November 1992 a record 117 women won major party nominations to run for Congress (106 in the House, 11 in the Senate), and 2,396 women were nominated at the state level (CAWP, 2008). EMILY's List claimed a great deal of credit for this accomplishment, and many of the women elected thanked Malcolm and the organization for its critical support. The election of so many Democratic women in 1992 spurred major changes in EMILY's List in terms of membership and money, which allowed the organization to support more candidates and allowed Malcolm to diversify the organization's repertoire.

Over the next 8 years EMILY's List expanded in scope. In 1994 it became a "full-service political organization that raises money for women candidates, helps them build strong campaigns, and mobilizes women voters" (EMILY's List, 2009). The crown jewel of EMILY's List's expansion was Women Vote! First introduced in 1994, the Women Vote! program used polling data from the *Women's Monitor* report and survey conducted by Lake Research Partners specifically for EMILY's List, to target and mobilize Democratic women at the mass level. Malcolm believed that when women vote, Democrats win. Therefore mobilizing women voters was a win-win situation—these women would support EMILY's List candidates where they were running, and, again Malcolm knew the research—when they got to the polls, they would likely support other Democrats on the ticket. EMILY's List also expanded into training campaign professionals: first campaign workers and then, in 2002, college students and recent college graduates. Campaign Corps became a way for the organization to train and then place young, politically active workers on progressive campaigns at little to no cost. In helping EMILY's List become a "full service political organization," Malcolm solidified the organization's relationship with the Democratic Party: If the organization could take a large part of the responsibility for targeting female voters and vetting viable female candidates, the Democratic Party could focus its money and resources on other areas while reaping the benefits. In many ways EMILY's List's role as a party adjunct is one of the keys (along with Malcolm's leadership) to the organization's success. The close relationship with the Democratic Party meant that the organization, and specifically its leader, Ellen Malcolm, secured a seat at the table during party decision making.

Year	Receipts	PAC to Candidates	Bundled Money
1986	\$212,324	\$14,807	\$0
1988	\$417,922	\$70,647	\$64,015
1990	\$973,124	\$71,013	\$198,575
1992	\$4,425,157	\$348,007	\$886,493
1994	\$7,422,835	\$227,689	\$822,015
1996	\$13,619,906	\$253,218	\$1,375,840
1998	\$14,237,394	\$238,721	\$1,734,556
2000	\$21,201,339	\$221,746	\$2,591,030
2002	\$22,682,406	\$202,975	\$6,198,169
2004	\$34,128,818	\$120,535	\$8,324,782
2006	\$34,118,930	\$278,436	\$8,239,439
2008	\$35,232,112	\$244,951	\$5,779,369

**Table 24.2** EMILY's List Receipts, PAC Contributions to Candidates, and Bundled Money, 1986–2008

SOURCES: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission; data on bundled contributions from CQ MoneyLine.

### Following in Malcolm's Footsteps

Malcolm's entrepreneurial leadership of EMILY's List—specifically her slow, measured plan to increase the organization's resources, her recognition of political opportunities, her swift yet savvy reactions, and her ability to combine resources and opportunities into organizational expansion and ultimately political success—is the reason that Malcolm and EMILY's List became a major political force. By 2000 the organization stood as *the* model that other interest groups sought to emulate. This was true for other women's PACs, but it was also true for other types of PACs and interest groups such as Club for Growth (Bai, 2003, p. 24).

The EMILY's List model, however, did not guarantee success for other women's PACs, nor was it always appropriate. For example, The WISH List, a women's PAC founded in 1993 by Glenda Greenwald and consciously modeled on EMILY's List (Malcolm even reportedly gave advice to Greenwald), did not enjoy the same level of success as EMILY's List (Burrell, 2004, p. 149; Friedman, 1993; WISH List, n.d.). The WISH List's mission was to elect pro-choice Republican women into public office, a policy position rejected by large portions of the Republican Party. Whereas EMILY's List and the Democratic Party are largely symbiotic in their stance on abortion, members of the Republican Party are largely pro-life. Thus the WISH List was unable to enjoy and benefit from the partisan

element of its mission in the same ways that EMILY's List has and was closed in 2010.

### Progressive Women's PACs

The growth and effectiveness of EMILY's List foretold more drastic changes for the other progressive women's PACs. NOW/PAC remained focused on policy issues, using PAC donations as an incentive. However, unlike NOW/PAC, the NWPC and WCF exclusively funded female candidates. Since EMILY's List could and would provide funding for viable pro-choice Democratic female candidates at a level that NWPC and WCF could not sustain, the success of EMILY's List posed a significant challenge to the leaders of these organizations. Should the organization compete with EMILY's List for members? Should it continue to fund Democratic female candidates, or should it focus on providing Republican female candidates with funds? Should it focus exclusively on state and local races? It became the task of the leaders of the other progressive women's PACs to answer these and other questions if their organizations were to survive.

### The National Women's Political Caucus

From 1992 to 2008, the NWPC underwent significant changes. By 2008 the NWPC had member chapters at the state and local levels. The NWPC board, which acts as the NWPC-CSC, listens to the recommendations of the Political Planning Committee (whose members screen candidates to endorse) and then votes on those recommendations. The NWPC-CSC focuses its resources on presidential and congressional races and occasionally a gubernatorial campaign "if requested by a state caucus." The organization provides candidates with training, and its PAC provides candidate contributions. The organization also conducts voter mobilization through the local caucuses (L. Flores, personal communication, June 2008).

According to Flores, members are also encouraged to donate directly to the candidates endorsed by the NWPC. However, records from the FEC do not indicate NWPC bundling any considerable sums to candidates in the past five election cycles.<sup>2</sup>

The main differences Flores identifies between NWPC and EMILY's List are partisanship and scope. Flores portrays NWPC as having a broader agenda and base than those of EMILY's List, which is evident in their appeal for members:

By becoming a member of the NWPC you will help us identify, recruit, train and elect women who are dedicated and committed to reproductive rights; policies that guarantee full and equal access to reproductive health services, pay equity, child care and dependent care; and legislation to protect equal rights for all individuals regardless of race, age, religion, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation. (NWPC, n.d.)

However, data from the FEC indicate that the organization's PAC activity (Table 24.3) is miniscule, although it did increase slightly in 2008. It appears that prior to 2008 the PAC function of the NWPC remained relatively static.

<i>NWPC-CSC and Victory Fund</i>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Contributions to Candidates</i>
1980	\$31,677	\$11,500
1982	\$14,080	\$4,300
1984	\$71,750	\$30,500
1986	\$54,192	\$8,150
1988	\$56,705	\$28,155
1990	\$31,268	\$7,750
1992	\$76,205	\$69,800
1994	\$58,007	\$35,750
1996	\$18,855	\$16,500
1998	\$27,465	\$26,200
2000	\$20,438	\$16,150
2002	\$9,403	\$7,900
2004	\$13,363	\$6,000
2006	\$5,307	\$6,200
2008	\$19,721	\$16,750

**Table 24.3** NWPC PAC\* Receipts and Contributions to Candidates, 1980–2008

SOURCE: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission.

\*Data from the NWPC-CSC and NWPC Victory Fund were combined for this chart.

### The Women's Campaign Fund

The WCF also changed its form and function during this time period. Between 2004 and 2006 the Women's Campaign Fund became the Women's Campaign Forum, a 501(c)4 membership organization with two affiliated organizations: the Women's Campaign Forum PAC (WCF-PAC) and the Women's Campaign Forum Foundation. According to, former president of WCF Ilana Goldman (personal communication, April 2008), the focus of the membership organization and PAC is

engaging pro-choice women in public leadership in all sorts of ways . . . whether that is as a voter, a donor or an activist or one of the hundreds of entry points that there are in politics. The Foundation is not focused on choice as an issue or any issue . . . its purpose is to conduct research on women and women's leadership.



When asked about the differences between WCF and EMILY's List in 2008, then-president Ilana Goldman (personal communication, April 2008) stated,

I think we fill a unique role . . . our women in politics is a little more comprehensive in a sense that we are spending just as much time on recruitments or appointed office or how we think about women as donors or women education . . . we are very focused on the election cycle and winning [but] that is not our sole focus . . . and I think that carries through to our endorsements. We are not solely focused on the next win, we are focused on larger issues in terms of making a long term investment in somebody who might lose this cycle, but could come back again. We always hope to be the first investor, the earlier investor, so then we can pass women along to EMILY'S List and we see that as a sign of success if EMILY'S List is picking up those candidates and helping them across the finish line.

Receipts to the WCF-PAC have continued to decline since the late 1990s (Table 24.4); however, in 2008 the organization gave more than \$118,000 to 47 candidates, more than it has given since 1998. Furthermore, in that year the organization spent more than \$26,000 in independent expenditures, money spent on advertisements in support of endorsed candidates. This is the first time that the organization spent money on independent expenditures.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Contributions to Candidates</i>
1980	\$459,830	\$72,763
1982	\$593,099	\$53,975
1984	\$957,642	\$128,200
1986	\$1,087,503	\$106,956
1988	\$1,119,595	\$123,012
1990	\$1,143,732	\$125,355
1992	\$1,980,430	\$519,567
1994	\$1,815,052	\$262,338
1996	\$2,778,428	\$307,185
1998	\$2,405,553	\$148,643
2000	\$1,541,565	\$74,294
2002	\$1,713,677	\$87,400
2004	\$1,781,884	\$86,482
2006	\$921,268	\$59,517
2008	\$223,335	\$118,478

**Table 24.4** Women's Campaign Fund/Forum Receipts and Contributions to Candidates, 1980–2008

SOURCE: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission.

## Recent Progressive Women's PACs

The two most notable additions to the world of progressive women's PACs were The WISH List (introduced earlier) and the Women Under Forty PAC (WUFPA). These two organizations, created after the ascension of EMILY's List, were heavily influenced by the success of EMILY's List and the legacy of progressive women's PACs.

As discussed, The WISH List was self-consciously made in EMILY's List's image, the only exception being its party affiliation. The WISH List encouraged its membership to bundle money to endorsed candidates, and operated an affiliated 527 organization, which it used for its state and local activities and voter mobilization. It also had a recruitment and training program at the state and local level called America's WISH, a federal-level campaign training program (the Tillie Fowler Campaign Training Program, named after a female Republican congresswoman from Florida), and a college-level program (College WISH) to provide younger Republican women with resources (training, networks, etc.) so that they could become leaders and potentially run for office in the future.

From its creation in 1992 until 2004, The WISH List consistently drew in more members and donations. In 2004, the organization's receipts dropped slightly and then fell drastically in 2008. Consequently, the amount of money that the organization gave to candidates also declined in recent cycles, to a low of \$13,112 in 2008 (see Table 24.5). Such a decline would typically indicate the organization was in serious trouble, and The WISH List went through some reorganization as a result of these declines. However, the problems faced by The WISH List were largely the result of the conflict between its partisan position and its policy orientation. The WISH List supported pro-choice Republican women who were running for office; however, in the past 20 years the Republican Party has become increasingly anti-choice (Republican National Committee, n.d.). The number of pro-choice Republican women running for office has declined. Those pro-choice Republican women who do run face considerable obstacles in campaigning; several lost their races in 2006 and 2008. Those who make it into office experience difficulties with Republican Party leadership (Evans, 1980; Sanbonmatsu, 2004).

There is no guarantee, however, that the Republican Party will remain anti-choice in the coming years, but The WISH List's decline led to its demise even though its membership was not composed solely of Republicans (Day & Hadley, 2005). Individuals are motivated to join groups and donate money for several reasons. Olson (1965) argued that group membership was highly dependent on material incentives; later, Wilson (1973), Moe (1980), and Walker (1991) argued that individuals were also motivated by solidary incentives such as networking opportunities or purposive incentives such as lobbying for a particular policy or supporting like-minded candidates or elected officials. Purposive incentives are especially important to donors to women's PACs (Day & Hadley, 2005; Pimlott, 2010). Thus

<i>Year</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>PAC \$ to Candidates</i>	<i>Bundled Money*</i>
1992	\$300,345	\$94,281	—
1994	\$462,658	\$165,773	—
1996	\$504,512	\$107,816	—
1998	\$558,259	\$88,287	—
2000	\$1,233,644	\$97,566	—
2002	\$1,869,211	\$103,205	\$391,786
2004	\$1,662,840	\$41,645	\$106,304
2006	\$1,053,914	\$21,609	\$148,320
2008	\$596,498	\$13,112	\$80,530

**Table 24.5** The WISH List Receipts, PAC Contributions to Candidates, and Bundled Money, 1992–2008

SOURCE: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission.

\*Data on bundled money is from CQ MoneyLine and was only available for the 2002–2008 period, although the organization did bundle money prior to 2002.

it is possible that Democrats who strongly support a woman's right to choose may have joined The WISH List seeking substantive representation, that is, to help elect Republican female candidates who espouse those beliefs. This would be especially likely when partisanship is less salient, that is, when control of Congress is not at stake. But when control of Congress is at stake and every Democratic seat matters, these same individuals may not have given to The WISH List and its candidates because the election of a Republican woman, albeit a pro-choice one, would threaten the Democratic Party's influence and power.

WUFPAC, which came into being in June 1999, is a bipartisan PAC focused on helping elect women 40 years of age and younger to federal and state-level office. When asked why she thought this PAC was necessary, cofounder Susannah Shakow replied,

I was working in a law firm doing lobbying in DC and there were a lot of young women working there and we talked about the fact that there were lots of young men in Congress and a few older women but there was no one fully representing our age group in Congress, so we decided to create the Women Under Forty PAC to give some money to the young women who were brave enough to put their names on the ballot and run for office. (S. Shakow, personal communication, April 2008)

Shakow and her colleagues were very aware of the fact that younger women have a harder time being considered viable, which is one of the criteria that organizations like EMILY's List use to determine endorsement. To become viable these women need political experience, including

running for office, and so WUFPAC focuses on giving younger women resources that help them gain that experience. This might mean giving a young woman money that will help her pay the filing fee for a state or local race, or money to do campaign advertisements in her area. At the federal level it means supporting younger female candidates who may have more political experience, like Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL). Schultz does not have a desperate need for the small monetary contribution WUFPAC can provide; however, the founders of WUFPAC believe that supporting and helping elect younger women like Schultz brings attention to the needs and preferences of younger women. For example, when elected to Congress in 2004, Schultz joined the ranks of an elite corps: congresswomen with small children. Finally, one of the long-standing obstacles to women's acquisition of political power in our government is that women enter office later than men and do not stay in office as long. By supporting younger women in their quest for office, WUFPAC is increasing the chance that women will be able to build up seniority, influence, and ultimately power within our political institutions (S. Shakow, personal communication, April 2008).

The reason WUFPAC bears more resemblance to NWPC and WCF than to EMILY's List and The WISH List goes beyond partisanship. WUFPAC's current president, Katie Vlietstra, oversees daily operations. The former president, Jessica Grounds, currently serves as the chair of the board of directors, which is comprised of 10 women who serve as directors. The board as a whole determines which candidates are endorsed by WUFPAC. According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the agency that regulates 527 organizations, WUFPAC does not have an affiliated 527, nor does it bundle significant amounts to its candidates, according to records of the FEC.<sup>3</sup>

WUFPAC also bears a striking resemblance to NWPC-CSC and WCF-PAC in its status as an affiliated PAC. WUFPAC's parent organization is a 501(c)3 nonprofit called Running Start; Shakow now serves as the president. When asked about the impetus behind Running Start, Shakow pointed to the need to focus on encouraging women to think about a career in politics at a very young age.

I ran WUFPAC for six years. We gave money to young female candidates for Congress, but there were times that we really realized that while it was great to give money and support to these women, there were so few candidates. What we didn't see was a group that was helping to engage and inspire younger women to think about running. When we talked to women—high school students, college students, young professionals—running for office was nowhere on their radar screen. They might have the ambition to run a company or start a nonprofit, but it was kind of rare for a young woman to express any desire to run for office herself. And so, Running Start was born. (S. Shakow, personal communication, April 2008)

Given that its structure is so similar to that of WCF and the NWPC, it should come as no surprise that WUFPAC



<i>Year</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Contributions to Candidates</i>
2000	\$8,492	\$4,710
2002	\$5,489	\$3,100
2004	\$23,578	\$11,075
2006	\$24,909	\$9,550
2008	\$16,808	\$11,000

**Table 24.6** WUF PAC Receipts and Contributions to Candidates, 2002–2008

SOURCE: Data from records of the Federal Election Commission.

finds itself in a similar position to WCF and NWPC; that is, it has limited resources and limited influence in the world of campaign finance (Table 24.6). According to a recent article (“WUF PAC Empowers Young Women to Succeed,” 2009), the organization has approximately 4,000 members, but FEC records indicate that in 2008, the organization had only 19 large donors (giving \$200 or more to the organization). Since its inception, it has given an average of \$7,887 in candidate contributions per cycle and has not spent any money on independent expenditures.

In a field where size matters a great deal, WUF PAC rejects the idea that it lacks influence. Instead Shakow casts it as critically important because of its unique focus on the election of younger women. Over the past 20 years, scholars have repeatedly argued that one of the reasons for the gender gap in representation is because women wait longer than men to run for office. Thus we have fewer women in the pipeline ready to run for higher office, and women who are elected later in life are less likely to remain in office long enough to acquire the benefits that come with being a long-term incumbent (S. Shakow, personal communication, April 2008).

The available data make it clear that WUF PAC has experienced a much slower start than The WISH List. WUF PAC’s influence is likely stronger in helping women at earlier stages of their career when others, even EMILY’s List, are unlikely to offer help. WUF PAC is proud of its role in helping younger women achieve office. Since its formation, the organization has helped elect 21 women under 40 to state and local office. At the federal level the organization has endorsed 40 women running for Congress since 2000, 14 of whom were elected (WUF PAC, n.d., “Endorsed Candidates”). However, it is important to note that many of the women endorsed by WUF PAC were also endorsed by EMILY’s List or The WISH List, either of which bring a great deal more money and resources to a candidate than does WUF PAC. It would be interesting to explore the timing of these contributions to see if WUF PAC is providing its candidates with seed money earlier than these other organizations, but that is beyond the scope of this chapter.

## The Defining Factor: Women’s Leadership

Looking at the broader landscape of progressive women’s PACs, it is evident that their size and influence is affected by the organization’s structure and mission. However, the most important factor that affects the trajectory of these organizations is the women who lead them. Moe (1980) claimed one of the most important factors determining interest group success is the emergence of an entrepreneurial leader who “exploits profitable opportunities” (p. 36).

### Malcolm and EMILY’s List

In the case of EMILY’s List, by 1992, founder and president Ellen Malcolm was an entrepreneurial leader. In many ways the organization’s very existence is the result of Malcolm’s awareness of the political opportunity afforded by the failure of the ERA, Woods’s failed Missouri Senate race, and Ferraro’s failed vice presidential campaign. Using her business acumen and social network, Malcolm enabled EMILY’s List to grow slowly and strategically, providing the organization with a solid foundation that allowed Malcolm to maximize on another political opportunity: women’s outrage over the Hill–Thomas hearings in 1991. The WCF and the NWPC also benefited from the Hill–Thomas debacle; however, it was Malcolm and EMILY’s List that benefited the most. Why? Because Malcolm did not take the organization’s increase in members and receipts for granted. She did not expect that this moment, in and of itself, was a turning point in women’s mobilization. After all, she knew that the 1992 victory was the result of more than 3 years of planning. According to one interview, as early as July 1989, Malcolm began the Majority Project as a plan “to recruit female candidates and provide them with strategic training and financial support. The group estimates that there will be 80 open seats in 1992 as a result of redistricting and retirements” (Schwartz, 1989, p. A6).

Even after women’s success in the 1992 elections, Malcolm did not believe that the battle for women’s equality in representation had been won. She knew that in order for EMILY’s List to succeed, the organization needed to strengthen its ties with the Democratic Party and other Democratic-leaning organizations, and she knew that she needed to expand EMILY’s List into a service organization that would, as Moe (1980) suggested, “attract support from individuals who might find them of value” (p. 36). Using the success of 1992 as a stepping stone, over the next 15 years Malcolm transformed the organization into a multi-pronged influence organization (Pimlott, 2010). EMILY’s List now provides a variety of services to a variety of political actors—the Democratic Party, candidates at federal, state, and local levels; campaign professionals; college students; members; and voters. In many ways Malcolm epitomized the entrepreneurial leader Moe (1980) discussed, as she spent more than 20 years at EMILY’s List’s helm. According to numerous sources, it is Malcolm who is responsible for the organization’s survival.<sup>4</sup>



None of the other progressive women's PACs discussed herein have enjoyed the constant leadership of a single entrepreneurial leader. The WCF, the NWPC, and WUFPAC have a president responsible for day-to-day operations, but major decisions are made by a board of directors. In many ways the structure of these organizations reflects the traditional wisdom regarding women's leadership in similar decision-making settings. For example, an examination of female committee chairs in Congress found that they tend to encourage more collaboration among committee members, encourage more voices, and more frequently seek out multiple perspectives than do their male counterparts (Rosenthal, 1998).

These progressive women's PACs are not deliberative bodies or representative institutions; there is no rule that states these organizations must function in a nonhierarchical manner. Still, according to Moe, the success or failure of a group is highly dependent on having an entrepreneurial leader. While one does not imagine that a nonhierarchically structured organization would be conducive to the emergence of such a leader, the recent history of these organizations indicates that just such a leader may be able to exist in such an organization.

### Goldman and the Women's Campaign Forum

The reorganization of Women's Campaign Fund into the Women's Campaign Forum, the WCF-PAC, and the Women's Campaign Foundation is the work of an entrepreneurial leader, Ilana Goldman. Goldman has master's degrees in business administration and public administration from Harvard as well as a master's in political science from Boston University. She served as vice president of DonorsChoose, which was named one of the "world's ten most innovative philanthropies." Goldman has also worked with several appointed and elected officials, including Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and former Senator Alan Simpson (R-WY). In 2008 it was clear that Goldman saw herself as leading the organization in a new direction:

I came on board very close to just three years ago, looked around and thought there was an amazing legacy about this organization . . . but it's also thirty plus years later, there's been a lot of change, it's time to do things a new way. So we closed down the Women's Campaign Fund and now we're reorganized. (I. Goldman, personal communication, April 2008)

Although Goldman has since left WCF, the changes implemented during her tenure have remained in place.

### Shakow and WUFPAC

Susannah Shakow, a Washington attorney, cofounded WUFPAC in 1999. With a degree from Davidson College and a law degree from the University of Virginia, Shakow

spent several years practicing legislative law in a prestigious Washington firm before becoming president of WUFPAC. In 2007 she helped form Running Start, WUFPAC's sister foundation. As discussed earlier, Shakow sees the mission of WUFPAC and Running Start as inextricably connected. Just as the impetus behind WUFPAC was filling a gap in the financial support of female candidates, Running Start focuses on stemming the gap of political ambition that occurs between young men and women. In doing so it hopes to create a pipeline of younger female candidates for political office, candidates that WUFPAC will be able to support. But Running Start provides WUFPAC with more than just a potential candidate pool. Now that WUFPAC is the affiliated PAC of a foundation, the FEC allows the foundation to cover overhead costs such as office space and salary, which traditionally consume a large percentage of receipts obtained by nonconnected PACs (Sabato, 1984). WUFPAC's affiliated PAC status provides it with some flexibility as it establishes itself and finds its path; that is, it can remain active in lean years and expand in better years. This is a key indicator of an entrepreneurial leadership: the ability to see ways to use existing ideas or structures, or modify those ideas or structures, to best suit the goal or mission of the organization.

### Flores and the NWPC

Flores clearly wanted to repack and reinvigorate the NWPC. In an interview for Women's News Radio, Flores stated that one of the main goals of her tenure was "to encourage women of various ethnic backgrounds to seek public office" (Lynch, n.d.). Of the PAC leaders discussed here, she has the most diverse background. She was born and raised in Laredo, Texas, where her father was one of the founding members of the League of United Latin American Citizens (Lynch, n.d.). Currently an attorney in Austin, Texas, Flores served as the chief of staff for Irma Rangel, the first Hispanic woman elected to the Texas Legislature; helped create the Texas Hispanic Women's PAC; and held several positions with the Railroad Commission of Texas. Before her election as NWPC president in August 2007, Flores served in various capacities with the NWPC at both state and national levels. Flores's activist background provides her with a significant amount of credibility as she tries to lead the organization in a new direction. In terms of evaluating her progress, data on the NWPC-CSC indicates that Flores has made significant strides in expanding the organization since becoming president—receipts increased 271%, the number of large donors increased, and the number of candidates the PAC supported increased 46% (see Table 24.3, p. 230). However the list of federal candidates the organization endorsed in 2008 does not appear very ethnically diverse (National Women's Political Caucus, n.d.). Still, encouraging minority women to run for office and helping them gain the political experience necessary to run for Congress often starts at the state and local levels, and those decisions are



made by the state boards. Examination of the endorsement of each state board is beyond the scope of this project, but it seems clear that Flores is showing considerable leadership in her attempts to reinvigorate the NWPC.

## Summary and Future Directions

For those who think of women's leadership as nonhierarchical, prioritizing collaboration and nontraditional voices, an examination of the leadership of progressive women's PACs is likely to disappoint. The most successful progressive women's PACs are hierarchical and narrowly focused; those with broader goals and less structured leadership are less influential. Still, examining the leadership of these organizations is illuminative of women's leadership in other ways. First, all of these organizations are led by women. This is because women, both historically and more recently, saw the need for organizations that provide women with critical resources. Thus the success and influence of these organizations directly affects the ability of women to become leaders, whether it is Malcolm's decision to endorse a candidate, thus providing that woman with critical funds for her campaign, or programs offered by WUFPA or WCF that provide younger women with the confidence to become leaders or less-experienced candidates by gaining experience at lower levels of office.

Second, the leaders of the progressive women's PACs show us the importance of leadership skills, education, and networks. All of the women who currently lead these organizations have extensive leadership experience in the public sector. All have advanced degrees; all but Flores live and work in the Washington, D.C., area, and the organizations benefit from their extensive professional and personal networks. For example, WUFPA's board of directors is a veritable Who's Who of young female politicians; the formation

and early growth of EMILY's List was heavily contingent on Malcolm's social network; and part of the impetus behind the formation of The WISH List was Greenwald's participation in EMILY's List (Friedman, 1993).

The examination of women's leadership in progressive women's PACs provide another example of the need for activists and scholars to heed the extensive research emphasizing the effect of role models, education, and career decisions on women's leadership. Simultaneously, the accomplishments of Malcolm, and the EMILY's List model in particular, show that it is possible for a female leader to create a hierarchically structured organization that fosters progressive feminist goals and creates powerful female leaders. Whether the EMILY's List model and Malcolm's entrepreneurial leadership continue to stand as the gold standard for women's PACs remains to be seen.

## Notes

1. The Women's Legal Defense Fund is now the National Partnership for Women and Families.
2. Because the Federal Election Commission only requires the organization to itemize bundled checks that are equal to or greater than \$50, it is possible that the NWPC has bundled money to candidates but that the checks are in smaller amounts.
3. Filings made by 527 organizations can be found through the IRS Web site <http://forms.irs.gov/politicalOrgsSearch/search/basicSearch.jsp?ck>; also see the Federal Election Commission Web site: <http://www.fec.gov/pages/brochures/electioneering.shtml#527s>.
4. Personal communications with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, October 2004; Ramona Oliver, Communications Director for EMILY's List, April 2008; JoAnne Howes, April 2008; Judith Lichtmann, June 2009. Moe (1980) stated, "enroll[ing] members, design, sell, and distribute packages of benefits, to set up an administrative structure, and in general to manage in such a way that the group survives . . . ensuring group survival is the fundamental task of the entrepreneur" (p. 37).

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN CONSERVATIVE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

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Hillary Rodham Clinton's impressive run for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008 generated national attention to women in politics. Once she left the race, however, discussions about gender, sexism, and elections were muted. Enter Sarah Palin. Unlike Hillary Rodham Clinton, Sarah Palin is decidedly conservative and her candidacy suggests we need to gain better insights into conservative women political leaders. Palin differs from many feminists in that she opposes legal abortion, favors limited government involvement in social programs, endorses tax cuts and heartily advocates the teaching of intelligent design in the classroom. However, like Clinton and other women leaders, she sees herself as representing women. In this way, Palin embodies the many faces of a growing conservative women's movement in the United States—a movement that has significant implications for conservative and gender politics.

This entry puts Palin's candidacy in a broader context by highlighting conservative women's leadership in national organizations. For years, conservative women have mobilized voters, swayed policymakers, and persuaded the public of the rightness of their views. Certainly feminists can take credit for helping to remove obstacles for women, but they are not the only ones who have helped shatter the constructed divide between home life and political participation. For as long as women have been advocating for feminist goals such as women's suffrage, pay equity, the equal rights amendment (ERA), and legal abortion, so too have women been fighting against these efforts. Perhaps not seen as "women-friendly," their work should at least be viewed in light of their ability to encourage and mobilize a range of women to take political action

and recognize the value of their efforts in affecting social change. This chapter provides a chronological review of conservative women's activism since the fight over suffrage, highlighting how women have used gender-conscious organizing to promote conservative causes and challenge feminist efforts. A full understanding of women's political participation is incomplete without recognizing the ways in which conservative women have shifted, reshaped, and pushed the boundaries of acceptable political behavior for women. Often thought to be the ones encouraging women to "stay at home," conservative women, like feminists, have consistently been involved in grassroots, educational, and legislative efforts.

Some have criticized conservative women for acting politically while they advocate for women to be homemakers. However, as this entry shows, well-known conservative women leaders such as Phyllis Schlafly and Beverly LaHaye do not call for women to retreat to a life void of political activism. Their emphasizing women's "traditional" roles as homemakers, for example, never included the sentiment that women's domestic life should be separate from that of her public obligations. To the contrary, the women's organization that LaHaye founded, Concerned Women for America (CWA), justifies itself in part by arguing that it is women's moral obligations as wives and mothers to fight for and protect their families (Schreiber, 2008). Indeed, their activism is seen as a mission for the religiously conservative women who comprise the group; women who are encouraged to be advocates and are taught "how to lobby from [their] homes."<sup>1</sup> In so doing, the leaders of CWA, like other conservative women, justify their political participation to secure what they believe are the

rights and obligations of wives and mothers and to bring these issues into the “public” realm of political life. The account that follows illuminates the efforts of those who have specifically opposed feminism and have promoted right-wing causes. Although they differ from each other in desired policy outcomes and style, these conservative women generally share similar goals.

First, they have organized as women to oppose feminist advocacy; many are specifically antifeminist and use language criticizing the feminist movement to mobilize other women to join them. They do so in part to be able to claim they, too, represent women. Second, these conservative women are mostly bound by gender-based appeals to maintaining a culture premised on women's social and biological differences from men, although they are clear that political participation falls well within the scope of women's responsibilities. Third, appeals to maternalism are often featured, with conservative women claiming legitimacy as actors through their status as mothers or by arguing that feminism devalues women's roles as primary caretakers. Fourth, the actions of conservative women should be considered in terms of their centrality to conservative movement politics. That is, these conservative women are critical to the success and development of conservative politics; indeed we cannot fully comprehend conservative movements without understanding the role of women within them. Finally, many of these women have pitted women against each other through tactics meant to sharpen divisions based on class, race, or sexuality.

It may be an overstatement to say that there is a conservative women's movement, but there has been sustained activism in the United States by right-leaning women over many years. This chapter discusses the most prominent of these women and the organizations that they have founded to promote their efforts.

### Women Opposing Women's Suffrage

The campaign for women's suffrage was protracted and complicated. Of course, it was ultimately successful, and in 1920, women won the right to vote in every state in the United States. Suffragists not only faced opposition from men, they faced it from women as well. It may now seem odd that women would strenuously work to reject such a fundamental right, but fears about the loss of class and racial privilege compelled women to wage a fierce battle to oppose ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

The first evidence of U.S. women's opposition to suffrage in the United States was documented in 1868, when a group of women fought against a Massachusetts initiative promoting female voting rights (Jablonsky, 2002). The proposal went nowhere, but both sides continued to mobilize as the push for women's suffrage gained momentum. As the intensity of the battle grew, more women became involved on both sides. The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), originally headed by

Josephine Dodge, represented women who challenged the fight for women's right to vote. Founded in 1911, it peaked at 350,000 members and coordinated activities in 25 states. The majority of its leaders, including Dodge, were wealthy, native-born, Republican, Protestant women from Eastern states whose husbands were prominent politicians and industrialists (Jablonsky, 2002). Since they were from well-to-do families, they mostly represented the interests of upper-income society. NAOWS published the newsletter *Woman's Protest*, which had significant momentum between 1912 and 1916 and was credited in part with helping to defeat almost 40 woman suffrage referenda in the states (Marshall, 1997). Dodge and others argued that suffrage would undermine women's privileged status and burden women with duties that would detract from their more important and central domestic lives. These antisuffragist women constructed supporters of suffrage as radicals whose efforts would destroy family life, women's status, and the “right of females to lifetime financial support” (Marshall, 1985). In a publication devoted to winning the antisuffrage campaign, Dodge (1914) wrote,

It is woman's right to be exempt from political responsibility in order that she may be free to render her best service to the state. The state has surrounded her with protective legislation in order that she may attain her highest efficiency in those departments of the world's work for which her nature and her training fit her. (p. 104)

Although premised upon the concept of “separate spheres,” whereby they believed men and women had distinct duties and responsibilities, these advocates did not necessarily consider women to be unequal to men. Instead, they argued that the sexes should be matched to efforts that matched their own gifts, but applied in different fashions (Jablonsky, 2002). This attention to gender role distinctions meant that women who actively opposed suffrage faced “mobilization dilemmas” (Marshall, 1985) concerning how they would encourage other women and men to join them because they reaffirmed a doctrine that placed women within the domestic realm while having to engage in “public” life to do so. To address this tension, female antisuffragists arranged their spaces to look genteel, like parlors, and claimed to be waging “educational” not “political” campaigns (Marshall, 1985). Nonetheless, they were clearly advocating women's political participation and the necessity of women to be involved in a campaign that would directly affect their lives. Indeed, their activities were quite similar to those of women who advocated suffrage—they lobbied, wrote public opinion pieces, and held petition drives and letter-writing campaigns (Green, 1997). Their rhetoric may have been finessed to address the tension between their working politically while arguing against that, but their actions spoke volumes about women's ability to affect outcomes on both sides of the political spectrum.

Ultimately, NAOWS and others failed in part because they did not establish a coordinated nationwide strategy



like that of the suffragists. In addition, in 1917, Dodge stepped down as leader of NAOWS and was replaced by Alice Wadsworth. Under Wadsworth's direction, the organization shifted and widened its focus to equate suffragism with radicalism, socialism, and subversion, a move that may have significantly weakened the group's ability to hone in directly on the issue of fighting the Nineteenth Amendment (Green, 1997). Although antisuffragists were defeated, it is important to recognize the ways in which these astute female activists sought, and found, political power and voice during a period when men dominated political and economic life.

### **Patriots and Guardians of the White Race**

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After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, many suffragists were empowered to continue their political involvement. The issue that once united them, women's suffrage, was gone, and women were freer to divide along class, race, and ideological lines (Blee, 1991). Some moved into Progressive Era politics, engaging in direct service work for poor and immigrant families and working to pass social welfare legislation. Others chose a different route—they opted to participate in racist efforts and organizations and were driven by anti-immigrant, white supremacist, and nationalist ideologies (Blee, 1991). Some of these women put their efforts into forming Women of the Ku Klux Klan (WKKK), a group that bolstered the terrorist activities of the KKK but also acted independently by calling on white Protestant women to protect “pure womanhood” and assert their newly found political rights. Many came into WKKK on their own, drawn in neither by their husbands nor other men. Indeed, some men were uncomfortable with their wives' participation in this group. Through WKKK, women organized parties and other social events to help people network; they also spearheaded boycotts against non-Protestant business owners and participated in electoral campaigns hoping to get more white, Protestant men elected to public office. They argued that the maintenance of racial, ethnic, and religious superiority was central to preserving the American family and women's privileged role within it (Blee, 1991). They drew on traditional conceptions of motherhood, calling on women to act as guardians of their home life and urging them to reproduce more white children. Because they used social events and reproduction to further political ends, their efforts expanded the notion of what it means to be political. That is, inspired by their gendered roles, these women used events such as Klan wedding services and funerals to promote Klan-based ideology and create a “sense of the totality of the Klan World” (Blee, 1991, p. 69). In so doing, the leaders of WKKK exemplified the ways in which women from a range of political viewpoints have worked outside established political institutions and norms to build social movements and organizations.

During World War II, a smaller but no less conservative group of women invoked similarly racist and purportedly

patriotic appeals to rally against U.S. involvement in the war. This “mother's movement” promoted isolationism, anti-Semitism, and opposition to New Deal social and economic policies (Jeansonne, 1996). Like other conservative women, these activists were marked by their gender-conscious activism and argued that women should have equal opportunity to participate in politics but on terms having to do with their motherhood. They grounded their arguments in maternalist discourse, claiming that mothers interested in protecting their sons had to clean up government and work to get different men elected to power (Jeansonne, 1996). They shied away from challenging men's privileged status as elected officials and instead insisted that women's obligations as wives and mothers required them to engage politically and challenge U.S. foreign policy (Jeansonne, 1996).

The post-suffrage era of conservative women's activism saw activists rallying around maternalism, calling on women to extend the notion of motherhood to be about women as guardians of racial purity and public morality. WKKK, for example, promoted the idea of procreation as being critical to the survival of the white race; they thereby used motherhood to normalize racism (Blee, 1991). Although their efforts drew on traditional and constrained notions of motherhood and women's familial status, they were vocal political actors who promoted and legitimized conservative causes.

### **Women and the Ascendancy of American Conservatism**

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The growth in American conservatism is often linked to the 1964 presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater, during which grassroots activists worked on his unsuccessful bid to defeat Lyndon B. Johnson. Before the election, conservatives from around the country started to mobilize in organizations such as the John Birch Society and Young Americans for Freedom (McGirr, 2001)—groups that reflected growing pockets of conservatism in suburbs and on college campuses. Women were well-represented among these political actors, and some were even overrepresented in the rank and file of a growing conservative movement in southern California (McGirr, 2001). Through their involvement in right-wing electoral and mobilization efforts, these women gained important organizing and political skills, enlisted other women, developed substantial conservative political and social networks (Klatch, 1999), and even started their own women's groups.

With her publication of the widely distributed book about Republican politics, *A Choice, Not an Echo* (1964), Phyllis Schlafly became prominent during Goldwater's brief ascendancy on the national political scene. Schlafly is an icon of conservative politics and one of the movement's best-known leaders. She came from a religious Catholic Republican family in Illinois and became especially interested in politics when she worked for the conservative American Enterprise Association (now the American



Enterprise Institute) in Washington, D.C., in the mid-1940s. Schlafly, like other conservatives, was concerned about liberal New Deal economic policies and what she perceived to be a communist international threat to the United States and other nations. Like political leaders from all ideological backgrounds, Schlafly was actively involved in party politics, worked for a congressional candidate, was a poll watcher during elections and a convention party delegate, organized other Republican women, and even ran for Congress, albeit unsuccessfully (Critchlow, 2005).

In *A Choice, Not an Echo*, she attacked what she considered to be the narrow and elite eastern Republican establishment and led a charge to change the focus of the Republican party, in part urging the recognition of women involved in grassroots party politics. Schlafly also played an important role in training and encouraging other women to be politically aware and effective (Klatch, 1999). In 1972 Schlafly founded the conservative Eagle Forum, an organization she still oversees. She is perhaps most famous, however, for directing successful opposition to the ERA, one of the most visible antifeminist campaigns in U.S. history (Mansbridge, 1986). Although critiqued for encouraging women to be homemakers while she ran a professional organization, Schlafly was well aware of the salience of her gender in this case and the necessity of having women themselves argue against the ERA and feminism. Indeed, she considered it one's duty to be active in politics and to mobilize other women to join her (Critchlow, 2005). She is, with good reason, disliked, and even vilified by feminists, but her contributions should also be viewed in light of her ability to personify the scope of women's political acumen and to be an astute and effective grassroots mobilizer for conservative causes.

### Institutionalizing Women's Conservatism

Over the past few decades, other conservative women leaders have started organizations and promoted conservative issues. Groups such as CWA, Independent Women's Forum, Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute, and Network of enlightened Women have sprung up to give conservative women a voice in national and local politics. Along with the Eagle Forum and the National Federation of Republican Women founded in 1938, these organizations constitute a solid network of conservative women that span generations and give legitimacy to conservative causes. These groups are profiled in this section with particular attention paid to how they were formed and how they seek to challenge feminism and boost conservative causes.

#### Concerned Women for America (CWA)

CWA has been a key player in conservative evangelical politics and is one of the most enduring religious right groups of the past 3 decades (Schreiber, 2008). CWA's founder, Beverly LaHaye, is married to Tim LaHaye, well

known for his efforts in mobilizing Christian Right activities in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Both have been allies of other religious right groups, such as the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition. The late New Right entrepreneur Paul Weyrich was noted as a "personal friend" of Beverly LaHaye on CWA's Web site, and popular conservative personalities like Laura Schlessinger ("Dr. Laura") and Robert Bork have been honored by CWA.

CWA was founded in San Diego in 1979. Along with its 500,000 members, the organization employs approximately 30 national staff, boasts an \$8 million annual budget, claims members in all 50 states, and professes to be the largest women's organization in the United States.<sup>2</sup> It has a diverse funding base, which has been considered a factor contributing to its longevity. Its founding was initially spurred by LaHaye's desire to oppose the ERA and to contest feminist claims of representing women (Schreiber, 2008). LaHaye still chairs CWA, but the group's daily operations are overseen by its president, Wendy Wright.

As a religiously based organization that opposes abortion and homosexuality, CWA is a social conservative interest group. Building on the successful techniques used by other conservative political players, CWA continuously adapts new technology to get its message out and to attract new members. It broadcasts audio and visual materials over the Internet, offers podcasts and e-alerts, and frequently updates its polished and professional-looking Web site. Its Web site also offers interactive links to enable people to contact local media and their elected officials. Its e-alerts contain fund-raising appeals and provide links that easily enable recipients to donate online with the use of a credit card (Schreiber, 2008).

As a large membership organization, CWA's strength lies in part in its grassroots members, who are leaders in their own communities and who work with CWA's national staff. Locally, its mostly white female members gather in prayer chapters (650 throughout the United States) to take action on CWA's political agenda. These local prayer groups are the backbone of CWA and provide the organization with an extensive and active nationwide network of women eager to take action on social conservative issues. In addition to its lobbying and grassroots efforts, CWA houses the Beverly LaHaye Institute, a think tank devoted to publishing reports and assessing data on topics like abortion and motherhood (Schreiber, 2008).

It is important to note the central role that religion plays in this organization; conservative evangelical religious beliefs unite and mobilize many of the organization's members and leaders. Its stated mission, to "protect and promote Biblical values among all citizens—first through prayer, then education and finally by influencing our society—thereby reversing the decline in moral values in our nation" ([www.cwfa.org](http://www.cwfa.org)), exemplifies its theological convictions. However, CWA has tailored many of its discussions to reflect more mainstream concerns and language, and it does so in ways meant to establish itself as an organization that represents women's interests. For example, it argues



that abortions cause women severe mental and psychological distress and thus being pro-life is in the interest of women's health (Schreiber, 2008).

Its multi-issue policy agenda indicates the full extent of CWA's political participation and includes opposition to homosexuality, a platform mostly dedicated to opposing legalized abortion in the United States and abroad, efforts to oppose pornography, support for a curriculum that encourages sexual abstinence, and a commitment to work toward "religious liberty" by claiming that expressions of Christianity are wrongly and institutionally obstructed. Through advocacy on these issues, CWA works in coalition with such conservative organizations as the American Family Association, the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family, and myriad antiabortion groups.

### **Independent Women's Forum (IWF)**

In July 1991, President George H. W. Bush nominated Judge Clarence Thomas for a position on the U.S. Supreme Court. Partly because of his conservatism, and partly because he was accused of sexual harassment by his colleague Anita Hill, this nominee—a conservative African American man—sparked a nasty and prolonged national debate about judicial activism, racism, and sexism. The coalition to oppose his nomination included many feminist organizations, but at least one group of women rallied behind him: Women for Judge Thomas. Although Women for Judge Thomas disbanded after his successful appointment, its leaders were energized by their collective activism against feminism and eventually organized with another group, the Women's Information Network, to found IWF in 1992. It was also during this time that conservative congressional representative Newt Gingrich (R-GA) was gaining political prominence and power. Through his ardent efforts to undermine Democrats and liberals, he became House Speaker when the Republicans took control of the U.S. Congress in 1994. In this capacity, he fervently pushed his conservative manifesto—the Contract With America—creating a climate conducive for the growth, efficacy, and credibility of the fledgling IWF.

Ricky Silberman, a former vice chair and commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, was a pivotal figure in the establishment of IWF. These conservative women leaders are well connected to, or are themselves, key policy and opinion makers. Resembling more of a think tank than a grassroots organization, IWF was founded to take on the "old feminist establishment" (Schreiber, 2008).

For its part, IWF aligns itself with conservative organizations like the American Enterprise Institute, and its board and affiliated advisors boast many prominent conservative leaders. Its founding executive director, Barbara Ledeen, is married to Michael Ledeen, a former appointee in President Reagan's administration, and past and current board members include the late conservative television commentator Barbara Olson; former Reagan administration economist

and wife of U.S. senator Phil Gramm (R-TX), Wendy Lee Gramm; former Second Lady Lynne Cheney; and American Enterprise Institute scholar Christina Hoff Sommers. Since its inception, IWF has honored people like former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Ward Connerly, a well-known African American who successfully spearheaded a campaign to ban affirmative action in California. Talk-show host and conservative political commentator Laura Ingraham helped the organization in its formative years and remains on its national advisory board. High-profile right-wing pundit Ann Coulter has been deemed by IWF to be among the "women we love." IWF often holds public events that feature conservative lawmakers, writers, and advocates (Schreiber, 2008). Compared to CWA, IWF is a much younger and smaller organization, but it seeks and attracts considerable media and public attention. For example, its current president, Michelle Bernard, is also a political analyst for cable television's MSNBC. IWF also had close ties with the George W. Bush administration. For example, when Bush became president, his staff contacted IWF, asking for names of potential female appointees. This turned out to be fruitful for IWF, as under Bush, board member Elaine Chao became the U.S. secretary of labor, IWF president Nancy Pfotenhauer was appointed to the UN Commission on the Status of Women and to the Department of Justice's National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women, and national advisory board member Pat Ware served on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (Schreiber, 2008).

IWF is founded on economic conservative principles; its members believe in free marketplace ideals and limited federal government involvement in social and economic affairs. The organization supports tax cuts and incentives for businesses as ways to effect social change, and its members argue that these policies specifically help women. To this end, IWF employs about 10 professional staff members in Washington, D.C., and operates on an approximately \$1.1 million annual budget. It gears itself toward public education through having its leaders make frequent media appearances, publishing research and reports, and sponsoring open forums with well-known conservatives. It also holds day-long conferences for the public and lawmakers on its issue priorities and organizes brown bag lunches around topics such as "Is Nancy Pelosi Really Good for Women?" To raise money and generate publicity, IWF hosts the Barbara K. Olson Women of Valor Award Dinner. Olson was a conservative pundit, founder of IWF, and wife of former U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson. She was killed in the plane that crashed into the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. In her honor, IWF presents awards to activists and political leaders, such as former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. These tactics help IWF to raise both money and awareness of its efforts. In addition, IWF sends out direct-mail appeals to highlight its efforts and to generate donations (Schreiber, 2008).

Like CWA, IWF employs new technology and forms of communication to interact with constituents and the public.



Its "IWF Inkwell" is a daily blog written by staff on issues ranging from energy policy to Hillary Rodham Clinton to motherhood. It sends regular e-mails to subscribers, alerting them to leaders' media appearances, current issue debates, and upcoming events, and it offers podcasts as well.

Although IWF does not have grassroots members, it does have a growing campus initiative that seeks to mobilize and mentor young, college-educated women. Seeing that young women have been responding to its message and recognizing that conservative college-based groups like the Network of enlightened Women and the Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute (discussed later in this section) are starting to gain attention, IWF has identified this group as an important constituency for itself and for the conservative movement more broadly. Along with conservatives such as David Horowitz who criticize universities as being too left-wing, IWF warns against those faculty and school officials who are allegedly indoctrinating young women on college campuses with skewed feminist and liberal rhetoric (Schreiber, 2008).

IWF also delights in caricaturing feminists and "debunking" supposed myths about issues such as the need for an ERA and pay equity policies; in addition it works on issues ranging from opposing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (on the grounds that the treaty promotes intrusion into other countries) to one of its newer enterprises (supported by federal funds) such as working with women in Iraq to spread its version of democracy throughout that country. In addition IWF has gained publicity by aligning itself with self-proclaimed feminists such as Christina Hoff Sommers and Daphne Patai, who mock high-profile women's issues such as date rape and malign Women's Studies programs for allegedly being imbalanced and hostile to those who are not feminists (Schreiber, 2008).

### Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute (CBLPI)

CBLPI was founded in 1993 to help mentor and train young conservative women to be leaders, especially at the university level. CBLPI considers it important to movement politics that a new generation be groomed to speak on behalf of conservatism to the media, public, and lawmakers. Like the leaders of CWA and IWF, the leaders of CBLPI are especially interested in having their spokespersons be women to broaden conservatism's appeal and give credibility to conservative causes. Similar to the economic conservative leaders of IWF, the leaders of CBLPI claim to be committed to principles such as "individual freedom" and sponsors a conservative speakers program that brings women like Ann Coulter, Bay Buchanan, and Star Parker to campuses. It publishes a student guide to assist conservative women in countering Valentine's Day activities that center around the production of the feminist play *Vagina Monologues*, because, according to the group, the play "glorifies social deviancy and sexual perversion"

(www.cblpi.org). Instead it urges women to organize alternative campus activities that "celebrate the intellect, strength and integrity and spirit of the modern American woman" (www.cblpi.org), and it has worked with other conservative women's groups like IWF and Network of enlightened Women to promote this position. In keeping with its conservative views about sex and sexuality, CBLPI distributes "Sense and Sexuality: A College Girl's Guide to Real Protection in a Hooked-Up World" (www.cblpi.org), which encourages young women to avoid casual sex and provides compelling statistics about the predominance of sexually transmitted diseases on college campuses. CBLPI was founded by a former Reagan appointee, Michelle Easton, and works closely with the Young America's Foundation, another organization working to combat alleged liberal biases on college campuses. Easton noted that CBLPI wants to "give young women the courage and plain old gumption to stand up and defend their conservative views" (Houppert, 2002). Indeed, Easton is married to the current president of Young America's Foundation, Ron Robinson. In 2009 the CBLPI published a "Pretty in Mink" calendar, in which conservative women leaders graced the pages dressed like Hollywood movies stars of the 1930s and 1940s. The accompanying letter noted that the role models featured in the calendar "embrace traditional marriage and motherhood—not feminism and liberalism," suggesting that those categories were distinct from each other.

CBLPI also assists in keeping conservative women leaders connected in Washington, D.C., by sponsoring a monthly Conservative Women's Network luncheon, cohosted with the Heritage Foundation, a well-known conservative think tank.

### Network of enlightened Women (NeW)

In keeping with the theme that college campuses can be unwelcoming to conservative women, NeW seeks to mobilize young conservative women to network and form groups in which they share ideas and promote conservative values. NeW was founded in 2004 by Karin Agness, who was at the time an undergraduate at the University of Virginia. Agness returned for her junior year at the university after interning on Capitol Hill for a Republican member of Congress. Eager to meet other conservative women, she found it necessary to start her own organization—NeW—because no entity like it existed on campus. NeW started as a book club and now the national group encourages campus chapters to follow that model. National NeW claims about a dozen college-based local chapters in which young women meet to discuss books but also organize speakers and panels for their universities and the greater communities in which they live. Agness noted that the grassroots organization focuses on "culturally conservative" issues, especially the "hook-up" culture and work–family balance, aiming to provide students with views that she believes differ from those of feminists (K. Agness, personal communication, January 29, 2009). For example,



Agness contends that feminism has made it acceptable for women to readily engage in casual sex and one-night stands—something she considers to be hurtful to women. Indeed, Agness and her counterparts generally believe that women should be more cautious and recognize that they are more physically and emotionally vulnerable than men when it comes to sexual relationships (K. Agness, personal communication, January 29, 2009). NeW sees itself as filling a niche among conservative women's organizations by helping young women do the work of starting their own chapters and engaging like-minded women looking for alternatives to feminist groups on campus.

## The Republican Party and Electoral Politics Organizations

Most of the organizations previously discussed are considered to be the type of nonprofit organizations that cannot (or choose not to) engage directly in electoral politics or endorse, recruit, or train candidates (although CWA and IWF have separate sister organizations that do those things). However, there are some conservative women's organizations that work on the electoral politics front, connect directly with the Republican Party, and encourage the election of conservative women political leaders. These organizations aim to rectify the fact that the entry of Republican women into elective office has lagged behind that of Democratic women<sup>3</sup> and to show the political power of women within the party as well as the importance of women's involvement in political life. The most prominent of these groups is the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW). NFRW was founded by Marion Martin in 1937 to unite a nationwide network of Republican women's clubs, which, until her efforts, were largely independent of one another. Martin, a former Republican National Committee assistant chair and head of its women's division, had two goals in creating NFRW: promoting the interests of women in party politics and promoting the Republican Party itself (Rymph, 2006). To organize this dispersed group of women, Martin traveled around the country speaking to women's clubs and encouraging them to join a national and unified group (Rymph, 2006). Over the years the organization has worked to mobilize its grass roots to support Republican Party issues and candidates. According to feminist scholar Jo Freeman, Martin did not call herself a feminist, but she used her leadership positions to lobby for women. She did so by urging Republican governors to appoint more women to state offices, pushing the Republican parties to give women more seats to national conventions and encouraging more women to run for office (Freeman, 2000).

Today, NFRW bolsters the Republican Party and its issues, runs campaign management schools, and continues to recruit Republican women to run for public office. In keeping with its desire to stand by the Republican Party and its decision to be more inclusive of women, NFRW

declared November 24 "Sarah Palin Appreciation Day" and noted the following:

We are so proud of Sarah Palin. . . . With a direct approach and dynamic personality, she was a powerful force on the campaign trail. She is energetic, enthusiastic, intelligent, courageous, and a strong leader who still is "one of us." I truly believe we haven't seen the last of this amazing Republican woman on the national stage. (National Federation of Republican Women, 2008)

## Spokeswomen and Pundits

Acting in conjunction with conservative organizations are a number of prominent women leaders who have made names for themselves as spokespeople and pundits. Women such as Ann Coulter, Michelle Malkin, and Laura Ingraham have captured significant media attention and given right-wing politics a female face (Schreiber, 2008). Perhaps the most popular of these media-savvy women is Ann Coulter. Known for her miniskirts and outrageous comments, Coulter has published numerous books castigating liberals. In her 2004 best-selling *How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must)*, Coulter includes an essay about feminism in which she proclaims to detest feminists because they have allegedly destroyed monogamy, marriage, chastity, and chivalry. Although she includes feminists in her rhetoric, Coulter's essays and public appearances are not tailored to directly target feminists. There are other commentators, however, whose careers are more closely defined by their ardent attacks on feminism and desire to challenge feminism. Christina Hoff Sommers, for example, published *Who Stole Feminism* in 1994, in which she argues that women have been victimized by "gender" feminists—self-interested, elite, privileged actors who pit women against men. She also criticizes feminists' alleged preoccupation with pain and oppression and argues that most women are not represented by feminists within the academy or in national organizations. A resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, Sommers's research has been supported by conservative donors like the John M. Olin Foundation, and she has worked with IWF, CBLPI, and NeW.

Like conservative women elected officials, Coulter and Sommers extend the work of conservative women's organizations, speak as and for women, and show that women are serious players in conservative politics at many levels.

## Future Directions

For more than a century, women have organized for antifeminist and conservative causes. They have appealed directly to women, calling on them to show that women acting as and for women is critical to promoting conservative values. As women's political clout grows, it is important to recognize these women as organizers, instigators,

and leaders. Over the decades, conservative women have had close male allies in government, business, and advocacy groups, and their work, directly or indirectly, has shaped and bolstered conservative politics. They are well aware that doing so can help decrease electoral gender gaps for Republicans, as well as cultivate more women-friendly explanations of conservative goals.

Of course, as among conservatives and Republicans in general, there are differences among these women as well. Some, such as members of CWA, are religious conservatives who cite biblical passages to justify their positions and argue for issues like prayer in schools. Others, like the women who run IWF, are more "libertarian," believing that government should regulate neither the economy nor the personal choices of individuals. (In that sense they do not take a stand on legal abortion or gay marriage.) A challenge for the future of a burgeoning conservative women's movement is for them to figure out how to unite or coalesce on issues for which they can agree, while leaving

aside their differences. Historically the Republican Party has been relatively successful in uniting these diffuse camps, but recent economic and social events may make that kind of collaborative work more difficult.

## Notes

1. CWA publishes a pamphlet titled "How to Lobby From Your Home," which can be downloaded from [www.cwfa.org/brochures/index.asp](http://www.cwfa.org/brochures/index.asp).
2. Some contest the membership count given by CWA. On its Web site, the National Organization for Women (NOW)—a feminist women's group—also claims to have 500,000 members. CWA contends that NOW really has fewer than 100,000.
3. In 2009, of the 16 women serving in the U.S. Senate, 4 are Republicans. Of the 74 women serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, 17 are Republicans. Seventy-four women hold statewide elective executive offices; of these, 22 are Republicans ([www.cawp.rutgers.edu](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu)).

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN LESBIAN ORGANIZATIONS

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Telling the story of lesbian leadership in the United States is a difficult task. Historically, since the first wave of the women's movement, it has been difficult to ascertain whether or not women, indeed, were lesbians. Anecdotal evidence is often useful in this task, but it may also promote speculation and discussion of uncertain truths. Still, written exchanges between women throughout history have led scholars today to posit that most leaders—not only in the first wave of the women's movement but also many of the early unmarried women in the professions—were lesbians.

Even today, there appears to be reluctance on the part of many individuals to be associated with the term *lesbian*. In fact, when, in 2009, the editor of this handbook searched for a scholar willing to tackle this subject, she repeatedly came up empty-handed. By far, more potential authors were invited to write this chapter than any other in this handbook. All of these scholars—from a variety of fields—declined. Whether this is a testament to interest in the subject—which was deemed essential to inclusion in any volume on women's leadership—or reticence of scholars to be identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, we do not know. The history of lesbian leadership is replete with instances where women have used assumed names, met in darkened clubs, or carried on closeted relationships. In many ways, it is clearly one of the last frontiers on the civil rights and liberties agenda.

In this chapter, we first discuss the difficulty in studying lesbian leaders and the history of women considered to be lesbians. We focus on women who took leadership roles in the early women's movement and later in the struggle for the right to vote and in the Progressive movement, culminating in the New Deal. Second, we discuss lesbian leaders and their activities from 1950 to 1980, which marked an era during which women began to declare their sexuality openly and speak out for their rights. Next we move on to the 1980s and 1990s, examining AIDS and its effect on women's leadership, the struggle for marriage rights, and expanded efforts to win elective office. We then move to a discussion of the situation for lesbian leaders today and conclude with considerations about the future directions for lesbian leaders in the United States.

### Lesbians Before There Were Lesbians

In *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America—A History*, Lillian Faderman (1999) notes that the classifications of lesbians in history “are so slippery in their subjectivity and mutability” that it is important to “make apt observations about . . . behavior” (p. 3). She, and many other historians, has used the term *lesbian* as an adjective (rather than as a noun) that describes “intense woman-to-woman relating and commitment.” In this chapter, although we rely on some historians' conclusions that

certain women were lesbians, when we discuss lesbian leaders today, our purpose is not to "out" anyone. Thus, even though we may have personal firsthand knowledge about someone's sexual preference, unless that person has publicly identified herself as a lesbian we do not do that here. We do not wish to fuel the rampant speculation regarding many women, especially in politics. For example, when Barbara Jordan (D-TX) ran for Congress as the second African American to hold that office, every 2 years there was an underground "smear" campaign, as to her sexual orientation. A very private woman, she eventually resigned for undisclosed health reasons (later it was learned she had multiple sclerosis). It was not until publication of her obituary that she was "outed," when it included the fact that she had lived for close to 30 years with her partner Nancy Earle.

### The Suffrage Movement

In 1840 Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and four other women traveled to London, England, to attend the World Anti-Slavery Convention. Sent as delegates from the American Anti-Slavery Society, they were barred from participating in the meeting and soon came to see their position as nearly as bad as that of the slaves they sought to free. Mott and Stanton vowed to call a meeting of their own, which occurred in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York. With them at the meetings in both London and in Seneca Falls was Mary Grew, perhaps the first woman of that movement to enter into a relatively public relationship with another woman, Margaret Burleigh. About her union with Burleigh, Grew wrote, "to me it seems to have been a closer union than that of most marriages. We know that there have been other such relationships between two men, & also between two women. And why should there not be?" (qtd. in Faderman, 1999, pp. 20–21).

Grew worked closely with Burleigh, a school teacher, in both the antislavery and women's rights movements. They also "shared both a home and a bed" (Faderman, 1999, p. 21). As Grew became more involved in the women's rights movement after the Civil War, she became the first president of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association in 1869. She remained its president until 1892, while also serving as the national president of the relatively conservative American Woman Suffrage Association in 1887. So widely known was her sexual orientation that upon receiving an invitation to hear a lecture by Grew at the Boston Radical Club, poet John Greenleaf Whittier penned a poem, "How Mary Grew," which referenced an essay on Sappho (who, as a resident of the island of Lesbos, wrote about love between two women): "By Sappho's lips of ruddy gold, the way to make the world anew, is just to grow as Mary Grew."

Grew was not the only suffrage leader who preferred the company of other women. Rumors continue to circulate regarding Susan B. Anthony's relationships with multiple women. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, for example, often

found herself having to explain Anthony's spinsterhood to quash these rumors. It appears that Anthony may have had a long-term relationship with Civil War activist and orator Anna Dickinson that played out in a series of letters penned between 1864 and 1895. These letters were often playful and suggestive. Anthony, for example, wrote to Dickinson of her wish that she "share [her bed] a few days" (qtd. in Faderman, 1999, p. 26). According to Faderman (1999), Anthony even told her niece Lucy, who was the partner of another suffrage leader, the Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, "I wanted what I feared I shouldn't find, that is a young women who would be to me—in every way—what she is to the Rev. Anna Shaw" (p. 27). Faderman speculates that Anthony was clearly indicating her recognition of her niece's relationship with Shaw.

Later, Anthony was considered by many to have entered a relationship with a married woman, Emily Gross. No correspondence exists between the two women, but Faderman traces their relationship by using letters written by Anthony to others. Anthony and Gross spent significant portions of the late spring and summer together in California on several occasions (Faderman, 1999). Perhaps underscoring Faderman's speculations is the fact that Bessie Potter, a lesbian sculptor, molded a statue of Anthony and Gross in 1896.

It is actually stunning to look back upon this period of tremendous suffrage activity and recognize the interconnectedness of the women who were involved. Many of them, whether unmarried, married, or widowed, appear at one point in their life to have been in a serious (oftentimes long-term) relationship with another woman. Even Carrie Chapman Catt, the twice-married president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association when the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, had both flirtatious and serious relationships with women. She was interred next to her close friend Mary Garrett "Mollie" Hay, even though the two died almost 20 years apart. The tombstone was inscribed, "Here lie two friends, for thirty-eight years united in service to a great cause" (Faderman, 1999, p. 78).

### Women in the Progressive Movement and the New Deal

Although women as voters saw few political gains in the years following the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, several women were key activists in the Progressive movement, working through the political system to gain greater rights for women. Much of this activity occurred through what was coined the "Ladies Brain Trust," a group of women brought to Washington, D.C., by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. While biographers continue to argue over Roosevelt's sexuality (she had a long-term relationship with female journalist Lorena Hickok), there is no doubt that many members of the Trust were lesbians. In fact, Mary Williams "Molly" Dewson, who not only was the director of the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee but also the first woman appointed to



head the newly created federal Women's Bureau, lived with Mary G. "Polly" Porter for 52 years in Washington, D.C., and then on a farm they had purchased for their retirement. Similarly, Frances Perkins, the first female cabinet secretary, is rumored to have had at least two affairs with powerful women active in New Deal politics.

This Brain Trust also included U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Florence Allen, the longest-serving, highest-ranking woman on the federal bench until 1980. For more than 20 years, activists urged Presidents Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Dwight D. Eisenhower to nominate her to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. But, especially by the 1950s, knowledge of her then-public lesbianism made her a less than attractive candidate for the Court.

## Lesbian Leaders: 1950–1980

To this point, we have largely discussed women who were engaged in relationships of varying degrees with other women and who were leaders in the women's and Progressive movements. It was not until the 1950s that a few lesbian women began openly declaring their sexuality and speaking out for their own rights. In 1955, eight women, including Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, who later were one of the first lesbian couples married in California, formed the Daughters of Bilitis (DoB). Influenced heavily by the Mattachine Society, which had been formed in 1951 by gay men, its articles of incorporation stressed that it was open to all women, "regardless of race, color, or creed" (Gallo, 2006, p. xxii). Among its eight founders were a Chicana and a Filipina. Later, in 1963, Cleo (Glenn) Bonner served as its president, making her the first African American to preside over a national lesbian organization.

DoB soon began to publish its own magazine, *The Ladder*, which was the first national lesbian periodical. It immediately provided to lesbians nationwide a source of information and a feeling of connection with the broader social movement. Still, the original DoB continued to seek new members. It was stymied in that effort, however, by its continued existence as a "secret lesbian social club" (Gallo, 2006, p. 10). In June 1956, it decided to move away from holding meetings in member homes and to begin a large-scale publicity effort as well as place an article about itself in the more widely distributed *Mattachine Review*. DoB also issued its first press release and agreed on a statement of purpose to promote "the integration of the homosexual into society" through a variety of educational initiatives, research projects, and investigations of penal codes that criminalized homosexuality (Gallo, 2006, p. 11).

At the time DoB was founded, in most areas of the country, even large cities, it was nearly impossible to be "out." Women who dressed in pants were an oddity, and many more "butch" lesbians faced actual danger on public transportation. Thus many lesbians found certain bars their prime loci of meeting other women. One study of lesbians

in Buffalo, New York, found that during the World War II years (1941–1945), there were more lesbian than straight bars in the city's downtown area and that "butch" lesbians were often the object of public harassment. The police, too, engaged in harassment of gays and lesbians, regularly raiding their bars and arresting some patrons for public lewdness (two women dancing together) or other violations of the law (Kennedy & Davis, 1997).

In 1963, DoB, after more than a decade of existence, took a new direction. Barbara Gittings reluctantly took over the editorship of *The Ladder* after founding and holding various leadership positions in the New York City chapter. The magazine began to promote a new DoB project: a scholarship program for women, which was named after the first female psychiatrist to advocate for the mental health of lesbians, Blanche M. Baker. This was a part of a broader strategy to broaden the acceptance of lesbian women in society, and it reflected an increased willingness among some segments of the population to express their lesbian identity. Along the same lines, in 1964, the words *A Lesbian Review* were added to the magazine's masthead. This was the first use of the word *lesbian* as a part of a magazine's title.

Over the next 5 years, the group became increasingly public, and it was easier to do so as pants now became part of every woman's wardrobe for day or evening wear. Lesbians became active in marches and rallies, including one in Washington, D.C., in 1965. They also began to work in cooperation with other homophile groups such as the Mattachine Society and joined coalitions of these groups that were beginning to arise around the country. In cooperation with the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, which was founded in San Francisco in 1964, DoB increased outreach efforts, appearing at events like the California State Fair to educate citizens on homosexuality.

During this time, the wider women's movement also began to get its footing. The emergence of this movement left members of DoB torn. Some believed that their primary commitment should be to lesbian issues, while others, including Lyon and Martin, found "a new arena for activism in the National Organization for Women (NOW)," which was founded in 1966 (Gallo, 2006, p. 135). Although Lyon and Martin originally were allowed to join NOW as a couple, that option was soon removed from membership applications. Lyon and Martin, in fact, place the blame for this overt act of discrimination on one of NOW's several founders, Betty Friedan, who was openly anti-lesbian and opposed to mixing the issues of women's rights with lesbian rights. Friedan, as NOW president, is said to have referred to lesbianism as "the lavender menace," and believed that the mixing of the two issues would be detrimental to achieving NOW's overall goals.

## Coming Out

As noted earlier, from the 1940s through the 1970s, gay bars and gay social clubs played an extremely important



role in providing meeting places for homosexuals as well as being a mechanism to spread information about gay and lesbian issues. Most city police departments, however, were aware of these bars and routinely conducted raids in which patrons were harassed and even at times arrested for what the officers saw as lewd behavior. On June 27, 1969, this harassment became a flash point in the development of a gay and lesbian social movement. On that date, police in New York City tried to close down the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar in Greenwich Village, New York. As police attempted to arrest patrons without identification or those dressed in drag, the remaining patrons saw a paddy wagon arrive. Gays and lesbians, finally, had had enough. It was time to fight back after years of discrimination and humiliation. A *Village Voice* reporter who observed the incident noted that the atmosphere within the bar became "explosive when police tried to arrest a 'dyke' who put up a tremendous struggle" (qtd. in Cavin, 1990, p. 324). Patrons then turned on the police, attacking them with beer cans and bottles. Before long, a major riot erupted. This first homosexual protest was fueled by years of anger and lasted for 3 days.<sup>1</sup>

Among the lesbians at Stonewall was author and activist Rita Mae Brown. Brown exemplified the openness of many women in the new generation of the lesbian movement, who were willing to acknowledge their sexuality and to force more mainstream organizations to accept them and lesbianism as an emerging political force. Forced out of NOW in 1970, Brown and other women such as Lois Hart, Karla Jay, and Barbara Love sought refuge in the newly formed Gay Liberation Front. In that same year, at the Second Congress to Unite Women, Brown, Jay, and nearly 30 other women, 17 of them "wearing purple tee shirts proclaiming themselves the 'the lavender menace' took over the stage after 'decorating' the halls with such signs as 'The Women's Movement is a Lesbian Plot'" (Gallo, 2006, p. 173). They also began to call themselves "radical lesbians."

Their efforts achieved some success the next year when NOW, under new leadership, invited Martin and Lyon to organize educational programs on lesbians at NOW's national convention. Lesbians were again welcomed into the membership fold. By 1973, NOW had formed a task force on sexuality and lesbianism. Perhaps more importantly, in 1973, the American Psychiatric Association was forced to remove homosexuality from its list of psychiatric disorders, following years of demands by a variety of gay and lesbian groups.

Other national groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, also began to take positions more favorable to lesbian and gay rights (Cain, 2000). But none of these groups had the singular focus on litigating for equal rights seen in other social movements. Perhaps spurred in part by publication of Jill Johnston's *Lesbian Nation* (1973), the energized movement began to focus on the legal system. Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund (now Lambda Legal) was founded in 1973. Later, in 1977, women involved in Equal Rights Advocates, a feminist,

San Francisco-based litigating firm, whose leadership included lesbians Mary Dunlap and Donna Hitchens, urged the creation of a separate group, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, from the Equal Rights Advocates' Lesbian Rights Project. Soon, national and regional litigation firms began to form across the country. One example was the creation of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders in New England in 1978.

Many of these groups, however, struggled to get off of the ground because 43 of 50 states at that time prohibited openly gay or lesbian law school graduates from being admitted to the bar. Homosexuality was considered deviant or illegal behavior unbefitting of an officer of the court. These laws forced lesbian law students to stay in the closet and limited the pool of lawyers able to use the legal system to advance lesbian and gay rights issues. Without the staff and financial resources to invest in a planned litigation strategy, these groups were essentially limited to reacting to cases involving lesbian and gay rights issues. These responses were nonstrategic and allowed the groups less control over how issues were framed and presented to the courts. Moreover, the efforts of all of these groups were soon to be largely put on hold, beginning in 1980 with the identification of a previously unknown disease in San Francisco's Castro district.

### The 1980s and 1990s: AIDS, Marriage, and Elected Office

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) was first recognized by the San Francisco Department of Public Health as an epidemic among gay men who engaged in certain (considered risky) sexual practices. Although public health officials first identified the disease in 1980, it was not officially acknowledged by the Centers for Disease Control until a year later, when it was identified among a group of five men in Los Angeles. Two years later, scientists isolated the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which was causing the disease (Shilts, 1987).

Despite this rapid identification, few treatment options existed in the early 1980s. Moreover, many individuals were uncertain about how the disease spread. Because of its high incidence among gay men, however, it quickly became known as the "gay plague." This misnomer had many effects for the lesbian community. In a spirit of solidarity, lesbian leaders were unwilling to disassociate themselves from gay men. Ironically, although the press portrayed homosexuals as a single class, lesbians had the lowest AIDS rate of any group. This fact was left largely unreported, outraging lesbians.

The politics and initial hysteria of the AIDS outbreak did, however, have some positive consequences for the potential for the development of women's leadership within the broader homosexual community. Many women who had enjoyed leadership roles in lesbian organizations now found room at the top of some larger



gay rights organizations, as the gay community was decimated by AIDS before antiviral medications were discovered. For example, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which had been founded in 1973 by three gay men, selected Virginia Apuzzo (a former nun) as its first female executive director in 1982. In the 20 years between 1982 and 2002, women, including Urvashi Vaid and Torie Osborn, led the group for a majority of the time.

These years were a period of tremendous growth, not only for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force but also for other gay and lesbian rights groups. Beginning with the second national March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1987, which drew approximately 500,000 participants, the gay and lesbian rights movement began to be revitalized. Under the leadership of these strong women, many groups within the movement increased their membership, raised more funds than ever before, and established or moved their headquarters to Washington, D.C.

These changes signaled the beginning of a new era in the gay and lesbian rights movement. Activists no longer devoted the majority of their time and resources to promoting public acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle. Although this is still a challenge faced by homosexuals today, modern gay and lesbian groups are more focused on fighting for marriage rights and achieving representation in government.

### **The Movement for Marriage Rights**

At the dawn of the 1990s, lesbian and gay couples began to call for the right to marry. Early in the decade, many liberal city councils (such as those in San Francisco and Atlanta, Georgia) enacted what were then called domestic partnership laws. These laws came in a variety of forms. Most generally, they allowed adults who lived together but who could not legally wed to register at city hall as domestic partners. Registration provided the couple with certain legal rights that they would not otherwise have enjoyed. Domestic partners often gained access to family health, dental, and life insurance plans, which generally covered only married persons. Domestic partnership provisions also allowed a partner the opportunity to make decisions for their partner if he or she became ill or died.

Many activists were dissatisfied with the idea of settling for domestic partnerships and believed that full equality would be achieved only when gay and lesbian couples were granted the right to marry. (Some lesbians, however, wanted no part of marriage, seeing it as a patriarchal institution.) Gays and lesbians began to challenge statutes that prohibited them from marrying. The most visible of these cases came from Hawai'i.

In December of 1990, three couples (two lesbian and one gay)—Ninia Baehr and Genora Dancel, Tammy Rodrigues and Antoinette Pregil, and Joseph Melillo and Patrick Lagon—applied for marriage licenses. The couples knew their applications were filed in violation of the 1985 Hawaii Marriage Law, which implicitly banned gay marriage by

referring to a “man and woman” and a “husband” and “wife.” As expected, their marriage applications were denied by the Hawai'i Department of Health in April 1991. This denial provided the couples with the opportunity to file the first serious challenge to a state prohibition granting same-sex marriage licenses in nearly 20 years.<sup>2</sup> This ruling was upheld by an October 1991 decision by a Hawai'i trial court. The couples appealed the case to the state supreme court later that month.

It was with this appeal that the case began to garner significant national attention. Several interest groups, including the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, joined the struggle as *amicus curiae* (or friends of the court) at the state supreme court level. Part of the reason the case drew so much national attention was because it came at a time when the gay rights movement in general was gaining increased recognition—and having increased success in courts—across the United States. In two 1992 cases, for example, gay rights activists won important victories in two southern states when the Commonwealth of Kentucky Supreme Court overturned the state's anti-sodomy law and a Florida jury found for a gay plaintiff in a job discrimination case.

This general sense of judicial goodwill on the state level extended to the Hawai'i marriage case. In a 3 to 1 ruling, the state supreme court decided that the state lacked a compelling public interest to limit civil marriage to heterosexual couples and thus may have been in violation of the equal protection clause of Hawai'i's state constitution. At least for a short time, it appeared as though gay marriage was on the fast track to approval in Hawai'i.

### *The Defense of Marriage Act*

Most successful social movements experience counter-movements, and the gay and lesbian rights movement was no exception. The Hawai'i Supreme Court's 1993 decision, which seemed to signal the imminence of the legalization of gay marriage in the United States, served as a call to arms for conservative and religious activists. It was not long after the case was decided that these people began to organize their forces for a battle in defense of the “traditional” American family.

The efforts of the conservative groups were aided by a number of factors. First, although conservative public interest law firms had begun to gain steam in the 1980s (see, e.g., Epstein, 1985), they continued to gain power—and realize the magnitude of the gay marriage issue—in the 1990s. In addition, conservative litigation efforts were drastically aided by the creation of the American Center for Law and Justice, the litigating arm of the Christian Coalition.

Moreover, in 1994, Republicans controlled both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years. This Congress was decidedly more conservative than its predecessors and made passage of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) easier. Perhaps more surprising, however, was Democratic President Bill Clinton's signing of the act.



DOMA was billed as an act in defense of the "traditional" American family. It defined marriage as "a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife." In addition, the law stated that no state would "be required to give effect to any public act, record, or judicial proceeding in any other state . . . respecting a relationship between persons of the same sex as a marriage under the laws of such other state" (Defense of Marriage Act, 1996). The constitutionality of this act has yet to be challenged as of this writing.

### Representation in Government

While lesbians continued to fight for their right to marry, national homophile groups also began to recognize the importance of legislative representation. In 1989, for example, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) created a political action committee (HRC PAC) to support candidates who advocate for a broad range of issues important to the gay and lesbian agenda. Once it endorses a candidate, HRC "makes financial and in-kind contributions to candidates vying for seats in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives during the election season" (Human Rights Campaign, 2009).

The Victory Fund, founded 2 years later, employs a different strategy. It works to support only openly gay and lesbian political officials, rather than any politician who campaigns with a gay and lesbian rights agenda. Recognizing the importance of having gay and lesbian officials at all levels of the political sphere, the Victory Fund also supports candidates for a wider range of offices beyond the federal House and Senate. For example, in 1992, it supported Cheryl Jacques in her successful campaign for the Massachusetts State Legislature, a position that she held from 1993 to 2004, when she became the head of HRC.<sup>3</sup>

Lesbians also achieved a first in 1998 when Democrat Tammy Baldwin was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Wisconsin's Second Congressional District. Baldwin, a former state legislator, had been involved in politics since she was a student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She won with tremendous support from the 40,000 students in Madison, the largest city in the district. Baldwin also received assistance from HRC PAC and the Victory Fund.<sup>4</sup>

Interestingly, in 1998, Baldwin was part of "a national triumvirate of lesbians running for Congress" (Ott, 1998, p. 1). The other members of this triumvirate were Grethe Cammermeyer, a Vietnam veteran who ran in Washington State, and Christine Kehoe, a San Diego, California, city councilwoman.<sup>5</sup> Both were Democrats, and both lost their races.

Most observers agreed that Baldwin's sexual orientation was not an issue in her campaign. "Tammy has been an out lesbian throughout all of her political career, and it has never seemed to be an issue," said her campaign manager Paul Devlin (Ott, 1998, p. 1). Karen Heinen, a

communications assistant for the Victory Fund, had a different take on the campaign: "Every openly gay candidate is essentially fighting two battles: one against homophobia and then the election itself" (p. 1).

### Future Directions

In 2002, lesbians headed most prominent gay and lesbian rights groups. Since that time, the female executive directors of some groups—including the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, the Victory Fund, Lambda Legal, and HRC—have been replaced by men. The trend toward male-dominated leadership is cause for significant concern. No longer does the leadership of the gay and lesbian rights movement reflect all of the people it claims to represent. More importantly, the underrepresentation of lesbians in top policy-making positions can cause issues of importance to be ignored by the very organized interests that exist to represent their beliefs.

This underrepresentation is an issue of particular concern as gay marriage becomes a growing issue in the United States. With six states having legalized gay marriage (and thousands of couples having married in California before citizens suspended gay marriage rights using a referendum) and a number of other states considering such proposals, the status of lesbians in the United States appears to be changing dramatically.

The lack of a singular leader in the footsteps of Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, or Betty Friedan also presents unusual problems. Most social movements have clearly present leaders. In spite of the gains made by lesbians, none has come forward to be the face of the movement (Peters, 2009). Lesbians thus are pressing for their policy goals without a singular leader, a fact that may be exacerbated because most issues of concern, such as marriage, are state issues. A focus on state issues and the absence of a national spokeswoman are causes for worry and also reflect the movement's major challenge: to speak out forcefully in one voice with clear leadership.

### Notes

1. The year after Stonewall, Brenda Howard, who was known as "the Mother of Pride," helped organize the first annual march to commemorate the event. Later, these annual parades took place throughout the world. The last Sunday in June is still celebrated as Lesbian/Gay Pride Day.

2. Before the Hawai'i case, courts in seven states rejected the idea of same-sex marriage. Two of those cases, *Baker v. Nelson* (1972) and *Hicks v. Miranda* (1975) reached the U.S. Supreme Court. In both cases, the Court refused to review the lower courts' decisions, thereby allowing these decisions, which concluded that states had the ability to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, to stand. Several states,



including New Jersey (1982), Pennsylvania (1984), and New York (1990), heard post-*Baker* and *Hicks* challenges to questions including divorce and property claims in same-sex relationships, but these cases did not involve the act of filing for marriage licenses. The courts' decisions in these cases were consistent with earlier decisions and, like *Baker* and *Hicks*, never received a full hearing by the Supreme Court.

A challenge to the District of Columbia's prohibition on same-sex marriage was decided in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia in 1992, at the same time the Hawai'i case was in the judicial system. In the D.C. case, two gay men sued the District of Columbia for the right to marry. On appeal, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, in 1995, ruled that two gay men who were denied a marriage license were not deprived of their right to equal protection of the law. In 2009, D.C. passed legislation to legalize gay marriage.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MOVEMENT

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The domestic violence movement in the United States,<sup>1</sup> from its emergence in the 1970s and into today, has largely been conceptualized as—and has in reality been—a women's movement, about issues primarily facing women and with women almost exclusively directing, guiding, and leading it. Throughout the movement's history, even as it has grown and changed, women have been at the forefront, challenging us to recognize domestic violence, developing ways to help survivors, and striving to change our social institutions and values for the better. As Rita Smith, the executive director of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, explains, "Women's leadership was critical, pivotal, and pretty much singular. . . . I think that if women hadn't taken leadership, this movement never would have been created" (R. Smith, personal communication, July 15, 2009).

### A Brief Historical Background

Understanding the emergence of women's leadership in the domestic violence movement, more commonly known as the battered women's movement in the early days of its existence, first requires a brief discussion of our cultural legacy of tolerance of domestic violence, as well as the key movements that made women's leadership possible. For much of history throughout the world, women were both legally and socially the property of their husbands. At marriage, a woman's identity was subsumed under that of her spouse,

and the married couple was treated as one person, represented by the husband (e.g., "Husband and wife are legally one person. The legal existence of the wife is suspended during marriage, incorporated into that of the husband. . . . If a wife is injured, she cannot take action without her husband's concurrence" Blackstone, 1765, pp. 430–431). In the United States, as late as the 20th century, women lacked the right to vote, to enter contracts,<sup>2</sup> or to take legal action (Hirschon, 1984); in essence, women did not exist apart from their husbands. Built into this system was a sense of male entitlement, an implicit—if not explicit—granting of permission for men to act however they wanted toward their wives, to treat their "property" however they saw fit. Not only did women lack a voice in the legal system and in society to speak out against any abuse they suffered at home, but our culture tolerated, and even condoned, domestic violence. For example, in 1864, the North Carolina high court held, "A husband is responsible for the acts of his wife and he is required to govern his household, and for that purpose the law permits him to use towards his wife such a degree of force as is necessary to control an unruly temper and make her behave herself" (*State v. Jesse Black*, 1864). This issue was directly addressed in the *Declaration of Sentiments* produced at the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention in 1848: "In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement."



Our society's long-standing complicity in violence against women is further demonstrated through historical legal acceptance of marital rape. The philosophy of women as their husbands' property, as well as historical understandings of the marital relationship, fostered the view that once married, the wife had permanently consented to sexual activity with her husband and could not revoke that consent. Therefore, it was impossible for a husband to rape his wife. Known as the Hale doctrine, the idea was first espoused by Sir Matthew Hale in 1736, a chief justice in England, who stated, "The husband cannot be guilty of a rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband, which she cannot retract" (Hale, 1736/1971, p. 629). The Hale doctrine was sanctioned by U.S. law as early as 1857 (*Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Fogarty*, 1857). Other states followed suit and created marital exemptions in their rape laws; that is, the statutes making rape a crime explicitly exempted husbands from prosecution for rape. Until the late 1970s, most states still did not consider spousal rape a crime. The first marital rape case to reach the U.S. court system took place in 1978 in New Jersey, where Daniel Morrison was found guilty of raping his estranged wife. In 1996 seven states still had marital rape exemptions in their criminal codes, and only recently have those been removed or eroded through case law. The movement in the 19th and 20th centuries to recognize women as independent people with the right to a legal identity separate from their husbands was a necessary precursor to the later feminist movement and to the ability of women to respond directly to domestic violence.

Similarly, the Prohibition movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s, led primarily by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, laid important groundwork for the domestic violence movement, in that many women supported prohibition because they believed that ending alcoholism and alcohol consumption, especially by men, would dramatically reduce the violence women were experiencing at the hands of their husbands (Rose, 1997). It is also critical to recognize the importance of the civil rights and antiwar movements of the mid-20th century, in that both forced U.S. society to confront some of its values and institutions and both afforded women roles as activists (see, e.g., Evans, 1980; Tischler, 2000). These movements' emphasis on the need for social critique and reform, as well as their grassroots and community organizing techniques, helped to inform the strategies and approaches of the early feminist movement more broadly, as well as the domestic violence movement.

## The Emergence of the Domestic Violence Movement

From the very beginning, the domestic violence movement was an effort spearheaded by women working in the service

of other women. Yet the women who first took up this issue were not leaders as the term is commonly used; rather they were women, often themselves survivors of abuse, coming together informally to address a problem that even they were just beginning to recognize. Small groups of women sat around kitchen tables, in classrooms, at religious organizations, and in other similar settings and shared their experiences and, in so doing, began to realize that they were not alone in suffering from abuse and violence at the hands of their husbands, boyfriends, or intimate partners. Through these "consciousness-raising" discussions, women started to name their experiences as domestic violence and to describe the interpersonal and cultural dynamics underlying the abuse. As the prevalence of domestic violence became more apparent to these groups of women, they began to organize more formally, focusing their responses on offering safety and support to survivors, as well as, and importantly, on challenging the social institutions and cultural norms they saw as the root causes of domestic violence.

## Grassroots Organizing and the Development of Shelters

Before women worked as leaders in any formal sense, they worked as peers, identifying a problem confronting their friends and their communities and making whatever efforts they could to help. The early participants in the movement recognized a need for victims of domestic violence to have a safe space to escape to, and these women opened their doors to victims, offering shelter in their own homes. They distributed their home phone numbers to friends and women in need of someone to talk to about their experiences of violence. Women did this work on a volunteer basis, not asking for or expecting compensation, but responding out of empathy to a pressing problem facing the women around them. Slowly, as these women began to raise awareness in their communities, they gathered enough money to rent a set of apartments or buy a house, establishing the very first formal shelters exclusively for domestic violence victims and their children.<sup>3</sup>

It was in these early shelters that the tone and characteristics of women's leadership in the movement were established and put into practice. The women who formed shelters and other domestic violence service organizations consciously rejected traditional hierarchical structures and models of the kind seen in male-dominated business and corporations (Schechter, 1982). Instead, they intentionally developed egalitarian and participatory organizational models based on radical feminism that prioritized collaboration and consensus.<sup>4</sup> Shelter staff—the "leaders" of these organizations—saw themselves as the residents' equals and viewed the residents' opinions and experiences as integral to the organization's operation (Schechter, 1982). For example, residents and staff frequently made decisions affecting shelter life, such as "house rules" and the division of chores, together (Schechter, 1982). Furthermore,



these early organizations emphasized group sharing, acknowledging that their efforts should not be about staff imparting knowledge to residents but rather about residents learning from each other. Women saw this approach as the most effective way for domestic violence victims to understand that they were not alone in their experience or at fault for the abuse, as well as to foster a sense of self-determination; this was the birth of the empowerment model approach to working with victims. Ultimately, the primary task of the shelters was to provide women with a safe space and, through the support of their peers, a forum from which they could begin to advocate for themselves and other domestic violence victims. The structures of these organizations consequently informed—and were informed by—the broader goals of the movement to address the social causes of domestic violence.

### **The Emphasis on Social Change**

A critical feature of women's leadership in the domestic violence movement has been the focus on raising awareness about, and working to challenge, the cultural norms and values that tolerated and condoned acts of violence against women, namely, gender roles and associated dynamics of power and control. Just as women rejected typical power structures in forming shelters, so too did they begin to confront power and control at all levels of society. Women in the movement saw a direct connection between domestic violence and other forms of oppression, primarily sexism, but also racism, homophobia, and religious discrimination.<sup>5</sup> Domestic violence was about more than two individuals: It was also about men's dominance, women's subordination, and inequality of access to social and economic opportunities. The women leading the movement asserted that domestic violence was not a private issue to be dealt with in the home but a public issue that required cultural reform; they maintained that widespread social change was necessary in ending violence against women. For many in the field of domestic violence today, this strong orientation toward social change work is the most distinguishing characteristic of women's leadership in the early stages of the movement, as well as one of the movement's most important continuing goals.

### **The Beginnings of a National Movement**

As more and more shelters and other domestic violence service organizations were formed in communities across the country, women leaders began to sense a need to communicate and work together on a national level. Either alone or in small groups, women traveled around their own state and into others, conveying information, strategies, and support to others working in the field. Given that responding to domestic violence was such a new endeavor and that many, if not all, of the women at the helm of shelters were learning their jobs as they went along, this exchange of experiences and best practices was not only

valuable but also essential. From this informal networking among women, the first domestic violence coalitions arose, uniting organizations from disparate locations but with a common purpose. These coalitions allowed organizations to combine resources for public education, support groups, and other needs of survivors. Importantly, women also recognized the potential power that a coalition of organizations, a collection of voices, could have in igniting more widespread social reform.

The formation of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is particularly illustrative of how many of these early coalitions emerged, as well as of how many women stepped in as leaders of the national movement (R. Smith, personal communication, July 15, 2009). NCADV's story begins in 1978 at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearing on what were then called battered women, where a number of women gathered to testify about their experiences, either as survivors or as advocates working in the field. During the process of the hearing, through the questions asked and responses given, it became clear how little Congress knew or understood about domestic violence. After they had finished testifying, many of the women congregated in the restroom and began discussing the lack of awareness and sympathy among the congressmen, and they decided that it was vital for women like themselves to organize on a national level in order to have the kind of impact they desired. Thus the NCADV was born, allowing these women working at the grassroots level across the country to return home to effect change in their communities while knowing that efforts would continue to be made on a national scale. With respect to the leadership of the NCADV, as with so many other organizations on the local and national levels, women assumed responsibility not because they had envisioned a career in the domestic violence movement but because they were passionate about the work and saw a need for leadership. As Rita Smith, executive director at NCADV, describes, "I just kept taking on more responsible roles because I thought, 'Well, somebody's got to do it. I think I can.' I think that's true for a lot of women in this work. . . . Those of us who took more responsible positions were just filling a void" (R. Smith, personal communication, July 15, 2009). In doing so, in stepping in where they were needed and out of a genuine desire to help victims and address the violence they were experiencing, these women committed themselves to improving the lives of women as well as society at large. Even if sometimes assumed inadvertently, the leadership that these women provided, whether at the local, state, or national level, was essential in bringing the issue of domestic violence into the public's consciousness. In opening their homes and then shelters to women in need, they created a space for victims to share their stories and empower each other to survive their experiences of abuse; in emphasizing the sexism and other forms of oppression at the core of abuse, they pushed for a confrontation with, and a reformation of, U.S. cultural institutions and norms and asked the public to, for the



first time, recognize the prevalence and seriousness of domestic violence.

## The Movement Grows

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, because of the tireless efforts of women in the movement, the issue of domestic violence began to gain national attention. Buoyed by the continued progress of the feminist movement and alongside other emerging social issues, domestic violence was increasingly seen as something worth devoting increased resources to, in both governmental and private sectors. Yet as the movement grew in prominence, it also changed in significant ways that had implications both for its leadership and for its guiding principles and practices.

## Framing Domestic Violence as a Crime

Increasingly, leaders of the movement pushed for the criminalization of domestic violence. Although states always had criminal laws against assault and battery, they were almost never enforced in the context of intimate partner relationships; instead, police officers and prosecutors often saw domestic violence as a dispute between partners better left to be resolved privately. Yet in the 1980s and into the 1990s, in response to violence of all kinds, U.S. politicians prioritized strong anticrime legislation. Leaders of the domestic violence movement capitalized on this existing political will and started framing their discussion in terms of criminal acts committed by a perpetrator and against a victim. Women in the movement saw the anticrime agenda as an opportunity to force the criminal justice system to take domestic violence seriously and to recognize abusers as offenders who must be accountable to the law. They pushed for states to charge abusers under the assault and battery laws already on the books; when that was met with resistance, they lobbied across the country for states to create laws specifically against domestic violence. Women also advocated for mandatory arrest laws, recognizing that too often police used their discretion to refrain from arresting abusers and tended not to adhere to the good cause standard typically used in making arrests.<sup>6</sup> Finally, after tremendous advocacy efforts by women across the country, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994. Representative Connie Morella (R-MD) believes that although certain men in Congress, such as then-Senator Joseph Biden,<sup>7</sup> were essential in moving this legislation forward, it was really the coalitions formed among the women in Congress that created the momentum and support needed to pass VAWA (C. Morella, personal communication, July 31, 2009). Included in VAWA was a call for states to strengthen laws against domestic violence, as well as requirements of increased training on domestic violence for prosecutors, judges, and police officers. VAWA also established funding sources and allocated government resources to domestic

violence service programs. The passage of VAWA reflected the shift of the domestic violence movement from a grassroots feminist cause to a more mainstream—and “legitimate”—national political issue, while at the same time it clearly emphasized the importance of the legal and criminal justice systems in responding to this issue.

## The Professionalization of the Movement

Understanding how the domestic violence movement became increasingly professionalized requires a brief discussion of the impact of the larger women's movement at this point in history. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, feminists had made considerable progress in terms of forcing the U.S. public to recognize and treat women as equals. The effects of this work were perhaps most keenly felt in the growing number of women attending college, receiving advanced degrees, and moving into the professional workforce. For the first time, women were being hired to work at companies and organizations at significant rates, and their presence in professional fields began to be felt. It was within this context that the domestic violence movement garnered more widespread attention, as well as an influx of workers that would shape the movement's direction.

Although national awareness of, and government support for, domestic violence work was of incredible value to the movement, it also caused, or perhaps necessitated, changes that altered the movement in significant ways. The increase in funding allowed for shelters and other organizations to hire more staff members and rely less on volunteer leadership. As more and more paid staff positions were created and then filled, many organizations shifted to a hierarchical structure. Though the early leaders of the movement had consciously rejected such a model, there was a growing sense that this more traditional, corporate-like structure was necessary to stay organized and effective. Consequently, in order to manage budgets, to keep track of programs and services, and to promote staff responsibility, domestic violence organizations hired executive directors, created management levels of staff positions, and appointed boards. Furthermore, those brought in to fill these new leadership roles—though still almost exclusively women—were increasingly people with a professional education or background. Women lawyers, social workers, and psychologists entered the field in significant numbers, and their training and skills became essential components of domestic violence work. In one sense, hiring professionals was part of a strategy to give the movement increased credibility and legitimacy, to demonstrate that domestic violence was a real problem deserving of serious attention by formalized social institutions in law, medicine, and mental health care. At the same time, though, many in the movement felt that this professionalization was necessitated by the funding requirements of VAWA and other sources. VAWA, as well as private funders, prioritized the provision of services; because domestic violence had been framed as a crime, the emphasis was



on redress through the legal and criminal justice system, and lawyers were therefore necessary. Additionally, funding sources placed greater attention on individual counseling for women, calling for more traditional therapeutic approaches as a means to help survivors. In general, there was an increasing sense, both in society at large and within the movement, that professional qualifications were necessary to work competently with those who had experienced domestic violence (Schechter, 1982).

### Consequences of Changes in the Movement

Because of the changing leadership of the movement at this time, the discourse on, and responses to, domestic violence changed as well. New leaders often reframed domestic violence as less of a political and social concern and as more of a health and criminal justice issue, and this directly affected the values and practices of those working in the field. Although in many respects this shift was necessary and valuable, it was not without ramifications.

The emphasis on legal redress has caused what many of the movement's current leaders see as an overreliance on the criminal justice system. Even though much work has been done to train police officers, attorneys, and judges on domestic violence, and even though the movement has many more allies in the criminal justice system, there are still many in the justice system whose work is counterproductive to the movement's goals. Police officers, attorneys, and judges continue to act in ways that implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, tolerate or condone abusers' behaviors and that threaten the safety of victims. Leaders of the movement have been forced to confront the realization that a criminal approach to domestic violence will not solve the issue and in some cases may exacerbate it. Furthermore, that many organizations primarily refer victims to the legal system has meant that many women are discouraged from seeking help at all. As Ben Atherton-Zeman, a leading male advocate in the movement explains, "We're hearing from [abused women] that they don't always want criminal justice system involvement. And they have really good reasons for not wanting that, whether it is because they're undocumented immigrants or women of color who historically do not have a good relationship with the criminal justice system" (B. Atherton-Zeman, personal communication, July 15, 2009). Criminal justice system involvement often disproportionately impacts families of color, disproportionately putting more men of color in jail and more children of color in the child welfare system. Consequently, current leadership is being challenged to look outside this system for redress and to broaden the kinds of available interventions and responses.<sup>8</sup>

Many leaders have also noticed that the professionalization of the movement has resulted in a considerable lack of focus on social change. Although the counseling, legal, and other services provided through most of today's shelters and service organizations are certainly valuable and important for victims to receive, there is a growing recognition that

these services alone are not going to solve the problem of domestic violence. Significantly, service provision is reactive and generally does not have any meaningful capability for prevention. Leaders must recognize the need to address the societal attitudes and perspectives that are at the root of abuse. Many of the women guiding the field today are beginning to return their attention to the social change goals so essential to the movement's leadership in the 1970s and to affirm the importance of questioning, challenging, and changing U.S. cultural institutions and values.

### Moving Forward

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Though the leaders of this movement have made tremendous progress since the 1970s in raising awareness about domestic violence and developing responses to the issue, there is still much work to be done and continued strong leadership needed as we go forward. For many, the movement is now at something of a crossroads: The increase in funding, the criminalization of domestic violence, the involvement of social systems, the changing structures of organizations, the decrease in social change efforts have positive and negative implications, and there is some tension in the movement as a result. Resolving or negotiating the coexistence of these tensions is important as the movement develops and moves forward, just as it will be critical to develop new and insightful directions in which to take the movement. Undoubtedly, women's continued leadership and demonstrated passion for this cause will be essential for the movement's future, but it is also important for those in the movement to explore new projects and paths, as well as emerging leaders.

### Men in the Movement

While women have historically been—and continue to be—the vast majority of those working in and leading the domestic violence field, more and more men have begun to take up this cause and become involved as advocates, activists, and leaders. Both men and women in the movement agree that men's presence is critical, primarily because men are perhaps best positioned to speak to other men about ending men's violence and about confronting and changing the definitions of masculinity that permit abusive behaviors. Furthermore, men's presence has in some ways lent credibility to the movement. Men's involvement signifies that domestic violence is not just a "women's issue" but one deserving of broader social attention and one that requires the efforts of all to address.

Yet, for all the advantages it offers, involving men also raises questions and presents challenges, particularly with respect to how men can and should interact with the women who have led this movement. Men's socialization as men—as members of a gender group taught to step in, to lead, to be in control—can complicate their involvement in the domestic violence movement.



There's a lot of training that we've [men] had over our lives that has taught us that male voices are more important than women's voices and that men are more important than women. . . . So we tend to come to a meeting for the first time and immediately act like the expert, we tend to interrupt women, we tend to belittle—usually not consciously—women's thinking and prioritize men's thinking and men's voices. (B. Atherton-Zeman, personal communication, July 15, 2009)

The struggle, therefore, is to include men, as both participants and leaders, in a way that does not undermine the leadership of the women who continue to be at the forefront of the movement. An important step toward accomplishing this is to help men who come to this work to understand their social privileges as men and the positions of social power that they come from, so that they may better work alongside women. Moreover, men must recognize the history of women's contributions to this field, as well as the centrality of their continued work as advocates, activists, providers, researchers, organizers, and survivors.

### **Involving Youth**

Many of the current leaders in the field recognize the incredible potential in teenagers and young adults, more of whom are becoming drawn to this work. Youth come to this field from a variety of directions, whether because of an academic background in Women's Studies or Gender Studies, because they grew up in abusive homes, because they are survivors of teen dating violence, or for other reasons—and these youth are committed to continuing efforts to address domestic and dating violence. Interestingly, youth are frequently returning to the grassroots-organizing mentality that was essential to the early movement. Yet, their techniques may look different, reflecting the culture in which they grew up. For example, young people's activism often involves the Internet, taking advantage of tools like blogs, online chat forums, and social networking sites to reach out to other youth and communicate with them about these issues. It is essential for the movement's current leaders to make room for youth, to engage them in this work, mentor them, and inspire the next generation of emerging leaders.

### **Prioritizing the Voices of Silenced People and Groups**

As the movement continues to grow, leaders acknowledge that it must strive to account for the variety of experiences and needs of all who are affected by domestic violence. Survivors from communities of color, from Native communities, from religiously observant communities, and from communities of economic privilege may experience the abuse differently, may have different obstacles to reaching out for help, and may want different things from service providers and advocates. The same may be said for lesbian, gay, and transgendered survivors

and for male survivors of domestic violence. For much of U.S. history, as a society and as a movement, we have been reluctant to acknowledge these groups and to include them in domestic violence work.<sup>9</sup> Not only must these varied stories be accounted for by those currently working in the field, but survivors from all of these communities and backgrounds must be included as leaders in the movement, as people whose knowledge and experience can and should inform the movement's direction. If the domestic violence movement is to maintain the voice of survivors as the central guiding value, all of those voices, including voices that have traditionally been silenced, must be brought to the table.

### **Community Collaboration**

As the domestic violence field grows and moves forward, it will also be critical for the movement's leadership to collaborate with other community organizations, not only to bolster resources but also to reignite the emphasis on social change. Other agencies and community groups engaged in antiviolence and antioppression work not specific to domestic or intimate partner violence are implementing projects and strategies for response and preventions that have the potential to complement the movement. Organizations in other countries addressing domestic and sexual violence, as well as broader women's issues, are making great strides for women in their countries and have developed new ideas and approaches that have value for other areas of the world. Building relationships with these organizations, whether informally or formally through coalitions and advocacy groups, can improve the available resources and provide a forum for initiating broader social change. The challenge facing the movement's leadership is to engage with groups and communities that may have different goals and understanding of this issue—for example, faith organizations, rape crisis centers, and community development organizations—so that we may learn from them, support their work, and continue to push for institutional and cultural change.

### **Summary and Future Directions**

The domestic violence movement in the United States has made considerable progress in the past 30 to 40 years in raising awareness of this issue and developing services to help those experiencing domestic violence. Yet the movement is still growing, expanding, and changing, and there is much that we still do not know, questions we have not asked, and answers we do not have. As a movement, we must continue to develop services that are responsive to the increasingly diverse needs and wants of survivors and their families and to challenge the things in our society that persist in being tolerant or permissive of, or blind to, violent and abusive behaviors and attitudes. Throughout this movement's history—and assuredly, into its future as



well—it has been women making the efforts to learn and do more. Even as the face of the movement's leadership may change, we must acknowledge that it has been women who have brought their compassion, commitment, persistence, knowledge, and personal experience to the field, who have been willing to take up this work, and who have worked tirelessly to see the day when we will end domestic violence.

## Notes

1. While the focus of this chapter is the history of the domestic violence movement in the United States, it is worthwhile to note that women around the world have been the leaders in developing services and social movements to address domestic violence in their nations and communities. These women have made important contributions to the world as it exists today and increasingly, as our society becomes a global one in the 21st century, women are working across national boundaries to learn from one another and support each other's efforts to address domestic violence and other social concerns.

2. As the legal identity of a woman was subsumed under the identity of her husband (or father) and she was considered the property of her husband, a woman could not therefore own property or contract for property or services. New York passed the Married Women's Property Act in 1848, allowing women to acquire and retain assets independently of their husbands. This was the first law that clearly established the idea that a married woman had an independent legal identity and could therefore form contracts. The New York law inspired nearly all other states to eventually pass similar legislation.

3. Women's Advocates in St. Paul, Minnesota, is widely recognized as the country's first shelter and was established in 1972 (SafeNetwork, 1999).

4. Feminist organizing principles gave us the consensus decision-making model that rejected oppressions and traditional patriarchal power structures in favor of empowerment of individual battered women through group processes. The underlying rationale is perhaps best described by Audre Lorde (1984): "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change" (p. 112).

5. Some of the early writings about the intersectionality of multiple oppressions and addressing domestic violence in

communities of color and lesbian communities include those of Angela Davis, bell hooks, and Suzanne Pharr, among others.

6. The idea behind mandatory arrest laws was to require police to make an arrest when there was good cause to believe that domestic violence had occurred. The implementation of these laws, however, caused considerable consternation in the domestic violence movement. There were serious unintended consequences. In arriving on scene to a "he said, she said" situation, police officers may find it difficult to determine which party is the abuser and which is the victim (in fact, sometimes police make no effort to determine who is the predominant aggressor) and, because they are required to make an arrest, may arrest both parties. Having an arrest record may then make it difficult for the victim to access legal remedies such as protection orders or custody of children. When a victim is arrested, it may also communicate the message that she or he is responsible for the abuse, and it will likely discourage the victim from calling the police during future abusive incidents. Great efforts have since been made to modify mandatory arrest laws to prevent or discourage dual arrest and to train police officers to make appropriate assessments on the scene.

7. Vice President Joseph Biden first proposed the Violence Against Women Act in 1990 when he was in the Senate. He not only led the efforts to pass the original VAWA in 1994 but also led the efforts to reauthorize and expand the legislation in 2000 and again in 2005. He has often stated, "My proudest legislative achievement in the Senate was passing the Violence Against Women Act" (White House, 2009).

8. The mainstream feminist movement is considered by many to have been a middle-class, heterosexual, white woman's movement. In the effort to unite all women in a common cause, the movement frequently ignored the diversity of women and presented an essentialized view of women and women's lives. Consequently, many women of color, lesbian women, and women from poor or rural communities—as well as their experiences—were not included in the discussions about what the feminist movement would look like or the goals that it would aim to achieve. The unfortunate result was that often societal changes benefited white, heterosexual, middle-class women but left women of color, lesbians, and poor women behind or even in worse circumstances than before. The domestic violence movement has similarly been guilty of proposing less inclusive solutions, the focus on the criminal justice response to domestic violence being perhaps the most obvious.

9. Even today, the Violence Against Women Act does not identify same-sex domestic violence as an issue and multiple state laws specifically exclude same-sex relationships from coverage under their domestic violence laws.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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Human trafficking, or modern-day slavery, is the 21st-century trade in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor. This egregious human rights abuse has proliferated rapidly in today's environment of increasingly connected networks and ease of travel. It exists in virtually every country around the world and is estimated to be an annual \$32 billion criminal enterprise (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2008). People are trafficked internationally and also internally within their own countries. Although accurate numbers are difficult to determine because of the hidden nature of this crime, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that, at any give time, there are at least 12.3 million people in modern-day slavery (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2009, p. 8). Other estimates put this number as high as 27 million people (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2008).

Although human trafficking is not exclusively a woman's issue, women are disproportionately affected by trafficking. According to U.S. government statistics, of those trafficked across national borders, 80% are women and girls (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2008). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that women comprise an average of 65% to 75% of all trafficking victims (UNODC & UN.GIFT 2009, p. 59). The majority of women and girls

who are trafficked are under the age of 25; many are teenagers (Blanchfield, 2009, p. 16).

The first section of this chapter is an overview of human trafficking, including how and why it disproportionately affects women. Focusing on U.S. efforts, the second section profiles some of the leaders whose combined efforts helped launch a worldwide antitrafficking movement.

### How Trafficking Occurs

Human trafficking operates in much of the same way throughout the world. Though some victims are outright kidnapped, more often they are "recruited" by traffickers who falsely promise legitimate employment and educational opportunities. The traffickers earn their victims' trust and in some cases are even relatives of the victims. Traffickers usually arrange for the victims' travel. However, once the victims arrive at their destinations, they are forced into commercial sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and labor in various industries, where they are held in conditions of slavery.

The ILO estimates that virtually all of the victims trafficked into prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation—98%—are women and girls (Blanchfield, 2009, p. 16). Victims trafficked into sexual exploitation are subjected to daily rapes and other sexual

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\*The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the authors.



violence. In some cases, increasingly younger girls are trafficked because of the perception that younger victims are less likely to be infected by HIV/AIDS (Blanchfield, 2009, p. 16). Many become infected with HIV/AIDS as a result of sex trafficking and are later shunned by their families and communities because of the associated stigmas of HIV/AIDS and prostitution.

Women also comprise a majority—an estimated 56%—of victims trafficked into economic exploitation (Blanchfield, 2009, p. 16). Economic exploitation involves forced labor in places like factories and farms, domestic servitude in people's homes, and bonded labor in which traffickers enslave victims by forcing them to pay off a phony "debt." Victims of economic exploitation are also abused physically, sexually, and psychologically. Women and girls forced into domestic servitude are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation by members of the households in which they are forced to work (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2009).

Trafficking is characterized by "force, fraud or coercion" (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2009, n.p.). This means trafficking victims may be held in slavery-like conditions by physical force or psychological coercion. Usually, both elements are present. Traffickers may threaten to kill the victims or their family members back home. They often convince victims, who are isolated in an unfamiliar place, that if they try to escape, the police will arrest them.

## Why Women and Girls Are Most Affected

The push and pull factors that drive human trafficking are similar to those that drive all forms of migration. Specifically, the "push" factors include poverty, lack of education and employment opportunities, underemployment, and political instability. The pull factors include the promise of jobs, schools, and security.

The inequality of women and girls in society, however, manifests itself in more gender-specific push and pull factors that facilitate the trafficking in women and girls. For example, while a community may lack overall job and education opportunities, the group that is most likely to have the least opportunity is women and girls. In too many areas around the world, families with limited resources are more likely to send their sons rather than daughters to school. Cultural notions of women's roles may limit their economic opportunities. Women and girls are more likely to face discrimination and other barriers to employment.

Other push factors that are more specific to women and girls are domestic violence and sexual abuse. The UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has estimated that one in three women throughout the world will be a victim of violence, whether it be rape, assault, or beating. Victims of domestic violence may see the promise of a new life as a way out of the abuse. Girls who are sexually abused at home are more likely to run

away and become homeless, where they are more vulnerable to traffickers.

People in conflict and postconflict areas who are displaced are especially vulnerable to trafficking. Here too, women and girls are disproportionately affected as they become vulnerable to both criminal traffickers and also, as has been widely reported, to some peacekeepers and other humanitarian workers who perpetrate trafficking crimes (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2009). In addition, the commercial sex industry creates a disproportionate demand for women and girls. The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) estimates that traffickers earn \$19 billion per year alone from forcing women and girls into sexual exploitation (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2008).

## Who Are the Traffickers?

Trafficking involves criminal networks that range from large, international organized crime rings to small, loosely organized groups. In a February 2009 report, the United Nations found that most traffickers share the same nationality as their victims. These traffickers "recruit" victims from their own countries and sell them to criminal networks in destination countries (UNODC & UN.GIFT, 2009). As a surprise to many, the same UN report found that women play a larger role in committing trafficking offenses than previously thought (UNODC & UN.GIFT, 2009). Some women recruiters are victims themselves who have been coerced into returning to their countries to recruit more women. Women traffickers are also less likely to be caught and more likely to be given more lenient sentences if caught (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2008).

## Establishing an Antitrafficking Movement

Perhaps because human trafficking disproportionately affects women, many women have been at the forefront of naming the problem and developing solutions to it. The profiles in this chapter are among many courageous antitrafficking activists, too numerous to name. With a U.S. focus, these profiles demonstrate how diverse leaders with different leadership styles and positions collaborated from the grass roots to the highest levels of government to bring the issue of trafficking out of the shadows and put it on the world stage.

The profiles of then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright demonstrate how women in positions of power used their platforms and considerable influence to mobilize other powerful decision makers to fight human trafficking and create a space for other women to be heard on these issues. The profiles of legislative activist Sharon Payton and forward-thinking American legislators highlight the importance of



harnessing political will to codify remedies to address human rights issues.

The profiles of Oksana Horbunova from Ukraine and Marina Pisklakova from Russia show how women in the nongovernmental organization (NGO) community encountered trafficking and other forms of violence in their communities and courageously took a stand against it. At great danger to themselves, these women worked with and advocated for victims before the international community had a name for this issue. They educated both their local communities and world leaders.

The profile of Martina Vandenberg from the United States demonstrates how researchers and advocates documented and reported on human trafficking. Armed with crucial firsthand information, they used that knowledge to help shape U.S. policy.

The profile of Saisuree Chutikul of Thailand demonstrates how women leaders in governments around the world brought the issue of human trafficking to their own governments and international organizations such as the United Nations. These international linkages helped them take resources and best practices back to their own countries.

Finally, the profile of Somaly Mam, a trafficking survivor from Cambodia, is a story of personal triumph over trafficking, in showing how survivors can draw on inner strength to help other victims rebuild their lives.

These examples show how the antitrafficking movement requires the collaboration of leaders. These leaders, who influenced and inspired each other, came from vastly different backgrounds, sometimes working on different continents, and with unique skills and worldviews. What united them is that they did not expect that someone else would right the wrongs they saw. They shared a deep commitment to use their talents and passion to stand against cruelty and injustice.

## Powerful Partners at the Top

### First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

On September 5, 1995, then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton stepped up to the podium in Beijing, China, at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women with more than 1,000 delegates from 189 nations in attendance. As honorary chair of the U.S. delegation, she began her address noting that the conference was a celebration of women.

"Women comprise more than half the world's population," Clinton said. Yet, she noted, "Women are 70% percent of the world's poor, and two-thirds of those who are not taught to read and write." As she described the hardships many women face around the world she said, "Those of us who have the opportunity to be here have the responsibility to speak for those who could not" (Clinton, 1995, n.p.).

Clinton described a series of violations of the human rights of women and girls, including being "sold into the slavery of prostitution." The language of human trafficking, the scope and scale of the problem, was not yet widely known in 1995. As Clinton noted these human rights violations, she was met with applause and affirmation. Finally, she said to thunderous applause from the delegates rising to their feet, "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights, once and for all" (Clinton, 1995, n.p.).

Returning home from the UN conference, Clinton brought the strength of her commitment to the role of honorary chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, a government task force that was established by President Bill Clinton in the weeks prior to the UN conference to coordinate U.S. government efforts to ensure that the good ideas that came out of the conference were implemented.

Hillary Rodham Clinton struck a cord with her rousing speech at the UN Women's Conference and received requests from all over the world to meet and speak with people who shared her commitment for urgent and sweeping action to improve the lives of women and girls. In November 1996, on a visit to Thailand with President Clinton, she took a side trip to Chiang Mai in northern Thailand to visit the New Life Center run by the Reverend Lauren Bethel, an American Baptist missionary who aimed to give girls rescued from prostitution a second chance at life.

Returning to Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, Clinton hosted a roundtable discussion at the U.S. embassy with Thai women leaders to talk over key issues affecting women and girls. One of the leaders in this discussion was Dr. Saisuree Chutikul, profiled later in the chapter, who was a member of the Thai delegation to the UN Women's Conference and was well known for her advocacy in the Thai government to protect women and children from sexual exploitation.

Madeleine Albright had been the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations at the time of the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women and had chaired the official U.S. delegation to the conference. She had announced to the delegates the series of U.S. government commitments for follow-up action. In its commitments, the United States pledged to combat violence against women and to implement a robust agenda for the new President's Interagency Council on Women (Albright, 1995).

In January 1997, Albright became the first female U.S. Secretary of State. Soon afterward, she and then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton held a special program at the U.S. Department of State in honor of International Women's Day. Secretary Albright opened the program with this clear message, "Let me begin this morning with one simple statement. Advancing the status of women is not only a moral imperative; it is being actively integrated into the foreign policy of the United States. It is our mission. It is the right thing to do, and frankly, it is the smart thing to do" (Albright & Clinton, 1997, n.p.).



As the highest ranking member of the cabinet, Secretary Albright became chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, taking over from Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, who served energetically for the first 2 years. As secretary of state and chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, Albright wasted no time in bringing the fight against human trafficking, a particularly egregious form of violence against women and girls, onto the U.S. foreign policy and interagency agenda. "Unfortunately today, around the world, appalling abuses are being committed against women. There are those who suggest that many of these abuses are cultural and there's nothing we can do about them. I say they're criminal and it's the responsibility of each and every one of us to stop them" (Albright & Clinton, 1997, n.p.).

One outcome of the powerful alliance between First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was the Vital Voices Democracy Initiative,<sup>1</sup> a series of conferences organized by the State Department to promote women's voices and participation in the emerging democracies around the world. This was a time of democratic openings in countries emerging from communism, military dictatorships, and other forms of oppression. Women were eager to take their place in building government and civil society structures to ensure that these democracies protected women's human rights and provided opportunities for women's full political and economic participation.

On July 11, 1997, Hillary Rodham Clinton gave the keynote address at the first Vital Voices conference in Vienna, Austria. At this conference came disturbing reports of young women from the region leaving for work overseas as nannies and waitresses and then disappearing, with no further communication with their families. With subsequent help from women such as Oksana Horbunova from Ukraine, Marina Pisklakova from Russia, and Martina Vandenberg from the United States (each profiled later in this chapter), the government officials began to understand the sordid events that led to the disappearances.

There was a clear need for coordinated U.S. governmental action to address this newly emerging issue. On March 12, 1998, in a ceremony to mark International Women's Day, President Clinton issued an executive memorandum, outlining a path forward in the U.S. government's response to this insidious human rights violation. The president called upon the President's Interagency Council on Women to coordinate the U.S. government activities, in close consultation with NGOs. Those who spoke at the White House ceremony included First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Attorney General Janet Reno, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and Thai government official Saisuree Chutikul. Along with NGOs, they represented some of the key stakeholders needed for an aggressive antitrafficking effort.

Shortly afterward, on July 11, 1998, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York. At that

time, she was the highest ranking woman in the history of the U.S. government. She was mindful that it was there in Seneca Falls, in 1848, that the great American suffragists held the first Women's Rights Convention.

In her induction speech, Secretary Albright said that she was leading "a major diplomatic and law enforcement effort to halt trafficking in women and girls" (Albright, 1998, n.p.). She described how her diplomatic efforts led to concrete results:

For example, as a result of my talks with Prime Minister Netanyahu, Israel has set up special police units in Tel Aviv and Haifa. We have established a joint working group with Italy. And in response to a request from the Government of Ukraine, we are preparing a comprehensive strategy for responding to trafficking in and out of that country.

After all [she said], if we believe in zero tolerance for those who sell illegal drugs, shouldn't we feel even more strongly about those who buy and sell human beings? . . . Our goal, ultimately, is to mobilize people everywhere so that trafficking in human beings is met by a stop sign visible around the equator and from pole to pole. (Albright, 1998, n.p.)

## Legislative Activists

Growing attention to the horror of human trafficking from the press, NGOs, the United Nations, and governments led to interest from the U.S. Congress.<sup>2</sup> In early 1999, Sharon Payt,<sup>3</sup> a human rights lawyer working for Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), had just finished working with a coalition of faith-based groups to ensure passage of the International Religious Freedom Act.

Sharon had worked throughout the former Soviet bloc with an extensive network of contacts there in the human rights and faith-based communities. She brought to the attention of Senator Brownback the heartbreaking stories she had been hearing about women and girls disappearing from their villages and being sold into sexual slavery.

On the House side of the U.S. Congress, Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ), chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, which promotes human rights in the former Soviet Union, was hearing disturbing reports from leaders in the NGO community such as Oksana Horbunova of Ukraine and Marina Pisklakova of Russia. They reported that organized criminal networks were preying on vulnerable women and girls who were seeking a better life through overseas work.

Representative Smith had also been very active in the International Religious Freedom Act. Payt saw an opportunity to work again with Smith and mobilize the highly motivated coalition of faith-based groups that had just successfully pushed for religious freedom legislation. These groups, including the National Association of Evangelicals, the Salvation Army, Southern Baptists, the Union for Reform Judaism, and the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, joined with women's human rights activists and other NGOs from organizations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the



International Human Rights Law Group (now known as Global Rights), and the International Justice Mission, to form an unprecedented coalition. They came together with the U.S. Congress and the President's Interagency Council on Women to begin work on legislation to combat human trafficking. Sharon Payt's leadership, and her talent for bringing together groups from across the political spectrum, allowed her to use the U.S. Senate as a platform to respond to those heartbreaking stories she heard of women and girls disappearing in the former Soviet Union.

Although this chapter focuses on women's leadership, the significant antitrafficking contributions of men cannot be overlooked. Congressman Smith, Senator Brownback, the late Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN), and former Congressman Sam Gejdenson (D-CT) held a series of hearings over the next several months to learn about the root causes of trafficking and to engage the Clinton administration in the effort to codify the U.S. government's activities to stop the trade in human beings.<sup>4</sup>

In a September 1999 hearing before Representative Smith, Theresa Loar, who was the director of the President's Council and senior coordinator for international women's issues at the State Department and had traveled to Thailand with the First Lady, described the policy the President's Interagency Council on Women developed based on President Clinton's 1998 directive on combating trafficking in women and girls.

This strategy is based on the three P's of prevention, protection and assistance for victims, and prosecution and enforcement against traffickers. The three elements of the U.S. policy framework are interconnected . . . prosecutions are virtually impossible if trafficked women do not receive protection and support so they can overcome their legitimate fears and be witnesses. (Loar, 1999, n.p.)

The policy framework developed by the President's Interagency Council on Women endures to this day as the action template for the worldwide antitrafficking movement.

This "three P's" framework is enshrined in the first comprehensive federal antitrafficking law in the United States, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), which was signed into law by President Clinton on October 28, 2000. This landmark legislation was the result of the efforts of many individuals and groups working collaboratively to bring their best ideas and solutions to the table. In the October 18, 2000, edition of her newspaper column *Talking It Over*, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who through her tireless advocacy and powerful partnership with Secretary Albright played such a leadership role in bringing attention to this issue, commented that "trafficking is nothing less than a pervasive human rights violation and a transnational crime. It is time for us to lead the way and bring it to an end. With the passage of this new law, we can do just that" (Clinton, 2000, n.p.).

## Courage on the Front Lines: Grassroots Leadership

The President's Interagency Council on Women could not have established the "three P's" framework without the guidance provided by people working on the front lines with trafficking victims. These individuals broke down barriers within their communities and countries and built networks to stand up to the traffickers.

### Oksana Horbunova

In the early 1990s, Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union and entered a long period of transition to democracy. In the midst of this transition, Oksana Horbunova left her position at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and began working in the Ukrainian parliament (Isenstein, 1995). Through her extensive networks, she discovered that women were disappearing from their communities. She decided to use her government contacts to investigate why and how this was happening.

Horbunova then joined and led the grassroots antitrafficking group La Strada in Ukraine. She established a women's rights hotline so that trafficking victims would have a lifeline—someone to call and some place where they could find help. She would meet returning survivors at the airport even though she knew she was in danger of running into the traffickers who were there to pick up and recapture their human cargo.

Horbunova's activism brought her to the attention of the U.S. State Department, and she was invited to speak at the Vital Voices Conference in Vienna in 1997. At this conference she met leaders in both governmental and nongovernmental communities, who became her allies for years to come in the fight against human trafficking.

Horbunova's hands-on experience and practical approaches to protecting women and girls from exploitation made her a valuable partner to the U.S. and Ukrainian officials who were just beginning to understand the nature and scope of the problem. Her transatlantic cooperation led to other alliances, linking the President's Interagency Council on Women with European Union officials who were tackling the same issues. Her expert advice helped lead to the U.S.–Ukraine bilateral antitrafficking agreement mentioned by Secretary Albright in her Seneca Falls speech. Horbunova pressed her own government to pass its first antitrafficking legislation, and she testified in the United States before the U.S. House of Representatives, urging the passage of the first U.S. antitrafficking law.

Horbunova is now called upon by world leaders for her expertise on trafficking, victim protection, and victim rehabilitation. She works with the International Organization for Migration to help rehabilitate trafficking victims. She continues to call attention to the lasting damage trafficked women suffer: "99% of those who return home (after being rescued or expelled) have severe medical problems. One of



the first people that trafficked women visit when they return home is their dentist, because so many have had their teeth knocked out during their ordeal" (Horbunova, 2002, n.p.). When Horbunova first began working on this issue, she was virtually alone in her efforts. Today, those who provide services to trafficking survivors are not alone but have networks and resources inspired by people like Horbunova.

### Marina Pisklakova

In the early 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Marina Pisklakova, who has a background in aeronautical engineering, was coordinating a women's issues survey for the Russian Academy of Sciences. She received a questionnaire response describing a case of domestic violence and did not know how to classify it because, as she notes, it was not recognized in post-Soviet Russia. Soon afterward, she encountered a woman who confided to her that she had been beaten by her husband. Pisklakova wanted to help but realized there was no place for this woman to go.

Compelled to act, in 1993, Pisklakova started the first crisis hotline in Russia for battered women. She answered more than 700 calls in a year. With no training, Pisklakova initially worked the hotline by herself. She will never forget one caller who said, "By the time you get to me, I will be dead" (Yerman, 2008).

Despite threats from angry husbands, Pisklakova persevered and created a network of women's crisis centers across Russia called ANNA, or Say No to Violence.

Some of the calls Pisklakova's hotline received were from women who returned to Russia after having escaped from their traffickers. They described the terrible ordeals they experienced and asked for assistance.

Pisklakova understood the particular vulnerabilities of Russia women who were emerging from life under Soviet Communist rule. After being closed off from the Western world for so long, many had an idealized view of life outside Russia. The lifting of travel restrictions, widespread corruption, and soaring unemployment made recruitment even easier for the traffickers, who gave the women false promises of overseas work. In addition, women who were fleeing violence in their own household were especially desperate and vulnerable.

Pisklakova began working with NGOs and other women's crisis centers to press the Russian government to protect Russian women and girls from exploitation. They also started developing educational programs to warn young women and girls. Over time, Pisklakova began working with international women's rights NGOs and became an important source of information for the U.S. Congress and President's Interagency Council on Women as they developed antitrafficking policies and proposed legislation. She has worked with her government and embassies to provide services for trafficking survivors and safely repatriate them. Countless women's lives have been

saved because Pisklakova decided to take action based on that questionnaire response she received many years ago.

### Pioneering Advocacy

After having studied at Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar, Martina Vandenberg decided to take a giant leap into the unknown. She left the United States in 1992 with little money and a dream of starting a rape crisis center for women in Moscow, Russia. In April 1994, a dedicated group of Russian and American women activists celebrated the opening of Syostri (Sisters), one of Russia's first rape crisis hotlines. It was through the hotline—and the pioneering work of an American filmmaker<sup>5</sup> that Vandenberg first learned of trafficking.

Confronting the horror of violence against women in Russia, Vandenberg sought systematic change, and over the next several years she earned her law degree while continuing her work in this field. Vandenberg traveled to Israel to investigate the trafficking of women from the former Soviet Union. Working as a volunteer for the Israel Women's Network in Jerusalem, a local NGO, Vandenberg authored *Trafficking of Women to Israel for Forced Prostitution*. The findings of the report were featured on the front page of *The New York Times* on January 11, 1998. On her way to Israel to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright noticed the article and decided to raise the issue during her visit with Israeli officials.

Returning from Israel, Vandenberg joined the Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, where she conducted extensive research in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Kosovo, and Uzbekistan. Interviewing victims of trafficking, domestic violence, and rape as a war crime, Martina documented gruesome accounts of human rights violations and harrowing escapes. Synthesizing and analyzing the stories told by women and girls, Vandenberg sought to take the victims' voices directly into the policy arena.

Theresa Loar was building the team at the President's Interagency Council on Women at the State Department to develop the framework for the first-ever U.S. government policy to combat human trafficking. Anita Botti, a senior State Department official with years of experience working on migration and refugees, came on board to play a leadership role in the interagency process. Botti understood the conditions that made young women and girls vulnerable to the lure of traffickers and the need to prevent trafficking from taking place.<sup>6</sup> Stephen Warnath, a Harvard-trained lawyer, came over from the White House to serve as special counsel and bring his law enforcement background to the issue of prosecuting the criminal traffickers.<sup>7</sup> This team worked closely with Luis CdeBaca, then the Justice Department's Involuntary Servitude and Slavery Coordinator, who had years of experience investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases.



Vandenberg added her voice to the deliberations to argue that protection of the victims needed to be added to the framework. She, along with other advocates, argued passionately for a clear mandate to protect those found in conditions of slavery because the alternative was simply unacceptable. Vandenberg cited concrete examples of Russian and Eastern European women trafficked into forced prostitution who found themselves swept up in police raids, incarcerated, prosecuted, or deported, only to be thrown back into sexual slavery by law enforcement officials and traffickers working hand in hand. The President's Interagency Council on Women came to rely on Vandenberg's research and well-informed advocacy on the need to integrate a victim-centered approach. Thus the component of *protection* was added to the council's "three P's" antitrafficking policy framework—prevention, protection, and prosecution.

There was no roadmap to show Vandenberg how to play a leadership role in shaping U.S. government policy. Her direct work with victims in the trenches, keen analysis, and courageous determination to gather and document the facts gives Martina Vandenberg the power to change people's minds.

### Inspired Government Leadership

Saisuree Chutikul was born in Thailand in 1935. Her parents sent her to Whitworth College and Indiana University in the United States, where she earned a doctorate in education and became an accomplished musician. When she returned home, Chutikul's talent as a concert pianist and composer brought her such recognition that there is a music hall in Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, named in her honor.

Over the next 30 years, Chutikul leveraged her considerable accomplishments to champion the rights of those without a voice. She worked in her own government, as a cabinet minister and as a leader in the Senate, to advocate for women's rights, for assistance to girls at risk of sexual exploitation, and for protection of children from forced labor. She was a driving force in reforming laws to tighten penalties against criminals who traffic children into prostitution.

With no precedent to follow, and women and children at increasing risk from exploitation as a result of globalization and more open travel, Chutikul looked outside of Thailand to the United Nations, seeking broader cooperation and more systematic solutions. She played a leadership role in bringing the issue of human trafficking onto the agenda of various UN commissions, including the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

She drew from her expert knowledge of the affliction of human trafficking in Thailand to author a definitive report in 1999 for the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) on trafficking in women and children and helped lead her country's preparations for

the historic 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. Through the United Nations, Chutikul developed a global network, which included U.S. diplomats working during the Clinton administration, to build alliances with leaders working for women's advancement. Her prominent stature allowed her to move freely among the Thai government, governments of neighboring countries, NGOs, and the United Nations.

During a visit to the United Nations in New York in March 1998, Chutikul received an urgent call from Sharon Kotok,<sup>8</sup> a long-time colleague and friend at the U.S. Department of State: "Can you come down to Washington to join President and Mrs. Clinton in the White House for a ceremony marking International Women's Day?" When Chutikul spoke from the podium of the White House that day, some 40 years after first coming to the United States as a young college student, those in attendance saw a respected world leader who drew her power from standing up for those at risk of exploitation, women and children in her own country of Thailand and around the world.

### Trafficking Survivors Empowering Others

Throughout the horror of the Khmer Rouge killing fields of Cambodia, in the mid-1970s, Somaly Mam, grew up in poverty and was separated from her parents in her childhood. Though she is in her late 30s, she does not know her real age (Crosse, 2008). As a young girl, she worked as a domestic servant before she was sold to a brothel (Pearl, 2006). There, Mam suffered unspeakable cruelty. After many long years, she was finally able to escape.

Who would be able to return to such a dark world? Yet Mam found great inner strength and courage to return to the brothels to save other young girls from the same fate. She has said that she did not want what happened to her to happen to other girls.

In 1996, she cofounded an organization known by its English translation as Acting for Women in Distressing Circumstances (AFESIP) in Cambodia. She has organized raids on brothels to rescue trafficking victims as young as 4 years old and bring them to the shelters at AFESIP. There, they receive health care and vocational training, and they go to school. But perhaps more importantly, the girls receive the love and care that Mam herself has said she never received as a child (Pearl, 2006). She acknowledges that people say she gives them hope and a new life, but she says that they do the same for her every day. "You know, these victims and me—we have the same heart, the same body, the same pain" (Crosse, 2008, n.p.).

Through AEFSIP, Mam has rescued more than 4,000 young lives from brothels. She has expanded her organization beyond Cambodia to Laos and Vietnam, and she also directs her own foundation, Somaly Mam Foundation, to marshal resources to fight trafficking.

This work is not without its own danger. Mam's own teenage daughter was kidnapped, which was believed to be



retaliation from traffickers (Pearl, 2006). Although her daughter was thankfully found, it shows that traffickers will stop at nothing to continue their trade without interference. But Mam's indomitable strength shows that she will not be deterred from saving other young women and girls from the horrors of trafficking.

## From Past to Present

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The antitrafficking movement continues to expand and grow today. The United Nations and other multinational organizations implemented the "three P's" framework to devise international and regional conventions. Around the same time as the passage of the TVPA, the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children was adopted to promote international cooperation to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and investigate and prosecute trafficking cases. This UN protocol came into effect in 2003 and has since been ratified by more than 115 countries, including the United States. Many countries around the world have now passed antitrafficking legislation as well.

The antitrafficking community also continues to learn. As the collective knowledge on trafficking grows, laws and frameworks are revised to meet newly identified challenges. For example, the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 has been reauthorized with revisions three times: in 2003, 2005, and in 2008 with the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008.

The fight against human trafficking is a critical part of the Obama administration's foreign policy. Hillary Rodham Clinton has made it clear that she will use her platform as secretary of state to continue the campaign against trafficking that she has waged since her 1995 speech at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. At her confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January 2009, she stated, "I take very seriously the function of the State Department to lead our government through the Office on Human Trafficking to do all that we can to end this modern form of slavery. We have sex slavery, we have wage slavery, and it is primarily a slavery of girls and women" (Clinton, 2009d, n.p.).

On June 16, 2009, Clinton marked the release of the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons report by welcoming an international mix of diplomats, legislators, advocates, service providers, journalists, and business leaders to the elegant Diplomatic Reception Rooms with these remarks:

This is one of the really significant days in the calendar for our country and particularly for the State Department. We have so many people who have been affected by this significant issue over the years. And it is especially fitting that we would hold this announcement here . . . where we have a great diplomatic history of so many important events in our nation. (Clinton, 2009b, n.p.)

Clinton then introduced President Barack Obama's newly appointed Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, former Department of Justice prosecutor Luis CdeBaca, saying, "Thanks to him, hundreds of trafficking survivors are now living productive and healthy lives in our own country, while their abusers are behind bars" (Clinton, 2009b, n.p.).

Clinton has also elevated the International Women's Issues office at the State Department by appointing Melanne Verveer—who, as assistant to the president and chief of staff to the First Lady during the Clinton administration, and as a cofounder, former chair, and co-CEO of Vital Voices Global Partnership, has been at the forefront of efforts to raise women's status around the world—as the first Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues. Secretary Clinton remarked that Verveer had "particularly helped to lead our commitment to end the intolerable scourge, the global crime of human trafficking" (Clinton, 2009c, n.p.). Recognizing that the lower status of women and girls is one of the root causes that make women and girls vulnerable to the lure of traffickers, Secretary Clinton has kept the advancement of women as a central theme in her foreign policy agenda, often working in partnership with other countries (Clinton, 2009a).

## Future Directions

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Although much progress has been made to combat human trafficking, much still needs to be done. Prevention efforts must include raising the status of women so that the push and pull factors that make women and girls especially vulnerable to trafficking are eliminated. This includes reforming laws that discriminate against women in employment and with regard to access to credit, inheritance, and property. In addition, violence against women in all forms must be taken seriously and perpetrators must be apprehended so that women and girls can live free from forced marriages, sexual abuse, and family violence.

To apprehend those who perpetrate violence against women, especially trafficking, more training is needed for judges, prosecutors, and police officers. Stereotypes of women victims and reluctance by some prosecutors and judges to take seriously violence against women contribute to low enforcement of laws that criminalize such violence, including human trafficking. Training can increase the likelihood that traffickers will not only be convicted but will receive sentences that are significant enough to act as a deterrent to other would-be traffickers. Training can also help law enforcement, who may be the first responders to situations of trafficking, to accurately identify trafficked women as victims.

As traffickers make use of more sophisticated communications technology to coordinate and facilitate their activities, so must those in the antitrafficking movement. This ranges from using new media tools to reach mass audiences and vulnerable groups to raise awareness

about trafficking, to facilitating communication between governments and law enforcement to find victims and prosecute traffickers.

At the international Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking in 2008, participants noted that the “prevention, protection, prosecution” framework deserved a fourth “P”—partnership (UN.GIFT, 2008). There must be better coordination between government agencies to prosecute traffickers and stronger partnerships between government and civil society to fight trafficking. Finally, it is important that these partnerships also include the business and private sectors, which must join with governments and NGOs to effectively fight trafficking.

## Notes

1. In 2000, this U.S. government initiative grew into a non-governmental organization, Vital Voices Global Partnership, whose current president and CEO is Alyse Nelson, who is also a cofounder (see [www.vitalvoices.org](http://www.vitalvoices.org)). As a college student, Nelson traveled to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and has been a dedicated advocate for advancing global women's leadership ever since.

2. An important early research report that put some of the first figures on the extent of human trafficking was *International*

*trafficking in women to the United States: A contemporary manifestation of slavery and organized crime*, by Amy O'Neill Richard. Richard continues her antitrafficking work as Senior Advisor to the Director, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State.

3. Sharon Payt continues her work to combat human trafficking as World Vision's advocacy director for the Middle East (see World Vision Web site at <http://www.wvi.org/wvi/wviweb.nsf>).

4. The professional staff of these legislators also provided significant leadership in moving this agenda forward: David Abramowitz, then-chief counsel, House Foreign Affairs Committee; Charlotte Oldham-Moore, then-senior policy advisor to Senator Wellstone; Dorothy Douglas Taft, then-chief of staff, Helsinki Commission; and Maureen T. Walsh, then-general counsel, Helsinki Commission.

5. Gillian Caldwell produced and directed the film *Bought and Sold: An Investigative Documentary of the International Trade in Women*.

6. Anita Botti brings her expertise on global women's issues to her role as deputy director of the Office of Global Women's Issues at the U.S. Department of State.

7. Stephen Warnath continues his work on human trafficking as the executive director of the NEXUS Institute to Combat Human Trafficking.

8. Sharon Kotok continues to serve as an advisor to U.S. delegations to the United Nations, working with the Office of Global Women's Issues at the U.S. Department of State.

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS TO ACHIEVE EQUAL RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE

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*U.S. House of Representatives*

Women have always been the backbone of society but rarely have been recognized for their full contributions to the workforce. Moreover, women continually have been denied the opportunity to participate outside the home in the public sphere on an equal footing with men. Thanks to countless women throughout history who stood up for equality in the workplace, women have achieved great strides for equal rights for working women. Nonetheless, women still are far from equality in the workplace. In May 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court interpreted the Equal Pay Act of 1963 very narrowly. In denying Lily Ledbetter the right to sue her employer for lost wages that she learned about upon her retirement, the Court ruled that she sued too late and would not be able to reclaim lost wages. This ruling was so egregious that Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg not only wrote a stinging dissent but read it from the bench urging Congress to act. Democratic Members of Congress responded immediately and introduced the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to reverse the Court's decision. In the 2008 presidential campaign, equal pay gained attention as then-Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) pledged to support and ultimately cast his vote for it, while Senator John McCain (R-AZ) opposed and voted against the act. When President Obama was elected, the Lily Ledbetter Act of 2009 was the first bill he signed into law.

Historically, the fight for equality began to improve conditions in female-dominant industries such as textile mills and has evolved for women to hold equal leadership positions with men in any industry. Beginning in the early 1800s, women began to organize collectively for their rights. They formed their own labor unions and

fought for a voice in male-dominated unions. The first wave of feminism's demand for the right to vote was also deeply characterized by the call for equal economic opportunity for women. During moments of social upheaval such as the Civil War and World War II, women temporarily were granted opportunities to work in traditionally male defined occupations. The activism of the second wave of feminism led to many legislative gains for women's equality. Today, the fight continues in the halls of Congress and from individual women such as Anita Hill and Lily Ledbetter, who have the courage to demand their rights. The United States has made great strides for its working women but still lags behind the progress made in other nations.

### Women in the Labor Force, 1820–1900

In early America, work for most women was confined to unpaid labor as a wife and mother, working alongside her husband, running a household, farm or plantation, shop, or saloon. In the South, women managed elaborate plantation systems. Unmarried or divorced women without property often worked as servants or slaves, teachers, milliners, or cooks, helping wives with household work, or substituting the role of the wife if there was not one in the family. With the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, women from New England, as well as women drawn from farms all down the eastern seaboard of the country left their homes to work in factories. Women were lured by the wages and the ability to leave home because fewer women were needed to run households.



## The First Female Labor Unions

The 1820s marked the beginning of the collective resistance of women to deplorable working conditions. Women and girls were forced to work 13- and 14-hour days at low pay, operating dangerous machines in excruciatingly hot rooms. One of the first documented cases of working women's activism took place in Dover, New Hampshire, in 1828. To protest low wages and long hours, 300 to 400 girls marched out of the cotton mill factory firing off gunpowder (Fraad Baxandall, 1995). The first union for women only, the United Tailoresses of New York, was formed in 1825 in response to a cut in piecework rates. In 1831, 1,600 of its female members went on strike for "a just price for our labor" (Lerner, 1992). In 1844 women and girls in Lowell, Massachusetts, formed the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA) to advocate for the 10-hour workday. Sarah Bagley was the organization's first president. Under her leadership, LFLRA convinced the Massachusetts legislature to conduct the first investigation into labor conditions by a governmental body in the United States. Its organizing efforts spread to nearby areas, and in 1847 New Hampshire became the first state to enact a 10-hour workday (Flexner & Fitzpatrick, 1996).

## Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention

This new spirit of equality transferred to the first women's rights convention in the United States, in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, where equality in the workplace was one of the rights clearly articulated. *The Declaration of Sentiments* stated that the history of mankind

has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns. He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction, which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known. (Harris, 1978, p. 78)

The women at Seneca Falls demanded "the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce" (Harris, 1978, p. 78). Seneca Falls conveners Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and four others declared a grand vision that inspired a new democracy of equality.

Two weeks after the convention, participants agreed to meet again in Rochester and made a particular effort to include women from the labor class. At the end of the conference, Sara Owen delivered a speech about a woman's place in the world of work in which she praised accomplished women pioneers such as Elizabeth Blackwell, the first openly identified woman to graduate from medical school in the United States. Later, Owen and Amy Post established the Working Women's Protective Union declaring that women were entitled "equally with men to the products of their labor or its equivalent" (Stanton, Anthony, & Gage, 1881).

The suffrage movement continued to advocate for women's economic rights and tried to find allies in the labor movement. In 1868 Susan B. Anthony, along with wage-earning women, formed the Working Women's Association, which was initially formed to give Anthony delegate credentials to participate in the National Labor Congress. The Working Women's Association was the first labor organization to bring together wage-earning women to challenge the organized power of men over them (DuBois, 1999). However, the association only lasted about a year because of the cultural divide between the predominantly middle-class suffragists and working-class women. Nonetheless, the Working Women's Association was a groundbreaking attempt to develop a working women's feminist movement addressing economic as well as political concerns (DuBois, 1999).

## Women and the American Civil War

The American Civil War provided ample opportunities for women to leave the domestic sphere and enter the public sphere. Thousands of women entered the realm of paid labor and occupations traditionally held by men. Governments at both the federal and state levels hired women en masse as office clerks and scribes. Factories hired women to produce the uniforms, boots, foodstuffs, and armaments necessary for the war. Notably, the Civil War marked the first widespread entrance of women into the profession of nursing. An estimated 3,000 women served as nurses, both paid and unpaid. Most notable among these nurses was Clara Barton, who in 1881 founded the American Red Cross (McMillen, 2008). Whereas few of the opportunities created by the war were permanent, the field of nursing became a more acceptable career option for women.

In the latter half of the 19th century, many women worked as domestic servants. Female factory workers flocked to the cities for the excitement of urban life as well as the incentive of earning their own wages. Many women's labor unions were started but were short lived. When the Knights of Labor was formed in 1878, the delegates took a very progressive stance as the preamble to their constitution pledged, "To secure for both sexes equal pay for equal work" (Baxandall, 1995). The Knights decided that all its activities would be the same for men and women. By 1886, when the Knights were at their peak, about 50,000 of its members were women (Baxandall, 1995). In 1887 Leonora Barry, the country's first paid union organizer, published a report for the Knights of Labor documenting the slavish working conditions of women in New Jersey.

## Immigrant and Farm Women and Labor Unions

At the turn of the century, women were still limited to labor-intensive work such as the garment industry. The garment workforce consisted mainly of young immigrant



women from European countries such as Poland, Russia, and Italy, as well as native-born young women from U.S. farms. With the new industrial sewing machine, employers demanded high production yields from their employees. As a result, women were forced to work long hours with low pay, constant humiliation, and virtually no opportunity for advancement.

Similar to the spirited women at Lowell Mill, the women of the factories organized for their rights. In 1903 the Women's Trade Union League was founded, which later became one of the most influential women's labor organizations in the first half of the 20th century. Founding members included William Walling, a cofounder of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People); Mary MacArthur, head of Women's Protective and Provident League; Jane Addams of Hull House; Mary McDowell of Woman's Christian Temperance Union; Alice Hamilton, the first woman to be appointed to the staff at the Harvard Medical School; Florence Kelley, the first executive secretary of the National Consumers' League; and Sophonisba Breckinridge, who had the first J.D./Ph.D. in the United States. A main purpose of the organization was to educate women about the advantages of trade union membership as well as to support women's demands for better working conditions.

Female leaders such as Clara Lemlich and Rose Schneiderman were at the forefront of the labor union movement in the early 20th century. Both were involved with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), which was founded in 1900. Although it was of the first unions in the United States to have predominantly female membership, its leadership largely consisted of men. In the fall of 1909, shirtwaist factory owners demanded longer hours for workers at less pay. Outraged, the ILGWU had a meeting on November 22 to discuss a strike. Among the crowd was 19-year-old Clara Lemlich, one of the founders of ILGWU Local 25. A few months earlier, hired thugs attacked Lemlich for her union involvement.

During the meeting, tired after hearing all the male leaders rant on about the need for solidarity, Lemlich demanded the opportunity to speak to the crowd. She boldly stated that there was no more time for talk and demanded that a general strike be declared. Lemlich's call to strike inspired what became known as the "Uprising of the 20,000" that occurred over the next 2 days when approximately 20,000 of the 32,000 workers in the shirtwaist trade walked out. During such a momentous occasion, Lemlich was always there, making speeches until she lost her voice. The strike continued until February 1910, resulting in union contracts at virtually all factories except the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory (Flexner & Fitzpatrick, 1996).

March 25, 1911, marks one of the greatest tragedies in the fight for working women's rights. On that day, 148 workers, the vast majority of whom were immigrant women and girls aged between 13 and 23 years of age, died in a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York

City. Due to unsafe working conditions, these women and girls either burned to death in the building or died jumping to their deaths from the ninth floor. At a memorial to the fire victims, Rose Schneiderman, a leader in the Uprising of the 20,000 and the vice president of the New York Women's Trade Union League, declared the necessity of building a strong working-class movement to prevent future atrocities (Flexner & Fitzpatrick, 1996).

The calamity of the Triangle fire was a turning point in U.S. labor history. Unions grew as members wanted to secure greater rights. Government, both state and national, took an active role in enacting laws for workplace safety. Both Lemlich and Schneiderman stayed active union leaders and also became deeply involved in the suffrage movement, through which women successfully gained the right to vote in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

During this time period, three landmark Supreme Court decisions were made related to sex discrimination and labor law: *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), addressing the minimum hours for women, and *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* (1923) and *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish* (1936), both of which addressed minimum wage laws for women. The National Consumers League and its executive director, Florence Kelley, were actively involved in bringing all of these cases to court (O'Connor, 1980). Curt Muller, who owned a laundry business, was convicted of violating Oregon law by making his female employees work more than 8 hours in a single day. The Supreme Court upheld the Oregon law limiting the number of hours that women employed in factories and laundries could work. In setting a new precedent for women's protectionism, the Court declared the government's interest in protecting women workers because of their reproductive capabilities for society. In part, the majority opinion read,

That woman's physical structure and the performance of maternal functions place her at a disadvantage in the struggle for subsistence is obvious. This is especially true when the burdens of motherhood are upon her. Even when they are not, by abundant testimony of the medical fraternity continuance for a long time on her feet at work, repeating this from day to day, tends to injurious effects upon the body, and as healthy mothers are essential to vigorous offspring, the physical well-being of woman becomes an object of public interest and care in order to preserve the strength and vigor of the race. (*Muller v. Oregon*, 1908)

The laundresses in *Muller* received protection because the government wanted women to remain healthy so they could properly contribute to society through producing offspring. *Muller* was the first instance of government-mandated protection of workers, but only for those workers who it had a special interest in protecting women. This concept of government interest in protecting social welfare predominating over freedom of contract, which male workers possessed, set the stage for later New Deal protections, culminating in the gender-neutral Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (Arnesen, 2006).



*Adkins v. Children's Hospital* (1923) was a defining moment for reformers in the United States, especially Florence Kelley of the National Consumers' League, who tried to keep the case out of court, fearing an adverse decision. The Supreme Court ruled that minimum wage laws for women were unconstitutional because they interfered with the liberty of contract guaranteed by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. Additionally, the Court ruled that Congress did not have the power to set minimum wages for women as a special group. Kelley supported advocacy for women workers' rights as an "entering wedge" to gain workplace protections for everyone. Yet, *Adkins* demolished the National Consumers' League's message that a ceiling on wages without a floor left women vulnerable. *Adkins* also halted national efforts to equalize pay between men and women, a discrepancy that remained until the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (O'Connor, 1980).

In *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish* (1936), Elsie Parrish, a chambermaid working at the Cascadian Hotel, sued the hotel because she was not being paid the \$14.50 per week for 48 hours established as a minimum wage by the Industrial Welfare Committee and Supervisor of Women in Industry, pursuant to Washington State law. The Supreme Court decided that the establishment of minimum wages for women was constitutionally legitimate, thus overturning *Adkins*. The majority opinion by Chief Justice Hughes stated that the Constitution permitted the restriction of freedom of contract by state law where such restriction protected the community, health, and safety of vulnerable groups, as was decided in the *Muller* case (Arnesen, 2006).

After *Muller* and passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, the women's movement was strongly divided between those favoring protecting women and those preferring equality between the sexes. This debate between protection and equality was also evident in the early activism surrounding the equal rights amendment (ERA), which Alice Paul of the National Woman's Party drafted in 1923. The National Woman's Party strongly believed that anything less than an identical treatment of men and women was bound to be discriminatory (Baxandall, 1995). Social feminists, reformers in groups such as the National Consumers' League, the YWCA, the Women's Trade Union League, and other unions, as well as the League of Women Voters espoused the view that gender distinctions in law were necessary to protect women's rights and defend protective labor legislation they fought so hard for, such as *Muller*.

## Working Women and World War II

The period of World War II created a transient opportunity for women's advancement in the workplace. Although no permanent new career opportunities were established for women, societal attitudes toward femininity definitely changed. For the first time, women were being hired en masse to do traditionally male jobs, such as manufacturing, and earning their own wages. Society began to reconcile the

idea that women could have paid employment outside the home and also do domestic work. Moreover, this change laid the foundation for the second wave of feminism (Honey, 1984). When the United States rapidly deployed predominantly male soldiers for war efforts abroad, a huge gap in the domestic workforce needed to be filled. In 1944 the War Advertising Council launched its extensive "Women in the War" recruitment campaign to bring women into civilian and military service (Honey, 1984). Because magazines were the predominant form of mass entertainment of the day and their primary readership was women, they were used as a powerful outreach tool for the woman-power campaign. One of the most influential images of this campaign was "Rosie the Riveter" (Honey, 1984).

As a result of the campaign, the number of women working grew to 20 million by 1944, a 57% increase from 1940. Female factory workers in durable goods increased from 15% in 1939 to 45.3% in 1943. Because wages in the durable goods fields, such as munitions plant and aircraft factories, paid 40% higher than other female occupations, this shift represented a significant career advancement for women (Honey, 1984). Even though they were making more money than previously, women still were not making as much as their male counterparts. The average salary of female factory workers was \$31.21 a week, whereas males earned an average of \$54.65 (Honey, 1984).

During this rapid onset of women into new fields, female leaders such as Mary Anderson and Dorothy Ducas fought to ensure that women's rights were defended. Mary Anderson, the first head of the federal Women's Bureau in 1920, was a labor organizer who had founded the Chicago branch of the Women's Trade Union League. Anderson lobbied for equal pay enforcement, pay upgrades, adequate household services, and gender-blind job classifications. She succeeded in including women in the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, which set the first national standards for minimum wages and maximum hours for all workers (Laughlin, 2000). Dorothy Ducas, a journalist and friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, was the head of the Magazine Bureau, which was a liaison between government and the magazine industry. In 1942, she noted that magazines were taking the lead in mobilizing women by anticipating the lack of day care centers that would be necessary when women entered the workforce at large (Honey, 1984).

Although women proved they could perform as successfully as men in manufacturing positions, this was only a temporary triumph. After World War II, as male soldiers returned home, their jobs were there for them as women were encouraged to return to the home. Yet middle-class, white women continued in the workforce, joining millions of African American and low-income women who had always worked.

Many white women were not eager to leave their new jobs. Surveys taken in 1944 demonstrated that 75% to 80% of women in war production planned to keep their current jobs after victory (Honey, 1984). (Women did not reenter the job market in such large proportions again until the 1970s.)



Historian Leila J. Rupp stated this was the first historical moment when working women dominated the public image (Honey, 1984). Rosie the Riveter inspired a generation of women and showed them they were capable of performing any type of work. The energy created by these new opportunities would be released with the explosion of the feminist movement in upcoming years.

## From Housewife to Breadwinner

### The Era of Change

The 1960s marked the beginning of the second wave of feminism. In 1961 President John F. Kennedy established a Commission on the Status of Women to document workplace inequality, as well as inequalities in all walks of life, and propose policy recommendations. Esther Peterson, a labor activist appointed to head the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor, was the commission's executive vice chair, and Eleanor Roosevelt acted as chair until her death. The commission's report, *American Women*, documented myriad forms of societal and legal discrimination against women.

The year 1963 was a watershed moment for equality, marked by the issuance of *American Women*, the passage of the Equal Pay Act, and the release of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. In October 1963, the Commission on the Status of Women published the *American Women* report, recommending affordable child care, paid maternity leave, and equal opportunity for women (Laughlin, 2000). The report sparked a national debate about the value of women's work and led to Peterson's appointment as assistant secretary of labor for labor standards, where she became the highest-ranking woman in the Kennedy administration and the driving force behind not only the passage of the Equal Pay Act but also its implementation.

#### *Equal Pay Act of 1963*

Efforts to pass equal pay legislation began in 1945 but continually failed under both Democratic and Republican administrations. All prior forms of the legislation contained the phrase "comparable worth," which was controversial and led to its demise. Comparable worth, often referred to as pay equity, is the reform effort to pay various positions the same wage or salary according to their importance to their employer, regardless of gender (Laughlin, 2000). Proponents of comparable worth argued for it as a way of addressing the patterns that occur when female-dominated industries are paid less than comparable male-dominated jobs because of systematic discrimination against women. The language of the Commission on the Status of Women's report included the term *comparable work*, but opponents argued that comparability was too difficult to determine (Laughlin, 2000).

Representative Edith Green (D-OR) introduced the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and Representative Katherine

St. George (R-NY) offered compromise language to replace the "comparable worth" phrase with "equal pay for equal work." The Equal Pay Act passed the House but died in the Senate due to parliamentary procedure and would not pass until the next session of Congress in May 1963. The act states that employers are prohibited from discriminating against women on the basis of sex when women perform jobs requiring "equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions" as jobs performed by men. To recover lost wages under the act, a woman must prove that an employer paid higher wages to male employees than to female employees; that male and female employees conducted an equal amount of work that requires substantially equal skill, effort, and responsibility; and that men and women performed the work under similar working conditions (Laughlin, 2000). This victory was 18 years in the making and marked the first time the federal government affirmed the right of women to be employed on the same basis as men.

Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* became a best seller by 1964, selling 3 million copies. In essence, Friedan argued for the right of the wife and mother to pursue an identity and a career of her own. Friedan describes "the problem that has no name" as the loneliness brewing within housewives around the country as they went about their daily chores, longing for a more satisfying and purposeful life (Friedan, 1963). To an extent, Friedan ignored the situation of women of color and low-income and working-class women, who by necessity were already active outside of the home. Yet, her words deeply resonated with countless college-educated white women and rallied them to join the growing feminist movement. In 1966 Betty Friedan cofounded, and became the first president of, the National Organization for Women (NOW).

#### *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 included Title VII, which incorporated a ban on sex discrimination in employment by certain employees. When the civil rights bill headed to the House of Representatives for debate, Alice Paul and members of the National Woman's Party contacted Representative Howard W. Smith (D-VA), chairman of the House Rules Committee, and proposed that a ban against sex discrimination be included in the legislation. Smith was opposed to the bill but believed that if it should pass, women should have the same rights as African Americans. Smith's sponsorship of such an amendment, in efforts to kill the bill, would guarantee the votes of 100 or more Representatives from the Deep South, who would otherwise vote against such a feminist initiative. On February 8, 1964, he introduced the amendment, which led to several hours of humorous debate that later came to be known as "Ladies Day in the House" (Caraballo, Meuli, & Csida, 1993).

Representative Smith began his argument by reading a letter from a woman complaining that the 1960 U.S.



Census declared 2,661,000 “extra females” in the United States and asking him to introduce legislation to remedy the shortage of men for women to marry (Carabillo et al., 1993). The House fell into an uproar of laughter, and Smith stated he read the letter just to demonstrate that women have some real grievances. This ribaldry outraged the female Representatives, and all but one of them quickly allied to support the amendment in defiance of party allegiance. The southern strategy backfired, and the prohibition against sex discrimination passed.

Title VII was precisely the type of legislative action called for by the *American Women* report, banning discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Nonetheless, it fell short of intended effect, particularly in the area of enforcement. In 1965 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was created to enforce the Civil Rights Act. Although the original bill intended for the EEOC to be a “cease and desist” agency like the National Labor Relations Board, as passed, it was only able to hear legal complaints and to file amicus curiae briefs. Individuals or organizations were required to take the initiative to bring about such cases (Banaszak, 2005).

One of the first problems to emerge from EEOC was in regard to sex-segregated help-wanted ads. On August 18, 1965, a special 17-member EEOC committee consisting of 13 men and 4 women met to consider whether these ads violated Title VII. With 10 of the committee members representing newspapers or advertising agencies, they quickly decided that such ads did not constitute a violation (Felder, 1999). Feminists such as Esther Peterson and Representative Martha Griffiths (D-MI) chastised this EEOC interpretation. Commissioners and union organizers Aileen Hernandez (also an avid civil rights activist) and Richard Graham (the founding director of the National Teacher Corps in the 1960s) had fought against sex-segregated ads but were unsuccessful in swaying the committee. Outraged, in 1966 at the Third Annual Conference of Commissions on the Status of Women in Washington, D.C., Hernandez, Graham, and others teamed up with Friedan to found the National Organization for Women (NOW) (Felder, 1999).

In 1969 the problem of sex-segregated help wanted ads still persisted. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations adopted an ordinance prohibiting sex-segregated help wanted ads. Yet, *The Pittsburgh Press* newspaper continued to classify employment opportunities by gender. Consequently, the Pittsburgh chapter of NOW filed a complaint with the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations. The newspaper argued that the ordinance violated the First Amendment by restricting their editorial judgment. The challenge eventually went to the Supreme Court. In *Pittsburgh Press Co. v. Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations* (1973), the Court upheld the Pittsburgh Human Rights ordinance, deciding that a forbiddance for newspapers to carry sex-designated advertising columns

for nonexempt job opportunities does not violate First Amendment rights.

### *Title IX: Equality in Education*

In the early 1970s, activists such as Bernice Sandler and Representative Edith Green (D-OR) led the fight to end sex discrimination in education, which culminated in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sandler was a part-time faculty member at the University of Maryland. In 1969 when she asked a male colleague why she was not given full tenure, he stated that she came on too strong for a woman (Carabillo et al., 1993). Upon sharing the news with her husband, he labeled what had happened to her as sex discrimination. Although laws existed against sex discrimination, these did not extend to the area of education. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act excluded “educational institutions in their educational activities,” thereby exempting faculty and administrators. Similarly, the Equal Pay Act exempted all professional and administrative employees, including faculty (Carabillo et al., 1993). Moreover, up to that point, no case concerning discrimination against women in education had ever been decided in favor of women by the Supreme Court. Sandler went on a mission to determine how to legally make her case against sex discrimination.

After extensive research, Sandler realized that Executive Order 11246—prohibiting federal contractors from discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, and national origin—had been amended, effective on October 13, 1968, to include discrimination based on sex. This meant that because most universities and colleges had federal contracts, they were forbidden from discriminating in employment on the basis of sex. She then combined forces with the Women’s Equity Action League and filed a historic class action complaint against all universities and colleges in the country. Over the next 2 years, Sandler filed charges against approximately 250 institutions and other individuals, and organizations such as NOW filed an additional 100 charges (Carabillo et al., 1993).

In the summer of 1970, Representative Green (D-OR), chair of the subcommittee that dealt with higher education, held the first congressional hearings on the education and employment of women. Consequently, Representative Patsy Mink (D-HI) introduced a bill that eventually became Title IX. As the bill drew close to passage, Sandler and women’s organizations offered to lobby on the issue. Representative Green (D-OR) recommended that they not lobby because there was no opposition to the bill, and the fewer people who knew about the bill, the greater its chances were for passage. On July 1, 1972, President Richard M. Nixon signed Title IX into law. It included an amendment to the Equal Pay Act, which opened up coverage to administrators, professionals, and executives (Carabillo et al., 1993).

Title IX states, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination



under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (Carabillo et al., 1993). Title IX has created tremendous opportunities for women and girls at all levels of education. Although the original statute made no reference to athletics, Title IX has been most known for its impact on high school and collegiate athletics. Many women's university athletic teams would not be possible without such Title IX funds.

### *Equality for Working Parents*

In the 1970s, outrage from two major court cases in the 1970s drove the creation of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978. Once again, the battle over protectionism for women in the workplace emerged. Debate arose as to whether or not pregnancy should be given special consideration or whether it should be treated like other short-term disabilities. In 1974, in *Geduldig v. Aiello*, a majority of the Court ruled that the exclusion of medical benefits in state medical plans for pregnant women in California by the California State Disability Insurance program was nondiscriminatory (Vogel, 1993). Later, in *General Electric v. Gilbert* (1976), the Supreme Court ruled that denial of sickness and medical benefits to women disabled by pregnancy did not violate Title VII (Vogel, 1993). Infuriated after the *Gilbert* decision, Ruth Weyand of the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers and Susan Deller Ross of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) very quickly became coauthors of the Campaign to End Discrimination Against Pregnant Workers. The campaign consisted of organizations such as NOW, the Women's Legal Defense Fund, the Women's Equity Action League, the ACLU, congressional aides, and pro-life groups such as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the American Citizens Concerned for Life. This was the first time a women's rights coalition asked Congress to pass legislation to reverse a Supreme Court decision (O'Connor & Epstein, 1983). Through the effective collaboration of pro-choice and pro-life groups, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act passed in 1978. The act amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit sex discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, requiring that employers who are covered by Title VII treat pregnancy as any temporary disability. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act outlawed previous common forms of discrimination, such as not being hired due to visible pregnancy or likelihood of becoming pregnant, being fired after informing an employer of pregnancy, being fired after maternity leave, or receiving a pay cut due to pregnancy (Vogel, 1993). This was a landmark act for working mothers.

In 1993 President Bill Clinton signed into law the Family Medical Leave Act. The Women's Legal Defense Fund, along with groups such as NOW and National Federation of Business and Professional Women, spearheaded the movement to pass this crucial act (Maloney, 2008). The Family Medical Leave Act (1993) provides up to 12 work weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for

various reasons such as the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child; caring for a sick family member; or for one's own serious health condition. It also ensures protection of employee benefits while on leave and restoration to the same position upon return to work.

### *Sexual Harassment*

The term *sexual harassment* was first coined by feminists in 1975, in response to the case of Carmita Wood, an administrative assistant at Cornell University who quit her job after falling ill from repetitively fighting off the advances of her male supervisor (Arnesen, 2006). This case caught the attention of legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon, whose legal theories became most influential in establishing that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In her 1979 book *Sexual Harassment of Working Women*, she differentiated between two types of sexual harassment: (1) quid pro quo, in which sexual compliance is exchanged for an employment benefit, and (2) condition of work (later termed *hostile environment*) in which a woman is not promised or denied a benefit, but harassment makes her work unbearable. Following MacKinnon's sexual harassment framework, in 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission adopted guidelines prohibiting sexual harassment by forbidding both quid pro quo harassment and hostile work environment harassment (Arnesen, 2006).

In 1986 the Supreme Court first analyzed the issue of sexual harassment in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson*. After being fired, Meehelle Vinson sued her boss, vice president of Meritor Savings Bank, for coercing her into sexual relations. The Court ruled that sexual harassment creating a hostile or abusive work environment violates Title VII, even without financial loss to the employee (Arnesen, 2006). In 1991, Anita Hill's courage brought national attention to the issue of sexual harassment. At the Senate confirmation hearing of Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, Hill testified that while working with Thomas at the EEOC, he sexually harassed her after she refused to date him (Maloney, 2008). Hill's bravery inspired countless women to begin to talk about their similar experiences and demand justice.

### **Future Directions**

In spite of all the strides women have achieved and all the laws that have been passed, full equality does not yet exist for American women in most spheres, including employment. The Roberts Supreme Court revisited pregnancy discrimination in *AT&T Corporation v. Hulteen* (2009). The Court ruled that maternity leave taken before the passage of the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act cannot be considered in calculating employee pension benefits. In other words, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act is not retroactive and women such as Noreen Hulteen, who took leave before its passage, will forever receive lower pension



benefits than those who worked the same amount of time but took pregnancy leave after the passage of the act.

The United States can greatly improve in terms of family-friendly work policies such as paid leave, paid sick days, and the right to breastfeed. Various studies have documented that companies with family-friendly benefits produce higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and lower attrition among employees. A 2007 study by the Project on Global Working Families found that the United States dramatically lags behind all high-income countries, as well as many low- and middle-income countries in terms of policies benefiting working families. In terms of leave around childbearing, 169 out of 173 countries offer guaranteed leave with income to women in connection with childbirth. Furthermore, 98 of these countries offer 14 or more weeks paid leave. Besides the United States, only three other nations in the study—Liberia, Papua New Guinea, and Swaziland—do not guarantee paid leave for mothers in any segment of the workforce (Heyman, Earle, & Hayes, 2007, p. 1). Sixty-six countries guarantee that fathers either receive paid paternity leave or have a right to paid parental leave. In contrast, the United States does not ensure fathers either paid paternity or paid parental leave (Heyman et al., 2007, p. 2). Whereas 145 countries provide paid sick days for short- or long-term illnesses, the United States provides only unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The provisions of FMLA extend only to those working for employers with 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius (Heyman et al., 2007, p. 5).

Breastfeeding has been proven to reduce infant mortality. Because the United States ranks the highest among industrialized countries in terms of infant mortality, breastfeeding could be a policy goal to reduce infant mortality (Maloney, 2008). Whereas at least 107 countries protect working women's right to breastfeed, and in at least 73 of these the breaks are paid, the United States does not guarantee working women the right to breastfeed (Heyman et al., 2007, p. 6).

As a result of the lack of family-friendly policies at the workplace, many women “off-ramp”; that is, they leave their careers for an extended period of time to take care of children or elderly family members. According to the *Harvard Business Review*, 43% of professional women with children step off the fast track at some point, and on average, they stay off for 2.2 years. Although 93% of these high-powered professional women want to return to work, only 40% find an “on-ramp” to meaningful employment (Hewlett, 2005). Implementing programs such as flexible working arrangements, telecommuting, mentoring groups, and access to day care have proved successful in reducing attrition among working women.

Many bills addressing these policy needs are regularly introduced in Congress but have yet to become law. The Breastfeeding Promotion Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide tax incentives for businesses to provide breastfeeding areas, create a performance standard for breast pumps, and allocate tax deductions for breastfeeding equipment. The Working Families Flexibility

Act would protect a worker's right to ask for a work schedule change without fear of retribution. The Family and Medical Leave Inclusion Act would amend the FMLA to ensure unpaid leave to care for family members such as a domestic partner, parent-in-law, sibling, adult child, or grandparent who has a serious health condition. The Family and Medical Leave Enhancement Act would expand FMLA protections to employees of companies with more than 35 employees as well as allowing employees who are parents or grandparents to take up to 24 hours of leave during any 12-month period to attend to family needs, such as medical appointments or parent-teacher conferences. The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act provides federal employees with 4 weeks of paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child during the 12 weeks of unpaid leave to which they are currently entitled through FMLA (Maloney, 2008). Congressional leaders, particularly female congressional leaders, continue to defend the rights of working families.

The ERA is another example of a legislative action that can benefit women in the workplace. Alice Paul drafted the ERA in 1923, but it was not until 1972 that it passed out of the House and Senate and went to the states for ratification. Congress extended the ratification deadline from 1979 to 1982. However, when the final deadline arrived, the ERA was passed by only 35 states, 3 short of the 38 states required for it to become a constitutional amendment. The ERA has been reintroduced by every Congress since then.

There is much legal and political debate about the potential impacts of the ERA. Some ERA advocates argue that it would provide a legal remedy against sex discrimination for both men and women. They believe its existence would bring clarity as to what constitutes sex discrimination and eliminate the inconsistency of how this is interpreted in various state and federal courts. Sex would be a suspect classification just as race currently is, and women would have the power of constitutional protection rather than just piecemeal legislation targeting certain issues (Francis, 2009).

The term *glass ceiling* first became popular in the 1980s to describe the invisible barrier preventing women from achieving top management positions. The glass ceiling still exists in many regards. Representative John Dingell (D-MI) and I commissioned two government reports examining the status of equal pay for women in the United States. A 2003 report, “Is the Glass Ceiling a Permanent Fixture?” found that the gap between men's and women's earnings persisted from 1983 to 2000, even when accounting for employment and demographic factors. The 2003 report showed that working women are paid an average of 80 cents for every dollar that men are paid and are penalized for their dual roles as wage earners and those who disproportionately care for home and family. Men with children earn about 2% more than men without children, whereas women with children earn about 2.5% less than women without children (Maloney & Dingell, 2003). Similarly, a 2008 Joint Economic



Committee Report that Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) and I commissioned indicated that recessions disproportionately affect working mothers, particularly women of color. In 2008, 1 out of every 10 women maintaining a family was unemployed; this number exceeds the highest rate experienced during the 2001 recession and the "job-less recovery" that followed (Maloney & Sehumer, 2008). Sex disaggregated statistics must be routinely collected to document and analyze the status of working women. For instance, such research demonstrated that in the recession that began in December 2007, men lost their jobs at a higher rate than women. The market for jobs traditionally held by women, such as health care, has sustained better than the market for jobs typically held by men, such as construction and manufacturing (Hagenbaugh, 2009).

Despite all of the advancements in women's rights and the role of women in society, much work still needs to be done. Just like any other civil rights struggle, the fight continues and the promised land has not been reached. As the most powerful country in the world, the United States cannot maintain its competitive edge if we Americans do not support our women in the workplace. Furthermore, we must ensure that barriers to women's advancement are being tackled much like they are in most other industrialized countries. If the United States is to lead, we must also lead with how we take care of the women in our workforce. Such practices will ensure our economic competitiveness as well as ensure that we are a country that truly practices good family values.

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## WOMEN LEADERS IN THE PEACE/ANTIWAR MOVEMENTS

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Women have played important roles as leaders in peace and antiwar movements, both in general peace movements and in women's peace movements. Women leaders in the first wave of women suffrage in the 1800s through to the second wave in the 1970s and beyond were involved not only in working for their own rights but in working for peace and social justice for all. This chapter focuses both on women's peace leaders individually and the movements they led.

Jane Addams (1860–1935), the 1931 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and the second woman to win that prize, exemplified the linkages between feminism and pacifism that have been characteristic of many women peace leaders. Known best for her social reform work and the creation of Hull House, Addams challenged not only patriarchy and social injustice but also nationalism and militarism. Addams (1916) argued, "It would be absurd for women even to suggest equal rights in a world governed solely by physical force, and feminism must necessarily assert the ultimate supremacy of moral agencies. Inevitably the two are in eternal opposition" (p. 129). Women appear to have different attitudes toward war and peace and international security than men, and even to define peace and security differently. Participants in the 1996 UN Expert Group Meeting on Political Decision-Making and Conflict Resolution: The Impact of Gender Difference argued that

a broad range of research and experience over several decades indicates that most women appear to have somewhat different definitions of peace, security, and sovereignty than most men. In general, women's approaches to violence, conflict and the resolution of conflict appear to be somewhat different than

those of men in positions of decision-making in peace and security matters. ("Expert Group Meeting," 1996, para. 29)

Peace researchers have shown that women's conceptions of peace and security tend to fall more at the human security end of the spectrum than the nation-state security end of the spectrum (Boulding, 1981).

Underlying women's definitions of security appears to be a preference for a different definition of power. Whereas many men tend to see power as power *over*, women have more often conceived of power as power *with*, capability rather than domination, the ability to construct rather than the ability to destroy. This entails a conception of political power in which power is seen as rooted in society rather than in its leaders, a bottom-up rather than top-down conception of power. This has been true both of women who see themselves as feminists and those who do not. Political theorist Hannah Arendt is but one of the most insightful, identifying violence as the absence of power rather than the presence of it. Women's leadership in peace movements has thus often been collective and participatory.

In 2006 the Women's Peace Initiative, established by 6 of the 12 women winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, argued for a different definition of peace:

We believe peace is much more than the absence of armed conflict. Peace is the commitment to equality and justice; a democratic world free of physical, economic, cultural, political, religious, sexual and environmental violence and the constant threat of these forms of violence against women—indeed against all of humanity. (Nobel Women's Initiative, n.d., para. 3)

1905—Bertha von Suttner
1931—Jane Addams
1946—Emily Greene Balch
1976—Betty Williams* and Mairead Corrigan (Maguire)*
1979—Mother Teresa
1982—Alva Myrdal
1991—Aung San Suu Kyi
1992—Rigoberta Menchú Tum*
1997—Jody Williams*
2003—Shirin Ebadi*
2004—Wangari Maathai*

**Table 30.1** Female Nobel Peace Prize Winners

SOURCES: Compiled from Nobel Foundation ([http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/lists/women.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/lists/women.html)) and Nobel Women's Initiative (<http://nobelwomensinitiative.org>).

\*Signer of Nobel Women's Initiative.

Although this definition is not unique to women, it is one that appears to be more widely shared among women than among men.

The wide variety of approaches to peace, ranging from Alva Myrdal's and Jody Williams's work on disarmament to Mother Teresa's service to the poor, to Wangari Maathai's work for democracy, women's rights, and the environment, illustrate the range of these peace concerns.

### Women's Peace Leadership in the 19th Century

Women's leadership in the woman suffrage movement went hand in hand with their advocacy of and leadership in social justice and antiwar movements. Half a century before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, Elizabeth Cady Stanton had characterized the vote for women as "not even half a loaf; . . . only a crust, a crumb." The beginnings of the women's movement in the United States in the mid-19th century were not limited to the goal of woman suffrage. They were firmly grounded in reducing the inequality of women in all ways and in changing the nature of the society that had created the inequality of women. The growth of the women's movement sprang directly from women's inability to stand as equals in other social movements, in particular, the abolition and temperance movements. Numerous histories of the women's movement chronicle its linkages with not only temperance and abolition but also movements for peace, socialism, trade unions, moral reform, religious

revival, education, medical and socioeconomic reform, and American Indian concerns. Women were among the top leaders of many of these movements, and many of the organizations that were to be most significant in the women's movement had their genesis in these other movements. The women's movement was originally a movement for general social action, not just for the equality of women in spheres previously defined by men. It was a far more radical movement than it later became. Originally considered a major threat to a male-run society, it eventually compromised on many of its goals out of a sense of political pragmatism, winning on suffrage but not yet on peace.

Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the Grimké sisters, Sarah and Angelina, and also Susan B. Anthony, Antoinette Brown, and Lucy Stone were more widely involved in social movements. All of these women were involved in the prohibition and abolition movements as well as the women's movement. All except the last two were also involved in peace activity and internationalism. In fact, virtually all of the early feminists, and those of the early 20th century, were involved in such movements. Although the specific issue changed with the historical period, in the three major periods of feminism (roughly the 1830s–1870, 1910–1925, and 1970–present), substantial parts of the women's movement have been involved in peace and radical social change movements.

Upbringing was significant in influencing women who became important in these movements. Examination of their biographies reveals a higher than average number of Quakers and children of ministers and reformers of all religions. The biographies of many who were not Quakers reveals substantial Quaker influence on many of their lives. These feminist women were socialized into these concerns for peace and social and economic reform. The combination of individual empowerment and concern for the broader society with which many of these women grew up seems of key importance for the early feminist movement.

Although feminist leaders held different positions on the relationship between the women's movement and the peace movement, and between women and peace, they did not question that there was a relationship. Even Carrie Chapman Catt, who, as World War I progressed, pledged the support of the National American Woman Suffrage Association to the war, was actively involved in the women's peace movement, having been one of the sponsors of the first International Women's Peace Congress at The Hague in April 1915. Both before and after World War I, she was opposed to war but felt that opposition would weaken the cause of suffrage. Long after World War I, Catt said of war, "Treat it as a sin, a crime, an inequity, an unethical institution, an impractical policy, or what you will. It is, in truth, a barbarism with no rightful place in an enlightened age" (Catt, 1928, as cited in DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 83).

Many other feminist leaders were as actively involved in the peace movement as in the women's movement. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, best known for her work with labor organizing, devoted most of her efforts after 1914 to



the peace movement. In *Herland* (1915/1979) Charlotte Perkins Gilman created a fictional world where female separatism produced peace and well-being. Emma Goldman, anarchist, pacifist, and (eventually deported) feminist, captured much of the spirit linking these movements when she made the statement, which later caught on in college T-shirts, “If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be in your revolution!” Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to Congress in 1916, voted against both world wars. She was the only member of the House to vote against World War II. Lillian Wald, a nurse, like Addams, combined settlement house work with peace advocacy. And there were others, lesser known but equally important, who combined their interests in the various parts of the peace movement—including peace both as the absence of war and as the presence of social justice—with their interest in the feminist movement. They saw, in fact, linkages

between these movements that have only begun to be obvious again in the American feminist movement.

### Organizational Feminist-Pacifist Linkages

From the very earliest period of American feminism there were linkages between the concerns for women’s rights and for other elements of peace and social justice. Table 30.2 shows a timeline of the first century of women’s involvement in women’s rights, peace, and social justice organizations in the United States.

The National Female Anti-Slavery Society (NFAS), according to Catt and Shuler, was the first organized women’s society (1833) and the first effort of women to influence politics directly. (Though some might argue the Daughters of Liberty were the first.) In 1837 the NFAS Convention, which met in New York City with 72 delegates,

1833	National Female Anti-Slavery Society formed Ladies’ Association for Educating Females formed
1837	National Female Anti-Slavery Society merged with male counterpart Mount Holyoke College, first women’s college, founded by Mary Lyon
1840	Daughters of Temperance formed as adjunct to Sons of Temperance Women delegates refused entry to World Anti-Slavery Conference in London
1848	First Women’s Rights Convention, Seneca Falls, New York
1850	First National Women’s Rights Convention, Worcester, Massachusetts
1863	Women’s Loyal National League formed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony
1869	Wyoming gave vote to women American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) formed by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe (conservative—limited to suffrage) National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) formed by Stanton and Anthony (more radical—spoke on labor, etc.)
1874	Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) formed
1878	Susan B. Anthony amendment introduced
1879	WCTU under Francis Willard developed Department of Peace and Arbitration
1887	Susan B. Anthony amendment voted out of committee NWSA and AWSA united as National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA)—limited to suffrage position
1890	General Federation of Women’s Clubs formed
1913	Congressional Union for Women Suffrage formed by Crystal Eastman, Alice Paul, Lucy Burns
1914	Woman’s Peace Party (WPP) of New York formed by Eastman (more radical) (Eastman sends Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence to Addams)

**Table 30.2** Timeline of Events in Early American Women’s Peace Organizations

(Continued)

(Continued)

1914	Anti-Preparedness Committee formed by Eastman, Lillian Wald, Oswald Garrison Villard, and Paul Kellogg (less radical)
1915	Anti-Preparedness Committee renamed American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) Split between NAWSA and Congressional Union as Catt pledges NAWSA support of war WPP of New York and AUAM together launch "Truth About Preparedness Campaign" First International Women's Peace Congress at The Hague (April)
1916	Jeannette Rankin elected first woman member of Congress Congressional Union reorganized as National Women's Party (NWP) by Paul (consistently opposed World War I)
1918	Susan B. Anthony amendment achieves majority
1919	(April) Second International Congress of Women at Zurich (October) Women's Peace Society formed by Fanny Garrison Villard (opposed coercive elements of League of Nations) (November) U.S. Section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom formed (reconstituted from remains of WPP—supported aspects of league after 1920)
1920	Susan B. Anthony amendment becomes law as Nineteenth Amendment Women's Joint Congressional Committee formed by 10 constituent groups to watch national legislation on women Crystal Eastman and Roger Baldwin and others found American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to defend wartime dissenters and conscientious objectors National League of Women Voters formed, including Department of Peace Woman's Pro-League Council (nonpartisan) established (March)
1921	Women's Committee on World Disarmament formed by Emma Wold and minority from NWP to demand disarmament action in Washington, D.C. Women's Peace Union of the Western Hemisphere founded with Canadian pacifists (opposed League as militaristic) National Council for the Limitation of Armaments (NCLA) formed by Christina Merriman (September; Coalition: women and churches and others)
1922	Women's World Court Committee formed by Maud Wood Park and leaders of Women's Joint Congressional Committee NCLA renamed National Council for Prevention of War (November)
1923	National Woman's Party introduced equal rights amendment (ERA)—divided feminists from women reformers
1924	National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War organized by Catt, Josephine Schain, and nine women's organizations to coordinate action (April; lasted to 1939)

was the first representative body of women (Catt & Shuler, 1923/1969, pp. 14–15). In that same year, John Quincy Adams introduced several of the antislavery positions of women into Congress. By 1839 the NFAS had merged with its male counterpart (Catt & Shuler, 1923/1969, p. 17). The Grimké sisters began their feminism out of their crusade against slavery. Born in the South, they refuted slavery, came to the North, joined the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Philadelphia, and began extensive speaking tours against slavery. Even among Quakers—a group early known for support of feminist and antiwar principles—the

Grimkés were considered too outspoken for women, and this radicalized them on the subject of their own rights as well as those of the slaves.

In 1840 another women's organization devoted to changing society was formed; shortly after the organization of the Sons of Temperance, the Daughters of Temperance was formed as an adjunct organization. Thus by the time of what is generally regarded as the official beginning of the American women's movement, the women's right convention at Seneca Falls, there had already existed organizations of women for purposes of societal change.



Much of the impetus to the first stirring of a feminist movement in the United States seems to have come from women's exclusion from participation in social change movements. The legendary meeting of Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, when women delegates were refused admission to the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, is duly registered in most women's history books as the direct cause of the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848. Mott and Stanton were so outraged by the refusal to admit the eight U.S. women delegates that they vowed to hold a meeting on women's rights when they returned to the United States. Thus, in July 1848, Stanton and four Quaker women—Lucretia Mott, Mott's sister Martha C. Wright, Jane Hunt, and Mary McClintock—issued the call for such a convention. Out of the convention developed the beginnings of a strong American women's movement, as well as a friendship between Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, another Quaker, which was to form the cornerstone of women's work for their own rights, temperance, abolition of slavery, and peace. These women saw these as integrally related. In May 1863 Stanton and Anthony formed the Women's Loyal National League, an organization that collected and presented to the Senate 300,000 signatures for a constitutional amendment to end slavery immediately. There were others, however, who believed that some of the ideas put forth by Stanton, Anthony, the Grimké's, and Mott were too radical and preferred to limit the women's movement to the question of suffrage. The split in the 19th-century American women's movement occurred in 1869, largely over the issue of whether to speak out on labor and other social issues that affected women's lives. Stanton and Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), while Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe helped organize the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), which was based solely on the issue of woman suffrage and developed a large conservative following. From the period of the Civil War until after the turn of the century, the road was difficult for the women's movement. Some would say that the Civil War killed the women's movement temporarily. In 1890 the NWSA and the AWSA were united, but by this time their focus was only that of suffrage, a limited and acceptable demand.

There were other events that were significant even in this bleak period. In 1874 the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was formed, eventually developing a strong feminist perspective and interests in many issues other than temperance as well. By 1879 the WCTU, under the leadership of Frances Willard, created a Department of Peace and Arbitration. This was headed by (Quaker) Hannah Bailey, who joined the WCTU in 1883. Willard moved the WCTU from a conservative organization to one concerned with both suffrage and peace. Just as Stanton tried to bring other feminist issues to the suffrage movement, so Willard tried to bring other feminist issues to the WCTU. The Department of Peace and Arbitration conducted a massive propaganda campaign after 1887,

which included advocating the use of arbitration in international disputes and the abandonment of war toys. About this same period, Fannie Fern Andrews led the American School Peace League, which prepared and distributed materials for peace education in the public schools.

In 1890, in addition to the reuniting of the two predominant branches of the women's movement, the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) was formed. By 1904 the GFWC had broadened its focus to become involved in social issues, and by 1914 it became involved in suffrage. By the early 1920s the GFWC was pleading for arms limitation, the outlawing of war, and for the World Court, echoing many other feminist organizations in this next resurgence of feminist peace work (DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 94).

## Women's Peace Leadership in the Early 20th Century

### The Prewar and World War I Years

Although the period around the turn of the century, until 1910, was bleak for women's movements, both the women's peace movement and the suffrage movement went on, and gradually the states, beginning with Wyoming, began to agree to voting rights for women. Carrie Chapman Catt writes of this period in terms of the power of the liquor lobby and its active and well-funded opposition to women's rights. Because the Prohibition Party had been organized in the same year in which Wyoming gave the vote to women, it was believed that both prohibition and peace might be the clear results of giving women the vote, and thus opposition was strong. Women continued their active involvement in broader social and peace movements, with a conception of peace that continued to include both the absence of war and the presence of social justice.

Several women leaders exemplify the linkages in the pursuit of peace and social justice and woman's rights in this period. Jane Addams, of Hull House fame, was first vice president of NAWSA from 1911 to 1914 and became the first president of the Woman's Peace Party in 1915 as well as the first president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in 1919. Addams held that women's nurturing functions led to feelings of maternal affection and solicitude, a position somewhat more tenable than the "natural differences" position under which women had carried on peace activity before then. The earlier position had made women vulnerable to the accusation that, if they were naturally different from men, then they were also naturally unfit to hold the positions of power that men did or to have rights equal to theirs. The new position was closer to the view that currently receives greater credence that says that socialization patterns are chiefly responsible for any male-female differences in this area.

Crystal Eastman may best epitomize this combination of ideologies. Blanche Weisen Cook (1978) characterizes



Eastman as "a tough lady lawyer who was not only a feminist, but a mother and socialist" (p. 3). She was also a journalist. Her work, once published, had largely disappeared until recently. Cook concluded that she was too far in the vanguard for both movements. Eastman was, she says, "generally the only socialist at feminist meetings, and one of the very few feminists at socialist meetings" (p. 1). Her life, which spanned 1881 to 1928, was controversial, free, loving, lived in the company of the sophisticated set, and totally dedicated to women's rights, socialist revolution, and peace. Even now it is difficult to make clear the vision that so clearly unites these issues. Cook (1978) notes, "Very early on Crystal believed that revolution was a process and not an event" (p. 8). This helps explain part of the linkage.

Eastman, completing an in-depth sociological investigation of industrial accidents, was appointed in 1909 the only woman member of New York's Employers Liability Commission. She served as campaign manager for the Wisconsin suffrage referendum in 1912 and attributed its defeat to the brewery industry. In 1913 she was a delegate to the Seventh Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance in Budapest; there she met feminist-pacifists Rosika Schwimmer (Hungary), Aletta Jacobs (Holland), and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence (England). It was in 1913, when the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage was formed by Eastman, Alice Paul, and Lucy Burns in reaction to the limited action of NAWSA that American feminists again became actively involved in organizing for peace and broader social concerns.

In November 1914 Eastman called the first meeting of the New York Woman's Peace Party, which she was to head until 1919, out of fear that U.S. entry into the European War would destroy all of the reforms for women achieved in the United States. To this first meeting, she invited Pethick-Lawrence, a militant suffragist, who set the tone for the organization, arguing that there was "no life worth living, but a fighting life" and that it was time for women to be "active and militant" about peace (Cook, 1978, p. 11). This organization was to adopt that style and to differ considerably from the more analytic, discreet style of the national Woman's Peace Party. In cooperation with Lillian Wald, Oswald Garrison Villard, and Paul Kellogg, Eastman also formed the Anti-Preparedness Committee, a less radical organization intended to question and slow down American preparedness for World War I. In 1915 this was renamed the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) and, together with the Woman's Peace Party of New York, it launched in that year the "Truth About Preparedness Campaign." Eastman, in "A Platform for Real Preparedness," in the November 13, 1915, issue of *The Survey*, suggested that it was important "to say to Congress: 'Gentlemen, before you take \$500,000,000 more from our pockets for national defense show us how the last \$250,000,000 was spent. Show us why we don't get better defense for our money'" (Cook, 1978, p. 242). Eastman and the organizations she helped form were interested in the "effect of increased armament on our own national psychology" (p. 246).

Several other important feminist-pacifist events occurred in 1915. Eastman sent Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, the British feminist-pacifist whom she had brought to speak at the opening of the Woman's Peace Party of New York, to Addams. The result was that Addams agreed to be the first president of the national Woman's Peace Party, an organization that was to be less radical than its New York branch. The Woman's Peace Party held its first annual meeting in January 1916 and expanded to 165 group memberships and 40,000 women as members. It became a part of the Women's International Committee for Permanent Peace (Degen, 1972). The Woman's Peace Party published *Four Lights*, several issues of which were to be confiscated during the war by the U.S. Post Office for violating the Comstock Act, which made it illegal to send any "obscene, lewd, and/or lascivious" materials through the mail. Although Addams and Eastman disagreed on the degree to which women should speak out against the war during the war, they agreed in their opposition to it.

The year 1915 also saw the split between the Congressional Union and the NAWSA as Carrie Chapman Catt pledged NAWSA's support to the war effort, while Alice Paul consistently opposed the war. The Congressional Union was reorganized by Paul in 1916 as the National Woman's Party. 1915 was also the year of Henry Ford's "peace ship"—an idea originated by Hungarian American feminist-pacifist Rosika Schwimmer. In April 1915 Aletta Jacobs, the first woman physician in Holland and founder of the Dutch suffrage movement, called the First International Women's Peace Congress at The Hague, resolutions from which Addams carried to seven governments. Disturbed that the meeting of the International Woman Suffrage Association, which had been scheduled for 1915 in Berlin, could not be held, Jacobs determined that it was even more important in wartime to hold an international meeting of women. The Congress opened on April 28, 1915, with 1,136 voting members, of which the largest number were Dutch, with a U.S. delegation of 47. One result of the meeting was the opening of the headquarters of the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace.

Eastman also organized a massive publicity campaign and mediation effort to avert war in Mexico, leading to a June–July 1916 "unofficial commission" of three Mexican and three U.S. antimilitarists, and eventually to President Woodrow Wilson's appointment of a Joint High Commission that met from September 1916 to January 1917 to mediate differences and avert war.

The year 1916 was the height of seeming disputes between the peace and suffrage movements because of the necessity to choose between presidential candidate Charles Evans Hughes (later Chief Justice of the United States from 1930 to 1941), "who seemed to promise suffrage with war," and Woodrow Wilson, "who promised peace without suffrage" (Cook, 1978, p. 16). Whereas most suffragists supported Hughes, Eastman and the AUAM supported Wilson, due to this difference in plans for war.



While Eastman's New York branch of the Woman's Peace Party continued to oppose the war and support civil liberties during wartime, especially through its newsletter, *Four Lights*, other Woman's Peace Party branches assisted in the war effort. This included the Boston branch, under Lucia Ames Mead, as well as Addams and Wald, who, although opposed to conscription, provided places for draft registration in their own settlement houses. Yet Addams, Wald, Emily Green Balch, and Paul's National Woman's Party consistently opposed the war, and both Addams and Eastman were followed by secret agents during the 1920s for their support of socialism, progressive reforms such as child labor legislation, denunciation of the food blockade, and peace. The split in the feminist, pacifist, internationalist progressive coalition had strengthened militant and antidemocratic forces, according to Cook (1978, p. 22).

A similar split occurred in the women's movement between feminists and social reformers over the issue of the equal rights amendment (ERA) versus protective legislation for women. Eastman had always opposed the idea of the physical inferiority of women. Yet the Brandeis brief put forth in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908) based its support of protective legislation for women on women's physical differences. The National Woman's Party's introduction of the ERA in June 1923 challenged this idea and led to a further split in the women's movement; this did not begin to heal until the 1960s, when the equal rights position became dominant.

During the war years there was clear disagreement among women as to the best strategy for winning suffrage. Whereas some women became invaluable in the war effort, to a large degree in the hopes of getting the vote, others maintained that they could not support the war of a nation that did not even allow them to vote. The National Women's Trade Union League, headed by Margaret Dreier Robins, was the only nonpacifist women's organization to oppose the 1917 movement of the United States toward war (DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 94).

Eastman, Roger Baldwin, Addams, and others, concerned with the erosion of civil liberties during wartime, founded in 1917 the American Civil Liberties Union to defend the rights of wartime dissenters and conscientious objectors. Eastman said, "Unless the people rise up and rid themselves of this old intolerable burden of war, they cannot progress toward liberty" (Cook, 1978, p. 268). During that same war, the Susan B. Anthony amendment achieved a majority in Congress. Politically, woman suffrage was probably aided more by those women who aided in the war effort than by those who opposed it vocally, yet even those feminists who put suffrage before peace were clearly part of the feminist-pacifist opposition to war, however much of the recent history of feminism may have obscured that fact.

### The Post-World War I Period

After the war there was a new resurgence of "feminist peace-seeking," as DeBenedetti calls it. DeBenedetti and

others have identified some of the reasons for this resurgence, arguing that

the peace cause proved attractive to women's groups after the war because it helped to blur the sharpening differences that were threatening the women's movement. The victory of the suffrage cause had ironically removed the one issue that had united the movement for a generation. . . . The women's movement needed the healing peace reform and the peace reform needed the women's movement. (DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 90)

Second, many saw the power that lay behind women's victories in prohibition and suffrage and believed that women must turn their power as a group to various social reforms, of which peace appeared as the highest priority. Eastman, for example, when asked why there should be a Woman's Peace Party, emphasized the importance of international connections between women and also suggested that by keeping distinct, women could focus their new-found political power against war most effectively. As she put it, "We women of New York State, politically speaking, have just been born" (Cook, 1978, p. 267). Finally, there were both traditional and modern political reasons why women were seen to have a special ability to work in the field of world peace. There remained the old maternal instinct argument, but there were other social and political arguments as well. Laura Puffer Morgan of the National Council for the Prevention of War said women were destined for a central role in peace work because

women are instinctively more interested than men in humanitarian projects and in matter of the common welfare, because they have more leisure for study and activity, because they have fewer financial entanglements, and as a result a more objective viewpoint and greater moral courage—in other words, because they are freer. (qtd. in DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 90)

Feminists were, during this period, a part of a wider coalition that formed the basis for the modern American peace movement. DeBenedetti, in an excellent study of the development of the peace movement from 1915 to 1929, characterizes separate movements. Internationalists, conservative and progressive legalists, feminists, pacifists, and Protestant clergy all combined radical social criticism with an active commitment to nonviolence. Although the war divided the Progressive movement in 1917, it was to form again around an axis of world peace. The new movement was to revolve around the theme of a common humanity and around the idea that war was a symptom of systematic social injustice. Focusing in the early 1920s on the "outlawry of war," the movement experienced a slump after March 1920, with the rejection of the League Covenant, until spring 1921, when there began to be public interest in arms limitation. In 1925 an unsuccessful attempt at unity focused on a campaign for arbitration in place of war, which eventually resulted in the 1928 Pact of Paris. After that, the focus narrowed; DeBenedetti concludes that the



peace movement narrowed to simply an antiwar movement during the 1930s.

In addition to the large number of feminist peace organizations formed during World War I and the subsequent decade, most of the traditional women's organizations also took an active part in support of peace work, with a variety of foci. One of the major points of focus and of division was the question of the creation of the League of Nations and the World Court. Most feminist groups were torn by this, in that they supported the idea of an international organization that would work for peace and social justice but opposed the coercive elements of the League. Eventually many organizations came to support the idea of the League, and especially the World Court, but with reservations on the particular coercive elements that they opposed.

In 1919 a number of significant feminist-pacifist events took place. On March 1, 1919, as Eastman's last activity as president of the Woman's Peace Party of New York, the First Feminist Congress in the United States was held "to see the birth of a new spirit of humane and intelligent self-interest" (Cook, 1978, p. 23). In April 1919 the Second International Congress of Women in Zurich reformed into the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Addams, its first president, urged a new nonviolent international structure. The conference urged relief for Europe but was in disagreement with respect to the Treaty of Versailles and the League Covenant, praising some aspects of the League but criticizing its coercive aspects. Emily Greene Balch, an economist and sociologist who had been removed from the Wellesley faculty for her outspoken pacifism, served as director of the main office of WILPF in Geneva, working at international relief and reconstruction and cooperating with League commissions on white slavery, narcotics, and the International Labor Organization. The U.S. Section of the WILPF was formed in November from the remains of the Woman's Peace Party. WILPF gradually moved toward support of the non-coercive elements of the League after 1920 (DeBenedetti, 1978, pp. 91-92; see also Bussey & Tims, 1965).

Also in 1919, the more radical Women's Peace Society was formed, in disagreement with WILPF's growing support of the League. Fanny Garrison Villard founded the organization on the basis of the Garrisonian principles of noncooperation with coercive government, immediate and universal disarmament, free trade, and the inviolability of human life. Eventually the group claimed 1,600 members, mostly in the New York area. The Women's Peace Society's emphasis on converting individuals, coupled with personality differences within the group, led in the summer of 1921 to a split and to the formation, with Canadian women pacifists, of the Women's Peace Union of the Western Hemisphere. This organization, based on absolute nonresistance, used political action rather than the conversion of individuals to oppose the League as militaristic, to oppose the payment of war debts and reparations, and to support immediate and complete disarmament.

In 1920, the year in which the Susan B. Anthony amendment became the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, three women's organizations that were to be active in the peace movement were founded. The Women's Joint Congressional Committee was organized in the fall of 1920 by 10 constituent groups (and grew to encompass many women's organizations) to keep watch on national legislation related to women. It expressed its support for disarmament work and for national action in this area. The National League of Women Voters (NLWV) was also founded in 1920 and included a Department of Peace, which funded peace propaganda with the intent of arousing popular action. At its third annual meeting the NLWV advocated the abolition of war as a "legalized institution" and its replacement with international law and eventually world federation. The third organization to be formed in that year was the Woman's Pro-League Council (nonpartisan). This organization was founded by New York feminists Daisy Borden Harriman, Florence G. Tuttle, and Harriet B. Laidlow.

From 1921 to 1922 the slogan "outlawing war" was adopted by many organized women's groups. The U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom shifted its focus in the spring of 1922 to the dual goals of abolition of the legal status of war and of bringing the United States into the World Court. The YWCA supported outlawry. The General Federation of Women's Clubs spoke, but did not act, for arms limitation, outlawry, and the World Court. The National Women's Trade Union League, the one nationally organized body of working women, led by Margaret Dreier Robins, adopted outlawry as part of its 1922 platform, in addition to better health care, education, and working conditions for women. Robins, together with feminist, NLWV organizer, federal judge, and politician Florence E. Allen and attorney Frances Kellor, a founder of the American Arbitration Association, opposed the League and supported outlawry. By February 1924 the Women's Peace Union had come to focus almost entirely on a constitutional amendment to strip Congress of the power to make war (DeBenedetti, 1978, pp. 63, 65, 94-95).

In 1921 many organized women's groups also began to direct their energies toward an international arms limitation conference. The Women's Committee on World Disarmament was formed by Emma Wold and a minority who withdrew from the National Woman's Party and proceeded to demand disarmament action in Washington, D.C., causing echoes throughout other feminist organizations. Probably more important was the work of Christina Merriman, who was New England organizer for NLWV and executive secretary of the Foreign Policy Association, in establishing the Clearing House for Limitation of Armaments in the spring of 1921 to coordinate action between feminist and church movements. She was so successful that on September 8, 1921, she called together representatives of a more varied group of 17 national organizations claiming 6.3 million members to form the National Council for the Limitation of Armaments, an organization that built a consensual coalition to concentrate



the power of the common people for arms limitation and against war. The Council grew to 43 organizations in the early 1920s and, in November 1922, was renamed the National Council for the Prevention of War, which was to be singled out for attack by right-wing elements of the government for its success in linking organizations in the peace cause (DeBenedetti, 1978, pp. 29–30, 86–88).

In 1921 there was also an upsurge of enthusiasm for the League of Nations among organized women's groups, occasioned largely by Catt's commitment to the peace movement and especially to the League. The NLWV played an important role here. In 1922 Maud Wood Park and leaders of the Women's Joint Congressional Committee formed the Women's World Court Committee, which in turn formed the broader-based World Court Conference Committee. Support for the Court was more widespread than for the League, among women's groups and outside.

Over the winter of 1923–1924 antiwar sentiment swept U.S. colleges and churches. Organized women's groups, as well as other peace groups, had by this time each developed "a framework for interpreting international events," leadership, and a program of action (DeBenedetti, 1978, p. 111). However, division among women's peace groups led to a decline in the influence of pacifist feminists and an increase in support for Catt's more conservative consensual approach to peace. Catt saw peace primarily as the absence of war and not, as pacifist feminists saw it, as that plus the presence of social justice and nonviolence. In April 1924 Josephine Schain, with Catt's aid, established the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War (NCCCW) that was designed to coordinate peace action among nine of the major women's organizations. Many of these organizations were also members of the NCPW and the Women's Joint Congressional Committee, after which the NCCCW had been patterned. Although the organization did not develop a consensual position, it was important in coordinating action among the groups. In January 1925, at the first of its 14 annual meetings, 463 delegates came from organizations ranging from the WCTU to the GFWC. In December 1926, almost 500 feminists went on record for neutrality revision and for U.S. recognition of regional efforts to identify and isolate aggressor states. The organization lasted until 1939. By the late 1920s, however, there was such division in the peace movement that it lost the drive it had had earlier and succumbed, with the growth of right-wing feeling in the United States, to becoming simply a weak antiwar movement.

Division also was the lot of the feminist movement during the end of the 1920s, with the introduction of the ERA dividing militant feminists from social reformer feminists who feared that it would remove the protective legislation for women that they had established.

This division extended to the international women's movement as well. In May–June 1926 the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (IWSA—which later became the International Alliance of Women) rejected the application of the (U.S.) National Woman's Party for membership by a vote of 123 to 49. The issue was largely that of the

regulation of women in industry, although matters of militancy in style were also cited. Catt, who had been president of the IWSA and the NLWV, which had been the only U.S. member, opposed the membership of the National Woman's Party on the grounds that they could not work with it. Yet Eastman, who served as a representative of the National Woman's Party at that conference, observed that this was an occasion of elation for her; she felt the support of IWSA members from other nations for her goals, in spite of the formal rejection (Cook, 1978, pp. 186–211).

By 1930, feminism, peace, and social reform had all declined in their role as effective social movements. They were not to arise as such again until the 1960s.

What occasioned the failure of the early 20th-century women's peace movement? DeBenedetti (1978) suggests two reasons, the first being that the suffrage movement left intact the stereotype of the domestic female, with the result that not enough women were mobilized to social action. He goes on to say,

On the other hand, it was the lasting irony of the suffrage crusade that, as it singled out women as a people of profound social conscience with an instinctive hatred of war, it created alternative stereotypes that robbed organized women's groups of their fullest political effectiveness. Women were expected to protest for peace. (p. 97)

Feminists have been running from this stereotype since the 1930s. In running, however, many have come full circle into accepting the values of male-dominated society with respect to war, the military, and now the full equality of women in the military. This is far from the original feminist vision.

The feminist peace movement from the 19th through the early 20th century, like other peace movements, did not succeed in doing away with the causes of war or creating the causes of peace. The radical work of Paul and Eastman and others for equal rights and peace may even have hindered women suffrage. Certainly women's advocacy of prohibition did. Suffrage, in a democratic society, is important. Suffrage, as many early feminists concluded, was first necessary if women were to have bread. Bread (including jobs and dignity), as Addams concluded, was first necessary if people were to have peace. But suffrage, in a society that is not fully democratic—politically, economically, socially, and culturally—does not solve the problems of women. Underlying questions of changing the culture of patriarchy and militarism were to become an important goal of the next phase of women's leadership for peace.

### **Women's Peace Leadership in the Late 20th Century**

In the mid- to late 1960s again, women's participation in other social movements—and their denial of full equality in that participation—was to spark a new outbreak of the feminist movement and, by 1980 a new realization of the linkages



between feminism and pacifism that had existed in the two earlier periods of major feminist activity. Women experienced difficulties in their work for social justice and against war, in particular, in the movements for civil rights and against the Vietnam War. Numerous new women's peace organizations joined the long-standing WILPF from the late 1960s to the 1980s. Among these were Another Mother for Peace and Women Strike for Peace.

Shortly before February 8, 1980, when President Jimmy Carter revealed his proposal to register women and men for the draft, the debate over whether women have, or should have, a particular relationship to peace was reopened in the United States with new vehemence. Organizations took positions varying from WILPF's total opposition to registration to Phyllis Schlafly's opposition to drafting women. The National Organization for Women and the National Women's Political Caucus changed their positions from January 25 to February 8 from total opposition to the draft to opposition coupled with the idea that if there were to be a draft, it had to include women. The debate was on between feminists who believed in equality within male power structures and feminists who believed in changing male structures of power, in this case, in opposing war and militarization altogether.

A new generation of more radical feminist leaders came to the forefront. Gloria Steinem, the editor of *Ms.* magazine, argued that, rather than conservatives or moderates taking over the women's movement, experience had radicalized the women's movement to bring it closer to the "true feminist" view (Steinem, 1978). She argued, "Relative to other movements and interest groups, the Women's Movement is also measurably more radical" (p. 92). She cited a 1976 Harvard University Center for International Affairs/Washington Post survey of leadership groups in the United States as finding that

feminists were consistently more willing to address questions of basic change (public ownership of utilities and oil firms, redistribution of income, for instance) than any other group; and the majority questioned were members of NOW and the National Women's Political Caucus, the very groups often cited as "conservative" feminists. (Steinem, 1978, p. 92)

Another set of events took place in 1980 and 1981. The first Women's Pentagon Action in November 1980 drew approximately 1,300 women to Washington, D.C., to protest peacefully defense spending and military policies, racism, sexism, and violence against women; the second, in November 1981, drew about 2,000 women. Participant groups included those such as WILPF, Artists for Survival, Coalition for a People's Alternative, Mobilization for Survival, Women of All Red Nations, Women and Life on Earth, Women for Racial and Economic Equality, and Women Strike for Peace. Led by huge puppets from the Bread and Puppet Theater, the protest went through four stages: mourning (of women who had died violent deaths), raging, empowerment, and defiance. Women of all classes and ages participated.

At the United Nations, the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975, and the following

Decade for Women 1976–1985, had as their theme equality, development, and peace. The long-standing debate over whether there is a relationship between women and peace arose again in the Mid-Decade Review Conference in 1980 in Copenhagen over the role of women in national liberation movements. American feminist leaders Betty Friedan and Representative Bella Abzug (D-NY) came to the UN conferences with American feminist views of the primacy of individual women's rights and discovered other feminisms that involved more communal views, in turn influencing third-world feminists toward stronger views on women's rights. As a founder of the Women's Environment and Development Organization in 1991, Abzug began to incorporate environmental concerns as well as peace concerns into the women's movement and, along with other environmental organizations, into the UN conferences on women. At the 1985 Decade Review Conference in Nairobi, Wangari Maathai, Kenyan activist for women's rights and democracy and founder of the Green Belt Movement in 1977, was a substantial influence. Maathai won the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her work. By the time of the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, peace had become very much a part of the rhetoric, with critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action, including the effects of armed conflict on women and inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision making.

As a result, in October 2000, women leaders in WILPF, the Women and Armed Conflict Caucus, and the NGO Working Group on Women and International Peace and Security worked with Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury of Bangladesh to pass Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which urged the protection of women in armed conflict and their increased representation in decision making in prevention, management, and resolution of conflict (Hill, Aboitiz, & Poehlman-Doumbouya, 2003).

Women's leadership was also important in the development of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (also known as the Mine Ban Treaty or the Ottawa Treaty). Jody Williams and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), in coordination with the Canadian government in the Ottawa Process, produced the convention, which was opened for signature in December 1997 and came into force in record time in March 1999. The achievement of the signing of the treaty won Jody Williams and the ICBL the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

## Summary and Future Directions

Women's leadership in the peace and antiwar movements has been significant and appears to have incorporated conceptualizations of peace and of power that relate more to human than to national security. Women's peace leadership has alternated between a narrow view of peace as the absence of war and a broader view of peace as both the absence of violence and the presence of social justice, as



leadership in the women's movement has alternated between emphasis on women's rights and social justice for all, between social reform and structural change. But always, there has been linkage between women's struggle for their own rights and their broader leadership for peace.

As women move toward greater equality and into positions of power, it becomes clearer that the old arguments about the natural peacefulness of women are being supplanted by the understanding that the construction of gender and peace in our culture is critical to questions of both equality and peace. As this happens, the role of feminist

peace educators becomes more significant. Researchers have shown clear linkages between sexism and militarism (Enloe, 1989, 1993). Academics such as Elise Boulding, whose work on women (1976, 1977) and cultures of peace (1988, 2000) has shown the linkages between these; Betty Reardon (1985), whose work on the relationship between sexism and the war system has significantly influenced the entire field of peace education; and Birgit Brock-Utne (1989) have shown the way to the future work that needs to be done by women peace leaders in changing cultures of war to cultures of peace.

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## PART IV

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# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT





## OVERVIEW: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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**M**ary Robinson, former president of Ireland aptly describes the rationale of having women in leadership roles: "Society that is without the voice and vision of women is not less feminine, it is less human" (Robinson, 2003). Still, even in the 21st century, men of any class, caste, race, ethnicity, or nationality are more able to acquire leadership positions than are women from their respective categories. This chapter discusses the implications of this phenomenon for women's leadership in the global context. It provides an overview of women's political leadership since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It draws from various reports of the United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, and International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) and other academic research on women's political leadership. It discusses the public-private dichotomy, the importance of having women in leadership roles, and avenues for women's political leadership.

This chapter provides an overview of women in national parliaments and regional parliamentary assemblies, discusses the roles of political parties in recruiting more women to leadership roles, and assesses the impact of electoral systems on women's representation in positions of power and gender quotas as a measure of increasing women's numbers in leadership positions. Subsequently, the chapter presents a case study of India that has the world's largest number of elected women in local governments but ranks as low as 97th regarding women's representation in parliament. Future directions for increasing the number of women in leadership roles are then presented. Finally, this chapter ends with a summary and conclusions section and a list of further readings and online resources that offer in-depth knowledge on this topic.

### Women's Political Leadership

#### Rationale of Having Women in Leadership Roles

Leadership roles offer a person an opportunity for maximizing one's potential. These are the roles where a person can stretch oneself to perform at her or his best. Women constitute half of humankind. If they are not equally represented in leadership positions, it is unfair and unnatural. Women's equal representation at every level of decision making would make our democracies more legitimate and fair. Although many countries have enacted or passed laws guaranteeing equal civil and political rights for women and men, most nations have patriarchal systems that do not allow women to exercise these rights. This is reflected in the relative absence of women from power structures and leadership positions.

Socialization and negative stereotyping of women reinforces the idea that politics is the preserve of men. Women's low representation in leadership roles undermines their rights and also the sanctity of their equal citizenship rights. It also questions the legitimacy of democracies that continue to exclude women from leadership positions. The shortfall of women may also have serious consequences for political agendas and for the articulation of women's interests. Furthermore, the underrepresentation of women in positions of power influences how they are perceived by society. The perception about women as a powerless category gets translated into actions that lead to gender-based violence and perpetuates the subjugation of women.

Leadership opportunities available to women in the field of politics include heads of state or governments,

ministers, presiding officers of national legislatures, members of Parliament (MPs), elected officers, and leaders of political parties. These opportunities are available on the local, state, national, and international levels. On the international level, the regional parliamentary assemblies—such as the European Parliament and the Central American Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the United Nations—are among other avenues available to women for assuming leadership roles.

### **International Discourse on Women and Decision Making**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) emphasizes the right of an individual to take part in the government of her or his country. Equal participation of women and men in public life is one of the cornerstones of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (adopted in 1979). The UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 adopted the Beijing Platform for Action that identified inequality between women and men in power and decision making and insufficient mechanisms for the advancement of women as critical areas of concern. It concludes that “discriminatory attitudes and practices” and unequal power relations lead to the underrepresentation of women in political decision making. The Universal Declaration on Democracy (1997) upholds this principle: “The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences” (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1997, para. 4). The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security emphasizes the need for greater representation of women in negotiating peace. The Millennium Development Goals 2000 identified the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments as a key indicator for measuring women's empowerment.

Organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and regional organizations have also facilitated women's political empowerment by training women candidates, providing tools for electoral reforms and by working with political parties. In October 2005, women were 16% of parliamentarians worldwide.

### **Women as Executives**

The top leadership positions in politics are that of head of the state and head of government. These include the posts of the prime minister, president, chancellor, queen and/or the governor general.

### **Women Heads of State and Government**

The queen, grand duchess, and the governor-general are not elected positions. So far, the Netherlands, Tonga,

Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Cambodia, Lesotho, Denmark, and Swaziland have had queens or grand duchesses. Belize, Canada, Barbados, New Zealand, Saint Lucia, and Bahamas have had women governor generals.

Her Royal Highness Charlotte was the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg from 1919 to 1964. Tonga's Queen Salote was the ruler of Tonga from 1918 until her death in 1965. Her Majesty Queen Zein al-Sharaf of Jordan successfully filled a constitutional vacuum after the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951. She took part in the writing of the 1952 Constitution, which gave full rights to women. Her Majesty Somdetch Pra Nang Chao Sirikit Phra Baromma Rajini Nath of Thailand took the oath as regent before the National Assembly in 1956, as her husband, King Bhumibol, retired to do the traditional Buddhist studies. Queen Juliana was the queen of the Netherlands from 1948 to 1980. She abdicated in favor of her oldest of four daughters, Beatrix. Her Majesty Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard has been the queen of the Netherlands since 1980. Her Majesty Margrethe II has been the queen of Denmark since 1972, and since February 6, 1952, Queen Elizabeth II has been the head of state of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms (Christensen, n.d.b). She has reigned for more than 58 years, the longest period enjoyed by any head of the state or government in the 20th century. As head of state, Queen Elizabeth II undertakes constitutional and representational duties that have developed over 1,000 years of British history.

Prime ministers and presidents are elected positions. They represent heads of government and heads of state, respectively. More than 30 countries have had a woman prime minister at some point in time (Christensen, n.d.a).

As of January 1, 2010, there are nine women heads of the state out of 151 (6%) and 11 heads of the government out of 192 (5.7%; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2010, February). Sri Lanka and India have had women prime ministers as well as women presidents. Bangladesh is unique because since 1991 it has alternated between two women leaders: one as the prime minister and the other as the leader of opposition.

### **Women Ministers**

As of January 1, 2010, there are 1,056 women ministers in 188 countries. It must be noted that 292 of these (27.6%) are concentrated in the portfolios dealing with family affairs, women's affairs, social welfare, and education, and only 11 (1%) are entrusted with defense and 24 (2.27%) with finance. Four countries have more than 50% women as ministers. Finland tops the list with 63.2%, followed by Cape Verde (53.3%), Spain (52.9%), and Norway (52.6%). There are 30 countries with more than 30% women ministers. At the other end, 16 countries have no women ministers: These include the Bahamas, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Comoros, Guatemala, Hungary,



Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nauru, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2010). The United States, with its 33%, is unique because this critical mass in the government has been achieved without any voluntary quotas or legislated gender quotas in politics.

## The Global Scenario of Women in Parliaments

The parliament is the highest law-making organ of a democratic government. Membership in parliament gives one an opportunity to represent the people on the national level. As of January 1, 2010, there are 187 existing parliaments, 76 of which have two chambers.

### Historical Trends

Table 31.1 shows that women's representation in the lower houses of parliaments has gradually increased from barely 3% in 1945 to 19.1% in 2010. It is the highest representation so far.

As Table 31.1 shows, from 1945 to 1955 a growth of 150% occurred from 3% to 7.5%. The number of parliaments also has increased from 26 to 61 (134%) during this period. The year 1975 marked the UN First World Conference on Women in Mexico City. During the 34 years since then, the number of parliaments increased from 115 to 188 (63.47%) and women's representation increased from 10.9% to 19.1%, an increase of 75.22%. Even if the current growth in women's representation continues, the Inter-Parliamentary Union projects that it will not be until 2025 that an average of 30% women in parliaments will be reached and not until 2040 that gender parity will be achieved. As of February 2010, 25 countries have reached the mark of 30% women's representation and only Rwanda has crossed the mark of 50% (56.3% in September 2008 elections), constituting a women's majority in the parliament. However, since this is a very recent development, it is too early to conclude whether this leads to more gender-just legislation.

	1945	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995	2000	2005	2-28-2010
Number of parliaments	26	61	94	115	136	176	177	187	186
% Women representatives (lower house or unicameral)	3.0	7.5	8.1	10.9	12.0	11.6	13.4	16.2	19.1
% Women representatives (upper house)	2.2	7.7	9.3	10.5	12.7	9.4	10.7	14.8	17.9

**Table 31.1** Women in National Parliaments, 1945–2010

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Accessed April 8, 2009, at <http://www.ipu.org/wmne/worldl.htm> and <http://www.ipu.org/English/surveys.htm#45-05>.

## Regional Trends

Regional variations in women's representation are very striking. As of February 28, the Nordic countries have the highest representation of women in parliament at 42.1%. Sweden has always remained the top performer in the region. It now has 46.4% women in parliament. Until the emergence of the newly reconstructed Rwanda in 2003, Sweden historically has had the world's highest representation of women in parliament. In contrast, the Arab region has had the lowest representation of women (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.c). Table 31.2 shows the regional scenario as of February 28, 2010.

Although the Arab region average of 10.1% is just over half of the global average of 19.1%, it is still 2½ times more than the 4% average of 13 years ago. Afterward, countries including Djibouti, Jordan, Iraq, Morocco, and Tunisia adopted quotas for women. This contributed to their increased representation in parliament.

### Critical Mass of Women in Parliaments

The concept of a critical mass, the notion that women will only be able to start making a difference when their numbers exceed about 30%, is a point of contention in feminist theory but is widely used by women politicians and by proponents of quotas (Dahlerup, 1988). In 1995, in only five countries did women constitute over 30% of parliament. As Table 31.3 shows, in 2010, the number of such countries with women's critical mass in their parliaments has increased to 25. There are 46 countries with women's representation ranging between 20% and 29.9% (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.a).

The Nordic countries adopted women's party quotas in 1970s. International interventions for postconflict reconstruction led to drafting of new constitutions with the inputs from the United Nations and other international agencies. These new constitutions provided for women's quotas in the national parliaments of countries

	<i>Single House or Lower House</i>	<i>Upper House or Senate</i>	<i>Both Houses Combined</i>
<b>Nordic countries</b>	42.1%	—	—
<b>Americas</b>	22.2%	21.7%	22.1%
<b>Europe-OSCE member countries</b> including Nordic countries	21.9%	19.8%	21.4%
<b>Europe-OSCE member countries</b> excluding Nordic countries	19.9%	19.8%	19.9%
<b>Asia</b>	18.7%	16.4%	18.5%
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	18.4%	20.4%	18.8%
<b>Pacific</b>	13.2%	32.6%	15.3%
<b>Arab States</b>	10.1%	7.6%	9.5%

**Table 31.2** Women in National Parliaments: Regional Averages

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union. World and regional averages. Accessed April 8, 2009, at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>.

NOTE: OSCE = Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

like Burundi, Iraq, Mozambique, Rwanda, Afghanistan, and South Africa, which reemerged from violent conflict situations. The presence of several developing countries on this list indicates that the level of development is not a decisive factor in ensuring greater representation of women.

### Parliaments Without Any Women

As of February 28, 2010, there are seven countries that do not have even a single woman in either house of parliament. These include Comoros, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu. In Tonga no woman was elected to parliament, but as one woman in Tonga was appointed to the cabinet and as cabinet ministers also sit in parliament in Tonga, there is 1 woman out of 32 members. Women do not have the right to vote in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but they are entitled to vote in the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.a).

### Women Presiding Officers of Parliament

Before 1945, Austria was the only state to elect a woman; in 1927 Austria elected a woman as the presiding officer of one of its chambers, the Bundstrat. As of February 28, 2010, there are 35 women who preside over one of the chambers of the existing 187 parliaments. This constitutes only 13% of the total 268 posts of presiding officers in these 187 parliaments (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2010).

### Regional Parliamentary Assemblies

There are two regional parliamentary assemblies that offer women an opportunity to represent their nations at the international level: the Central American Parliament and the European Parliament. As Table 31.4 shows, as of March 2010 the Central American Parliament has six constituents, that is, Panama, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras. It has 21.6% representation of women (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.c).

On the other hand, the European Parliament has a greater representation of women, at 35.2%. There were 259 women of the 736 members elected in the June 2004 elections. Finland ranks first with 61.5% women representatives. As many as 20 out of 27 constituent countries of the European Parliament have more than 30% women's representation, as shown in Table 31.5. In contrast Malta, with 5 members, does not have any woman representative in European Parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.b).

### The Role of Political Parties in Women's Leadership

Political parties are the most important channel to women's recruitment in leadership roles, whether within the party or in the parliament. They identify candidates for election and facilitate their entry into public office. To qualify for the label "democratic," parties should be inclusive and truly representative of the population they claim to represent.



Rank	Country	Lower or Single House					Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats	Women	% Women	Elections	Seats	Women	% Women	
1.	Rwanda	9 2008	80	45	56.3	10 2003	26	9	34.6	
2.	Sweden	9 2006	349	162	46.4	—	—	—	—	
3.	South Africa*	4 2009	400	178	44.5	4 2009	54	16	29.6	
4.	Cuba	1 2008	614	265	43.2	—	—	—	—	
5.	Iceland	4 2009	63	27	42.9	—	—	—	—	
6.	Netherlands	11 2006	150	63	42.0	5 2007	75	26	34.7	
7.	Finland	3 2007	200	80	40.0	—	—	—	—	
8.	Norway	9 2009	169	67	39.6	—	—	—	—	
9.	Mozambique	10 2009	250	98	39.2	—	—	—	—	
10	Angola	9 2008	220	85	38.6	—	—	—	—	
11.	Argentina	6 2009	257	99	38.5	6 2009	71	25	35.2	
12.	Belgium	6 2007	150	57	38.0	6 2007	71	29	40.8	
13.	Denmark	11 2007	179	68	38.0	—	—	—	—	
14.	Spain	3 2008	350	128	36.6	3 2008	263	81	30.8	
15.	Andorra	4 2009	28	10	35.7	—	—	—	—	
16.	New Zealand	11 2008	122	41	33.6	—	—	—	—	
17.	Nepal	4 2008	594	197	33.2	—	—	—	—	
18.	Germany	9 2009	622	204	32.8	N.A.	69	15	21.7	
19.	The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	6 2008	120	39	32.5	—	—	—	—	
20.	Ecuador	4 2009	124	40	32.3	—	—	—	—	
21.	Belarus	9 2008	110	35	31.8	7 2008	58	19	32.8	
22.	Uganda	2 2006	324	102	31.5	—	—	—	—	
23.	Burundi	7 2005	118	37	31.4	7 2005	49	16	32.7	
24.	United Republic of Tanzania	12 2005	323	99	30.7	—	—	—	—	
25.	Guyana	8 2006	70	21	30.0	—	—	—	—	

**Table 31.3** Countries With a Women's Critical Mass in National Parliaments

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Accessed April 8, 2009, at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

\*The figures on the distribution of seats do not include the 36 special rotating delegates appointed on an ad hoc basis, and all percentages given are therefore calculated on the basis of the 54 permanent seats.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Nicaragua	21	7	33.3
El Salvador	20	6	30.3
Honduras	21	5	23.8
Panama	12	2	16.7
Dominican Republic	22	3	13.6
Guatemala	20	2	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21.6</b>

**Table 31.4** Women's Representation in Central American Parliaments

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Accessed April 8, 2009, at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/regions.htm>.

Political parties in Nordic countries have set the best example of initiating voluntary party quotas.

### Candidate Selection

Candidate selection is the most crucial stage in women's path toward leadership roles. This process varies from country to country, depending upon the electoral system as well as the political region. Even within any given country, it varies from party to party. Parties evaluate aspiring women candidates on the basis of elective merit. This includes the track record in the party organization, recognition within party ranks as well as outside, visibility, and the support base that the aspirant has nurtured over the years. Family background counts a lot toward one's elective merit, especially if one hails from a political family. On most of these counts, an average male aspirant scores higher than an average woman aspirant. Women typically have fewer resources, their professional networks are limited, they enjoy less power of patronage, and they have a limited nuisance value compared to a male aspirant in a comparable position. That is, if a woman is denied candidature by the party, she is less likely to contest the election as an independent candidate or harm the chances of success of the official nominee or the interests of the political party. This puts women at a disadvantage in relation to their male counterparts during candidate selection.

### Challenges for Women

Women find it very difficult to break into the inner circle of power that plays a decisive role in the nomination process. An average woman activist is less available to the party organization as compared to an average male activist. For her, party activities are a double burden, or in

<i>Country</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Finland	13	8	61.5
Sweden	18	10	55.6
Estonia	6	3	50.0
Netherlands	25	12	48.0
Bulgaria	17	8	47.1
Denmark	13	6	46.2
France	72	32	44.4
Austria	17	7	41.2
Slovakia	13	5	38.5
Latvia	8	3	37.5
Germany	99	37	37.4
Belgium	22	8	36.4
Hungary	22	8	36.4
Portugal	22	8	36.4
Romania	33	12	36.4
Spain	50	18	36.0
Cyprus	6	2	33.3
Luxembourg	6	2	33.3
United Kingdom	72	24	33.3
Greece	22	7	31.8
Slovenia	7	2	28.6
Ireland	12	3	25.0
Lithuania	12	3	25.0
Italy	72	16	22.2
Poland	50	11	22.0
Czech Republic	22	4	18.2
Malta	5	0	0

**Table 31.5** Women's Representation in European Parliaments

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Accessed April 8, 2009, at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/regions.htm>.

case of a professionally active woman, even a triple burden, in addition to her domestic and professional obligations. Many party activities are rarely woman-friendly. The timing of meetings, distances to be traveled to participate, and lack of mobility and scarcity of resources are factors that severely limit a woman from participating in party activities to the fullest extent. Even when they participate, they may be in a hurry to get back home, which society has defined as their primary calling. On the other hand, men often can afford to keep lingering before or after any formal event. This enables them to develop informal networks with party colleagues and leaders—the



networks that become a valuable asset in the process of candidate selection.

### **Institutionalization of Selection Process**

If there are no clearly written party rules that ensure women's representation in party positions as well as among candidates, women may not be adequately represented within the party or in elective offices. In the absence of institutionalization, the nomination process is dominated by leaders of party factions. Patronage, loyalty, and patriarchy influence the selection of candidates. Within weak party organizations with unclear rules of recruitment, decisions are made by a limited number of elites, typically men. Women are usually excluded from these circles; if they are there, they may not have a decisive influence on the decisions. This may work against a genuine woman activist seeking nomination as a candidate.

### **Women's Wing**

Often women remain confined to the women's wing of their party. When they do get a position, it is usually as one among several vice presidents or one of the half a dozen joint secretaries and very rarely as the general secretary or the president. The leaders of a women's wing, however, stand a better chance of representation on candidate selection committees.

Parties should conduct gender sensitization programs for male workers in order to generate awareness about the importance of women's role in the public sphere and the constraints they face in patriarchal societies. Political parties should provide voluntary party quotas. They should adopt women-friendly functioning styles, where the activities would be planned in ways that encourage women to participate.

### **Gender Quotas: Fast Track to Women's Leadership**

Electoral quotas for women are a form of affirmative action aimed at rectifying the unjust underrepresentation of women. They guarantee that a certain number of women will be represented in the elected offices or legislative bodies. Quotas may be provided by constitutions or by legislation, or they may be voluntarily adopted by political parties. They represent the "fast track" to equal representation of women in politics in contrast with the "incremental track."

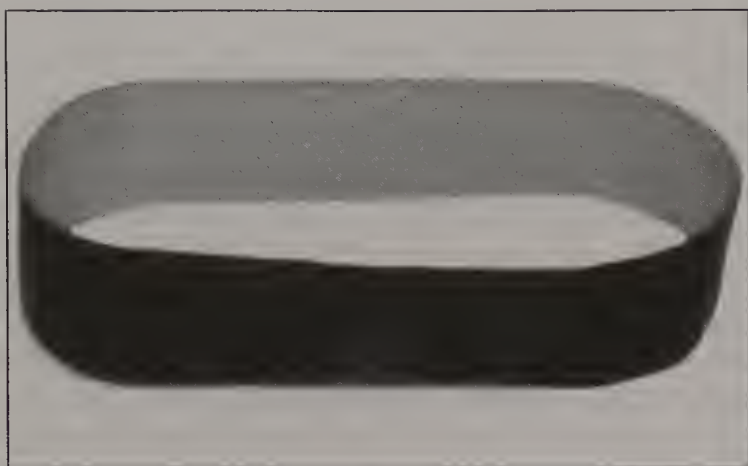
The Nordic countries represent the incremental model. There, the party quotas are voluntary, and they were introduced when women already constituted nearly 20% to 30% in these parliaments (Dahlerup, 2006). Denmark, Norway, and Sweden attained 30% of women's representation nearly 70 years after women obtained the right to vote. Although some quota laws appeared as early as the 1930s, most quotas prior to the 1990s were adopted voluntarily by political parties (Krook, 2009).

Gender quotas mark a shift from the focus on equality of opportunity to equality of results. Currently there are more than 100 countries that have some kind of gender quota. There are regional variations in gender quotas. In Latin America the preferred type is candidate quotas enacted by law. Reserved seats are most popular in the Arab region, South Asia, and, to a certain extent, Africa. Nordic countries prefer voluntary party quotas. There are clear links between the electoral system and the preferred quota types. Party quotas are implemented in the system of proportional representation, whereas the majoritarian systems prefer reserved seats (Dahlerup, 2006). The electoral system where the candidate securing the largest number of votes gets elected irrespective of the percentage of votes gained is called the majoritarian system or the "first past the post" system. Such systems prove to be less conducive for women's representation. These systems increase the risk, or at least the risk perception, of political parties, were they to nominate a woman as the candidate. Countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Rwanda, emerging out of conflict situations, have managed to increase women's representation during the reconstruction phase.

Out of the 25 countries with over 30% women in parliaments, more than 16 have a system of proportional representation. Although proportional representation is conducive for women's representation, if the parties have "open lists," where the voters can change the sequence of candidates on the list, it is likely to result in pushing down the rank of women candidates, thereby reducing their chances of success. In case of "closed lists," voters simply vote for the parties and cannot change the sequence or ranks of candidates on the party lists. In closed lists, women with high ranking are certain to get elected. Even in the case of closed lists, if women are given lower ranking, their chances of getting elected are remote. To ensure women candidates are given a higher rank, political parties have resorted to "zipper" policies, where the party places women and men in alternate positions on the list right from the top rank.

### **Public Sphere Versus Private Sphere**

Patriarchy, or the culture of male dominance, assigns different responsibilities to women and men in the public and private spheres. Women's primary responsibilities are defined to be in the private sphere. This restricts women's participation in the public sphere and also poses a conflict between the two. Whenever a woman wants to assert her role as a citizen, there is a conflict with her role as a homemaker. There is a perennial conflict, if a woman tries to play crucial roles in both the spheres. For her, both the roles are equally demanding. Her physical presence is required in both spheres at the same time. Figure 31.1 represents the public-private dichotomy experienced by a woman. A woman is confined to the private sphere shown in the gray. No matter how hard she tries, she cannot come to the outer black surface, which represents the public sphere.



**Figure 31.1** Public Versus Private Dichotomy for Women Under Patriarchy

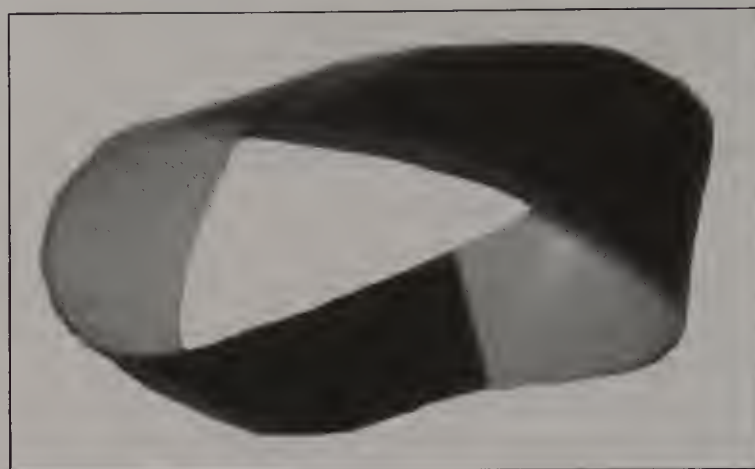
SOURCE: Concept by Medha Nanivadekar.

A man's primary commitment to the public sphere has been accepted throughout the ages. His absence from the responsibilities in the private sphere, in order to fulfill his obligations in the public sphere, is not only accepted but, at times, even glorified. A man moves smoothly between the public and private spheres. For him there is no conflict. There is no rupture. As Figure 31.2 shows, this loop represents a continuous surface that is a combination of the black and the gray. It is hard to distinguish between the inner and outer surface. There is a continuity that allows a man to glide smoothly on the black surface as well as the gray one or between the public and the private spheres. Patriarchy does not pitch the public and the private against each other in a man's life. For a woman, it does.

In many developing countries, if a woman tries to cut short some of her household chores to meet some urgent obligations in her professional life, let alone political life, she is likely to face bitter criticism. A man is rarely asked whether he intends to pursue his career after getting married. For a woman it is a routinely asked question. Her presence in the public sphere is totally at the mercy of the patriarchal dynamics that dictate her role in the private sphere. As long as a woman faces a conflict while stepping into the public sphere, she is bound to be drained even before she reaches the entry point. Moreover, the patriarchy makes each stride in the public sphere an uphill task. Institutions, political party organizations, and legislative structures contain inherent gender biases. Many women choose not to marry or choose to have children later in life, thus reducing this conflict. The challenge is of transforming the institutions, processes, and values in such a way that enables women to move freely between the private and public spheres.

### India: A Case Study of Women's Political Leadership

India presents a very interesting case for the study of women in politics. India got its independence from British colonial



**Figure 31.2** Resolution of the Conflict Between the Public and the Private

SOURCE: Concept by Medha Nanivadekar.

rule on August 15, 1947. Women had participated in India's freedom struggle in large numbers. Women constituted 10% of those jailed for anti-British activity (Swaroop, Sinha, Ghosh, & Rajput, 1994). The Constitution of independent India came in force on January 26, 1950. It guaranteed equal civil and political rights to women and men, irrespective of their race, caste, class, religion, or sex.

### Unique Features About Women and Politics in India

India has the distinction of having had a woman prime minister, as well as a woman president. Indira Gandhi was the prime minister from 1966 to 1977 and from 1980 to 1984. Pratibha Patil has been the president since 2007. India has another distinction of having several woman-headed political parties. The major parties include the Indian National Congress, led by Sonia Gandhi; the Bahujan Samaj Party, led by Mayawati; All India Anna DMK, led by Jayalalitha; the Trinamool Congress, led by Mamata Banerjee; and the Bharatiya Jana Shakti Party, led by Uma Bharati.

Sonia Gandhi, the daughter-in-law of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the widow of the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, succeeded her husband in politics after his assassination in 1991. Jayalalitha, former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, succeeded her mentor and the AIADMK leader M. G. Ramachandran. Mamata Banerjee, the Union Railway minister, is the founder of the Trinamool Congress, a breakaway faction of the Indian National Congress in West Bengal. Mayawati, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, succeeded her mentor Kanshi Ram as the leader of Bahujan Samaj Party, which has a wide support base among the Dalits (formerly untouchable castes now termed the Scheduled Castes). Uma Bharati, former chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, is the founder of Bharatiya Jana Shakti Party, a breakaway faction of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Mamata Banerjee and Uma Bharati do not owe their political stature to a privileged political family background or to an influential mentor.



The most important distinction is that India has the world's largest number of elected women representatives in local government: 1.2 million. It is more than the entire population of nearly 18 countries. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments implemented in 1993 provided 33% women's quotas by reserving the local government constituencies in rotation. Subsequently, the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh, while ruled by the National Democratic Alliance governments, provided for 50% women's quota in local governments that prompted the UPA government at the center to introduce two more constitutional amendment bills in November 2009 to increase women's local quotas from 33% to 50%. Interestingly, the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments were not the result of any persistent demand or mass mobilization by the women's movement. They were initiated by the state and came as a surprise. Parties did not have many women's members, let alone activists, to stand in these 1 million constituencies. As a result, in the initial elections, after nominating all women activists, the parties nominated the wives of those outgoing male members who were going to lose their newly woman-reserved constituencies. However, the percentage of such candidates is on the decline and thousands of women are emerging as dynamic leaders in their own right.

These amendments have empowered women from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, which are the historically underprivileged communities. These quotas have brought about a phenomenal change in Indian society. Their impact on the average Indian woman is far greater than the impact of having a woman as the prime minister. When a woman from the so-called untouchable caste gets elected as the chief of the village council, and when everybody salutes her after she hoists the national flag on Independence Day and Republic Day, its impact on the village women is unfathomable. These quotas have led to the reversal of traditional patriarchal hierarchies, at least for some of the elected women representatives where the husband or the father-in-law of a woman mayor works under her as the municipal clerk.

In India, women's quotas in local government were not something that was written afresh on a blank slate. There were various types of quotas already scribbled on it. India has a history of over 59 years of constitution-backed quotas for various sections in society. Article 334 of the Constitution of India provides for a reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and the nomination of the Anglo-Indian community in the House of the People and in the legislative assemblies of the states. In India, quotas are also applicable in admission to educational institutions and in employment in the public sector. (Nanivadekar, 2006)

### **Lack of Voluntary Party Quotas**

Barring the exception of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and, to a certain extent, the Indian National

Congress, political parties in India have not initiated any measures to ensure women's 33% representation in their organizational ranks and among the office bearers nor have they nominated more women candidates for elections to state legislative assemblies or for parliament, something they can voluntarily do. Although it is an established fact that the left parties are more likely to adopt voluntary party quotas for women, the Communist Party of India-Marxist did not have any woman in its Polit Bureau until 2005. Somnath Chatterjee, the speaker of XIV Lok Sabha (House of People) has opposed women's quota in party ranks, while claiming to be in favor of women's quota in parliament. Major left parties in India do not have a women's wing in the party organization either.

### **Controversy Over Women's Quotas in Parliament**

Globally, as of February 2010, India holds the 97th rank with its 10.8% women's representation in parliament. This is far less as compared to its neighbors, such as Nepal (33.2%), Pakistan (22.5%), and Bangladesh (18.6%; Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.a). It is a tragic paradox that India, which had 10% women among its freedom fighters in jail, took 62 years after independence to send 10% women to its parliament.

Women's quotas in local government were enacted smoothly because the MPs who enacted these quotas and the members of state legislatures who ratified them were not affected by the same. But passing the Women's Reservation Bill (108th constitutional amendment bill) would amount to a virtual political suicide for male MPs and state legislatures because in three subsequent elections each of them would be de-recruited from parliament for a 5-year term while their constituency would be reserved exclusively for women. The 14-year deadlock over the bill since 1996 is caused not by the demand for a separate quota for women from backward classes as it is made to appear but by the provision of rotational reservation that has turned the process of women's political empowerment into a zero sum game in which 181 women would get seats in parliament only by removing men from those seats.

On March 9, 2010, this bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) amid ugly scenes in the house that resulted in the suspension and then physical removal of seven members from the floor of the house. Afterward, the opponents of the bill did not allow the parliament to work until they got a firm assurance from the government that the bill would not be introduced in the lower chamber, the Lok Sabha, until their concerns were addressed. The deadlock over the bill continues.

### **Win-Win Solution for the Deadlock**

In view of the constitutional embargo on increasing the number of constituencies between now and 2026, converting all single-member constituencies in India



into dual-member constituencies to elect one male and one female representative each seems to be the win-win formula to resolve this deadlock. This would increase women's representation without reducing the number of sitting male members. The number of people represented by an average MP has increased from 0.715 million at the time of the first general elections in 1952 to 2.15 million for the 15th general elections in 2009. India's neighbors, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, have one MP per 0.515 million and 0.45 million people, respectively. For the 3½ times larger population since the first election, it is quite justifiable to double the number of representatives. The resultant increase in the expenditure should be viewed as an investment for increasing the legitimacy of Indian democracy.

### Summary and Future Directions

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The overview of the global scenario of women in politics shows that women have not yet received their due. The Nordic countries so far have done the best by implementing voluntary party quotas that have resulted in 42.1% women in the parliaments in this region. To do away with worldwide injustices sooner, the "fast track" approach of gender quotas should be adopted. Instead of turning women's political empowerment into a zero sum game, it is desirable to increase the number of positions of power while also sensitizing men to share power with women and work as equal partners in leadership roles. Women's equal representation in the political elite would transform power relationships between women and men in the private sphere as well. These changes would have far-reaching implications for rectifying social and economic inequalities. When women emerge as leaders in each field in equal numbers with men, the phenomenon will gradually transform patriarchal values that are at the root of gender-based discrimination, as well as violence such as female feticide, dowry deaths, and sexual harassment. Gender-based violence is the violence inflicted upon the powerless. In the transformed scenario, women will no longer be powerless and their voices and visions will free our societies from all forms of violence against women.

Funding support for women candidates, especially at early stages of their campaigns, could encourage women to run for election. If a campaign initially appears strong, it is easier to mobilize funds. EMILY's List, the fund for pro-choice Democratic women candidates in the United States, was started with the vision that in any campaign, "Early Money Is Like Yeast—it makes the dough rise." Women in politics need more initiatives like this to reach leadership positions in larger numbers. Limits on campaign spending and campaign contributions would level the playing field for women.

Political parties with 30% or more women in their organizational offices and parties that nominate 30%

women candidates for election should be given extra incentives such as free media time and a greater share of public campaign funds, where such funding exists. Electoral laws should be amended to make it mandatory for political parties to nominate an equal number of women and men for elections. Elected representatives must be provided with salaries commensurate to their work to enable them to perform efficiently. An all-party agenda of pursuing gender-sensitive policies may be chalked out. Elected women and as well as men should be encouraged to commit themselves to this agenda and lobby for pushing it forward within their own parties as well as in the elective bodies in which they serve as a model of bipartisan cooperation.

I also propose that the Standing Committee for Women's Development be created in all national parliaments and in state and local governments, wherein one third of the seats must be reserved for men. This quota for men is essential to establish that women's issues are not the concern of women alone. In collaboration with experts in the field, these committees can work out the implications of various governmental policies for women. President Obama, for example, ordered each of his cabinet heads to create offices to deal with women's issues and to act together for the advancement of women. His creation of the White House Council on Women and Girls is a significant step in this direction. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has created a new ambassadorship to deal with women's issues worldwide, headed by her former chief of staff, Melanne Verveer.

The process of empowerment of women envisages the kind of power that will no longer remain exploitative or dominating in character but will refer to energy and initiative. The process of empowerment should promote positive self-images of women, stimulate critical thinking, deepen their understanding of power structures, and enable women and men to envisage an alternative society totally free from inequalities and exploitation. The basic objective of the process of empowerment should be the creation of a situation wherein artificially created and externally induced measures like quotas would no longer be required and all sections of society would naturally get their due share of formal political power and representation in leadership positions.

There is an urgent need to change the perception and reality about women as a powerless category that can be taken for granted at home or outside the home. Both women and men should be sensitized that, women, simply because they are women, have suffered inequalities, subordination, and violence. Because women's subordination is not natural but socially determined, it can be eliminated. Women should have the autonomy to define the goals and strategies for changing their conditions. Both women and men should work as allies in implementing these strategies to achieve the goal of gender equality, to make society not more feminine, but more human.



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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE GLOBAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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Despite multiple pronouncements, declarations, and resolutions espousing the importance of gender balance and gender mainstreaming, the United Nations has not yet achieved these goals. The most progress has been made in recognition: whether it is human rights protection, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, or armed conflict, the United Nations, governments around the world, and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) increasingly recognize that women play an essential role in maintaining peace and security, protecting the rule of law, establishing good governance, and reducing poverty.

What is missing? The United Nations still lacks the necessary resources, will, and processes to ensure that these goals are institutionalized in every area, department, and office. There are cultural and organizational impediments within the United Nations that continue to slow the progress of women assuming leadership roles. As a result, the United Nations is not retaining and grooming future female leaders, and women remain severely underrepresented at the senior levels of the organization.

There are several layers and distinctions within the issue of women's leadership and gender in the United Nations. First, it is important to understand the terminology related to gender and women. These terms are often poorly understood or falsely conflated, which can hinder the effective implementation of gender equality policies. *Gender equality* refers to the equal enjoyment by men and women of all rights, opportunities, and resources. Historically, attention to gender

equality focused on remedying women's relative deprivation in society and aimed to achieve gender balance, meaning the participation of equal numbers of men and women in all spheres. In recent years, the international community has begun to realize that men and boys must be included to address fully the power imbalances that cause inequality. As a result, the United Nations has adopted gender mainstreaming as its strategy for achieving gender equality.

In 1997 gender mainstreaming was defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned policies and programs at all levels. Gender mainstreaming goes a step beyond gender balance by using gender analysis to analyze the power structures and relationships between different groups in society, which can keep women and men from enjoying equal opportunities. Projects aimed specifically at women's empowerment may be a part of the gender mainstreaming strategy, when evidence suggests that targeted programs are necessary to help women claim their human rights. For example, the United Nations has established women's focal points throughout the organization to examine concerns and obstacles that are particular to women. However, the overall goal of gender mainstreaming is to make the experiences of both men and women a central focus in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs in all areas.

Second, women and gender are areas of concern for the United Nations both internally and externally. The United Nations has 20 peacekeeping operations employing



110,000 personnel around the world, as well as 12 political and peacebuilding missions totaling over 3,000 in personnel.<sup>1</sup> In addition to these operations, the United Nations maintains a strong humanitarian and development presence in many countries. Gender considerations have become an important element in these field missions, and gender advisors and focal points have been established to promote gender-sensitive approaches and support women's participation among UN personnel and in local communities. Increasingly, understanding and responding to the differing needs of men and women is being viewed by the United Nations as central to the accomplishment of its mandates in these countries.

Third, gender mainstreaming requires a focus on both protection and participation, but both aspects have not always been considered in international law, policies, and programs. Women's protection needs have been recognized in human rights and humanitarian commitments for some time, although they have only recently been considered a peace and security issue. Developments in the protection of women during armed conflict emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. Earlier humanitarian law clearly prohibited certain crimes against women during war, although these provisions were meant to protect "women's honor," and sexual violence against women was not considered to be as serious as other types of wartime crimes. In the 1990s, the Rwandan genocide and the Bosnian war drew worldwide attention to the extent and severity of gender-based violence and rape and the problem of impunity for perpetrators. As a result of civil wars during this period, organizations realized that women made up the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons fleeing from conflict. The humanitarian assistance community, including UN agencies, tasked with providing aid on the ground, began gradually to address women as a particularly vulnerable group in these situations.

Although increased awareness among policymakers of the unique needs of women in conflict situations was an important development, early efforts calling for their protection often had the unintended consequence of portraying women as helpless victims. Until recently, there was less understanding of women's active role in preventing, resolving, and recovering from conflict. Since the 1990s, women have emerged as a powerful force in speaking out against violence and impunity, and they have been vocal in demanding peace, good governance, and development. In addition, women have proven to be crucial actors in the process of postconflict reconstruction, as they are often the main providers of services, reconciliation, and community building after conflict ends.

In the past decade, individual activists and international women's organizations have produced studies detailing women's contributions to different pillars of peace and security, including conflict prevention, peace negotiations, disarmament, governance, and transitional justice (Anderlini, 2007). Their work helped bring about the passage of the seminal Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 and

Security Council Resolution 1820 in 2008 (described later), which institutionalized both protection and participation as key tenets in the women, peace, and security movement. Both resolutions require reporting to the secretary-general of the United Nations on implementation and call on the United Nations and member states to take specific actions to protect women from sexual violence and support their participation in peace and security decision making.

Critics point to the absence of enforcement mechanisms as a major impediment to fully realizing these goals. These resolutions do not include punitive measures for noncompliance, and there have been no specific sanctions applied for failing to implement these commitments. However, the Security Council did cite its commitment to Resolution 1325 as one reason for creating a hybrid African Union–United Nations peacekeeping mission in Darfur, and for renewing the arms, travel, and diamonds embargo for Côte d'Ivoire.

Overall, significant progress has been made in raising awareness of the importance of gender equality and women's rights. Increasingly, policymakers are coming to realize that all issues are women's issues and that the participation of women in all aspects of decision making and policy implementation is not only ideal but is necessary for success. However, the ongoing underrepresentation of women in leadership positions suggests that this recognition does not always translate into action. Significant work remains to be done in establishing the mechanisms necessary to promote women's leadership in practice and to make gender balance a reality.

This chapter provides an overview of the current status of women's leadership opportunities in the United Nations, including the involvement and visibility of women on key international issues and conferences, the composition of UN staff, and the resources available for promoting gender mainstreaming. Subsequent sections discuss how concern for gender and women in the United Nations emerged within the framework of human rights discourse and how attention to these issues has developed through a gradual expansion into the practical areas of human rights, humanitarian relief, development, and peace and security. Recent initiatives are highlighted to show specific actions by UN agencies and departments on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. Finally, a number of recommendations address areas where progress has not yet been fully realized and identify entry points for compounding current successes.

## **Current Status of Women in Leadership in the United Nations**

The United Nations publicly has recognized the importance of attracting, retaining, and advancing women into leadership positions. Women in visible leadership positions bring important and diverse perspectives to the global problems that the United Nations addresses. At the same



time, women who serve in leadership positions also play a symbolic role, demonstrating the international community's commitment to including women's voices in decision making on critical international challenges.

Increasingly the United Nations is identifying women leaders who can help increase international understanding and build support for key issues. In recent years the United Nations has involved well-known women from a variety of sectors, fields, and countries to bring international attention to global problems. For example, the United Nations periodically designates Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors, who are accomplished artists, musicians, filmmakers, athletes, and writers, to help raise awareness of key UN issues and activities.

The UN deliberations on human rights, humanitarian, development, and peace and security issues provide forums for women to cultivate their leadership skills. Over time, civil society organizations have become increasingly powerful forces in advocating for UN action and integral partners in implementing UN mandates on the ground. Women are representing civil society organizations in UN conferences, meetings, and programs; conducting research; leading advocacy campaigns; and managing projects in the field. In many cases, global issues that affect women disproportionately, such as displacement, underdevelopment, and conflict, have provided a strong incentive for women leaders to take action. Recently, women have begun to move into previously male-dominated fields, such as peacekeeping, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and reforming the security sector. Nevertheless, women remain underrepresented in formal governmental and UN positions. For example, women permanent representatives (ambassadors) to the United Nations account for approximately 5% or 6% of the total number of diplomats in these positions.

### Female UN Personnel

In the 1990s the UN General Assembly established a goal of 50/50 gender distribution in professional posts throughout the United Nations, and this goal has repeatedly been reaffirmed by the secretary-general of the United Nations. However, women in the UN system at the professional levels remain well below 50% of the workforce. Although women are almost equally represented in some of the lower professional categories, the disparity becomes greater in upper professional levels and in management positions, where the percentage of women hovers at about 10%. At the highest levels—for example, special representatives of the secretary-general and envoys in the field—the gender imbalance is stark. At the end of 2008, only one woman, Ellen Margrethe Løj, was serving as a special representative to Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in Liberia, out of 17 of these positions in peacekeeping operations overseas.

The need for UN personnel in the field is growing exponentially, especially in the area of peacekeeping. Large numbers of UN personnel are beginning to retire or are approaching retirement age. The United Nations has a significant problem with filling and maintaining personnel in field positions. Women are not applying for UN positions in equal numbers as men, and the attrition of female personnel is higher than that of men in comparable positions.

In February 2008 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution that expressed serious concerns regarding the lack of progress in reaching the 50/50 gender balance goal and requested a report of the secretary-general on the status of women in the United Nations (UN General Assembly, 2008). The secretary-general's report from September 2008 shows only negligible improvement in the percentage of women in the professional and higher categories. The report cites a variety of reasons for the failure to achieve gender equity, including lack of accountability and enforcement of gender balance mandates; failure to retain women in the organization; a weak system of focal points for women to study and address work environment and women's advancement obstacles; and lack of support for flexible work arrangements, which continues to be a major factor in women's career choices. In addition, the report shows that the majority of UN agencies and offices do not have a gender scorecard to support gender mainstreaming, and most do not systematically collect information on staff attrition; the lack of data impedes the United Nations' understanding of why women are dropping out of the system before reaching senior leadership positions.

A variety of factors may be contributing to the slow progress on gender balance within the United Nations, including lack of political will among decision makers, cultural biases within the organization, structural and bureaucratic impediments to change, and a general lack of priority placed on recruitment and retention. However, with growing personnel requirements at the United Nations, more attention is increasingly shifting to personnel needs, especially on attracting and retaining female talent.

The issue of work-life balance may be one of the biggest impediments to women's advancement in the UN system. Although exit interviews are not being conducted on a regular basis by the United Nations when personnel resign from the organization, recent studies indicate that this is an area of concern for professional women in the UN system and that work-family balance is often the reason that women turn down senior-level positions in UN operations abroad. This has proven to be a serious problem for attracting and retaining women for peacekeeping operations; in the majority of these missions, personnel are not officially allowed to bring their families with them. Qualified women (and increasingly men) who are married, have children, or both, either turn down these opportunities or are unwilling to commit to long tours in these locations.



## Structural Organization

Responsibility for gender balance and mainstreaming is dispersed among several offices and departments of the United Nations. They include the following:

- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality.

- The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

DAW advocates the improvement of the status of women of the world and the achievement of their equality with men—as equal actors, partners, and beneficiaries of sustainable development, human rights, and peace and security.

- Office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI)

OSAGI supports and oversees the implementation of gender mainstreaming, including monitoring and reporting. The mandate covers the whole of the United Nations, and OSAGI plays a supportive and advisory role.

- The Focal Point for Women

The Focal Point monitors the status of women in the United Nations secretariat and reports on progress to the secretary-general.

- The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)

The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) is a network of gender focal points in UN entities. The network is chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. IANWGE monitors and oversees the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the programmatic, normative, and operational work of the UN system.

- United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)

UN-INSTRAW carries out research and training activities, highlighting the gender perspective as an essential element in the analysis and implementation of programs and projects aimed at achieving peace, sustainable development, and good governance.

- Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

CSW is dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. Forty-five member states of the United Nations serve as members of the commission at any one time, with one representative from each of the 45 member states elected by the Security Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution: 13 members from Africa; 11 from Asia; 9 from Latin America and the Caribbean; 8 from Western Europe and other member states, and 4 from Eastern Europe. Members are elected for a period of 4 years. Every year in late February to early March, representatives of member states gather at UN Headquarters in New York for 10 days to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards, and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

The committee watches over the progress for women in member countries to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The committee monitors the implementation of national measures to fulfill CEDAW obligations.

The current organizational structure for addressing gender and women has been criticized for overlapping mandates and insufficient funding. In recent years, advocates inside and outside the UN system have argued for a new UN agency for women, which would consolidate responsibilities and resources. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has publicly endorsed the proposal for a new agency. In July 2008 the deputy secretary-general of the United Nations sent a paper to the General Assembly that presented the following gender entity options: (a) maintaining the status quo, (b) creating an autonomous fund or program, (c) creating a department within the secretariat, or (d) creating a composite entity. In September 2009, the decision was made by the General Assembly to establish a composite body that would consolidate the mandates of the four existing UN women's agencies: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). At the request of the General Assembly, on February 2010 Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon presented a report proposing details for the new gender entity. According to the secretary-general's report, the new body will be a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, reporting through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its governance will include an executive board that will oversee its operational activities, and the United Nations anticipates that the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will play a critical role in guiding its work (World AIDS Campaign, 2010).



## Historical Evolution of Gender and Women in Leadership in the United Nations

The emergence of gender mainstreaming and gender equality concepts and policies within the United Nations can be traced from four main frameworks: human rights, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, and most recently, women, peace, and security. Since the formation of the United Nations, gender equality and women's leadership have become intertwined within these frameworks, gaining increasing visibility as a result of major conferences, conventions, resolutions, and policy directives. The linkages among women's status and human rights, humanitarian assistance, and economic development are now accepted widely within the international community, even though gaps remain in implementation.

### The Women's Human Rights Framework

Early on, women's rights were subsumed under the larger process of redefining and legitimating human rights in general. The UN Charter was signed in San Francisco in 1945 by 51 initial member states, initiating the international system of human rights protection and becoming the first international legal document to specify that these rights extended equally to men and women (United Nations, 1945). International interest in the protection of a comprehensive set of rights was further established in 1948 with the adoption by the General Assembly of *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, stating that "the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom" (United Nations, 1948).

*The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was intended to be nonbinding on signatories, but it was bolstered by a number of subsequent treaties that aimed to give it the force of law. Through the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Political Rights, a wide range of rights became codified in international law. In addition, the CSW, established by the United Nations in 1946 to promote women's rights, played an active role in raising global awareness of women's issues. The CSW identified national laws regarding the family and the political rights of women as major sources of discrimination and drafted instruments such as the Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1952 and the Convention on Consent to Marriage in 1957, which became the first international agreements to recognize and protect women's rights within the family and in the public arena.

But gender equality remained far from a reality in many aspects of the United Nations' work, and a number

of countries continued to deny women the right to vote, hold public office, own land, or participate in decision making within their own families. This resistance made clear that allusions to women's rights in general human rights treaties were insufficient to ensure that equal rights were respected in practice. While the CSW was beginning to address this problem, its initiatives remained largely confined to marriage and the family. Outside of these traditional areas, a sheer lack of data on women's status and roles in society was a significant obstacle to further progress.

Over time, new legal and practical justifications helped to garner political and social support for gender equality and women's rights. The evolution of the global women's rights movements can be mapped in the events surrounding the four World Conferences on Women. The United Nations designated 1975 International Women's Year, and organized the first World Conference on Women in Mexico City. The issues raised had such weight that International Women's Year was extended into the Decade for Women, and the decision was made to hold another conference in Copenhagen in 1980.

The first two World Conferences on Women laid a crucial foundation for future action on women's rights. In Mexico City, UN-INSTRAW and UNIFEM were established, in recognition of the fact that increased data gathering, information sharing, and public awareness regarding the issues women face were crucial components to progress toward gender equality. In Copenhagen, CEDAW was introduced as the first legally binding international document to situate women's rights within the broader human rights framework by specifically defining what constitutes discrimination against women, and obligating governments to take concrete steps to promote women's equality (United Nations, 1979). However, these gains were overshadowed by a number of issues, including the competing agendas of various groupings of nation-states, divisions within the women's groups present, and a general lack of experience with the agenda-setting process on the part of activists.

Overall, the Decade for Women proved to be a valuable period for assessment, capacity building, and organization. Through their participation in Mexico City and Copenhagen, women's organizations gained experience and formed networks to facilitate cooperation and develop constituencies around common goals. In particular, violence against women became a unifying human rights issue around which women of divergent backgrounds and ideals were able to rally. They used this heightened organization to dramatically increase the visibility of gender violence at the third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985. The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women represented new approaches to achieving gender equality, by demonstrating how violence against women is related to other issues such as development and peace. However, it became clear that gender-based violence continued to be considered a "women's concern,"



limiting the potential for linking women's rights to other agendas within the United Nations.

Two main factors contributed to overcoming this marginalization and isolation of women's issues. First, women activists produced powerful theoretical and legal arguments, providing a human rights framework for women's issues. Second, international legal mechanisms specifically linked women's rights to human rights by designating various forms of women's subordination as incompatible with human dignity. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna resulted in a declaration and platform for action which identified gender violence and any form of sexual harassment and exploitation, cultural prejudice, and human trafficking as violations of basic human rights.

The most recent World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, bore testimony to the profound changes in the conceptualization of women's rights over time. The Beijing declaration and platform elaborated an agenda for empowerment that focused on economic advancement, equal rights and access to health care and education, and violence against women, and identified 12 critical areas for action, ranging from poverty to the environment and sustainable development. The platform recognized that all issues are women's issues and that gender equality has an impact on virtually all areas relating to basic human rights.

### **Humanitarian Protection and Relief**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there was increasing recognition within the United Nations that humanitarian protection and assistance must take into account the particular needs of women. As a result of the proliferation of humanitarian emergencies, the humanitarian assistance community began to understand that vulnerable populations have different needs based on gender and that gender inequalities can influence the distribution of aid and the recovery of communities. The international community began to identify women as the majority of displaced and refugee populations created by violent conflict or natural disasters and to recognize the disproportionate burdens and vulnerabilities that women face in the wake of these emergencies. These include increased vulnerability to human trafficking, as displaced women are forced to find alternative means of survival, and the alarming rate of gender-based violence that is perpetrated against female refugees and internally displaced persons.

Although earlier human rights and humanitarian law conventions addressed the protection and equality of women, many of the specific policy commitments and guidance regarding gender mainstreaming in humanitarian operations were articulated beginning in the late 1980s. In 1989, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is the lead UN agency on refugee protection, established a senior position for refugee women (later transforming it to a position that addressed both refugee women and gender equality), regional advisors, and gender focal

points in countries where the UNHCR was operating. The UNHCR formally recognized the need to provide specific protections for women refugees in 1991, with the publication of its *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women*. In 1998, the UN Economic and Social Council requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to ensure the integration of a gender perspective into humanitarian activities and policies (ECOSOC, 1998). In 1999 the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) issued the Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance. The IASC includes the Food and Agriculture Organization, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Children's Fund, UN Development Programme, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, World Food Programme, and World Health Organization, as well as international NGOs that are involved in humanitarian relief activities. The policy statement articulated the differentiated impact of humanitarian emergencies on men and women, the violations of women's human rights, and women's distinct health and reproductive needs. The statement also reiterated the UN commitment to gender equality and women's participation (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 1999). That same year, the United Nations issued Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex and recognized the special needs of women who are displaced. In 2003, ECOSOC passed a resolution on integrating a gender perspective in the planning, programming, and implementation of humanitarian assistance, formalizing previous guidelines into a systemwide strategy.

UN humanitarian agencies, such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), have recognized that gender perspectives are crucial to their programs for a variety of reasons, including that women and men can be vulnerable in different ways, their roles within the family can change during crises, and the way that assistance is provided can affect power dynamics and relationships (OCHA, 2004). In sum, identifying and addressing the gender dimensions of humanitarian crises can assist agencies and organizations in understanding the situation on the ground, the needs of the population, and ways to provide relief more efficiently.

In recent years NGOs have continued to advocate for improvements in gender mainstreaming, including engaging women in all aspects of programming, designing camps to protect women and girls, including women in camp leadership, ensuring separate facilities for men and women and that the nutritional and health needs of women are met, including women as eligible recipients of reintegration programs, and instituting protection programs for displaced women and girls. In 2006 the IASC issued a gender handbook to address remaining gaps in gender mainstreaming in field operations. In June 2008 the IASC issued the Gender Equality Policy Statement, reiterating the IASC commitment to gender equality and specifically calling for gender equality programming in humanitarian operations through gender mainstreaming across all sectors,



empowerment of women and girls, human rights-based programming, prevention and response to gender-based violence, targeted actions based on gender analysis, mechanisms to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian personnel, and promotion of gender balance in the workplace.

UN agencies with responsibility for humanitarian components in the United Nations have further modified their guidance in recent years in response to lessons learned in the field. For example, in 2008 the UNHCR produced a revised strategy for protecting the rights of refugee women in the *UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls*. The handbook specifically addresses the human rights abuses experienced by refugee women and identifies sexual and gender-based violence as a defining characteristic of contemporary humanitarian emergencies.

### Women, Gender, and Development

The development industry emerged to meet the needs of countries undergoing transitions to independence or democratic governance between World War II and the end of the cold war, and early projects and policies tended to focus on economic growth. Development was generally viewed as a gender-neutral policy area. As a result, programs and policies rarely looked specifically at women's issues, with the exception of limited initiatives aimed at improving maternal health or reducing fertility.

The emergence of the global women's rights movements in the 1960s and 1970s brought with it closer scrutiny of the patterns of discrimination against women in all areas, including development. Women's rights activists challenged the assumption that women would automatically benefit from a trickle-down effect of economic growth and demonstrated that development policies of the time were in fact worsening the position of women. For example, evidence showed that women were responsible for the majority of subsistence agriculture in many countries, yet because this work was unpaid and not included in economic calculations, it was overlooked in standard prescriptions for development. This had the adverse effect of depriving women of their traditional and central role in agricultural labor, often making it more difficult and time consuming to provide for basic needs.

During the 1970s, a number of women's organizations began to support the belief that exclusion from the formal marketplace was the root cause of women's subordination. The "women in development" movement called for the integration of women into the market economy, mainly through income-generating projects designed specifically for women. During the UN-sponsored World Conferences on Women advocates provided compelling evidence that women were not just passive beneficiaries of development in the form of health and social policies, but were active contributors to economic development. In failing to draw on women's productive roles, development agencies were using resources in an inefficient way.

The argument proved to be a powerful one, and the number of programs designed specifically for women vastly increased. Development agencies sought to empower women by building their organizational and advocacy skills at the local level, while micro-credit initiatives specifically for women aimed to improve their productive capacity. In addition, the argument made at the World Conference on Women in Nairobi and in other forums—that is, that discrimination against women is also a development issue—helped to give women's role in development a higher profile in policy discourse. The women in development movement was able to use this international legitimacy to ensure that women's issues were included in all areas of development, demonstrating the role of women in increasing food security, improving child welfare, and reducing poverty.

On the surface, ending women's subordination in the development arena seemed to provide a common goal around which a unified platform for action could be developed. However, a number of organizations and activists questioned the strategies advocated by the women in development movement. Others felt that it focused too exclusively on remedying women's subordination through targeted programs and ignored the role gender relations play in creating subordination.

These critiques led to the emergence of the "gender and development" perspective, which is generally regarded as the predominant approach today. This approach focuses more closely on how gender norms affect men's and women's place in society, and proponents of this approach try to show how gender inequality is constructed at multiple levels: in the home, state, community, and the market. Adherents to this view favor gender analysis as the best means of identifying and understanding subordination, and their advocacy contributed to the development of measures that have vastly improved the quality and quantity of data on gender issues. In particular, the gender-related development index (GDI) and the gender empowerment measure (GEM) have proved invaluable in assessing how countries compare to one another on quality of life indicators and for measuring women's power in terms of their share of national income and labor force participation.

The gender and development approach also drew on the insights of a number of feminist scholars who argued that flawed policies were the result of women's exclusion from policy discourse. This call for increased participation and empowerment was recognized in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which called for the integration of gender into all development projects. To attain this goal, the strategy of gender mainstreaming was introduced, calling for the experiences, perceptions, and interests of both men and women to be considered at every stage of decision making and planning.

In September 2000, the largest gathering of world leaders in history convened at UN Headquarters in New York to ratify the Millennium Declaration, reaffirming their commitment to the protection of human rights as outlined in the UN Charter. These leaders also pledged their nations to the



attainment of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with 18 specific targets to be achieved by the year 2015. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is the third goal, with the targets of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education, increasing the number of women in wage employment in nonagricultural sectors, and raising the proportion of seats in national parliaments held by women. Following a UN-sponsored summit held in September 2005 to evaluate progress on the MDGs, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan issued a report calling for new strategies for achieving the goals, as many countries were not on track to meet the targets (UN General Assembly, 2005). Following the release of this report, civil society organizations were solicited for input on potential policy changes. International women's organizations, as well as development agencies, used this opportunity to highlight the fact that each of the MDGs impacted women, making gender equality a cross-cutting issue vital to the attainment of any of the targets.

Many UN entities have worked to accelerate progress toward the MDGs by helping member states identify and respond to the gender dimensions of development. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UNIFEM are examples of agencies that are playing a central role in developing and coordinating innovative gender and development strategies. UNDP provides vital assistance to member states in developing gender-sensitive national-level plans in areas such as democratic governance, poverty reduction, the environment, and crisis prevention. UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy for 2008–2011 explicitly holds all staff accountable for contributing to gender equality outcomes, promotes information sharing among UN entities on best practices, and calls for extensive training initiatives to maximize understanding of the gender equality mandate. In addition, the strategy requires each UNDP country office to establish gender focal points and a Gender Action Plan that tailors the Gender Equality Strategy 2008–2011 to the local context. UNIFEM is mandated to support gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations, ensure women's involvement in these activities, and monitor progress toward gender equality and the MDGs. One of UNIFEM's primary functions is analyzing the gender and development plans of other UN entities and providing support and expertise in the design and implementation of new strategies. In addition, UNIFEM has implemented its own operational programs at the country level.

### **Women, Peace, and Security**

Although the commitments to gender equality and women's human rights were established in the early years of the United Nations, and built upon in subsequent documents and structures, these issues remained sidelined from the security realm. By the 1990s it was generally recognized that women bore the brunt of armed conflict as civilians, experiencing gender-based violence and displacement disproportionately in these situations. But the

role that women were playing in establishing security and building peace in conflict zones was relatively invisible in the United Nations. In contrast, this role was highly visible on the ground, where women at the grassroots and community levels were actively preventing the escalation of conflict, mediating among warring parties, collecting weapons, rebuilding communities, and demanding good governance.

The Beijing Platform for Action (discussed earlier) established a framework for supporting women's roles as peacebuilders in conflict situations. Chapter E on Women and Armed Conflict incorporated women's experiences in conflict, not just as victims but as agents of peace. In addition, it highlighted that women were underrepresented in postconflict decision-making roles, peacekeeping operations, and the areas of defense and foreign affairs, and called for women's participation in conflict resolution efforts. The recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action supported gender mainstreaming and increased involvement of women in multilateral negotiations and peace support operations. Thus the 1995 Beijing conference built upon the previous foundation of women's rights and women in development to establish a new women, peace, and security movement.

In 2000, at the fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, international NGOs urged the Security Council to pass a resolution on women, peace, and security. These groups partnered with the governments of Bangladesh, Namibia, and Canada, among others, to advocate for a UN Security Council resolution. In May 2000, Namibia spearheaded the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, which laid out key areas of action for achieving gender equality in UN peace support operations. The declaration included provisions on women's participation in peace negotiations; gender mainstreaming within the mission mandates and operations; a 50% target for women in leadership positions; gender specialists and units within the missions; increasing the number of women in peace operation personnel; and incorporation of gender considerations in procedures, monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms (Windhoek Declaration, 2000). As a result of consistent advocacy on the part of member states and NGOs, on October 31, 2000, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Resolution 1325 comprehensively addresses three main areas of action in conflict situations: prevention, protection, and participation. It reaffirms previous commitments on gender balance and equality; highlights the need for prevention, protection, and accountability of gender-based violence; and urges the involvement of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peace processes, and postconflict reconstruction. The resolution includes commitments to increase the leadership opportunities for women in these processes and to incorporate gender mainstreaming in UN peace and security activities. Specifically, the resolution



urges member states and the United Nations to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes and the appointment of more women as special representatives and envoys. In UN field operations, the resolution commits the United Nations to include more women personnel, especially among military observers, civilian police, and human rights and humanitarian personnel (UN Security Council, 2000).

Putting the resolution into practice has been a slow and uneven process. One of the major problems with implementation of Resolution 1325 is that it lacks enforcement and accountability provisions. Without these mechanisms, there has been little incentive among UN components and member states to take the necessary steps to fully implement these commitments. Advocates for women, peace, and security continue to argue for more accountability mechanisms to ensure that decision makers in the United Nations take the necessary steps to promote gender balance and gender mainstreaming. Some have urged the Security Council to pass a new resolution with stronger accountability provisions.

The passage of Resolution 1325 laid the groundwork for an emerging field of study, training, and advocacy focused on women, peace, and security. UN entities, member states, and NGOs have utilized the resolution as a mandate to incorporate women and gender considerations into conflict prevention, management, and peacebuilding. A group of UN member states formed the Friends of 1325 to monitor the implementation of the resolution and brought civil society and governments together as advocates on this issue. In the first years after Resolution 1325 was passed, much of the follow-up activity focused on women's participation in peace negotiations. Since then, the field has developed to include women's role in peacekeeping, governance, rule of law, demobilization and reintegration, and security sector reform.

In recent years the development of a human security framework within the international community has given additional weight to the importance of gender equality and analysis. This framework is shaped by prior international human rights treaties and draws on the notion of respect for human dignity to shift the focus of international security from nation states to individual human beings. Whereas traditional security emphasizes the ability of nation-states to protect themselves from external threats, human security is people centered and expands the scope of protection to include a broader range of threats, including environmental degradation, infectious disease, and economic deprivation. In the United Nations, the focus on human security began with the establishment of a high-level Commission on Human Security, which produced a final report in 2003. The report defined protection and empowerment as two vital and reinforcing components of human security. In 2004 the United Nations established a Human Security Unit with the mandate of integrating human security into all UN activities. Although the human

security focus on people does not automatically translate into gender sensitivity, this integrated approach to human rights, development, humanitarian protection, and security provides an ideal platform to improve the integration of gender into UN programming and to better respond to the needs and concerns of women.

## Gender and Peacekeeping

The fastest-growing area of UN peace and security work is in peacekeeping. It is also an area where women's underrepresentation and the barriers to women's engagement are apparent. Among the human rights, humanitarian, and development segments of the United Nations, recognizing and incorporating gender balance and gender mainstreaming principles preceded Resolution 1325. But the dominant political and military culture in peacekeeping has been more resistant than other UN components to incorporate women and gender as priorities. It has only been since 2000, bolstered by the Namibia Plan of Action and Resolution 1325, that these issues have received attention in peacekeeping and only very recently that they have become a core part of staffing and programming in these overseas operations.

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) began examining gender mainstreaming in 2000, and the work in this area was spearheaded by the Lessons Learned Unit in DPKO. In preparation for the *Beijing +5* review in June 2000, this unit produced a report titled "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations." The Lessons Learned Unit argued for gender equity, balance, and mainstreaming in the following areas: Security Council mandates for peacekeeping missions, planning and budgeting, knowledge of and commitment to gender mainstreaming from the leadership, recruitment mechanisms, peacekeeper training, and accountability measures to ensure that gender mainstreaming and gender balance are implemented (UN DPKO, Lessons Learned Unit, 2000).

DPKO has made structural changes to integrate gender mainstreaming into its work, specifically through the establishment of gender advisors and focal points in UN peacekeeping missions. In 2004 DPKO established a senior gender advisor position at UN Headquarters to support the work of the advisors in the field, although advocates were disappointed that the position was not at a senior management level. The gender positions in the field are responsible for assisting in the mainstreaming of gender inside and outside of the missions. For example, inside the missions, gender advisors work on increasing the number of women and on training personnel in gender issues; externally they work on such issues as preventing and combating gender-based violence, incorporating gender in governance, rule of law, and other areas of peacebuilding. As a result, gender advisors and gender focal points must be able to engage on a wide range of issues. Unfortunately,



these positions in both UN political and peacekeeping missions have been underresourced and understaffed, and those who serve in these positions have been marginalized from decision making by the leadership in some missions.

DPKO has also produced guidance for its staff at UN Headquarters and in the field to implement Resolution 1325. In July 2004 DPKO produced the Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations as a guidance document for both civilian and military peacekeeping personnel (UN DPKO, 2004). The resource package includes key gender issues in a variety of areas (including human rights, child protection, political and civil affairs, and the military, legal, and judicial systems), guidance for all stages of peacekeeping operations, and tools to assist with implementation. In November 2006, in response to Resolution 1325, DPKO issued a Policy Directive on Gender Equality in UN Peace Operations. The directive acknowledges the equal rights of women and men and their different experiences, priorities, and contributions; supports the elimination of laws, policies, and practices that are discriminatory toward women and girls in postconflict societies; and elaborates and promotes minimum standards for ensuring effective integration of gender perspectives. The directive also requires that adequate resources are made available to implement the directive and that managers monitor progress and ensure accountability for the gender equality standards (UN DPKO, 2006a).

One serious problem is sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers. In 2004 allegations of sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers emerged in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This was followed by cases of abuse in several other UN missions. Sexual abuse and exploitation by UN peacekeepers brought the issue of women's equality and gender mainstreaming to the fore, as most of the victims of abuse were local women in areas where the United Nations operates. The cases undermined the United Nations' mandate to protect civilians and maintain peace and security in these countries, while also highlighting how far the institution has to go in terms of institutionalizing commitments to gender equality in the field.

In response, the UN secretary-general appointed an adviser on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeeping personnel, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan, who released a report in March 2005 (UN General Assembly, 2005b). Subsequently, the United Nations adopted a three-pronged strategy focusing on prevention, enforcement, and remediation; established units at headquarters and in the field to monitor conduct; and continues to work with its troop-contributing countries to ensure full implementation of the recommendations in the Zeid report. Although the problem has not been eliminated, the United Nations has made it a priority to improve training, awareness-raising, and accountability for such actions. Many advocates have urged the United Nations and member states to bring more women into peacekeeping forces (military, policing, and civilian), especially in leadership roles, as a strategy to more effectively prevent sexual violence,

punish the perpetrators of such acts, and provide support to victims of abuse and exploitation in these missions. UN personnel on the ground have reported fewer incidents of abuse when more women are in these positions.

Despite this attention, within the senior levels of UN political and peacekeeping missions, women remain severely underrepresented. The underrepresentation is linked to a variety of factors, ranging from a highly political and nontransparent process to choose the leaders of these missions, to a continuing failure to attract and retain talented women at the professional levels to staff peacekeeping and political missions. One of the most cited obstacles to increasing the number of women in these operations is the inability to bring family to the majority of these peacekeeping locations. Within the military forces in these missions, women's participation is under 2%; in the policing area, women make up less than 8%. This is attributable to the fact that in the majority of troop-contributing countries, women are not adequately participating in these sectors. With the growth of UN peacekeeping operations and the increasing staffing needs, the United Nations is facing a personnel crisis. As a result, improving women's participation is no longer considered only a gender balance issue, but it is considered imperative to achieve the mandates of these missions.

In March 2006 DPKO hosted a dialogue with troop- and police-contributing countries, which focused on increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping. The participants recognized the important and positive impact that women can have on these operations and agreed on recommended actions to address the gender gap (UN DPKO, 2006b). The member states underscored the fact that the participation of women in peacekeeping is necessary for these operations, highlighting the unique contributions of women in these roles, such as the success of women in riot control, community outreach, and trust building. However, they acknowledged that stronger public information campaigns were needed to make decision makers at all levels aware of these positive contributions and to ensure that women themselves were aware of career opportunities in the armed forces or police services. The recommendations of the report outlined specific mechanisms to increase the recruitment and deployment of women, such as designing surveys to identify the barriers and opportunities for enhanced deployment, and the creation of rosters of experienced female peacekeepers who could be called on for short-term assignments.

In 2007 the first all-woman peacekeeping unit of more than 100 female Indian peacekeepers deployed to Liberia to provide policing support for the UN mission. The presence of the Indian contingent has encouraged recruitment of women into the Liberia police force and provided important support for the security of women in a country that has experienced high levels of sexual violence. A second all-woman Indian contingent deployed to Liberia in 2008. India is one of the top-10 troop-contributing countries to UN peace support operations, and its move to promote the inclusion of



women has the potential to significantly increase the percentage of women in UN police components.

Recently, DPKO and the Department of Field Support (DFS) have implemented several significant reforms that could improve the gender balance in these operations. First, in 2006 a new Senior Appointments Section was established in DFS. The section is not specifically focused on the recruitment of women but has viewed this as a key objective in identifying qualified senior-level candidates for leadership roles. For example, the section has made a commitment to ensure that there is at least one female candidate on any "short list" of candidates that is considered by the secretary-general of the United Nations. As a result of this section's efforts, the number of women in senior positions in peacekeeping increased by one third in its first year of operation. DPKO established a new outreach and recruitment unit in 2006. This unit is not devoted exclusively to improving gender balance, but it does incorporate this goal within its mandate. Gender sensitivity and gender equality goals are being incorporated into all peacekeeping position announcements, and the mechanism for collecting applications online is being revamped. DPKO is also in dialogue with countries that provide troops and police to recruit more women from those countries.

## Recent Progress

Since the passage of Resolution 1325, various reports, discussions, and evaluations have documented the progress and remaining gaps in implementation. The secretary-general of the United Nations has issued follow-up reports on implementation of the resolution in response to requests by the UN General Assembly. In 2004 the Security Council mandated the development of a systemwide action plan throughout the United Nations to implement Resolution 1325. The first UN action plan covered the period 2005–2007 and addressed such issues as conflict prevention and early warning; peacemaking and peacebuilding; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian response; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; preventing and responding to gender-based violence in armed conflict; and preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. The 2008–2009 action plan placed more emphasis on results-based programming, monitoring, and reporting, and focused on five thematic areas: prevention, protection, participation, relief, and recovery. At the governmental level, 16 member states had established national action plans on women, peace, and security by the end of 2008: Austria, Belgium, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Liberia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, Uganda, and the United Kingdom.

A number of UN entities have further integrated gender equality into their work on peacebuilding, humanitarian relief, development, and human rights work in 2008 with gender-mainstreaming strategies, including the Food

and Agriculture Organization for the United Nations, the UN Human Settlements Program, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, UNHCR, the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Organization for Migration, and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office. New programs were developed and implemented in countries to support women's participation in conflict prevention and early warning, peace processes and negotiations, peace support operations, humanitarian relief, peacebuilding, security sector reform, and protection of women from gender-based violence.

Specific UN agencies and departments have implemented gender equality into both their programming and human resources policies:

- UNDP has developed a gender and diversity scorecard to monitor gender parity and diversity and has increased women's participation to 53% of its leadership development program.
- UNESCO is developing a program for female staff to gain managerial and leadership skills and is supporting networking among female staff. UNESCO has set up programs to facilitate the employment of spouses, and it conducts exit interviews for female staff at the professional levels and above.
- UNHCR established the Special Constraints Panel to help staff balance family responsibilities with career choices.

In 2008 the Office of Human Resource Management and OSAGI began collaborating on the following initiatives:

- Development of a gender scorecard for each department and office in the UN Secretariat
- Development of a new human resource action plan with gender balance targets
- Increasing awareness and acceptance of flexible work arrangements
- Establishment of a human resource outreach unit to increase the number of women and geographic diversity in staffing

The Security Council has held a number of follow-up debates on thematic issues relating to women, peace, and security and has invited civil society organizations to brief Security Council members through a mechanism called Aria Formula meetings. Increasingly, the Security Council meets with women's groups on the ground to discuss women's participation during assessment missions abroad. In June 2008 the Security Council held a meeting on sexual violence in armed conflict and subsequently passed Security Council Resolution 1820, which recognized sexual violence during conflict as a security problem. The resolution reaffirms the dual goals of protection and participation that were mandated in Resolution 1325 and reiterates other international commitments. In Resolution 1820, the Security Council expresses deep concern with



the level and brutality of sexual violence in conflict and the continuing obstacles to women's full participation in peace processes. The resolution also requests the United Nations and member states to develop mechanisms to increase awareness, training, protection, and accountability, while highlighting the importance of consulting with women and women's organizations. The secretary-general's report on implementation of Resolution 1820 was released on July 15, 2009. The report outlines current data on sexual violence and calls on the Security Council to implement a series of recommendations to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict (UN Security Council, 2009).

## Summary and Future Directions

A number of recommendations have been offered in both UN-sponsored and NGO-directed studies. The main recommendations can be grouped into three broad categories.

*First, specific gender goals should be developed, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation should be put in place to measure progress.* All plans of action for UN entities and member states should have clear mandates and should identify benchmarks to measure progress. Such targets would enable staff to implement gender equality programs with clear end goals, thereby improving coordination and the efficient use of resources through more rapid identification of problems and best practices. Examples of gender goals include the establishment of focal points in peace and security, the development of national action plans for Resolution 1325, or a specific percentage increase in the use of gender analysis instruments.

Increased efforts should be made to monitor implementation and evaluate progress. Mandated exit interviews with staff returning from field operations are one way of identifying successful strategies as well as areas in need of improvement within specific programs. Building partnerships to facilitate communication among UN entities, member states, and NGOs is another important means of gathering information to improve the implementation of gender equality strategies. The data collected from these and other sources should inform further study and analysis on obstacles and best practices. The "complementarities process" entered into by UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNIFEM is an example of organizations working together to align their work and strategies in pursuit of gender equality results. In addition, organizations within the United Nations have demonstrated increased cooperation on implementing Resolution 1325 through participation in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women. However, these efforts must be strengthened and expanded upon to ensure the attainment of specific gender goals.

*Second, rhetorical support for gender equality must be accompanied by stronger commitment from leadership within the United Nations and member states.* The success of gender equality strategies depends in large part on the

willingness of senior decision makers to establish mechanisms for effective implementation. First, this entails the allocation of adequate resources to the issue. Politicians and heads of departments are in a position to ensure that financial resources are specifically allotted to initiatives such as the collection of gender disaggregated data and the training of staff in gender analysis techniques. Leaders should use their authority to see that gender equality policies are enforced and that the mechanisms for gender mainstreaming are used in a systematic way. To help cultivate this senior-level commitment, accountability mechanisms should be put in place for managers in achieving gender goals.

The importance of committed leadership, effective oversight, and adequate funding for gender equality programming is well documented. The UNDP attributes the success of its Gender Action Plan for 2006–2007 to the active leadership of the administrator, monitoring by a Gender Steering and Implementation Committee, and sufficient funding from its Gender Thematic Trust Fund (UN Development Programme, 2007). Similarly, the Executive Committee of UNHCR identified the appointment of a new Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women/Gender Equality as the impetus for a stronger gender equality policy within that organization in 2000 (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2001). However, these successes tend to be the result of individual initiatives, and this commitment has not yet been institutionalized into a systematic approach to gender equality.

*Finally, UN recruitment strategies and mechanisms must be improved to promote women's leadership.* The work of the United Nations requires the identification and selection of highly skilled individuals, and the composition of this leadership should serve as a positive example of equal representation to the countries in which the United Nations operates. Recent studies have shown that women who serve in senior positions bring unique experiences and highly beneficial skills to all areas of UN work. However, current recruitment processes tend to discourage women from assuming senior leadership positions. As such, concerted efforts should be made to remove obstacles to women's leadership within the United Nations.

The incorporation of work-life concerns into human resource policies is an important first step in improving the recruitment of women. Designing career track positions that allow women to enter and exit the system over a certain period of time, and the implementation of alternative work arrangements such as flex time, could help address the issue of women being forced to choose between family life and career advancement. Mentoring and professional development programs for women can be expanded as a means of reducing the self-elimination of women who feel they are not prepared or qualified to accept leadership roles. Other initiatives could include increased training and awareness-raising on gender issues among UN personnel. These efforts would help to create a more gender-sensitive organizational culture.



There is increasing recognition that achieving gender balance in the United Nations would have a positive effect on the organization and that the United Nations has a role to play in setting an example for gender equality in the countries in which it operates. Numerous commitments and policies describe the value of including women in leadership roles and mainstreaming gender perspectives into UN activities and establish actions to be taken in support of these goals. UN conventions, treaties, and resolutions have created an important foundation for women to claim rights to protection and participation. The realities on the ground in conflict and disaster affected areas, including the disproportionate effect of violence on women, have shown that gender dimensions cannot be ignored in UN operations. The peacebuilding work of women on the ground in conflict zones has convinced many policymakers and practitioners of the great potential of women's leadership for global peace and security.

Civil society advocates continue to press for support for women's participation, and increasingly, advocates can be found inside the various entities of the United Nations. Creative partnerships among civil society, the United Nations, and member states are being developed to promote women's engagement in areas ranging from elections, to policing, to postconflict reconstruction activities. Human resources are being reexamined to determine better ways to attract and retain talent, particularly female staff.

However, much of the progress remains incremental, slow, and ad hoc. The lack of women in leadership roles in the United Nations, and in peace and security roles within countries around the world, is a visible reminder of the challenges in implementing gender equality. The issue of women's leadership and participation is not yet fully integrated into the institutional culture, structure, and programs of the United Nations. Those offices that are responsible for gender and women's issues continue to be sidelined by lack of staffing and funding (both at UN Headquarters and in the field); model practices are not collected, replicated, and expanded; the various dimensions of women and gender are not fully understood among UN personnel and member states; and there are remaining pockets of peace and security work in which these issues are not addressed as priorities. The next step is to systematically include women's voices, perspectives, and leadership skills in all aspects of staffing and programming on peace and security. The United Nations, its member states, and civil society are all key actors in this process.

## Note

1. See the Web sites of the UN Department of Peacekeeping and the UN Department of Political Affairs for further information on these missions.

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**SPOTLIGHT: Melanne Verveer**

On April 6, 2009, Melanne S. Verveer was confirmed as the first U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues. Ambassador Verveer's swearing-in ceremony by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was on June 12, 2009, in the historic Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department. It was attended by more than 400 people who were there to applaud this historic choice and celebrate the importance of this position, and most importantly, they were there to pay tribute to a woman with extraordinary talent and leadership skills.

The decision to create this position of Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues is unprecedented and reflects the elevated importance of these issues in the Obama administration at the same time it reflects the tireless advocacy and leadership of Verveer herself. In her capacity as director of the Department of State's new Office of Global Women's Issues, Verveer coordinates foreign policy issues and activities relating to the political, economic, and social advancement of women across the globe. In a job that is tailor-made for her, Verveer is charged with mobilizing concrete support for women's rights and political and economic empowerment through initiatives and programs to increase women and girls' access to education and health care, end violence against women and girls, and ensure that women's rights are fully integrated in the development of U.S. foreign policy. In this capacity, she travels across the globe advocating both for the inclusion of women's rights in foreign policy and also for the women themselves, telling their stories and highlighting their lives.

Verveer's career has spanned numerous sectors in Washington, D.C., and reflects the multifaceted nature of her advocacy both in Washington, D.C., and across the globe. Immediately prior to her appointment as ambassador-at-large, Verveer was chair and co-CEO of the Vital Voices Global Partnership, an international nonprofit organization she cofounded in June 2000. Vital Voices invests in women leaders across the globe and grew out of the U.S. government's successful *Vital Voices Democracy Initiative*, which was established in 1995 by then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing to promote the advancement of women as a U.S. foreign policy goal. Before her role at Vital Voices, Verveer served in the Clinton White House as chief of staff to First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and was Clinton's top aide on international issues to advance women's rights across the globe. She also led the effort to establish the President's Interagency Council on Women. Prior to her service in the White House, Verveer served in a variety of roles in public policy organizations and as a legislative staff person on Capitol Hill.

Verveer's leadership qualities can be summarized quite simply: She has the ability to get others willingly to follow her. In short, she embodies the qualities that make a leader. She has vision and values, with a clear picture of where to go and a firm grasp of what success looks like and how to achieve that success. She clearly communicates that vision to others with a style that brings people along and engages them in the cause. She has passion, strength of character, and tremendous integrity. She is creative, has the ability to think differently, and looks for uncommon solutions to problems as well as uncommon allies and partners. She is magnanimous, giving credit where credit is due. She is persistent and dedicated, spending whatever time or energy is necessary to accomplish the task at hand and setting an example for others.

Verveer's career reflects these values and every conversation about her and her work touches on them. At her swearing-in, Secretary of State Clinton encapsulated these qualities:

Melanne is most famous for the unwavering passion she brings to her causes. And for the last 15 years, that cause has been women and girls; their rights, their opportunities, their central importance to the future of our world's progress and prosperity. The absolute commitment she has always shown to giving voice to the voiceless, and making sure that the stories of everyday heroes and heroines would be known to a broader audience. She helped to launch the Vital Voices Democracy Initiative [within the U.S. government] more than a decade ago, and she nurtured it and helped it to grow into what it is today. In the past eight years, she turned a government program into a global NGO, and the results of that work are ones that I encounter everywhere I travel on behalf of the United States. And she particularly helped to lead our commitment to end the intolerable scourge, the global crime of human trafficking. So I was pretty lucky that Melanne was willing to accept this nomination to be our first ever ambassador on behalf on the issues and the causes and the women and girls that she has worked for for so many years. She's exactly the kind of diplomat that we need in the 21st century to exercise what we call smart power. . . . But she will, once again, be the vital voice to make sure that the concerns of women and girls remain central to the American foreign policy agenda. (Clinton, 2009, paras. 6–8)

Mary Daley Yerrick, a Republican, who cofounded and cochaired Vital Voices with Verveer, emphasized that Verveer "is a great leader in large part because she is an outstanding communicator. She has the inherent ability to frame an issue in a clear, concise and compelling manner" (Yerrick, 2009). Similarly, Baroness Mary Goudie, a member of the British House of Lords who served on the board of Vital Voices with Verveer summed it up:



She has a strong sense of mission and sees long term goals. She is clear on objectives and what she wants from people. She brings people together, and builds a team with skills to complement her own. Finally, I find her one of the most enjoyable people to work with. She can laugh and makes this work fun. (Goudie, 2009, n.p.)

Her work with Vital Voices reflects her skills and abilities to bring people together to lift others up. After 8 years of hard work, Vital Voices is now an international nonprofit organization that invests in emerging women leaders who are advancing economic, political, and social progress in their countries. Vital Voices has built a network of more than 7,000 women in 127 countries, providing these women and their communities with credibility, skills, and networks to build better lives. The stature of Vital Voices and its work is to a large degree due to Verveer's ability to bring people together around a common goal. The current president and CEO of Vital Voices, Alyse Nelson, who began working with Verveer while Vital Voices was a government program explains, Verveer "seeks power to empower others and she really motivates people because she is working just as hard—if not harder—than you are working" (Nelson, 2009, n.p.).

While Verveer's portfolio is focused on what some call "women's issues," she has an innate understanding that these issues reach every single person across the globe. She has the ability to frame issues broadly and engage women and men to recognize that issues commonly classified or characterized as "women's" issues really are issues that concern everyone. Often these issues have been seen as the purview of women's right activists.

Verveer understands the importance of involving women from the corporate and business spheres in the cause of women's rights across the globe. Bringing these women's talents and networks to bear on the challenges facing women across the globe has broadened the circle of engagement and brought new champions to the table.

She sees the fundamental obstacles for women and understands the power of bringing visibility and focus from all parts of the world to give women the confidence to rise up and achieve their potential. [Verveer] also knows the power of inspiring individuals with resources by giving visibility to women facing challenges. She knows how to make this critical connection. This motivates those with resources to join the cause to help as they are inspired as [Verveer] often shares the women's stories to make her points. These resources and this focus give the women the knowledge, tools, relationships and most of all confidence to do more . . . to pay it forward. (Brooke, 2009, n.p.)

Verveer also sees men as allies in her work. For example, in her work to combat human trafficking, she has sought out men in law enforcement as well as human rights advocates, again to widen the circle of those able to influence the process and politics, with the aim of protecting women and raising awareness of this horrible scourge. As one of her male colleagues says, Verveer understands that this problem

will not be solved working apart from men. She reaches out to engage the participation of men in addressing these issues. An example of this inclusiveness is her work on human trafficking. This has often been identified as a "women's issue." At times this was an attempt to marginalize and limit responses to the problem. However, the problem impacts us all—men, women, children, families, communities and nations—and [Ambassador Verveer] has sought a level of involvement reflecting the full breadth of the issue itself. (Warnath, 2009, n.p.)

As she herself says, "I think that the more ownership of the issue you have, the more that you get things done" (Verveer, 2009, n.p.).

Verveer's interest in foreign policy and international issues stems from her personal background. She is of Ukrainian decent, and both her grandparents immigrated to the United States at the turn of the 20th century. They settled in Pennsylvania and imbued in their family the traditions and culture of Ukraine, as well as the language and history of the country. While she was growing up, Ukraine did not exist as a separate country (it was part of the former Soviet Union). Ukraine was a special place to Verveer:

Being Ukrainian was a very important part of my life, being a Ukrainian-American. . . . I went to a Ukrainian grammar school, a Ukrainian high school. . . . In school we sang the American national anthem. And then we sang [the Ukrainian national anthem]. And we learned all the time about what was happening in our ancestral homeland and how difficult the situation was for the people there. And every effort was made—certainly there was lot of praying—but there were a lot of other efforts made to provide support in very, very difficult times. (Gongadze & Baydyuk, 2009, para. 9)

(Continued)

(Continued)

Verveer says that her passion and vision come from the way she was raised, in a family that worked hard and embodied what America is about. Her father was very community oriented and taught her about the critical difference that each person can make, regardless of his or her background. She sums up this lesson by quoting a famous line by Bobby Kennedy, "There are those who look at things the way they are, and ask why . . . I dream of things that never were and ask why not."

Being raised in an ethnic household was important. It made her conscious of the world around her and the fact that there were people living across the world in difficult circumstances, some under the Soviet Union. Her father was a postmaster, who helped people ship packages to what were then countries in the Soviet bloc. When she asked him about it, he said that these people lived in difficult circumstances and needed help. From all of this, she learned "the importance of political activism, internationalism, compassion and that everyone has a role to play. I also learned to appreciate different cultures and differences between people. I always had sensitivity and respect of culture and the unique contribution each group makes to the world" (Verveer, 2009, n.p.).

This background spurred her interest in events happening across the globe. She grew up reading the newspaper and listening to radio, and at school, she started a civics club, and subscribed to *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *Congressional Record*. She went on a field trip to Washington, D.C., her junior year and decided to attend Georgetown University, from where she later graduated. She also met two people at Georgetown who would have a large impact on her life: her husband, Phil Verveer, now a deputy assistant secretary of state carrying the rank of ambassador, and Bill Clinton.

Verveer translated her family's personal story into policy, advocating throughout her career to make a difference. Critical to her ability to lead diverse groups is the firm belief that bringing people together to find common ground is more likely to bring concrete and real change and that having a wider circle makes your work more effective. Her clear focus is on results, finding common ground and understanding through which one can find agreement in unlikely places. As she says,

I am for making tangible progress forward. One of the most important lessons is that we should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. We have to chisel out progress, common ground and not stay in our opposing corners. Another one of my favorite phrases in politics is "no permanent friends, no permanent enemies." As a Democrat, I do not assume that all Republicans disagree with an idea or won't join me. There may be one issue where we can work together today—and then not work together again for a while. There is much progress to be made when we cross party lines. Here in the US, for example, we have made great progress in issues like Title IX and women's health, with women coming across the aisle. (Verveer, 2009, n.p.)

Verveer has a talent for using her broad policy expertise, both foreign and domestic, to forge connections across these lines. For example, a great deal of her work in Washington, D.C., has focused on domestic issues, and she is able to use lessons learned from that work to inform her work across the globe and see how those lessons can be applied to help advance women's rights across the globe.

In short, Verveer embodies what real leaders are: people who understand that we all want to make a difference and need a vision of how to play a part in making that difference.

—Stephenie Foster, American Legacy Foundation

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## WOMEN AS PRESIDENTS, PRIME MINISTERS, AND GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

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In 1995 national leaders from more than 100 countries gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. This group of national leaders was overwhelmingly male, including only 6 women. At the UN World Summit 10 years later, women were again only 8 of the more than 170 national leaders in attendance. Today, of the more than 190 countries in the world, a woman is the national leader of only 11.

A female in the top leadership position of a country, such as Michelle Bachelet of Chile or Angela Merkel of Germany, is thus an extremely rare creature. From the beginning of the contemporary era until 1980, only 5 out of 1,000 political leaders were women (Blondel, 1980, p. 116). Today, we can count a few more female leaders who have appeared on the world stage, but numbers are still small. Since 1960, when Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the first female to lead a modern country (Sri Lanka), only 34 women have become the top political executive of their country.

Why should we care? For one, national leaders are often incredibly powerful. Although the exact functions of a national leader differ from one country to the next, national leaders often set foreign and domestic political agendas, appoint ministers and other prominent public officials, and wield the power of the military. Women may carry out these tasks in ways much different than men do. Yet, even if male and female leaders were to behave in exactly the same way, national leaders play important symbolic functions. They serve as the “face of a nation,” both to their own citizenry and in the international arena. If these faces are

overwhelmingly male, it perpetuates the idea that, even though women increasingly participate in politics as activists or legislators, they are unable or somehow unready to lead.

Although women as national leaders remain a rarity, they are entering these positions at an increasing rate over time. Only 3 women became national leaders during the 1960s, and 3 women became national leaders in the 1970s. This number increased to 4 in the 1980s and then to 14 in the 1990s. In the first decade of the 21st century, 12 women achieved the highest political office in their country. Thus the story of women in top leadership positions is one of low, but generally-increasing, numbers.

In this chapter we discuss women who have appeared as national leaders over the past 50 years and the paths they took to power. We then distinguish women who hold national leadership positions from those who hold dual leadership positions or largely symbolic positions. Next we turn to women as cabinet ministers around the world, focusing on the numbers of women holding cabinet positions and the types of positions they hold. Finally we turn to a discussion of the difficulties faced by female leaders and whether female leaders make a difference.

### Women as National Leaders

Table 33.1 lists the 34 female political executives over the past 50 years. It is not an easy matter to determine who is a political leader of a country and who is not. National

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Dates of Rule</i>
Sirimavo Bandaranaike	Sri Lanka	Prime minister	1960–1965, 1970–1977
Indira Gandhi	India	Prime minister	1966–1977, 1980–1984
Golda Meir	Israel	Prime minister	1969–1974
Isabel Peron	Argentina	President	1974–1976
Margaret Thatcher	United Kingdom	Prime minister	1979–1990
Lydia Gueiler Tejada	Bolivia	President*	1979–1980
Eugenia Charles	Dominica	Prime minister	1980–1995
Gro Harlem Brundtland	Norway	Prime minister	1981, 1986–1989, 1990–1996
Corazon Aquino	Philippines	President	1986–1992
Benazir Bhutto	Pakistan	Prime minister	1988–1990, 1993–1996
Violeta Chamorro	Nicaragua	President	1990–1996
Ertha Pascal-Trouillot	Haiti	President*	1990–1991
Khaleda Zia	Bangladesh	Prime minister	1991–1996, 2001–
Kim Campbell	Canada	Prime minister	1993–
Silvie Kinigi	Burundi	President*	1993–1994
Tansu Ciller	Turkey	Prime minister	1993–1996
Reneta Indzhova	Bulgaria	Prime minister*	1994–1995
Chandrika Kumaratunga	Sri Lanka	President	1994–2005
Ruth Perry	Liberia	President*	1996–1997
Sheikh Hasina Wajed	Bangladesh	Prime minister	1996–2001, 2009–
Jenny Shipley	New Zealand	Prime minister	1997–1999
Janet Jagan	Guyana	President	1997–1999
Mireya Moscoso de Arias	Panama	President	1999–2004
Helen Clark	New Zealand	Prime minister	1999–
Megawati Sukarnoputri	Indonesia	President	2001–2004
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	Philippines	President	2001–
Angela Merkel	Germany	Chancellor	2005–
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Liberia	President	2005–
Michelle Bachelet	Chile	President	2006–2010
Portia Simpson-Miller	Jamaica	Prime minister	2006–2007
Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner	Argentina	President	2007–
Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir	Iceland	Prime minister	2009–
Jadranka Kosor	Croatia	Prime minister	2009–
Laura Chinchilla	Costa Rica	President	2010–

**Table 33.1** Female National Leaders, 2010

\*Interim or acting

NOTE: Ruth Dreifuss served as president of Switzerland in 1999 as part of a seven-member chief executive with a rotating chair. Micheline Calmy-Rey held this position in 2007.



leaders may be called a head of state, a head of government, or both—and a title in one country may mean something very different in another. For example, in some countries the “head of state” is a very powerful position. Barack Obama is the head of state of the United States of America. In other countries the head of state is a purely ceremonial position, for example Elizabeth II, Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In Table 33.1, some of the leaders hold the title “prime minister,” whereas others hold the title “president.” All are the leaders of their respective countries; what differs is the form of government of their country. In a parliamentary system, the top political leader is often called a prime minister. That person is usually known as a president in a presidential system. Understanding the distinction is important because it can help us to distinguish women who truly hold positions of power from those who hold largely ceremonial roles. A person holding the title of president in a parliamentary system is *not* the leader of the country but holds a position that is typically ceremonial and with little power. A person holding the title prime minister in a presidential system at best shares power with the president.

To understand the distinctions, consider three different female prime ministers:

Gro Harlem Brundtland was prime minister in a parliamentary democracy. In the Norwegian government, the prime minister acts as both the executive and legislative head of the government. He or she holds the most powerful political position in the country. While in office Brundtland pursued strong economic and foreign policy agendas and will be remembered for bringing environmental issues to the top of the nation’s political agenda.

Edith Cresson was the prime minister of France from 1990 to 1992. France has a mixed political system with a strong president and a potentially powerful prime minister. The prime minister is chosen by the president from the dominant party in the parliament. If the dominant party in the parliament is different from the party of the president, then the prime minister can be a very strong political figure (this is called *cohabitation*). However, if the dominant party is the *same* as the president’s party, then the prime minister is generally viewed as subservient to the president and holds little independent power. Edith Cresson was of the same party as François Mitterrand, a strong president. Indeed, as Cresson explains, “You are not entirely free to choose [your] ministers (far from it). As far as I [was] concerned, my freedom was certainly limited” (qtd. in Liswood, 1995, p. 122). In a list of leaders of France in the 20th century, Mitterrand would appear from 1990 to 1992, but not Cresson.

Elisabeth Domitien held the position of prime minister of the Central African Republic from 1975 to 1976. She was appointed to the position by the dictator Jean-Bédel Bokassa when he formed a new government and decided to include a prime minister. But when Bokassa began discussing making the country a monarchy and crowning himself emperor (which he ultimately did), Domitien publicly

spoke out against his plans and was promptly fired. Domitien cannot be considered to have had any substantial political power.

## How Women Attain Top Leadership Positions

What “paths to power” do women take to gain top political office? Some women gain power through a connection to a politically powerful male. That is, women run as a “surrogate” for a husband or visible continuation of the legacy of a father. This is not a rare occurrence. Fifty percent of the women listed in Table 33.1 have famous husbands or fathers who preceded them in political life. To name just a few, Indira Gandhi’s father was India’s founding, prime minister; Corazon Aquino’s husband was viewed as a national martyr; and in Bangladesh, the widow of a former president replaced the daughter of a former prime minister. The phenomenon of daughters or wives standing as surrogates for their fathers or husbands is particularly apparent in regions of the world where women in leadership positions would be *least* expected (Jalalzai, 2004). For example, Asia has generally low levels of female participation in other areas of politics, but it accounts for 30% of female national leaders and 75% of countries with more than one female leader over time. However, every woman who has held high political office in Asia is part of a political dynasty.

This “widow’s walk to power” may be most common where attitudes toward women are especially traditional. In places where women are seen as helpmates to their spouse, it is easy to visualize them as stand-ins for their husbands. The husband or father may have been assassinated, hanged, or have spent a great deal of time in prison, thereby making him a martyr in the eyes of the public and the surrogate wife or daughter a symbol of the continuing struggle. Recent examples also include wives succeeding husbands who are still living, including Cristina Kirchner, president of Argentina, and Hillary Rodham Clinton, who attempted the U.S. presidential bid.

As an example, consider Sirimavo Bandaranaike, of Sri Lanka, who in 1960 became the world’s first female prime minister. At 24, Sirimavo entered into an arranged marriage to Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike, a rising politician. In the early years of their marriage, she raised children and was active in the Ceylon women’s association. In 1956, her husband became prime minister when a coalition led by his party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), won the majority of seats in the national legislature. On September 25, 1959, Solomon was assassinated in their villa. New elections were set and the widow, known as “Mrs. Banda,” was asked to campaign on behalf of her husband’s party.

Sirimavo campaigned tirelessly, and in May she became the head of the party. She had little political experience before this point and only reluctantly agreed to accept the



party's nomination. "I had no intention to take up politics during his life. Except after he died, people wanted me. I was more or less forced to take it up competitively . . . to lead the party after his death. I did not want to. But after much consideration, I agreed to take up the leadership of the party" (qtd. in Liswood, 1995, p. 47). In July 1960 the SLFP won 75 of 151 seats and Sirimavo Bandaranaike was appointed prime minister.

Indira Gandhi, the second woman to achieve the highest political office of a country, was also related to a famous political father, Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru had worked with Mahatma Gandhi to achieve independence from Britain and, in 1947, was the newly independent India's first prime minister. But Gandhi exemplifies an important clause in the surrogate path to power: Female widows of politically powerful husbands often have little political experience before standing in as a surrogate for their husband. In contrast, *daughters* of political figures may have substantial political experience before taking power themselves (see Genovese, 1993, pp. 212–213). Indira Gandhi had a great deal of political experience of her own. She had been a member of the Congress Party headed by her father since 1952. She was elected to the Congress Parliamentary Board in 1958 and became the president of the Congress Party in 1959. In 1966, 2 years after the death of her father, she became prime minister. During her time in office she faced economic crises, war, and political intrigue. She also declared emergency rule when her leadership was challenged, imposed authoritarian rule, and censored newspapers. She was assassinated in 1984.

There is nothing subtle about women's surrogacy. During campaigns, references to the husband or father are repeated time and again, with the spoken or unspoken implication that the female candidate would simply continue his legacy. Benazir Bhutto referred often to her father in speeches and made sure his picture was in the background of her official portraits. During her campaign, Violeta Chamorro repeatedly invoked her assassinated husband, who was viewed as a national martyr. On hearing of Indira Gandhi's election in 1966, the crowds cried out not only "long live Indira" but also "long live Jawaharalal" (her father).

Of course, family dynasties are not restricted to women following their husbands or fathers into politics. The history of politics in most countries is rife with male political leaders who have followed their fathers or other male relatives into politics. In the United States alone we can think of male family legacies such as the Adams, Tafts, Kennedys, or Bushes. As for men, women also have been able to reach the highest echelons of political life through their relationship to a former politician.

Asia, in particular, has a strong legacy of family politics, so much that some men have benefited politically from connections to powerful women. For example, in India, Indira Gandhi's son followed her into politics, cementing a Gandhi–Nehru dynasty lasting for most of the latter half of the 20th century. And in Pakistan, after

Benazir Bhutto was assassinated, her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, was able to use his connection to his martyred wife to ascend to the presidency of Pakistan. At the same time, Bhutto's son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, became leader of her former party, the Pakistan Peoples Party.

Together, Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indira Gandhi introduce another theme in women's path to power—that women have done better gaining high-level positions of power in developing nations than in more developed nations. Until 1979, when Margaret Thatcher ascended to the top political position in Britain as prime minister of the House of Commons, the only women to have achieved leadership positions were in developing nations. Looking at all of the women who have ever held the highest political positions of a country, over 74% of them are from the developing world. As we already pointed out, it is also in these developing nations that women leaders are more likely to be surrogates. But even among the women who do not have any powerful male relation, 53% are from the developing world. The West does not lead the world in elevating women to the highest political office.

Another way that women achieve rarified positions of power is by rising through the political ranks. Golda Meir, the third woman to hold a national leadership position, exemplifies this strategy. By the time she was 20, Meir had married and was increasingly active in the Zionist movement in the United States, which advocated for a Jewish state in Palestine. At 23 she left America for Palestine and became increasingly involved in Zionist politics but simultaneously estranged from her husband, who had difficulty with her political work. From 1928 to 1968 Meir moved up the ranks into the political elite, acting as fundraiser, signer of the proclamation of the State of Israel in 1948, ambassador, and ultimately both minister of labor and foreign minister. In 1968, at age 70, she officially retired from politics—a retirement that was to last only a little over a year. In 1970, Israel's prime minister suffered a fatal heart attack and Meir was asked to return to politics, first as interim prime minister and then as the nationally elected prime minister. She served until 1975 and during her term contended with economic problems, terrorism, and the Yom Kippur War with Egypt and Syria.

Other women have followed a similar path through the ranks to achieve political power at the highest levels. Margaret Thatcher worked her way through Britain's Conservative Party ranks, was elected to the House of Commons in 1959, elected leader of the Conservative Party in 1975 and finally prime minister in 1979. Kim Campbell of Canada also took this route, as did Eugenia Charles of Dominica, Portia Simpson-Miller of Jamaica, and Michelle Bachelet of Chile.

Finally, women have occasionally risen to power in situations of extreme social or political instability. In such cases, their time in office may be very short. Lydia Gueiler Tejada of Bolivia exemplifies this path to power. The years between 1978 and 1980 were very unstable in Bolivia, with multiple elections, coups, countercoups, and caretaker



governments. In 1979, Wálter Guevara Arze was elected president but was almost immediately overthrown in a military coup. However, the leader of the coup also stepped down because he was not accepted by the military, civilians, or the United States. Lydia Gueiler was appointed interim president to arrange fresh elections. Before these elections were finalized, however, Bolivia's first female president herself was overthrown by General Luis García Meza. She had not been president for even a year.

Other female leaders who took power under situations of extreme social or political unrest include Ruth Perry of Liberia and Silvie Kinigi of Burundi. Both of these women led their countries briefly during civil wars. In fact, Perry was appointed to her position by an outside body of neighboring African states because Liberia was under a state of anarchy at the time. When women are placed into leadership positions during times of substantial social upheaval, it may be because they are viewed as symbols of reconciliation. Kinigi, for example, was an ethnic Tutsi originally appointed by an ethnic Hutu to build unity between Burundi's two ethnic groups.

Although there are some common themes to women's ascendancy to national leadership positions, there is great diversity among female national leaders as well.

For example, Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indira Gandhi were from wealthy and privileged backgrounds, whereas Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher were not. Female leaders vary in other ways as well. Benazir Bhutto entered office at 35 years old, and Janet Jagan of Guyana first entered office at 77 (Jalalzai, 2004). Some women who have held the highest political office of a country had less than a high school education, whereas others held Ph.D.s. Some were in office less than a year, while Margaret Thatcher was Britain's longest serving prime minister of the 20th century.

### Women as Dual Leaders and Symbolic Leaders

Some female leaders are not the top executive in their country, but can be viewed as holding a type of dual leadership role. As discussed in the case of Edith Cresson, in some political systems, a president holds much of the power but the prime minister is an important leader in government, especially if she is from the opposition party. Table 33.2 lists all female prime ministers who have served in such systems.

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Dates in Office</i>
Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo	Portugal	1979
Milka Planinc	Yugoslavia	1982–1986
Edith Cresson	France	1991–1992
Hanna Suchocka	Poland	1992–1993
Sirimavo Bandaranaike	Sri Lanka	1994–2000
Claudette Werleigh	Haiti	1995–1996
Tarja Halonen*	Finland	2000–
Madoir Boye	Senegal	2001–2002
Maria das Neves Ceita Batista de Sousa	São Tomé and Príncipe	2002–2004
Beatriz Merino	Peru	2003
Luisa Dias Diogo	Mozambique	2004–
Yuliya Tymoshenko	Ukraine	2005, 2007–
Han Myung-Sook	South Korea	2006–
Michele Pierre-Louis	Haiti	2008–
Zinaida Greceanii	Moldova	2008–
Dalia Grybauskaitė	Lithuania	2009–

**Table 33.2** Female Prime Ministers in Presidential Systems

\* Halonen is the president of Finland but shares power with the prime minister.

Table 33.1 lists women who held truly top political positions, either as prime minister in a parliamentary system or president in a presidential system. Table 33.2 lists women who have shared power in a dual leadership system. Some famous female leaders do not appear on either list. For example, Ireland is often highlighted as exemplary in having had two female presidents in a row. But neither Mary Robinson, president of Ireland from 1990 to 1997, nor Mary McAleese, current president of Ireland, are allowed to suggest legislation or even make partisan statements. Similarly, Vigdis Finnbogadottir of Iceland held a largely ceremonial position as president from 1980 to 1996. Table 33.3 contains female leaders who only held ceremonial, or symbolic, power. As noted earlier, the tables also do not include hereditary heads of state, such as Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. In most countries today, such positions are entirely ceremonial.<sup>1</sup>

This is not to say that symbolic leaders do not play a very important role for women in politics. When men dominate formal politics, it perpetuates ideas that politics is the domain of men. Especially in countries where women’s representation is particularly low, a female in a ceremonial leadership position can provide a boost of confidence for women. As Mary Robinson, the largely symbolic former president of Ireland, said, “I feel I can change perceptions about equality” (qtd. in Orth, 1992, p. 122).

Research suggests that women in positions of power influence the ambitions of young girls. In the United States, when female politicians receive press coverage, adolescent girls say they are more interested in politics. The pattern is the same around the world: High-profile female candidates act as role models to young girls and women, inspiring both to greater interest and involvement in politics (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006).

Women in Cabinet Positions

Women can also be appointed to key positions that advise government leaders. Typically called the “cabinet,” members of these executive positions are generally responsible for running a country. In some countries, cabinets even set the direction of public policy. Examples of cabinet officials in 2009 include U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and U.K. Home Secretary Jacqui Smith. Cabinet positions have a long history—descending from the groups that advised kings and emperors—and can be seats of great power (Davis, 1997).

As in other areas of politics, women hold only a small share of cabinet positions. Reynolds (1999) surveyed cabinet ministers in more than 180 countries in 1998 and found that only 9% were female (302 out of 3,486). This number has increased over time. In a study of 15 countries in Western Europe, Rebecca Davis found that the percentage of female cabinet officials increased from only 3% in 1968 to 13% in 1992 (Davis, 1997). Worldwide, women’s share of cabinet positions increased from 8.7% to 15.2% between 1999 and 2007 (Women and Economic Development Organization [WEDO], 2007).

Not all parts of the world appoint the same numbers of women to cabinets. In Western Europe, 28% of cabinet officials in 2007 were women, compared to only 4% in North Africa. Table 33.4 displays the percentage of cabinet officials who are women across the major regions of the world. Women are also better represented as cabinet officials in countries that are predominantly Christian (Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox) compared to countries with other religions such as Buddhism or Hinduism (Reynolds, 1999). Some countries also stand out as global leaders in the appointment of women to cabinets. In 2007 Finland became the first country to appoint a female majority cabinet (55% women). Ten other countries have at

	<i>Title</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Dates in Office</i>
Elisabeth Domitien	Prime minister	Central African Republic	1975–1976
Vigdis Finnbogadottir	President	Iceland	1980–1996
Agatha Barbara	President	Malta	1982–1987
Sabine Bergmann-Pohl	President	Germany (Dem. Rep.)	1990
Mary Robinson	President	Ireland	1990–1997
Agathe Uwilingiyimana	Prime minister	Rwanda	1993
Mary McAleese	President	Ireland	1997–
Vaira Vike-Freiberga	President	Latvia	1999–2007
Pratibha Patil	President	India	2007–

Table 33.3 Female National Leaders Holding Mainly Symbolic Power



Western Europe	27.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.9%
North America	22.0%
Latin America and the Caribbean	20.5%
Eastern Europe	10.5%
Asia and the Pacific	6.9%
North Africa	4.0%

**Table 33.4** Women's Average Share of Cabinet Seats by Region

SOURCE: WEDO (2007).

least 40% women in their cabinets: Chile, Norway, Spain, France, Switzerland, Nicaragua, Sweden, South Africa, Burundi, and Germany (WEDO, 2007).

Not all cabinet appointments are equal. In most countries each cabinet official is given responsibility for a specific government department, such as labor or education, and some are considered more important than others. The prime minister or the president, at the center of the circle of advisors, may have a core group of trusted advisers around him or her. This core usually includes cabinet officials covering finance and foreign affairs (Davis, 1997). Other cabinet officials, farther out in the circle of advisors, may play less of a role in creating and implementing policy.

Women are overrepresented in some cabinet positions and underrepresented in others. Female cabinet ministers tend to be given positions in "softer" areas—health, family, education—that are less prestigious and less likely to be in the core of advisors. Table 33.5 lists the percentage of female cabinet officials holding select types of cabinet positions in 1998. Of the varied types of departments women could tackle, they are most often in health (14% of the time) or women's affairs (13% of the time). Education, culture/arts, and family and children are the next three most common. In contrast, women are substantially less likely to appear in the more prestigious cabinet positions such as defense, finance, or home affairs. In each of these cases, only 1% of female cabinet officials hold these positions. Unfortunately it is these more prestigious cabinet positions that can be viewed as stepping-stones to greater power. These patterns are generally consistent across world regions except in the Caribbean, where women are distributed more equally across ministries (WEDO, 2007).

Women rarely achieve prestigious cabinet positions. Between 1968 and 1992 in Western Europe, roughly 50% of female cabinet appointments were in the areas of health, social welfare, education, family, culture, or consumer affairs. Women never held positions associated with economic affairs, defense, relations with the parliament, employment, equipment, and budget (Davis, 1997). In

Type of Cabinet Position	%
Health and Social Welfare	14
Women's Affairs	13
Education	9
Culture-Arts-Heritage	9
Family and Children	8
—	
Finance-Treasury	1
Home Affairs	1
Defense	1
Oil	1
Civil Service	1

**Table 33.5** Women's Cabinet Positions for Selected Types

SOURCE: Reynolds (1999).

recent years a growing number of women have been appointed to prestigious cabinet posts in some countries. In the United States, for example, the past three presidents have appointed female secretaries of state—Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton. Notably, Michelle Bachelet was defense minister before rising to the presidency in Chile. But, women serving in these positions are the exception rather than the norm. As of 2007, 45% female ministers still served in sociocultural positions (WEDO, 2007). Even in the female majority cabinet of Finland, men still occupy the senior cabinet posts in finance, defense, and foreign affairs.

Why do we see low numbers of women in cabinet positions? One important explanation is the lack of women in legislative positions. In parliamentary systems, cabinet ministers are almost always drawn from among parliamentarians. Loyal party members come to the attention of prime ministers and get choice cabinet appointments as a reward. This means that when there are few women in a country's parliament, there are few women available for potential appointment to the cabinet.

Rebecca Davis (1997) created a hierarchy of Western European regions based on their percentages of female cabinet ministers. Scandinavia does the best in women's representation in cabinets, followed by the Continental countries (the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, and Austria). The United Kingdom and Ireland and countries in Southern Europe do worse, rarely achieving more than 10% women. This hierarchy mirrors almost perfectly the percentage of women in parliaments in those regions (see Davis, 1997, pp. 16, 35). The same pattern appears if we consider countries around the world—higher percentages of females in

the parliament are related to higher percentages of females in cabinet positions (Reynolds, 1999; WEDO, 2007).

One route to achieving a gender-balanced cabinet may be the election of a female national leader. Michelle Bachelet was the first national leader to nominate women to 50% of cabinet positions. Finnish President Tarja Halonen was responsible for appointing the first female majority cabinet. Other, recently elected female leaders, such as Angela Merkel and Cristina Kirchner, have appointed cabinets with around 40% female ministers (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2008).

Why are women overrepresented in the “softer” cabinet positions? The explanation may again start with their experience as legislators. National legislators often divide their work into legislative committees to prepare or review legislation in a particular area. Subsets of legislators belong to legislative committees of different types—defense, finance, and so on. Female legislators are more likely to be assigned to “women’s issues” committees and social issues committees. Women are seldom assigned to the so-called power committees like treasury, budget, or foreign relations (Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, & Taylor-Robinson, 2005). It is by serving on these “power” committees that legislators get the important experience that helps channel them to top cabinet posts. Because women serve on power committees at much lower rates than men, they get channeled to power cabinet posts at lower rates too.

Why are women getting assigned to social issues committees instead of power committees? As relative newcomers to politics, these women pose a serious threat to traditional male power on these committees. In most legislative bodies it is a small number of people who make committee assignments (e.g., the party leaders). If male party leaders can, therefore, they will sideline women into unimportant committees to preserve their own power (Heath et al., 2005). Overall, the current underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, both at the national level and in political parties, affects women’s appointment to cabinet positions around the world.

## Difficulties Faced by Female Leaders

Leaders of any gender are expected to behave in certain ways. Traditionally, effective leadership is associated with aggression, competitiveness, dominance, and decisiveness. People also have expectations of women and men. Male stereotypes suggest that men are assertive, aggressive, dominant, independent, and competitive. Women, on the other hand, are stereotyped as nurturing, helpful, likable, gentle, and polite.

The “match” between stereotypes of men and leaders is much better than the match between women and leaders. For this reason, women face prejudice as leaders because people tend to assume that leadership is a

masculine trait (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Further, because women have traditionally been in a subordinate position to men, cultural beliefs lead people to assume that men are more competent and legitimate as leaders than are women (Ridgeway, 2001). This prejudice is even *more* likely to emerge when the leadership position in question is typically male, as in the case of military leaders or political leaders.

Female leaders in highly visible leadership positions therefore must live with assumptions that they are less competent than their male counterparts. They may be held to higher standards than men to obtain and retain their leadership position. Iceland President Vigdis Finnbogadóttir explains,

We all know that women have to do everything a little better than a man. Women cannot afford to make a faux pas, as they say in French, that is quite clear. We are also very, very tolerant when men make mistakes, but I don’t know of any society that is tolerant when women make mistakes . . . there’s a tendency to say . . . well, she’s a woman. You’d never say, “well he’s a man, it’s natural that he makes a mistake.” You do not say a thing. You only accept it. (qtd. in Liswood, 1995, p. 69)

Female leaders face an additional problem because they must serve two roles: their role as a leader and their role as a woman. The two sets of expectations can be very different, and in fact, they are in conflict with each other. This puts a female leader in a difficult position. Should she act the way people expect her to act as a woman? Should she be nurturing, supportive, and gentle? Or should she act the way people expect a leader to act? This may require exhibiting “masculine” behavior, such as aggressiveness and dominance. If female leaders choose aggression, research demonstrates that they will be negatively evaluated. In a review of research, Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) found that people evaluate autocratic behavior by women more negatively than they do the same behavior by men. Women who act assertively violate the expectations of those around them and subsequently get penalized for this behavior (Ridgeway, 2001). For example, Margaret Thatcher, a very assertive and aggressive politician, was called “Attila the Hen.” This puts female leaders in a real catch-22: “Conforming to their gender role can produce a failure to meet the requirements of their leader role, and conforming to the leader role can produce a failure to meet the requirements of their gender role” (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 786).

At times women can use cultural expectations about masculinity and femininity to their advantage. Margaret Thatcher is an example of a female leader who was very aware of the impact of her femininity on the men around her. She dressed attractively and would coax, cajole, and flatter to get her way (Genovese, 1993, p. 207). But she also adopted traditionally masculine behavior in a way



that men found difficult to counter. Thatcher was aggressive, tough, ruthless, and rude; these were all behaviors that men did not expect from a woman. Harris (1995) relates an interview with a member of her first cabinet: "If any male Prime Minister had said things to me in cabinet in the terms and tone that she often adopted, I would have gone to him privately afterwards, given him a blasting, and told him that if he did that again I'd resign. But you can't treat a woman like that" (p. 62). Similarly, because of unwritten but rigorous codes of chivalry, Poland's male-led parties were hesitant to intrigue against Hanna Suchocka, their female prime minister (Liswood, 1995, p. 67). A recently elected female leader, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, ran on a gendered platform, claiming that she was free of corruption and would "bring a motherly sensitivity and emotion to the presidency" as a way of healing the wounds of war" ("Profile: Liberia's 'Iron Lady,'" 2005).

### Gender and Leadership: Are Female Leaders Different From Male Leaders?

Does having women in positions of power change anything? Does the fact that a national leader is female make a difference in how they act? People expect female leaders to be concerned about the welfare of other people (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Research on female legislators shows that women have different policy priorities than men (e.g., Gerrity, Osborn, & Mendez, 2007; Kathlene, 1995). Women also tend to be more democratic and participatory in their leadership style than men, for example, allowing subordinates to participate in decision making.

Biographies of women at the highest levels of political leadership suggest that some, such as Corazon Aquino and Violeta Chamorro, strove for participation and consensus. Others, however, were famously autocratic. Margaret Thatcher was a self-described "conviction politician" rather than a "consensus politician." She surrounded herself with "yes men" and limited debate and discussion during cabinet meetings. Thatcher would enter a cabinet meeting, tell her cabinet members what she wanted, and then try to bully them through scare tactics, intimidation, control of the agenda, and "sheer force of personality and conviction" (Genovese, 1993, p. 199). Indira Gandhi seriously endangered India's 28-year-old democracy by declaring emergency rule when her leadership was challenged. Declaration of emergency rule essentially transformed India into a dictatorship, and Gandhi, as the head of the central government, was able to arrest opposition leaders, censor the press, ban political organizations, and jail more than 100,000 people without trial.

Are women more peaceful as leaders than men? Stereotypes suggest that men are the aggressive perpetrators of war whereas women are the peacemakers who try to

stop wars. But female *leaders* may not be different from men in their attitudes about aggression. Nancy McGlen and Meredith Sarkces (1993) found that women working in the U.S. State Department and U.S. Defense Department advocated aggression and violence at the same rate as did men. Female leaders may not be able to be more peaceful than male leaders as they act on the world stage. If male leaders perceive female leaders as weak, countries led by female leaders may be more likely to be attacked by nearby neighbors. Mary Caprioli and Mark Boyer (2001) argue that, of the 10 international crises involving female leaders between 1960 and 1990, none of the female leaders initiated the crisis.

Nevertheless female leaders have been involved in wars. Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, and Margaret Thatcher were all involved in wars, while Benazir Bhutto and Tansu Ciller were involved in crises that did not lead to full-scale war. Whereas women may be seen as symbols of peace and reconciliation when they come to power (as has occurred in Africa), once in power they are willing to use force if necessary. For example, Margaret Thatcher did not hesitate to respond to Argentina's invasion of the British-controlled Falkland Islands, and, like a male leader, Margaret Thatcher experienced a huge rise in popularity after Britain's successful defense of the islands.

### Summary and Future Directions

Regardless of potential differences between female and male leaders, the fact remains that there have been very few female leaders in history. Simone de Beauvoir put it well: "Perseus, Hercules, David, Achilles, Lancelot, the French warriors Du Geslin and Bayard, Napoleon—so many men for one Joan of Arc." Young men growing up today have plenty of heroes to emulate. But who can women look up to? Luckily for today's young women, there are more and more examples of powerful female leaders to follow. Female national leaders act as prominent exceptions to the rule that "men govern." Today's young women can look to today's leaders as examples when they make their own bids for the highest office of the land.

### Note

1. The tables of female leaders do not include leaders of states that are not recognized as independent. For example, Pamela Gordon, premier of Bermuda (a British territory) in 1997–1998 is not included. Neither is Kazimiera Prunskiene, prime minister of Lithuania during the transition to independence. We also do not include women whose tenures as leaders were exceptionally ephemeral. For example, Carmen Pereira was acting president of Guinea-Bissau for 3 days. Another example is Rosalia Arteaga Serrano of Ecuador who, involved in a succession battle, was sworn in as president for 2 days and then forced to resign.

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## WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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*When it comes to the top levels, unfortunately, women experience a sticky floor, a glass ceiling or a thick layer of men!*

—Margot Wallstrom, vice president of the European Commission (2009)

This chapter reviews the position of women in executive office in Europe up to the end of 2009. It is mainly concerned with the member states of the European Union<sup>1</sup> (EU) but will also examine Norway, given its leadership role in women's political advancement. The status of women in EU institutions, notably the European Commission and the European Parliament, is also considered. It begins by mapping women's cabinet post-holding across Europe, followed by a consideration of the main obstacles women encounter on the path to cabinet office and, indeed, premiership. It then turns to assessing the opportunities for women's government office holding and concludes by grouping countries into two distinct categories—recognizers and facilitators—according to their efforts to increase the presence of women in political life. The chapter is in three sections: The first section focuses on cabinet office holding. Section two considers the experience in EU institutions, and section three examines the factors that contribute to women's gaining executive positions in a European context. We begin, then, by examining women and cabinet office in Europe.

### Women and European Cabinets

Research on European cabinets has long recognized that all ministries are not equal, with the ministries of finance and foreign affairs enjoying a close connection with the prime minister's office. Post holders in treasury, justice, home affairs, state, and defense—often perceived as constituting a prime minister's "inner" cabinet—have regular access to the head of government and are her closest advisors. Studies show that these posts have typically been held by men. "Outer" cabinet portfolios, such as education, labor, health, and social affairs, are seen as being less central to the traditional core functions of a state—security, defense, and external relations—and have a less intense connection with the premier. These ministries are predominantly held by women when they are eventually admitted to cabinet office.

In the first comprehensive study of women's cabinet office holding in Europe, Rebecca Davis (1997) highlighted that the portfolios allocated to women often reflected the occupational and educational categories

into which women have traditionally been directed for work and study. She found that in the 24-year period between 1968 and 1992, roughly 50% of the 438 appointments that were made to women were in the categories of health, social welfare, education, family, culture, or consumer affairs (Davis, 1997, p. 16). These ministries also represent important foci for advocacy on women's and family-related issues, and, in holding these ministries, women are more likely to be attuned to these concerns. While recognized as encompassing very important areas of policy, sociocultural ministries are not often seen as key portfolios on the path to premiership. In recent years Borrelli (2002) has found evidence to support a more flexible gender distribution of cabinet portfolios. Women have been appointed to the ministries of finance, foreign affairs, and defense in a number of European countries. This would suggest women are beginning to break the mold and enter the inner circle of cabinet.

Throughout Europe the size of national executives varies. The average number of ministers in each cabinet<sup>2</sup> is 18; Malta has the lowest number (9) and France has the highest number (38). In Norway the cabinet consists of 19 ministers. In 2009 the share of women ministers in the EU27 and Norway was 26% (see Table 34.1). This figure represents a marginal increase since 2007 (24%) and a more significant, 6-percentage point increase since 2004 (20%). Many western European states experienced rapid increases in the share of women ministers during the 1990s. The proportion of women among the EU15 executives stood at 16% in 1994 and increased to 23% by 2004.<sup>3</sup> Much of this growth can be attributed to significant increases in the representation of women in west European national parliaments during that decade.

Female representation at the cabinet table is comparatively high in the Nordic region (see Table 34.1). The cabinet of the Finnish government is dominated by women (60%). In 1994 the Swedish Social Democratic government was the first administration anywhere in the world to appoint equal numbers of women and men to cabinet office. That gender balance has been more or less maintained in the subsequent 15 years, and in 2009 45% of the ministerial portfolios in Sweden were held by women. Norway and Denmark have also maintained consistently high rates of female representation in their cabinets since the mid-1990s. This contrasts sharply with the pattern in Cyprus, Slovakia, and Romania where in 2009 women occupied less than 10% of the ministerial seats in those countries. Ireland was the first country in Europe to appoint a woman to cabinet (Countess Markiewicz in 1919 to the labor ministry), but the country had only 3 women in its 15-seat cabinet 8 decades later. The United Kingdom ranks 11th in Europe, with 26% of its cabinet seats filled by women.

In former Eastern European states, women occupied few ministerial positions in the state socialist governments

prior to the transition to democracy in 1989. When they did occupy ministerial office, women were usually appointed to positions that were deemed "appropriate" for women, notably education, health, and social affairs. Since 1990, the share of women ministers in the governments of former Eastern European countries has increased, with a significant presence of women in the cabinets of Estonia, Slovakia, and Poland. In addition, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Poland have had a woman prime minister (Galligan, Clavero, & Calloni, 2007, p. 94).

### Cabinet Portfolios Held by Women

A closer look at the portfolios held by women ministers across Europe reveals that women predominate in socio-cultural ministries<sup>4</sup> followed by infrastructural (23%), basic (18%), and economic (16%) portfolios (see Tables 34.2 and 34.3).

Although there is no formal hierarchy of cabinet portfolios, it is universally considered that finance and foreign affairs are the most prestigious of all government functions. These responsibilities fall into the two categories (economic and basic) where female ministers are least represented. It must be acknowledged, though, that portfolios that were once male-only domains have had more women in charge in recent years, confirming Borelli's (2002) observation. Since the early 1990s a growing number of European countries have appointed women to their ministries of finance, defense, and foreign affairs (see Table 34.4). The Nordic countries lead the way in appointing women to posts traditionally reserved for men. Eastern European countries also have a quite impressive recent record in this regard.

### Women as Prime Ministers and Elected Heads of State

The position of prime minister and elected head of state are seen as carrying considerable prestige. This is because European prime ministers wield significant power and the elected head of state carries important symbolic power. Of the 28 countries examined in this chapter, only 9 have ever had a female prime minister—Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom<sup>5</sup>—and only 4 have had a woman elected head of state—Malta, Ireland, Latvia, and Finland.<sup>6</sup> Female prime ministers are more likely than their male counterparts to appoint women to their cabinets. Thus, Gro Harlem Brundtland was responsible for appointing 8 women to an 18-person cabinet in 1986—a world record at the time. However there is no steadfast rule about this. Margaret Thatcher's tenure as British prime minister is an exception to the general rule. For much of Thatcher's 12-year period as premier, she was the only woman serving in the cabinet.



	Head of State (Gender)	Prime Minister (Gender)	Women (N)	Men (N)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Electoral system	Form of Government
Finland	W	M	12	8	60	40	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Spain	M (Ceremonial)	M	9	9	50	50	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Norway	M (Ceremonial)	M	9	10	47	53	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Sweden	M (Ceremonial)	M	10	12	45	55	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Belgium	M (Ceremonial)	M	6	9	40	60	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Germany	M	W	6	10	38	62	Mixed member system	Parliamentary
Denmark	W (Ceremonial)	M	7	12	37	63	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Austria	M	M	5	9	36	64	PR, List system	Parliamentary
France	M	M	13	25	34	66	Double ballot, Majority system	Presidential
The Netherlands	W (Ceremonial)	M	5	13	28	72	PR, List system	Parliamentary
United Kingdom	W (Ceremonial)	M	6	17	26	74	First past the post, Majority system,	Parliamentary
Bulgaria	M	M	5	14	26	74	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Poland	M	M	5	15	25	75	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Malta	M	M	2	7	22	78	PR – Single transferable vote	Parliamentary
Estonia	M	M	3	11	21	79	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Latvia	M	M	4	15	21	79	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Ireland	W (Ceremonial)	M	3	12	20	80	PR – Single Transferable Vote	Parliamentary
Luxembourg	M (Ceremonial)	M	3	12	20	80	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Italy	M	M	4	18	18	82	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Slovenia	M	M	3	15	17	83	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Lithuania	M	M	2	12	14	86	Parallel system	Parliamentary
Hungary	M	M	2	14	13	87	Mixed member system	Parliamentary

Table 34.1 Distribution of Senior Ministries in EU27 and Norway by Gender and Electoral System (January 2009)

(Continued)

(Continued)

	Head of State (Gender)	Prime Minister (Gender)	Women (N)	Men (N)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Electoral system	Form of Government
Portugal	M	M	2	15	12	88	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Czech Republic	M	M	2	16	11	89	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Greece	M	M	2	16	11	89	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Cyprus	M	M	1	11	8	92	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Slovakia	M	M	1	15	6	94	PR, List system	Parliamentary
Romania	M	M	0	17	0	100	PR, List system	Parliamentary
<b>All</b>			<b>132</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>74</b>		

SOURCES: Adapted from European Commission (2009); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2009). <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=764&langId=en>.  
PR = proportional representation.

<b>B</b>	<i>Basic</i> : foreign and internal affairs, defense, justice
<b>E</b>	<i>Economic</i> : finance, trade, industry, agriculture
<b>I</b>	<i>Infrastructure</i> : transport, communications, environment
<b>S</b>	<i>Sociocultural</i> : social affairs, health, children, family, youth, older people, education, science, culture, labor, sports

**Table 34.2** BEIS Typology

SOURCE: European Commission (2008; 2009).



	<i>Basic</i>		<i>Economic</i>		<i>Infrastructure</i>		<i>Sociocultural</i>	
	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>
<i>Austria</i>	40	60	0	100	0	100	60	40
<i>Belgium</i>	14	86	33	67	0	100	100	0
<i>Bulgaria</i>	38	62	0	100	33	67	25	75
<i>Cyprus</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	33	67
<i>Czech Republic</i>	25	75	0	100	0	100	0	100
<i>Denmark</i>	0	100	60	40	25	75	50	50
<i>Estonia</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	75	25
<i>Finland</i>	50	50	25	75	75	25	83	17
<i>France</i>	20	80	29	71	43	57	56	44
<i>Germany</i>	33	67	25	75	0	100	75	25
<i>Greece</i>	14	86	0	100	0	100	25	75
<i>Hungary</i>	13	87	0	100	0	100	33	67
<i>Ireland</i>	0	100	33	67	0	100	50	50
<i>Italy</i>	0	100	0	100	50	50	60	40
<i>Latvia</i>	14	86	0	100	0	100	50	50
<i>Lithuania</i>	0	100	33	67	0	100	25	75
<i>Luxembourg</i>	13	87	0	100	0	100	50	50
<i>Malta</i>	25	75	0	100	0	100	50	50
<i>Norway</i>	50	50	75	25	33	67	33	67
<i>Poland</i>	0	100	20	80	0	100	67	33
<i>Portugal</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	40	60
<i>Romania</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100
<i>Slovakia</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	25	75
<i>Slovenia</i>	0	100	0	100	0	100	60	40
<i>Spain</i>	43	57	0	100	100	0	57	43
<i>Sweden</i>	50	50	25	75	50	50	50	50
<i>The Netherlands</i>	17	83	40	60	67	33	0	100
<i>United Kingdom</i>	46	54	17	83	100	0	0	100
<b>All</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>% of all female ministers</b>	<b>18</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>23</b>		<b>43</b>	

Table 34.3 Distribution of Senior Ministries in EU Member States by BEIS Typology, 2009

SOURCES: Adapted from European Commission (2009); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2009).  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=764&langId=en>.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Defense</i>	<i>Foreign Affairs</i>
1990	—	Finland	—
1991	Lithuania, Sweden	—	Sweden*
1992	—	—	—
1993	The Netherlands	—	—
1994	—	—	Sweden
1995	Latvia	Finland	Finland
1996	—	—	—
1997	—	—	Bulgaria, Slovakia
1998	Slovakia	—	Sweden
1999	—	Norway	Luxembourg
2000	Denmark	—	Austria
2001	Lithuania, Poland	Norway	—
2002	Portugal	France	Estonia, Latvia, Spain
2003	—	—	Portugal, Sweden
2004	—	—	Austria
2005	Norway, Poland	Latvia, Norway	—
2006	Poland	Latvia	Greece, Hungary, Poland, United Kingdom
2007	France, Poland	Czech Republic	Cyprus
2008	—	Lithuania, Slovenia, Spain	—
2009	Spain	—	—

**Table 34.4** Female Appointments to the Portfolios of Finance, Defense, and Foreign Affairs Across the EU27 and Norway, 1990–2009

SOURCES: Christensen (n.d.); Inter-Parliamentary Union (2009).

\*This was not the first time a woman was appointed to the ministry of foreign affairs in Europe. That honor fell to Ana Pauker of Romania in 1947. Sweden first appointed a woman to the ministry of foreign affairs in 1976. Luxembourg followed in 1980.

## The European Union

The European Union is a continually evolving political project. Born out of a continent shattered by two world wars, its founding objective was to overcome the divisions of the first half of the 20th century to ensure its people could live in safety, peace, and prosperity. The first form of cooperation was in May 1950 when Robert Schuman (French foreign minister) proposed the establishment a European Coal and Steel Community. This began the process of putting in

place a common economic market among the six founding countries—Belgium, France, Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany), Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. Recent decades have been characterized by a steady process of economic and political enlargement, and by 2007 the European Union had grown to 27 member states. In 2009 the geopolitical map of the European Union thus stretched from the Scandinavian Peninsula to the Iberian Peninsula, from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to the coast of the Black Sea, and from the Baltic Sea to the



Balkan Region. EU laws and policies are made by a tripartite arrangement consisting of the Council of Ministers (representing the national governments of each member state), the European Parliament (elected by and representing the people) and the European Commission (the European Union's executive body).

Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union. Article 3(2) of the Treaty of the European Union (1997) states that the European Union shall in all its activities "aim to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between men and women." Article 141 requires nondiscrimination between women and men in pay and employment-related issues. Article 13 goes further, extending the nondiscriminatory remit of the European Union to areas other than employment when it advises that the Union may take "appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation."<sup>7</sup> These gender equality principles, binding on EU policy and member states, are important as they create the space for pursuing equal opportunities for women and men in social as well as political and economic policies. The effects of this principled commitment to gender equality can be seen in EU initiatives to support gender balance in political life.

The European Union was represented for the first time at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. One of the key areas of concern identified at this conference was the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes. Since then, the European Commission has published a number of framework documents for the development and promotion of policies to encourage gender equality. The most recent of these is the *Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men*, covering the period 2006 to 2010. This identifies a number of proposals for EU action on gender equality, one being the promotion of equal participation of women and men in decision making in EU institutions and in the national parliaments of member states. Parallel to the European Women's Lobby 50/50 Campaign for Democracy,<sup>8</sup> the European Commission presented the 2009 European Parliament elections as an opportunity for advancing gender equality in the European Union.<sup>9</sup> Achieving a gender-equal European polity, though, requires continual pressure from important political figures within the EU institutions, such as Commission Vice President Margot Wallstrom, in conjunction with demands from women in civil society, often expressed through the European Women's Lobby. As already noted, EU decisions and laws are generally the result of decisions made by the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament, and the European Commission that have repercussions on the lives of all EU citizens.

### Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers is the European Union's ultimate decision-making body. Every council meeting is

attended by one minister from each member state. Which ministers attend a meeting depends on which topic is on the agenda—for finance issues, all ministers of finance from the EU member states will attend, similarly for education, agriculture, health, foreign affairs, and so on. As already noted, women tend to occupy socioecultural-type portfolios at the national level, and so they have more of an input into these issues than others at EU level.

### The European Parliament

The European Parliament comprises 785 members directly elected by the citizens of the European Union. It plays an important role and participates in the legislative and budgetary processes of the Union. Since the first direct elections in 1979, the percentage of female members of the European Parliament (MEPs) has increased from 16% (66 seats) to 35% (256 seats) in 2009. There have been two female presidents of the European Parliament—Simone Veil (France) from 1979 to 1982 and Nicole Fontaine (France) from 1999 to 2002.

Jane Freedman (2002) observed that the representation of women in the European Parliament often exceeded that found in national parliaments of individual member states. Table 34.5 shows the distribution of seats in the European Parliament and national parliaments by gender and member state in descending ranking of the proportion of women per country. The figures provide strong evidence to support Freedman's findings. With the exception of eight countries (Spain, Finland, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Poland, Malta, and Cyprus), women from individual member states are better represented at the European Parliament (35%) than in their own national parliaments (average 24%). This may be due to the fact that in many countries, elections to the European parliament are perceived as "second order" elections—in other words, elections that do not affect national political arrangements and so are less important. This perception can work to women's advantage in that male politicians would prefer to pursue their careers on the national political stage than engage in the more "distant" politics of the European Parliament. This opens the way for women to contest, and win, elections to the European Parliament in higher proportions than in national politics.

Much of the literature on the representation of women in the European Parliament focuses on providing explanations for the varying rates of participation of women from the different member states. These cross-national studies emphasize the significance of gender quotas, the importance of electoral systems, the impact of a dominant religious doctrine, and the extent of cultural and economic development on the electoral prospects of women. Thus, it is not surprising to find that countries with compulsory gender quotas tend to elect more women to public office than do countries without quota provisions. Similarly, left-wing parties have been long identified with being more open to advancing women's political ambitions, and as a result, these parties are more likely than others to elect

	<i>Women (N)</i>	<i>Men (N)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>
<i>Finland</i>	8	5	62	38
<i>Sweden</i>	10	8	56	44
<i>Estonia</i>	3	3	50	50
<i>Netherlands</i>	12	13	48	52
<i>Bulgaria</i>	8	9	47	53
<i>Denmark</i>	6	7	46	54
<i>France</i>	32	40	44	56
<i>Austria</i>	7	10	41	59
<i>Latvia</i>	3	5	38	62
<i>Slovakia</i>	5	8	38	62
<i>Germany</i>	37	62	37	63
<i>Belgium</i>	8	14	36	64
<i>Portugal</i>	8	14	36	64
<i>Romania</i>	12	21	36	64
<i>Spain</i>	18	32	36	64
<i>Hungary</i>	8	14	36	64
<i>Cyprus</i>	2	4	33	67
<i>United Kingdom</i>	23	26	33	67
<i>Greece</i>	7	15	32	68
<i>Slovenia</i>	2	5	29	71
<i>Lithuania</i>	3	9	25	75
<i>Ireland</i>	3	9	25	75
<i>Poland</i>	11	39	22	78
<i>Italy</i>	15	57	21	79
<i>Czech Republic</i>	4	18	18	82
<i>Luxembourg</i>	1	5	17	83
<i>Malta</i>	0	5	0	100
<b>All</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>65</b>

**Table 34.5** Distribution of Seats in the European Parliament by Gender and EU Member State, July 2009

SOURCES: Adapted from European Commission (2009); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2009); <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=764&langId=en>.

NOTE: Countries are ranked in descending order of the proportion of women members of the European Parliament per country.

higher percentages of women to the European Parliament. Thus, in the 2004–2009 session of the European Parliament, women constituted 42% of Socialist Group members as compared with 25% of the European People's Party and European Democrats. Pippa Norris and Mark Franklin (1997) observed the importance of ballot structure in women's electoral prospects to the European Parliament. They found that women did well in closed-list proportional

systems. The dominance of a religion in a society may contribute to the shaping of attitudes toward gender equality and the perceptions of women as political leaders (Galligan et al., 2007). Norris and Franklin (1997) found that the participation of women in the European Parliament was higher among those from countries with a Protestant heritage. The increase in the participation of women in elected office can be correlated with the process of economic and cultural



development. Sonia Frias and Susan Marshall (2004) suggest that improvements in women's access to higher education have enhanced female electoral success and that the more wealthy countries are disposed to electing more women to the European Parliament.

### **The European Commission**

The European Commission is the executive branch of the European Union. Its members are appointed for a 5-year term by member states, subject to approval by the European Parliament. As the European Union's executive, it has wide powers to manage the Union's common policies and the budget for these policies. The appointment of women to the European Commission has increased significantly in recent years. During the 1990s women occupied only 5.6% of commission portfolios. In 2009, 10 women held commissioner positions, 37% in all. Women have held the position of vice president of the commission, but there has never been a female among the 11 commission presidents. Many have called for further advancements in the number of women in the European Union's top jobs. MEPs Anneli Jäätteenmäki and Karin Riis-Jørgensen (2009) note "the current College of European commissioners, with a little over a third of female commissioners, is not a shining example of gender balance" (n.p.). They suggest that appointments to the European Commission be based on a model currently used by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Judges of the ECHR are elected from a short list of three candidates put forward by national governments. Only lists containing at least one candidate from the underrepresented sex in the court (currently women) are considered.

### **Opportunities for Women's Executive Office Holding in Europe**

Given that parliamentary government is the predominant model of governance in Europe (with France as the single major exception), it follows that if women are to become members of a cabinet in European states, they must first be elected to parliament. Thus, when the level of women's representation in parliament is high, this has a positive influence on the level of women's representation in the cabinet (Davis, 1997, p. 8). This is because, in Europe, parliaments provide the pool from which executives are drawn. Electoral measures designed to produce a more gender-balanced parliament, such as alternating women and men on party candidate lists, have had a positive effect on the participation rates of women in parliaments. The Nordic region has a particularly good record of electing women to parliament (see Table 34.6). In 1994, Sweden introduced a requirement that male and female candidates be listed alternatively on party ballots. This rule, referred to as "zippering" candidates by gender, was designed to break the dominance of male candidates at the

upper end of a party list. In list electoral systems, candidates occupying the top five places on party lists are almost guaranteed election. The policy has had a positive impact of the proportion of women in parliament in Sweden, increasing from 38% in 1988 to 46% two decades later. Norway and Finland adopted similar policies and today, these countries regularly lead in the representation of women in parliaments across Europe. Unsurprisingly, these countries have commendable records of appointing women to cabinets.

However, concern with an equal presence of women and men in political executives is not confined to the egalitarian northern European states. In March 2007 Spain introduced an equality law (*Ley de Igualdad*), which modified the electoral laws and introduced the principle of "balanced presence." Party electoral lists are required to have a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 60% of either gender in all elections. The impact of this modification has been immediate. The proportion of women in parliament increased from 20% in 1999 to 35% in 2009 and in April 2008, the Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero appointed 9 women to an 18-person cabinet.

Given the central importance of parliamentary experience to women's prospects for serving at the cabinet table, it follows that strategies favoring women's entry to political life can play an important part in boosting their executive opportunities. Countries where women's membership of parliament has increased in recent years share some common features—quotas, a proportional representation-based electoral system, progressive socioeconomic development and political rights, and the existence of strong leftist political parties. These conditions can contribute to increasing the number of women in parliament and, eventually, cabinet. Drude Dahlerup (2006, p. 293) isolates party quotas as an important contributor to changes in women's representation. They bring about historical advances in women's parliamentary seat holding and can bring women into political life in regions where they have been traditionally excluded from legislatures.

### **Recruitment Norms to Cabinet**

Cabinet ministers are almost always drawn from the ranks of parliamentarians, but having a parliamentary seat is not a guarantee or constitutional requirement for cabinet membership. Political realities often dictate who is appointed to cabinet. Rewarding party loyalty, placating internal party divisions, incorporating a coalition partner, geography, parliamentary service, experience, and performance are all factors that a prime minister will consider when selecting a team of senior ministers.

There are no fixed, formal, or definite qualifications for seeking cabinet appointment in Europe, but Davis (1997, p. 30) points to the importance of informal

<i>Members of Lower House</i>	<i>Women (N)</i>	<i>Men (N)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Electoral System</i>	<i>Gender Quotas</i>
Sweden	162	187	46	54	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style
Finland	83	118	41	59	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style
The Netherlands	62	88	41	59	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style
Denmark	68	111	38	62	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style; quotas abandoned in 1996
Belgium	56	94	37	63	PR, List system	Legal provision for party quota system
Norway	45	82	35	65	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style
Spain	124	226	35	65	PR, List system	Legal provision for party quota system
Germany	194	400	33	67	Mixed member system	Party quota system, zipper style
Austria	57	125	31	69	PR, List system	Party quota system, zipper style
Portugal	66	164	29	71	PR, List system	Legal provision for party quota system
Luxembourg	15	45	25	75	PR, List system	Party quota system
Lithuania	33	108	23	77	Parallel system	Party quota system
Bulgaria	52	188	22	78	PR, List system	—
Estonia	21	80	21	79	PR, List system	—
Italy	134	496	21	79	PR, List system	Party quota system



<i>Members of Lower House</i>	<i>Women (N)</i>	<i>Men (N)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Electoral System</i>	<i>Gender Quotas</i>
Latvia	21	79	21	79	PR, List system	—
Poland	94	368	20	80	PR, List system	Party quota system
France	107	469	19	81	Double ballot, Majority system	Legal provision for party quota system
Slovakia	28	122	19	81	PR, List system	Party quota system
United Kingdom	125	520	19	81	First past the post, Majority system	Party quota system
Cyprus	9	47	16	84	PR, List system	Party quota system
Czech Republic	31	169	16	84	PR, List system	Party quota system
Greece	48	252	16	84	PR, List system	Party quota system; constitutional provision for quotas at the local and regional levels only
Ireland	21	145	13	87	PR – Single transferable vote	Party quota system
Slovenia	12	78	13	87	PR, List system	Legal provision for party quota system since 2006
Hungary	42	344	11	89	Mixed member system	Party quota system
Romania	33	293	10	90	PR, List system	Party quota system
Malta	6	63	9	91	PR – Single transferable vote	Party quota system
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>5,461</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>76</b>	—	—

**Table 34.6** EU27 and Norway: Membership of Lower Houses, Electoral System, Positive Action, January 2009

SOURCES: European Commission (2009); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2009). <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=764&langId=en>.

NOTES: PR = proportional representation. Party quotas are voluntary measures adopted by parties to address gender balance in candidate selection and are not necessarily in effect in all parties in a political system.

requirements for executive office. Being highly educated and working in certain professions (either the legal profession or civil service) were traditionally seen as the key attributes for cabinet membership. Legal and societal norms in many European states prevented women from accessing the highest levels of education and obtaining or maintaining employment (Davis, 1997). Thus women were essentially disqualified from membership of the political elite until comparatively recently. Since the 1950s, though, the number of women in higher education has grown phenomenally throughout Europe, and changes in labor law and societal norms have facilitated more women in accessing the labor force. Despite these advances, women still lag behind men when it comes to cabinet appointments because of their underrepresentation in parliament. However, once in parliament, women are often caught by a second discrimination—that of age. One of the perennial obstacles to women's career progression in politics is that they enter the political arena later than men. As a result, by the time they gain the experience, reputation, and name recognition to be qualified for cabinet office, they are either too old or are considering retiring from representative politics. Thus a major problem for women is in gaining the requisite skills and assets early enough in their careers to make them as appealing as men when it comes to cabinet appointments.

### Summary and Future Directions

Women still lag behind men at political decision-making levels across Europe. In national governments, male ministers outnumber women by 3 to 1. However, the situation is improving. During the 1990s the proportion of women among the EU15 executives stood at 16%. Since then the proportion of female ministers in the EU27 has increased by 6 percentage points from 20% to 26%. Examining the type of ministerial portfolios held by women demonstrates that women still tend to be appointed to sociocultural-type positions at a greater rate than they are appointed to basic, economic, or infrastructural portfolios. Although there is no formal hierarchy of cabinet portfolios, it is universally considered that finance, defense, and foreign affairs are the most prestigious of all government functions. These responsibilities fall into the two categories (economic and basic) where female ministers are least represented. However, change is occurring. Since the early 1990s a growing number of European countries have appointed women to these ministries. At the EU level the proportion of women in decision-making roles is also on the increase. Since the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979, the percentage of female MEPs has risen from 17% to 35%, while the number of women in the ranks of the European

Commission has swelled in recent times from a low of 5.6% during the 1990s to 37% today.

Any significant change in women's participation in cabinet government necessitates change in the representation of women in parliament. Access to the highest rungs of executive leadership is often a consequence of parliamentary experience, service, and performance. Parliamentary participation is essential if one is to be considered eligible for executive office. Countries where women's membership of parliament has increased in recent years share some common features—quotas, a proportional electoral system, closed lists, progressive socioeconomic development and political rights, and the existence of strong leftist political parties. These opportunities have all contributed to increasing the number of women in parliament, and eventually, cabinet.

Although progress has been made in the number of women appointed to cabinet across Europe, barriers to women's advancement in political life still exist. Being highly educated and working in certain professions (either the legal profession or civil service) were traditionally observed as key attributes for cabinet membership. Yet, legal and societal norms in many European states often prevented women from accessing the highest levels of education and obtaining or maintaining employment (Davis, 1997). As a result, women were essentially disqualified from membership of the political elite. Another barrier to women's progression in political life discussed was age. Often, women enter politics later than men. By the time they gain the experience, reputation, and name recognition to be qualified for cabinet office they are too old or are ready to retire. A major problem for women is gaining the requisite skills and assets as politicians, early enough in their careers, that will make them as appealing as men when it comes to cabinet appointments.

From our examination of the presence of women in executive office across Europe, we observe varying rates of participation in the different countries. The importance of electoral systems and rules, and the extent of cultural and socioeconomic development, are all significant factors when accounting for the differing electoral prospects of women across Europe. We suggest that European countries can be grouped into two distinct categories when it comes to the promotion of women in public office: those that recognize the value of women's inclusion in positions of power (the recognizers) and those that facilitate women's inclusion in positions of power (the facilitators). Recognition of the role of women in political decision making is often accompanied by the development of promotional strategies, such as funding academic research into the role of women in politics, creating support networks for women in politics, and running workshops that encourage more involvement of women in their local communities. These measures, while very welcome and



important, sometimes fall short of adopting concrete mechanisms that have the specific outcome of increasing the number of women in political life and thus improving the substantive representation of women. In contrast, countries such as those in the Nordic/Scandinavian region, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Austria, Germany, Portugal, France, and Slovenia have introduced institutional changes (measures such as quotas and laws promoting affirmative action) that have facilitated an increased number of women in public life. These countries tend to be in the predominantly Protestant regions of Europe or have more left-leaning traditions where parties are more willing than others to implement strategies to enhance the participation of women in public life.

From this analysis of women's presence in executive office in Europe we can conclude that the present situation is encouraging. The number of women holding ministerial office is increasing. However, there still exists a wide disparity in the percentage of women in cabinet positions across the different countries. If countries are serious about increasing the number of women in political decision making, they must consider introducing institutional changes to increase the number of women in political life. The research presented in this chapter would suggest that only with such measures will we see true change in the participation of women in politics across Europe and in the European Union.

## Notes

1. The European Union is a trans-state political entity to which 27 nation-states were members in 2009. These are Austria,

Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

2. This chapter examines senior ministries only in the EU27 and Norway.

3. The EU15 refers to the member states of Western Europe before the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. These enlargements brought 10 East European countries into the European Union along with two small west European countries, Malta and Cyprus.

4. This analysis is based on the BEIS typology that categorizes ministerial positions according to their main focus—Basic, Economic, Infrastructural, Sociocultural.

5. Bulgaria: Reneta Ivanova (1994–1995, interim government); Finland: Anneli Jäätteenmäki (1992); France: Edith Cresson (1991–1992); Germany: Angela Merkel (2005–2010); Lithuania: Kazimiear Prunskien (1990–1991); Norway: Gro Harlem Brundtland (1981; 1986–1989; 1990–1996); Poland: Hanna Suchocka (1992–1993); Portugal: Maria de Lourdes Ruivodu Silva Pintasilgo (1979–1980); United Kingdom: Margaret Thatcher (1979–1990).

6. Finland: Tarja Halonen (2000–2006; 2006–2012); Ireland: Mary Robinson (1990–1997) and Mary McAleese (1997–2004; 2004–2011); Latvia: Varis Vīe-Freiberga (1999–2003; 2003–2007); Malta: Agatha Barbara (1982–1987).

7. See [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/institutional\\_affairs/treaties/amsterdam\\_treaty/a10000\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/amsterdam_treaty/a10000_en.htm).

8. See <http://5050campaign.wordpress.com> (retrieved May 26, 2009). This campaign seeks to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the European Parliament and the European Commission following the June 2009 elections.

9. See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2009/welcome/headlines.htm?ref=20090302STO50555&secondRef=0&language=EN>.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

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All across Africa, women are seeking leadership positions in government with positive results because their countries are bringing about change, some more rapidly than others. Femmes Africa Solidarité (as cited in Skaine, 2008, p. 1) states that women also owe a huge debt to the past struggles of their sisters and the continuance of their struggle today. In Africa, the legacy of women leading is strong. Maulana Karenga (2006) stated that the tradition began with women pharaohs in ancient Egypt, such as Hatshepsut, and has continued with ruling queens and queen mothers ruling throughout Africa, such as Ann Nzingha in Angola and Yaa Asantewa in Ghana. That tradition continues today with women leaders in the modern liberation movements like Winnie Mandela and Elizabeth Sibeko of South Africa as well as the freely elected heads of state in the 21st century.

Securing the highest positions remains a great challenge for the women of Africa. An examination of two targets of the Beijing Platform for Action—women in power and decision making (United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, 1995) and the institutional mechanism for the advancement of women—contributes to our understanding of how that challenge is being met. Analysis of the individual Beijing reports for each country uncovers a mosaic of progress for women as leaders. (United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women, 2002, 2005).

### Overview of Progress

Since 1960, 53 women worldwide have been freely elected heads of state. In January 2008, 12 women were heads of

state, including two Africans: Luísa Dias Diogo, elected prime minister of Mozambique in 2004, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, elected president of Liberia in 2005 (Council of Women World Leaders, 2008). Liberia is the first African country to have an elected female president as head of state (Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU], 2006). Between Austria in 1927 and Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Serbia and Rwanda in 2008, a total of 72 countries in the world have had a woman become the presiding officer of parliament or of one of its houses (IPU, 2008).

In November 2008, worldwide, 30 women presided over one of the houses of the 188 existing parliaments, 76 of which are bicameral. Women hold 11.3% of the total number of 265 posts of presiding officers of parliament or of one of its houses. Included in the total are the African countries of Gambia (National Assembly), Lesotho (National Assembly), Rwanda (Chamber of Deputies), South Africa (National Assembly), Swaziland (Senate), and Zimbabwe (Senate) (IPU, 2008).

In Africa's parliamentary history, 11 women have become presiding officer of parliament or of one of its houses in the following countries: São Tomé and Príncipe, 1980; South Africa, 1994; Ethiopia, 1995; Lesotho, 2000; Liberia, 2003; Burundi, 2005; Zimbabwe, 2005; Gambia, 2006; Swaziland, 2006; Nigeria, 2007; and Rwanda, 2008 (IPU, 2008). Gretchen Bauer and Hannah E. Britton (2006) illustrated that in African countries, significant numbers of women have been elected to their parliaments (pp. 1–2). South Africa and Mozambique began the upswing with elections in 1994 that produced 25% women elected to parliament, and in 2004 the percentage of women elected to national legislatures increased to more than 32%. In

2005 Seychelles, Namibia, and Uganda had at least 24% of the seats in the lower or single houses of parliament held by women. Bauer and Britton observed, "This is a noteworthy development in a world in which regional averages for women's representation in parliaments range from six percent in the Arab states to only 18 percent in the Americas (approaching 40 percent only in the . . . Nordic states)" (p. 2). Bauer and Britton (2006) maintained that Rwanda's percentage of women is of particular significance. In October 2003, 10 years after genocide had taken the lives of almost 1 million people, Rwanda elected 39 women to its 80-member Chamber of Deputies (48.8%). In one election, Rwanda surpassed Sweden as the country with the highest percentage of women in its national legislature. The increase of Scandinavian and European countries was slow and steady, ranging from 35% to 45% women in early 2000. In September 2008, Rwanda's parliament became the first in the world where women have the majority (56%), including the speaker's chair. Gender balance moved more toward equality with the 2005 election of Johnson Sirlleaf as president of Liberia.

### Factors Contributing to the Success of Elected Women

Merely counting the number of women in politics does not measure the difference they make. As Julie Ballington (2004) concluded, the evidence the international Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) had collected "suggests that increasing numerical representation is an important first step towards facilitating real change in power relations throughout the world" (p. 128). The increase in the number of women in government positions is firmly based in the African landscape of generations of activism.

Important political change occurred in the late 1980s and 1990s. Aili Mari Tripp (2003) wrote that through collective action, women's organizations began to challenge "the stranglehold clientelism and state patronage had on women's mobilization in the post independence period" (p. 233). Women set in motion an important and unprecedented societal transformation, she concluded.

### The Role of Women

In general, men have ruled in Africa. Rwanda provides a stark contrast. Since genocide had taken the lives of so many men, women propel the economy, work on construction sites and in factories, and serve in government positions. Not only do women hold the majority of parliament seats and the speaker's chair, they also hold one third of all cabinet positions, including foreign minister, education minister, Supreme Court chief, and police commissioner general. Rwanda has accomplished this feat by eliminating patriarchal laws (such as those that prevent women from

inheriting land), legally ending domestic violence and child abuse, and further examining its legal code for discriminatory laws (McCrummen, 2008).

Why has Rwanda been able to accomplish so much? Because the largest proportion of Rwandans is women (55%) and the country's president, Paul Kagame, has enforced policies that help women. The quota system is ambitiously pursued. In 2003 the new constitution required that women fill at least 30% of all parliamentary and cabinet positions. The remaining 26% of the women currently in parliament have been indirectly elected (McCrummen, 2008).

### Organizing

Organizing is important in developing leadership. Miki Caul Kittilson (2006) wrote that women successfully organize when they recognize they must play an active role in creating opportunity (p. 140). One way opportunity is created is through political parties. Parties are the gatekeepers to elected offices and can facilitate or impede women's participation in parliament. Women's efforts are most effective when they recognize favorable conditions within the party and party system and where they devise strategies to be included. Once in a top-level party position, women can encourage parties to adopt measures to increase the proportion of women in their delegations to parliament. Positive attitudes of women political elites are essential to getting more women into powerful positions. Kittilson stated, "Those groundbreaking women must be willing to 'let the ladder down,' and recent surveys point toward a growing recognition of the effectiveness of quota policies" (p.158).

### Personal Development

In addition to organizing, developing positive attitudes, and playing an active role, women's use of language is critical in developing leadership (Stephens, 2000). In many African societies, women have had to value their influence through indirect means, for example, through a husband or son. Strong women have traditionally learned to use language to influence and persuade, as well as to listen and understand, which is critical to understanding leadership. Women have had the ability to influence people with their language using whatever available means of persuasion in any given situation by discovering what the available means of persuasion were. Jane Thompson Stephens (2000) found that in Githumu, Kenya, that one of the ways women succeeded was "through the art of persuading the persuaders" (p. 11).

To move toward women in governance, women must combine personal development and organizational efforts. In so doing, society must address issues that include identifying potential leaders, packaging and winning the women's vote, using the quota systems, and continuing to educate women through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).



## Factors in Society

### *Identifying Potential Leaders*

African countries in the tropical areas know the importance of women's formal participation in government. By the mid-1970s, those countries had concentrated on unifying and consolidating under government women's groups and with other organizations. At the same time, military regimes in Nigeria, Upper Volta (renamed Burkina Faso in 1984), Ghana, Mali, and Senegal returned their countries to civilian rule. Whatever approach governments took, all had in common a knowledge that they could not remain in power unless they addressed the issue of popular participation in the political system (Skaine, 2008, pp. 20–21).

In 1994 Amina Mama, the chairperson of Gender Studies at the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town, told the African Women and Governance Seminar and Training Workshop in Entebbe, Uganda, that donors to Africa had not addressed the development needs of women. Abantu for Development (1995) believed that by doing so, donors had overlooked an important resource, "women who are in a position to make a difference or women who could get into such positions relatively easy" (p. 1). The seminar and workshops worked to gain African women's participation in development and decision making at various levels. Akwe Amosu and Ofeibea Quist-Arcton (2006) pointed out that, in addition, an examination of middle-class women revealed that the women who move into top positions are a small minority of the class's elite. They stated that ordinary middle-class women haven't "pulled ahead of the pack and are in competition with a very large pool of men" (p. 22).

### *Packaging the Women's Vote*

Female candidates walk a fine line, wrote Amosu and Quist-Arcton (2006, p. 20). Johnson Sirleaf made much of her attributes as a homemaker and conciliator, but she did not present herself as a feminist. Her plan of attack appeared to be an effort not to alienate male voters. Portraying herself as a feminist may have affected female voters in the same way. A woman candidate's best approach is most likely to argue that she has the best skills for the position rather than emphasizing her gender, Amosu and Quist-Arcton believed.

An emerging pattern is that high-level female politicians have backgrounds in finance and economics. Managing government with these theories make knowledge and intellectual capacity matter. Amosu and Quist-Arcton (2006) suggested, "Smart women may have less trouble climbing the ladder in these sectors than in others where gender, political alliances, ethnic and other affiliations matter more" (p. 22). Since Africa suffers a shortage of top-level people, gender is not as significant as it might be in lower-level positions. High-level people like Johnson Sirleaf and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, minister of finance in

Nigeria, came to their positions as very accomplished individuals. Amosu and Quist-Arcton concluded that gender is not as important "as an ability to think strategically and a track record of attracting and managing resources" (p. 22).

## Using Quota Systems

Increasingly, gender quotas are viewed as an important policy measure for boosting women's access to decision-making bodies throughout the world, according to Karen Fogg (2004). Drude Dahlerup (2006) reached one especially relevant conclusion, "that in almost all political systems, no matter what electoral regime, it is the political parties, not the voters, that constitute the real gatekeepers into elected offices. Consequently, the party nomination practices should be kept in focus" (para. 10).

The types of quota systems in Africa include constitutional, election law and political party quotas (Mutume, 2004, para. 13). Burkina Faso and Uganda are examples of countries that have constitutional provisions reserving seats in their national parliaments for women. Election law quotas are provisions written into national legislation, as in Sudan. Political party quotas are internal rules that are adopted to include a certain percentage of women as candidates for office, as is the case in South Africa and Mozambique. Julie Ballington (2004) concluded that electoral systems matter because reserved seats exist under "first past the post" systems, whereas proportional representation systems are more suitable for the adoption of voluntary party quotas (p. 124). First past the post is a *plurality/majority election system*. IDEA and Stockholm (2005) explain that it is "the simplest form of plurality/majority electoral system, using *single-member districts* and *candidate-centered* voting. The winning candidate is the one who gains more votes than any other candidate, even if this is not an absolute majority of valid votes" (p. 35). Also important are women's mobilization at all levels of government and windows of opportunity for legislative reform.

Ballington identified accurately six results of the quota implementation in Africa: First, women's political representation has increased steadily over the past 2 decades, with Rwanda becoming the world leader in women's parliamentary representation. Mozambique and South Africa ranked among the top 15 nations in the world. Second, the electoral system type has a strong correlation with women's political representation: Countries with proportional representation systems have twice the number of women in parliament than those with majority systems. Third, African countries utilized gender quotas either by reserved seats or appointments, and voluntary party quotas. Fourth, regional and international organizations mobilizing and recommending women are critical to promote quotas. Fifth, party leaders' political will is central to the successful implementation of quotas. Finally, more research is needed to determine



the political effect of quotas and whether they lead to any real empowerment of women.

### Educating of Women Through NGOs

Abantu for Development (1995) and the many NGOs believe and teach that women's political participation from the grassroots up empowers women. NGOs play a vital role as they work to train women for leadership. One of the important functions of organizations is developing leadership skills. Women use these skills in politics, business, and the professions. Femmes Africa Solidarité (cited in Skaine 2008, p. 1) reminds us that a leader can be a woman in a market selling food to pay for her daughter's education.

FEMNET (the African Women's Development and Communication Network) coordinates African regional participation of NGOs. Its vision is to promote African women's collective leadership for development through networking of African organizations. L. Muthoni Wanyeki, past executive director of FEMNET (personal communication, August 23, 2006) explained FEMNET's purpose: "FEMNET works towards African women's development, equality and other human rights through advocacy at the regional and international levels, training on gender analysis and mainstreaming and communications."

Other pan-African women's organizations and networks work to help women run for office and assist them once they are in office, but they tend to focus on specific sectoral work, according to Wanyeki. Examples are the Association of African Women for Research and Development, which focuses on research; Forum for African Women Educationalists, which concentrates on education; the Federation of African Women's Peace Networks, on peace; Society for Women Against AIDS in Africa on HIV/AIDS; and Women in Law and Development in Africa on law. Wanyeki stated, "There are none that focus specifically on women's political participation (with the exception of networks of female parliamentarians that exist under, for example, the Commonwealth and the IPU)" (personal communication, August 23, 2006).

Women across Africa are involved in creating significant change in their countries. An example of one who has made a difference is Amie Kandeh. Her work in the area of gender-based violence in Sierra Leone was recognized by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) when she was awarded the Sarlo Distinguished Humanitarian Service Award in 2008. She helped develop and coordinate the Sexual Assault Referral Center (SARC) project, one of the IRC's most successful gender-based violence programs. In 2004, under Kandeh's leadership, UNHCR named the SARC project one of the seven best practiced gender-based violence programs worldwide. In 2007, Kandeh led a lobby group that helped pass three gender bills into law: the Domestic Violence Act, Devolution of Estates Act, and Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act (L. Abirafeh, personal communication, October 20, 2008).

### The Challenges

Reaching a position of leadership poses many challenges. Johnson Sirleaf, president of the Republic of Liberia, shared this truth:

Women's presence in parliaments around the world is a reality that is impacting on the social, political and economic fabric of nations and of the world. Yet, their access to these important legislative structures, learning how to work within them, and the extent to which they impact on and through them, remain serious challenges. (IDEA & Stockholm University, 2005, p. 13)

### Political and Social

The social and political challenges include, "balancing work and family obligations; segregation into lower-paid jobs; inequality of pay between men and women; the feminization of poverty; increases in violence against women; and exclusion from post-conflict peace negotiations and rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts," stated Nadezhda Shvedova (2005, p. 48). Party support and media coverage are limited. Women's groups sometimes do not support women or their efforts are not coordinated, wrote Shvedova. Women's low self-esteem and self-confidence are culturally enforced. Multiple roles make getting into and staying in positions of power difficult. If the husband of a female parliamentarian doesn't support her, her life becomes hard. The United Nations Economic Commission of Africa ([UNECA], 2005a) found the numbers of women in legislative bodies had increased, but generally women continued to be underrepresented in power and decision-making positions as legislative leaders.

### Women Heads of State Face Challenges and Structural Limitations

The small number of women in top levels of decision-making positions is caused by challenges related to political participation, reported the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2006). Real change for women necessitates engagement with mainstream institutions. Women must gain civil and political rights and institutional power in order to become leaders. Johnson Sirleaf, president of Liberia, reinforced that challenges remain: "We are aware as a result of our fortitude and struggle there are fortresses of political resistance to this new force of women leadership but we are certain that the wind of change that has hit the west coast of Africa will blow strongly" (IDEA, 2006).

To overcome structural limitations, Peggy Antrobus (2000) suggested, first, women who work in the apparently monolithic organizations within bureaucracies (e.g., some government structures) can transform them by challenging sexism and discrimination at the risk of job, status, or popularity. Second, women workers and their supporters must recognize potential in women who are



beginning to question patriarchal privilege and challenge gender-based hierarchies. Third, to promote transformational leadership within organizations, strategies such as alliance and coalition building are needed.

## The Country Assessment Reports

After the First World Conference on Women was held in 1975 in Mexico, regional commissions of the United Nations evaluated and made recommendations on the international platforms for action on the advancement of women. Since that first conference, UNECA has organized a review every 5 years for the African region. The 1994 Dakar Platform for Action, known as the African Platform for Action, was adopted by African women and their respective governments. UNECA organized the African regional conference to prepare Africa's participation in the 1995 Beijing conference. UNECA issued a separate report on postconflict countries and gender. It found considerable gains during the evolving process of democratization, especially in the inclusion of constitutional equal rights, growth of women's movements, and affirmative action plans. A major constraint for female candidates had been lack of information. In addition, women were not sensitized to the ways they can influence government, and they usually lacked independent resources that made costs of campaigning prohibitive. Third, women program councilors were not knowledgeable enough about gender issues or sensitive to the needs of women, especially the need to challenge some traditional values that undermined the status and rights of women.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) in its report, *Women in Decision-Making in the Arab Region* (2005), included all Arab countries of the world. UNESCWA found that constitutional rights did not necessarily lead to representation. Men controlled the political, social, economic, and legal realms of life through informal and personalized networks. UNESCWA's report stated, "Women in the Arab world have been largely marginalized from the formal political arena." Women remain marginalized even though over the years they have been granted political rights. Some of the earliest Arab countries in Africa to provide women their political rights were Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, and Tunisia. Djibouti became the first to guarantee women's suffrage rights in 1946. Worldwide most Arab countries had upheld such rights by the 1960s and early 1970s. In Africa, Sudan and Tunisia showed the best records of female representation in parliament, listing 9.7% and 11.5%.

UNESCWA also found that Arab women's representation in ministerial and executive positions was low. In 1990 only six African Arab countries had women ministers: Algeria, Comoros, Egypt, Mauritania, Sudan, and Tunisia; in 2008 Djibouti, Eritrea, Libya, and Somalia were added to this list (Christensen, n.d.).

UNECA's *Beijing +5* report (2001) reviewed progress in Africa in the area of women in politics and decision making since the adoption of the Dakar and Beijing declarations. Progress had been slow in that in 1999, only 11% of the members of legislative bodies were women, up from 10% in 1995, far short of the 30% target. The *Beijing +5* report recognized that creating a conducive environment for women to achieve must be accompanied by the philosophy that women should empower themselves. It stressed the importance of judging the nonquantifiable aspects, such as increased ability to enter political leadership, as well as the number of women in positions of power and decision making. In this framework, the report concluded that most African countries demonstrated a national commitment to raising the status of women and increasing their presence in power and decision making.

The second UNECA Beijing report, *Beijing +10* (2005b), viewed gender equality in governance as a human rights issue and a democratic imperative. It stated, "There is no democracy without gender equality." In general, there was a growing list of countries where peaceful elections had taken place, for example, in South Africa after apartheid had ended. Mechanisms for accountability were created, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism within the New Partnership for Africa's Development. UNECA (2005b) identified 3 African countries (Rwanda, South Africa, and Mozambique) among the 14 countries worldwide that reached or exceeded 30% of women in parliament. All of these countries had a proportional representation election system or a mix of systems that included some proportional representation. Eight African countries had quotas for women candidates. In some African countries, the proportion of women in parliaments increased dramatically. Rwanda headed the countries on the list with almost a 49% increase, and even the lowest country on the list, Uganda, had an almost 25% increase. These increments equaled or surpassed the objectives specified in the Beijing Platform for Action. The *Beijing +10* report found women elected and appointed as vice presidents, prime ministers, and as ministers, ambassadors, speakers, and deputy speakers of parliaments and national directors of public prosecution. In South Africa, 42.9% of its ministers were women.

The *Beijing +10* report concluded that many African governments had acted on their promises to implement the Beijing Platform for Action but that there were many unresolved issues: "The empowerment of women and gender equality, commitment to democracy and the right to development, continue to be considered as optional and not obligatory," and "If Africa does not prioritise the promotion of gender equality and continues with 'business as usual,' the continent will continue to struggle with the scourges of poverty, hunger and disease for a long time to come."

UNECA's *African Governance Report* (2005a) categorized African countries into three groups in terms of their efforts to empower women. The "high flyers" were South Africa and Uganda. Countries that had taken moderate



steps include Botswana, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The third group comprised countries that had taken no or inadequate steps: Benin, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, and Swaziland. The women in the high flyer countries held more than 25% of the seats in their parliaments. In the second group, women held 10% to 25% and in the third group, less than 10%. UNECA concluded that the level of women's participation in politics was generally low in spite of a "high flyer" group. It is encouraging that African countries are setting minimum standards for themselves. For example, the Southern African Development Community set a target of 30% target for women's representation in parliament and other state organizations in these countries. The 2010 Southern African Development Community Web site states that South Africa has surpassed the 30% target, and other countries have made increases in women's representation.

### African Gender and Development Index

Josephine Ouedraogo (2004, para. 5) found that "no study has been undertaken on the impact of government policies on the advancement of women at the continental level, which would at the same time enable an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of government strategies and those of other agencies." UNECA devised a tool to measure disparities between men and women in all priority areas (Ouedraogo, 2004). The index was a series of indicators on the basis of which disparities in terms of capacities, opportunities, and the power to bring about change can be measured. The new index correlated, for example, the measuring of gender inequalities as well as governmental efforts for the advancement of women. Ouedraogo para. 17) concluded, "The objective of the African Gender and Development Index is not to classify countries, but rather to provide a common platform for gauging actual progress on the ground, taking into account the social, economic, political and historical context in each country."

The African Gender and Development Index is an ongoing project. In 2006 it found that in the social sector, critical milestones in gender equality have occurred in the 12 African countries piloted: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda. Country performances in reaching gender parity were average for the economic sector and very weak for the political area. In 2007 the UNECA extended the index to include four more countries: Cape Verde, Namibia, Senegal, and Gambia (Conference of African Ministers of Finance, 2007).

In 2008, African countries began their 5-year activity plan for constitutional development agreed to by the African Union and IDEA. The lack of internalization in constitutions of gender equity principles is a legacy of the colonial era. Strengthening political institutions and

processes will make democracy work better and help to bring peace and security, concluded IDEA (2008).

Evaluating the progress of women in Africa in positions of leadership is a work in progress. Until this index is fully evaluated and the progress of countries is itemized, the progress of women's participation in decision making at the office-holding level will not be fully known. Numbers alone at this level do not totally represent women's participation in decision making. Women participate in many ways, such as political parties, lobbying, and private sector activities. Countries excel in ways not examined here. No systematic way is in place at present to determine gender progress and governmental efforts.

### African Women as Top Government Leaders

Notable women serve in many capacities of government leadership. Women serve as speakers of parliament and have gained the influential position of prime minister. Women who served or are serving as prime minister include Agathe Uwilingiyimana of Rwanda (1993–1994), Mame Madior Boye of Senegal (2001–2002), Maria das Neves of São Tomé and Príncipe (2002–2004), Luisa Diogo of Mozambique (2004– ), and Maria do Carmo Trovoada Silveira of São Tomé and Príncipe (2005–2006).

#### *Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2006– )*

Femmes Africa Solidarité (Skaine, 2008, p. 33) proclaimed the election of Johnson Sirleaf as the 23rd president of the Republic of Liberia as "truly a celebration, of which all women of the world and in particular Africa are proud of." Of 22 presidential candidates, Johnson Sirleaf of the Unity Party was the only female. She was elected in November 2005 and inaugurated president on January 16, 2006. Johnson Sirleaf won the November 2005 election with 59.4% of the vote compared to George Weah's 40.6%.

Johnson Sirleaf was born in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, on October 29, 1938. Her family came from the original colonists of Liberia who were ex-African slaves from America. When the ex-slaves, known in Liberia as Americo-Liberians, arrived, they enslaved the indigenous people using the social system of their old American masters to form their new society. Struggle between indigenous Liberians and the Americo-Liberians has led to much of the political and social strife in Liberia (Boddy-Evans, 2006).

At the age of 17, Johnson Sirleaf married James Sirleaf, but they later divorced. She is the mother of four sons and grandmother to six children. From 1948 to 1955, she was educated at the College of West Africa in Monrovia. In 1961 she came to the United States and earned a bachelor of arts degree in accounting at Madison Business College in Madison, Wisconsin. She later received a diploma at the Economics Institute at the University of Colorado and in 1971 she earned a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University.



When Sergeant Samuel Doe staged a military coup in 1980, Johnson Sirleaf left Liberia for several years. During this time she was a loan officer for the World Bank and a director for Citibank in Nairobi. In 1985, she returned to Liberia and President Doe placed her under house arrest because she criticized his repressive rule. David Harris (2006) wrote that when Johnson Sirleaf announced her intention to run as a senatorial candidate in the 1985 elections, she did so "in opposition to the military rule of Samuel Doe. For a brave speech heavily critical of Doe, she was sentenced to ten years imprisonment, of which she served two short periods of detention, one before and one after the 1985 election, before fleeing the country" (para. 1).

President Samuel Doe was killed in Charles Taylor's 1989 invasion to throw out Doe. A tentative peace accord called for elections, and Johnson Sirleaf returned to Liberia after the 7-year civil war to campaign for the presidency as a challenger to Charles Taylor, the strongest warlord. President Taylor was elected. At first, Johnson Sirleaf supported Taylor's 1989 invasion to rid the country of Doe. After that, she was his unrelenting opponent. The Taylor government charged her with treason, and she went into exile. Peace did not prevail, and civil war again broke out under Taylor's dictatorial rule. Taylor went into exile in Nigeria in August 2003. In November 2005, Liberia continued to search for peace and elected Johnson Sirleaf, the standard bearer for the Unity Party. After a disputed run-off with football player George Weah, Johnson Sirleaf became the first woman to win an African presidential election.

#### *Luisa Diogo, Mozambique (2004–)*

Mozambique, with its problems of poverty and disasters (drought, floods, and rising HIV/AIDS infection rates) and recovering from 17 years of civil war (1975–1992), is fortunate to have a visionary leader. Mozambique experienced slow but steady recovery when Luisa Diogo served as minister of finance in the 5 years (1999–2004) prior to her appointment as prime minister. But her history in helping the country began even earlier while still in college when, in 1980, she joined the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

Making Mozambique and all developing countries self-sufficient is one of Diogo's major goals. She has established a "poverty observatory," a forum of citizens and media who from time to time evaluate government strategies. Paul Fauvet (2004) stated that Diogo's greatest success was in debt relief. Mozambique was the third country (after Uganda and Bolivia) to qualify for relief under the World Bank's HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) initiative.

### **Future Directions**

Women make up half the human race, so half of the leaders of humanity should be female on the ground of equity alone, argued C. Sweetman (2000). The World Bank's

*World Development Report* (2006) stated that needed actions included "redistributing access to capital, perhaps by promoting micro-credit, strengthening women's land rights or access to jobs and welfare programmes, changing affirmative action programs to break down stereotyping and improving access to the justice system" (p. 102). Poverty, media, land rights, affirmative action, health and parity issues were all addressed by African countries in both *Beijing +5* and *+10* reports.

Meredeth Turshen (1998) demonstrated that too many African countries have been marked by conflict either through wars of liberation or civil wars. Conflict breaks down patriarchal values, but after the war is over, women are not always accepted. When they return, men view the roles women had assumed in their absence as men's work. Abantu for Development (1995) added that, in countries where conflict is current or recent, the reports found that women are sometimes shut out of politics even though the law provides for equality, as happened to the women who participated in Namibia's campaign for independence in 1986.

The objective expressed by the NGO Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMWA) is a phenomenal ideal. When fully realized, female leaders will have created and sustained feminist space and transformed feminism in government in Africa. AMWA believes their form of leadership is based not on power, but rather is "a process of inspiring ourselves and others towards the achievement of a vision, which transforms women's lives. Within this context, women should be seeking the kind of leadership which can dismantle all forms of patriarchal injustice and oppression," maintained Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi & Algresia Akwi-Ogojo (1998, p. 7).

The UNECA (2005b) stated, "While it is a matter of social justice that women should take their rightful places in decision-making structures, the challenge is to ensure that both men and women who enter into positions of power and decision-making prioritise the need for gender sensitive policies and programmes, and use their positions to bring about gender equality in development" (p. 20).

Part of that transformation is increasing the ability of women to access high-level positions. Sylvia Tamale (2000) reminds us that "eliminating hostility to women in senior political positions will be a painstakingly slow process," but "inspiration can be taken from the new breeze that is blowing across our fair continent" (p. 14).

Women in positions of political leadership continue the African tradition that began in ancient times. Women are in social transformation to produce greater change. All across Africa, exciting change is occurring for women. The Beijing platform country reports provide evidence of change, but they also stress the need for improvement and for women political leaders to guide the change.

Increasingly women in all parts of Africa are meeting the challenge of assuming leadership positions in government. Their progress has accelerated in the last decade, but they face daunting obstacles in order to reach the place where half of the leaders are women.



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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA

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In what has been one of Latin America's most conservative societies, cultural change has swept away at least some vestiges of patriarchal architecture, enabling that society to elect the first female president of a Latin American country to have won the position independently. Michelle Bachelet's election as president of Chile in 2006 marked a turning point for Latin American societies with regard to the possibilities for women's leadership. Although not all societies in Latin America have reached the watershed point seen in Chile, the change in status has been dramatic for many women in the region. This chapter will examine change in women's status and roles in Latin America and the record of women's leadership in the region. The pathbreaking case of Bachelet's election in 2006 as Chile's president will be examined, including the impact of her experience on governance and on prospects for women's leadership in the region. Finally, future directions for women's leadership in Latin America will be assessed.

### Women's Status and Economic Experience in Latin America

As is the case in many parts of the world, in Latin America, women historically have held few leadership positions in government or economy. As Latin America is a largely Roman Catholic region, the tradition held that female leadership in religious affairs was strictly prohibited, thereby precluding significant roles for women in other public spheres of society as well. Long termed a *machista*, or sexist, culture, one characterized by the dominance of men over women, Latin America historically saw few women rise to positions of political

or economic importance. In a landmark analysis of gender roles in Latin America, Elsa Chaney (1979) observed in her study, *Supermadre, Women in Politics in Latin America*, that when women were in the public eye, serving in government or in other organizations of civil society, their activities were almost always extensions of their family responsibilities. Although women, especially those of the narrow middle and upper classes, enjoyed authority within the family, this power was circumscribed in many important ways by educational background and even economic disadvantage compared to male members of the household and extended family. Opportunities for women's leadership with respect to family responsibilities that in other societies might have been exercised through organizations within civil society were quite limited as civil society itself has been comparatively underdeveloped in Latin America. Nonetheless, through attachment to an important male, women such as the iconic Eva Perón (María Eva Duarte de Perón) of Argentina were able to exercise considerable power in their own right.

Owing to the social position occupied by women in Latin America, women across the region were still seeking the right to vote as late as the mid-1950s. Women were not awarded the franchise until 1947 in Argentina and Mexico, 1954 in Colombia, and 1955 in Peru (Williamson, 2007, p. 133). With women's late entry to full citizenship in Latin America, it is not surprising that they did not begin to exercise leadership positions in interest groups and political parties until the 1960s and 1970s (Blake, 2008, p. 55).

While civil society continues to grow and mature in the region, it is still the case that by comparison with other middle income countries, Latin America has tended to be



very focused upon the state as the source of solution to social and economic problems despite the advent of market democracy to most of the countries in the region. Power has been very centralized in Latin America's typically presidentialist governing orders with weak legislative and judicial systems, thus affording fewer access points for political mobilization within civil society.

The global gender gap index, created by the World Economic Forum, measures the performance of states and regions across four sub-indices of equality (Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahidi, 2008). These indices measure a society's performance on behalf of women in terms of political empowerment, economic participation, educational attainment, and health and survival. For the years 2006 to 2008 as measured by the World Economic Forum's gender gap reports, Latin America stood somewhat ahead of Asia in all indicators while lagging behind Eastern Europe, North America, Western Europe, and Oceania. The Middle East and North Africa showed the poorest performance. Sub-Saharan Africa stood just ahead of the Middle East.

Across all regions, the most difficult area for achieving gender equity is in political empowerment. A country's ranking in the gender gap report is determined by calculating the number of women with seats in parliament over the male value, the number of women at ministerial level over the male value, and the number of years a female has served as head of state in the past 50 years over the male value with component variables weighted. Based on this rating, the data show that Argentina is the regional leader in providing gender equity in this most difficult category. For 2008, Argentina earned a political empowerment score of 0.3027 of a total potential score of 1.0, ranking at number 15 in the world. Cuba, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Chile follow most closely in these rankings. By comparison, the U.S. scores at 0.1398 with a ranking of 56, which places the United States between Mexico and Venezuela in the rank order of states. Brazil, Guatemala, and Belize rank well to the bottom, with Brazil at a rank of 110, Guatemala at 113, and Belize at 116 of the 130 countries surveyed worldwide (Hausmann et al., 2008, Table 4, p. 13).

The next most difficult hurdle for women in achieving gender parity is that of economic participation. Latin America slipped in its world ranking in the World Economic Forum report with respect to women's economic participation, falling behind even sub-Saharan Africa in its pace of improvement (Hausmann et al., 2008, Figure 3, p. 16). While women constitute 32.2% of full-time employees in Latin American economies, only 1 in 26 of these workers is in a senior management position (UNIFEM, 2008, p. 65). In comparative terms, however, women in Latin America fare better than some others in this regard elsewhere in the world. Women's participation as senior managers is even lower in East Asia and the Pacific, where only 1 in 62 women has risen to senior

management (UNIFEM, 2008, p. 65). The indicators for educational attainment, and for health and survival, have shown women in the region to be making more rapid improvement. Argentina, again the regional leader, ranked 15; Costa Rica ranked 20; and Chile ranked 26. Mexico and Venezuela ranked further down the list at 55 and 57, respectively. Both Brazil and Guatemala fared poorly, however, in their ranking at 110 and 113, respectively (Hausmann et al., 2008, Table 4, p. 13).

Nevertheless, there is some evidence that women in Latin America have seen some limited success in their ability to break the glass ceiling in the corporate world. Of those who work in the formal sector, 25% to 35% are employed as mid-level managers although they are not well represented in the highest levels of corporate leadership. Few women are found in positions of corporate presidents, vice presidents, or members of corporate boards, yet women are increasingly found in positions of department heads. Women occupy 14% of the seats on corporate boards regionwide, including 3% of the seats in Mexico and 7% of the seats in Argentina (Maxfield, 2005, p. 4).

The greatest upward mobility for women in Latin America's corporate world is seen in Colombia and Mexico. Argentina and Ecuador follow, while the weakest showing is in Brazil and Venezuela (Maxfield, 2005, p. 3, Table 1). Women have found the greatest opportunity for professional advancement in the pharmaceutical, health services, and the financial services sectors. They have not done well in the energy, telecommunications, or manufacturing sectors. Women tend to see more rapid advancement in the areas of human resources and marketing but are less likely to move up the corporate ladder in engineering positions, operations, or corporate finance (Maxfield, 2005, pp. 2–6).

Notably, the private sector has offered more opportunity to women than has the public sector. Multinational corporations have proved to be friendlier to women than have government enterprises. Women tend to see more advancement in larger private sector firms, those with more than 1,000 employees (Maxfield, 2005, p. 7).

When interviewed about their experiences, women attribute their success in the corporate arena to having worked harder than their male counterparts, often reporting that they worked twice as hard as their peers. Generally, their prospects for upward corporate mobility are stymied by stereotypes and social norms rather than overt discrimination. Compounding their problems is that they tend not to be as mobile in their work options as a result of family pressures and therefore are taken more for granted by their superiors. They report being less interested in competing for titles or power, but rather remain more focused on successful completion of tasks (Maxfield, 2005, pp. 8–11). Overall, the challenge of managing the work–family balance weighs heavily upon women employed in the corporate community and shapes



the choices made in developing careers and moving up the corporate ladder.

## Women's Leadership Experience in Latin America

Despite significant cultural and structural barriers to senior leadership positions in Latin American states, women have nonetheless increasingly occupied such positions of leadership, especially in the public sector, by either electoral or appointive means. Women have held appointments as ministers of foreign relations (e.g., in Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador); ministers of defense (Colombia, Argentina, and Chile); and minister of environment (Ecuador). More typically, however, they have held leadership positions in social service-oriented government ministries.

They have also led nongovernmental organizations, including women's organizations, human rights organizations, political parties, and peasant confederations. One such organization is Argentina's Grandmothers and Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, a group of women who first donned white headscarves in 1977 and began to walk in silence every Thursday afternoon in front of the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace in Buenos Aires. These human rights crusaders, active now for over 30 years, began to demonstrate to demand answers from Argentina's military dictatorship about the disappearances of their children. These women were a critical force in opposing the government's apparatus of oppression during the years of Argentina's "dirty war" in the 1970s and 1980s, and have continued to press successive Argentine governments concerning the fate of the "disappeared," stirring the conscience of the nation.

Women have been on the front lines of community-organized popular service organizations such as the soup kitchens of Lima, Peru. One such community leader was Maria Elena Moyano, deputy mayor of a sprawling Lima shantytown and leader of the community movement there. She was assassinated in 1992 by Peru's Shining Path guerrillas as she sought to protect the area from guerrilla pressure. Women have also held leadership positions in insurgent organizations in Latin America, including the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), in El Salvador's civil war of the 1980s; the Shining Path insurgent force in Peru in the 1960s to 1980s; and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), in Colombia, active beginning in the 1960s and continuing to the present.

Women's participation in such organizations has not been free of gender discrimination, however. Although women's membership has been comparatively high in these organizations, with women constituting fully 30% of the FARC's cadres, for example, leadership positions have been more limited. Only one woman, for example, has ever

participated as part of the peace negotiating teams fielded by the FARC to negotiate with the Colombian government. Women suffered marginalization in the assignment of duties within the FMLN (Caivano & Hardwick, 2008, p. 173). Notably, after the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) government was defeated in the 1990 elections, the number of women in Nicaragua's legislature dropped to well below prewar levels despite the representation of the FSLN in the postwar legislature (Paxton & Hughes, 2007, p. 176).

However infrequently, women have in fact served in the most senior leadership positions in Latin America. In February 2010, Laura Chinchilla was elected president of Costa Rica after having served in the government of President Oscar Arias. In Bolivia, Haiti, and Ecuador, women have served as appointed caretaker presidents of their governments. In Argentina, Isabel Martínez de Perón (María Estela Martínez Cartas de Perón) a former nightclub dancer and former Argentine president Juan Perón's third wife, was elected president in 1974, after the death of her husband, but was overthrown in a military coup shortly thereafter. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, widow of the prominent journalist and national icon, Pedro Chamorro, who had been the victim of a political assassination, was elected president of Nicaragua in 1990. Although elected as a "stand-in" for her late husband, she served for a significant period as a leader in her own right. In Panama, the widow of former president Anulfo Arias, Mireya Moscoso de Arias, was elected president in 1999 and served one term, which ended in 2004. Moscoso's political identity derived entirely from her deceased husband who had three times been elected president in Panama and had served until he was overthrown in a military coup in 1968. Moscoso, trained in interior decorating, ran on the Anulfista Party ticket and pledged to bring about a restorationist regime to Panama.

In 2007, Argentines elected Cristina Fernández de Kirchner as president following the presidency of her husband, Nestor Kirchner. As a political power in her own right, Senator Fernández easily won the Peronist nomination for the presidency under the banner of the Peronist FREPASO Party. That said, Fernández and Kirchner were viewed as a political partnership in which Kirchner clearly occupied the principal position. As Fernández took the presidency, her husband remained a vital component of the "Kirchner" political juggernaut. In what appeared to be a division of labor, President Fernández actively sought engagement in the international arena while her husband concentrated on managing domestic political strategy and was rumored to be considering another run for the presidency.

Another recent serious female contender for the presidency is Panama's Balbina del Carmen Herrera Aráuz, who had been the president of her political party and had won her party's nomination for the 2009 presidential election. In Argentina, legislator Elisa Carrió was a significant contender in her race for the presidency in 2007, against the



eventual winner in that contest, Cristina Fernández. Together, the two female candidates, Fernández and Carrio, representing a center-left perspective, won over 60% of the national vote. In Peru, attorney Lourdes Flores Nano, an experienced politician and leader of the Popular Christian Party, campaigned for president in 2001 and 2006. Although admitting to having been less than prepared for her contest in 2001, she and many observers believed she would win in 2006 and nearly did so. Running as a pro-business centrist, Flores fell victim to a whisper campaign launched by her opponents questioning her sexual orientation as a single woman. She was also hurt by allegations that her father had engaged in racist remarks concerning Peru's then-President Alejandro Toledo. Had she won, she would have been Latin America's second woman president to have won office without riding the coattails of a male family member. In Ecuador, Martha Roldós Bucaram, a member of the Directive Commission of the Constituent Assembly created by President Rodolfo Correa, was seen as an active contender to succeed Correa although she too would be riding the coattails of leading political families in that country. In Brazil, one of the leading contenders to follow President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula) in the presidential office in 2010 is his chief of staff, Dilma Rousseff. Finally, in Mexico, Beatriz Paredes Rangel, currently president of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), has been mentioned as a probable candidate for the presidency in Mexico's 2012 election.

Since 2000, women have been named as vice presidential candidates in at least 15 states in Latin America. Women contending for legislative office in Latin America face significant obstacles. In 2006, only 19% of legislative seats were held by women (Schwindt-Bayer, 2008b, pp. 2–3). Women tend to be assigned to committees that address women's issues and "family" concerns rather than those committees that deal with finance, appropriations, foreign affairs, defense, or committees that deal with the nation's economy (Schwindt-Bayer, 2008a, p. 8). Women have been able to make greater headway in the legislative setting if they develop "strategic partnerships" with women's movement organizations outside of the legislature and with state organizations that may serve women such as the special Secretariat for Women in Brazil or the National Women's Service (SERNAM) in Chile (Franceschat, 2008, p. 20). Notably, SERNAM's director holds the rank of minister of state.

Several women have recently served as defense ministers in Latin America, traditionally a male domain. Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Colombia have all seen women appointed to the top job in defense ministries over the past few years. In Argentina, Nilda Garré was appointed defense minister in 2005 and has undertaken major reforms within Argentina's military. Despite the resistance of the military to the reform project and to the minister herself because of her political associations on the left, Garré has continued to enjoy the support and confidence of Argentina's recent presidents, her political allies.

In a stunning appointment, Martha Lucia Ramírez was appointed Colombia's defense minister in 2002, but within 15 months, she had resigned. Her tenure as defense minister was marked by opposition from the military regarding her program for reform of military expenditures, for centralization of military budgetary authority, and for other reform issues. While Bachelet in Chile and Garré in Argentina had both pursued similar reform projects, Minister Ramírez found herself mired in public feuding with military officials and with the head of the national police, all of whom were reportedly determined to see her fail. Unlike Chile and Argentina, the urgency of Colombia's ongoing internal war meant that the president was unwilling to back his minister over the objections of his generals. Minister Ramírez would be forced to resign rather than having the president confront the military at the very beginning of what would prove to be a dramatic series of initiatives he would launch to turn around Colombia's desperate military situation.

Although women in Latin America hold less than 25% of all elected positions, the route to leadership may come through appointment to senior positions as was the case with Bachelet. Indeed, Bachelet never held elective office prior to her election as president. Women hold 25% of ministerial positions in Latin America's presidential cabinets (Inter-American Dialogue, Inter-American Development Bank, & League of Women Voters, 2008, p. ii). Since 2000, however, the number of women in legislative positions has risen dramatically. In some cases, this is due to the imposition of quota systems for nominations from political parties or for seats in legislative assemblies. Gender representation is sometimes provided for by quota laws that mandate defined representation for women in political party leadership posts, senior cadres, local or regional legislatures, or national legislatures. These arrangements may be voluntary or carry the weight of law. In some cases, these arrangements result from the influence of international organizations; in other cases, they may result from a political calculus. What is most important to consider when looking at gender quota arrangements is the set of requirements that lead to actual implementation of the relevant provisions of law, legislative rules, or internal party rules.

Between 2000 and 2006, women's participation in legislatures grew by 35% (Inter-American Dialogue, Inter-American Development Bank, & League of Women Voters, 2008, p. 2). Quota laws have not been very effective at the subnational level, as enforcement is particularly problematic at the regional and local levels. There, women are greatly underrepresented as governors and mayors, with women holding only 11% of gubernatorial seats (Schwindt-Bayer, 2008b, p. 3). At the national level, however, quota laws have increased the number of female legislators in Argentina, Mexico, and Costa Rica, for example. Argentina's women comprise 40% of the legislators in Argentina's Chamber of Deputies and serve in 30% of Argentina's Senate seats (UNIFEM, 2008, p. 40).



Argentina's quota law is written into the national constitution and provides legal sanctions for noncompliance. Of those states in the region where there are no quota laws, Brazil and Paraguay show the greatest underrepresentation of women in the legislative assembly. Nevertheless, despite Brazil's gender deficit in its legislature, female representatives have been remarkably effective in advancing legislation regarding women's rights, including legislation regarding domestic violence, sexual harassment, and health and maternity issues (UNIFEM, 2008, p. 27).

Studies show that women's underrepresentation in politics derives from a host of factors, including resource issues such as the lack of available time due to family and work obligations, lack of access to financing for candidates, and cultural aversion to such roles. Compounding this problem is that when women do win election to legislative assemblies, they then tend to be assigned by male leadership cadres to committees that concentrate on social policymaking. While women are thus theoretically able to impact social policy, they are screened out of participation in legislative power centers that address resource distribution. Even where women have higher rates of legislative participation, they are seldom found in leadership positions. Another problem faced by women is that when they are chosen by parties to run for election, they are often picked to do so in races that have a strong incumbent. Women are seen as a wild card that may have the chance to create an upset by representing something "new." Most often, however, although these races are often simply losing propositions, political parties can claim to have met their obligation to include women candidates.

Overall, women's participation in elective office is encouraged by rising levels of economic development, education, and changes in party and electoral rules. Electoral systems with single-member representation tend to produce fewer women in elective office whereas more women enter office via systems based upon party list-based elections (Pérez-Stable, 2008, p. 3). This result is explained in part by the greater availability of campaign finance support for candidates in strong party systems as opposed to single member district elections where candidates tend to run as individuals and not necessarily as candidates intimately tied to party interests. Observers suggest that the number of women leaders will rise in elective office when quotas are imposed that stipulate a percentage target and provide strong enforcement mechanisms.

### **A Woman's Voice: President Michelle Bachelet**

Bachelet's election as president of Chile for the period 2006 to 2010 is a remarkable development in Latin America's political history. Almost no one could have predicted that a woman with her background could become the president of what had been one of Latin America's most conservative societies. More than a dozen women

have served previously as president or chief executive in Latin America, but she is the first to have won the position in her own right.

Michelle Bachelet is the daughter of a Chilean Air Force officer and his wife who worked in a Chilean university, eventually as an archaeologist. As her father took new assignments as an air force attaché at different air force bases around Chile and overseas in Washington, D.C. Bachelet moved with the family, learning to adapt to new circumstances and to experience new cultures. As her father rose in rank to become a general, the family eventually settled in Santiago where Bachelet attended high school and university, pursuing medical studies as her father wished.

These were times of great political upheaval in Chile as President Salvador Allende was elected in 1970 and then overthrown in a military coup in 1973. In that coup, the Chilean Air Force bombed the office of the president, La Moneda, and, with the rest of the military under the leadership of Army General Augusto Pinochet, imposed martial law and shut down Chile's democracy. Bachelet's father had been assigned by the air force to run the subsistence program that had been put in place by the Allende government to provide affordable foodstuffs to Chile's impoverished citizens. Gradually, Allende's cabinet had come to be filled with military officers as the president tried to placate the military prior to the coup by increasing its responsibility in the government. General Bachelet's association with Allende, however, caused his fellow officers to turn on him after the coup, and he was arrested. Eventually Bachelet and her mother were also arrested and, like her father, they were tortured by the officials of the Pinochet dictatorship. Whereas her father died from his months of torture, eventually by cardiac arrest and medical maltreatment, Bachelet and her mother were eventually released and became political refugees, initially moving to Australia and later to what was East Germany. Despite the horrors of her experiences, she took up her medical studies once again in East Germany, specializing in pediatrics.

In 1979, Bachelet and her mother returned to Chile. By this time, Bachelet had been married and was the mother of a child. Eventually, she would have three children and would find that her personal relationships were fraught with disappointment. She decided to focus on rearing and supporting her children and pursuing her medical career. Her medical career in the private and then in the public sector led her to be appointed as an advisor to the Health Ministry and eventually to the position of minister of health in the government of President Ricardo Lagos. Chile had returned to democracy in 1990, and Bachelet had maintained her long-standing associations with the Socialist Party, one of the four parties in the coalition, named *Concertación*, which had governed Chile since the return to democracy.

She had also been previously appointed as a health care advisor to the Ministry of Defense. Her interest in defense and military issues was both difficult and easy to understand.



As the child of a murdered air force general and the victim of torture and political persecution, she could have decided to remain as far afield as possible from the security sector. Yet she was understandably drawn to it by a recognition that the military sector needed to be brought into alignment with Chile's restored democracy. She pursued courses at the country's leading military and defense think tank and later received a fellowship to study at the Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D.C. Ultimately, she was appointed minister of defense in the Lagos administration, an appointment that stunned so many because of the bitter irony that was implied.

She had made an excellent impression with Inter-American Defense College counterparts in Washington and did so as well with the Chilean military leadership, as uncomfortable a situation as it was. When appointed minister of defense, she was to be the first woman to have ever occupied that position in Latin America. Her tenure as minister was marked by successful reform efforts and support to the military for modernization of the armed forces.

Bachelet's political success was in no doubt facilitated by the centralized nature of power in Chile's democratic system. Power is centralized in the office of the president and in the national capital. The legislative and judicial sectors are comparatively weak and limited in their ability to contest the power of the president. There is little in the way of regional power and authority over the political and financial direction of the country. Given this arrangement, contenders for power in the Chilean system need to cultivate key national political leaders rather than having to find the financial wherewithal to build a massive campaign apparatus to win nomination. In the case of President Bachelet, her long years of service to the Socialist Party, her close political relationship with former President Ricardo Lagos, and the determination of the four-party coalition to remain united under the banner of the *Concertación*, all contributed to her ability to win the coalition's nomination.

That said, despite the backing of her political party and that of the sitting president, Bachelet was obliged to win her party's nomination in her own right. With the *Concertación* having been in power since 1990, coalition leaders sensed that something new was needed to forestall a victory by political forces of the center-right. Her advantage was that she was seen as the "other," representing a departure from conventional practices and allowing the coalition to appear to be presenting a new option to voters despite the continuation of the governing party in power.

Throughout Latin America, women are beginning to enjoy something of a political advantage in the minds of voters as they represent a departure from the status quo. Despite the sweep of democracy in Latin America over the past 20 years, democratic regimes have failed to put down deep roots. Dissatisfaction with the practice of democracy is felt throughout the region. Voters view politicians and political parties with skepticism that borders

on contempt in many cases. Among the most distrusted actors in society are professional politicians. Democracy has failed to deliver basic public goods and the region has seen political backlash against the failure of democratic regimes to provide honest, effective governance to society. Few states in Latin America have effectively tackled the two fundamental problems that afflict these societies: poverty and inequality. These conditions of life throughout most of the region directly affect the availability of health care, education, and employment. These problems fall heavily upon the shoulders of women as they seek to provide for family welfare, and in so many cases, are single heads of households. As political candidates, women are viewed as more values driven and less likely to succumb to corruption.

This context has opened the door to increasing consideration of women as candidates for political leadership. According to Bachelet, "One reason we women have begun appearing as relevant figures is that we represent a type of humanization of politics, closer to how people see themselves" (Francheschet, 2005, p. 2). It was not altogether surprising, therefore, that the two leading candidates for the *Concertación* nomination for the presidency in 2005 were two women, Foreign Relations Minister María Soledad Alvear and Defense Minister (and former Health Minister) Michelle Bachelet. Alvear attributed the opening toward women in Chilean politics to "tremendous cultural change. . . . I think people are now willing to vote for a woman. That is a result of our offering a different style of leadership, one that people want because it is identified with the real Chile" (Rohter, 2004, p. A12). Marta Lagos, the head of Latin America's most influential public opinion polling operation, *Latinobarómetro*, and a Chilean herself, commented upon the emergence of strong female candidates for the presidency in Chile:

I think that both of these women have emerged not so much because they are women but because of a vacuum and disenchantment with politics so big that people are looking for something as far away as possible from the traditional politician. They are symbols for a Chilean electorate that wants new faces and a different way of doing politics. (Rohter, 2004, p. A12)

With the nomination in hand, Bachelet won the presidency at the end of a second-round runoff election in which she defeated the center-right candidate, Sebastian Pinera Echenique, a multimillionaire businessman who is the principal owner of the national airline, LAN. Bachelet's election was a reflection of the dramatic cultural change that had swept through Chilean society since the return of democracy. Chile had seen a shift in social values that resulted in, for example, the legalization of divorce in 2004, and Chileans, it seemed, were ready for more change. One study attributed Bachelet's victory to the perception that she was the most trustworthy and approachable of the candidates, that she benefited from President Lagos's popularity, and that she also benefited from a strong showing by



women voters who appreciated that one of her campaign slogans was "Palabra de Mujer" ("A Woman's Voice"). Voters were particularly persuaded by her emphasis on employment, health, and education (Morales Quiroga, 2008, pp. 11–13, 26).

Bachelet ran on a campaign platform that promised economic development, equality, pension reform, energy reform, and improvement in relations with other countries in Latin America. The fact that she was a separated single mother of three children from two different relationships and was an openly declared agnostic mattered less than her agenda of social improvement and social inclusion. She also promised to appoint a cabinet composed of 50% women and 50% men and campaigned in favor of a broader 50% quota for women across the entirety of the public sector. Her specific promises to women included free preschool for the poorest 40% of the population, improvements in education, nondiscrimination in labor practices and in health care services, and the creation of 1 million new jobs along with job training programs for women and single mothers (Ross, 2006). She was elected with 53.49% of the votes cast winning votes from both men and women for her agenda. Her coalition also won a huge majority in the legislature.

During the election, Bachelet commented upon what she expected to be her leadership style: "My style will be much more participatory, seeking to coordinate, articulate and excite people around the tasks ahead. It is a style that could be characterized as more feminine, but which in reality, I think is more modern" (Ross, 2006, n.p.). In another interview in 2007, Bachelet offered additional thoughts about leadership:

It's always difficult to say if some attributes are gender linked or more personal to women and men. I know women who are very hard, who act like a man and tell you, "If you don't act like a man, you are dead." Equally, I know men who share my style. I have made a conscious choice that I will pursue a leadership style that can be strong and authoritative but can retain "womanly" attributes, if you will. That is why I push for social dialogue, because I think the best thing for the economy and the people is for everyone—owners, managers, and workers—to sit down and see how we can move forward together. (qtd. in Larraguibel, 2007, n.p.)

Her record of accomplishment has been substantial and she has succeeded in rebuilding Chile's ties to neighboring Bolivia and Peru, states with whom Chile has traditionally had difficulty. She has tackled the difficult issue of military sector reform, undertaking the all but unthinkable task of stripping away the military's guaranteed source of copper-based revenues and forcing a program of organizational modernization on the military to enhance civilian authority and to save critical revenues wasted by duplication in services-based expenditure. President Bachelet's success in foreign policy has been

marked by her election as interim president of the newly organized United Nations of the South, UNASUR. As president of UNASUR, she moved effectively to offer diplomatic assistance to the besieged Bolivian government, staving off what appeared to be a growing secessionist movement in Bolivia in 2008 that would have split the country in two.

Her leadership style has been described as inclusive and focused on consensus building. According to the authors of one study of Bachelet, she prefers to work in groups and to form task forces to work together. "Few things are more far afield from her style than to surround herself with four or five advisors and to make decisions within closed walls [author's translation]" (Subercaseaux & Sierra, 2006, pp. 138–139). Her emphasis has been on making sure that those who participate in work efforts have full knowledge of their work environment and know clearly what needs to be accomplished and why.

While visiting the United Kingdom in 2008, President Bachelet reflected on her experience as a political leader, noting the continued burden of sexism on female leaders. "Yes, I think women still have to prove themselves and have requirements put on them that men do not. . . . I have never seen a male candidate or president having his clothes or hair discussed. . . . There is a banalisation of women." Bachelet observes that "a strong woman" is characterized as "a woman of steel. A 'soft woman' is criticized for 'lack of leadership'" (Beeston, 2008). Bachelet continued, "I remember (former Chilean) President Lagos once was so touched by something his eyes were teary and the press said 'oh, what a sensitive man.' When I do it, I am called hysterical" (Beeston, 2008).

President Bachelet also noted that President Fernández of Argentina has lamented the tendency to label women as hysterical. The two presidents were involved in crisis diplomacy to defuse the March 2008 Colombia–Ecuador conflict following Colombia's cross-border attack on the FARC in Ecuadorian territory. "Christina [Kirchner] said they usually think that women are hysterical. . . . It was very funny [Bachelet said]. We were the ones who called on everybody to be cool. It is a paradox that women are pretty rational" (qtd. in Beeston, 2008, n.p.).

President Bachelet's tenure in office has been marked by the usual swings in support that characterize most presidencies. She has been credited with positioning Chile well to ride out the economic shocks triggered by energy commodity price escalation and by the U.S. financial collapse of 2008–2009. A reshuffling of her cabinet in March 2009 sent a strong reassuring signal that she was focused upon managing the impact of the global economic crisis and was intent upon still further improvement of Chile's relations with regional neighbors. Having seen a drop in support early in her tenure, by 2009 she enjoyed a nearly 60% approval rating (Vogler, 2009). She has compiled a favorable record in financial management, pension reform, military reform and foreign



affairs, particularly in achieving improved relations with neighboring states Peru and Bolivia.

## Summary and Future Directions

This chapter has reviewed the leadership experience of women in Latin America, primarily in the political and economic arenas. In Latin America, societal development has tended to emphasize the primacy of the state and the public sector with secondary emphasis placed upon civil society and the private sector. With the end of authoritarian governments and the advent of market democracy to the vast majority of states in the region, the private sector has grown in importance. Yet, given this profile of societal development, women's advance into leadership positions in the public sector has been and will continue to be a key measure of women's empowerment and opportunity for significant leadership.

Women's participation in leadership in the economy continues to be slow to develop, but women have seen more success in private sector employment in large corporations and those with multinational connections. They have done least well in smaller national enterprises where the norms of business enterprise are governed by family interests and traditional management arrangements. Even in businesses that have been friendlier to women's advancement to senior positions, they have tended to do better in more traditional activities within the corporation relating to human relations or sales rather than engineering, finance, or operations.

Within the public sector, women have fared better in countries that have pursued well-structured quota systems mandating representation in national legislatures. Women have pursued both elective and appointive office to climb the political ladder. Often, appointment to leadership positions in political parties and to positions in national ministries has served to overcome traditional prejudices concerning the "proper" role for women in society or their capacity for effective leadership.

Nevertheless, as is the case in most of the world (with the exception of several Scandinavian states), there remains a long road ahead for women to reach gender parity in leadership positions. Progress has been made in Latin America and the pace of change is represented by the remarkable election of Michelle Bachelet as Chile's president, by the election of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner as Argentina's president, by the election of Laura Chinchilla to Costa Rica's presidency in 2010, by the near win of Lourdes Flores in Peru's 2006 election, by the likely presidential candidacies of women in Latin America's two leading powers, Brazil and Mexico, for elections in 2010 and 2012, respectively, and by the prospect of numerous other women contending for leadership positions on what is now a regular basis. Clearly, as Latin America's citizens search for answers to profound problems of development, they are now increasingly willing to listen to women's voices as a source of insight into these issues.

For women in Latin America, access to enhance economic resources, access to education, and access to information resources will be important in the development of new leadership cadres. Women's groups have been an important source of support for women in positions of political leadership, and the continued vibrancy of such groups will be an important factor in the success of women as political leaders. Most important for women's access to leadership has been their success within the region's political parties. It has been through the political party system that women's capabilities have been most significantly recognized. Ministerial appointments have also been exceptionally important for women, and it will be important for women's organizations to apply the necessary pressure to ensure cabinet representation. Representation in elective office will continue to be difficult except in those cases where well-designed and well-enforced quota systems are in place. Several states including, importantly, Brazil, are currently lagging in affording gender parity in representation, and significant efforts will need to be launched to overcome this deficit.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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From history textbooks of the Middle East and North Africa, usually students learn the historical stories of important women leaders. This history includes many civilizations, empires, and religions that have called the diverse parts of the Middle East and North Africa their home. Some of the women emerging from this region include Canaan goddesses such as Ishtar, goddess of love and fertility, and women leaders such as Alissar (or Elissa from Tyre in what is now known as Lebanon who founded Carthage in today's Tunisia); Zannib, the queen of Tadmor (in Syria); the Queen of Sheba (in Yemen); Nefertiti, Cleopatra, and Hatshepsut, who ruled her people and convinced the world she was a god (Egypt); El Kahina, an indigenous leader (Algeria); Khadija, Mohammad's first wife, a well-known trader and the first believer in Mohammad's message; Mariam [Mary], Jesus's mother, who defied her people for her faith and brought Jesus into the world; Hagar, who carried Ismael across the desert in Saudi Arabia; Fatima, Mohammad's daughter and the wife of Ali (the founder of Shi'a Islam), who fought for her people; Fatima al-Fihri or Oum al-Banin, founder of the oldest university in the world, University of Qarawiyyin in Tunisia; Rabi'ah al-Adwaiyah, Sufi (an Islamic religious tradition) leader and poet, Wallada Bint al-Mistakfi; and Al-Khansa (poet).

These phenomenal women constitute only the tip of the iceberg of women's leadership in a variety of domains of life, including the economic, political, cultural, and educational. At the same time, in the modern history of the region, few women's names appear in the halls of parliament, senates, and ministries, or as heads of state. Writers, foundations, and government officials are often quick to list the percentage of women's participation in parliament

and other elected or appointed political positions in national governments as (often the only) indicators of women's political participation and leadership. Attention is rarely given to women in local governance, for example, or to alternative understanding of leadership and the breadth and scope of what actually constitutes the political process or political participation. The endless wars and conflicts in the region, as well as economic upheaval and political changes, also produced some important iconic images of courageous women fighters, caretakers, community leaders, teachers, and artists. These women were involved in building and rebuilding their communities but rarely made it to high-level decision-making positions at the state level. Feminists and women's rights activists began the process of uncovering some of that history to record and to retell the contributions women leaders have made.

This chapter will take a closer look at women's leadership in the large and very diverse Middle East and North Africa region. There is a shared history with numerous similarities culturally, linguistically, economically, and politically, yet there is much regional diversity and local particularities. The different types of colonial rules, and the different types of liberation struggles that ensued, led to different types of political structures and societies. There are countries that continue to struggle for liberation (e.g., Palestine), while others are suffering from recent occupations (e.g., Iraq), and yet others that have been marred by political unrest and autocratic governments.

The first section will discuss women's leadership in the political processes, including women's leadership in the struggle for political rights and in the struggle to build nations, including liberation and armed struggle. The second section will focus on women's leadership in the

women's movement toward equality in the region, addressing also education and law changes. The third section will focus on contributions of women's leadership in cultural and knowledge production. In all of these sections, it will be impossible to address all aspects of these fields and bring to light all women's leadership in the region. Instead, due to space limitations, the chapter will highlight particular stories and histories based on issues or specific countries.

## Women and Political Participation

Women's political participation is multiple and varied. An important element of women's political rights is the right to vote and run for office (suffrage). Women's participation in governing bodies of the countries, including parliament, cabinet, senates, and ambassadorial positions, is an important indicator but does not comprise the whole story of women's leadership in the political scene.

### Women's Leadership for Political Rights

Women's struggle for political rights in the region is a diverse one. Even though suffrage was provided by political will in certain instances, it often came as a result of a longer history of struggle in which women played a leading role in advocating for such rights utilizing diverse strategies. The struggle for suffrage in Lebanon and Syria has an old history closely tied to the women's movement, particularly in its early stages of development. The first attempt to raise the concern to the authorities took place in April 1920 when women presented a proposal to the Syrian Congress to grant women the right to vote (Thompson, 2000). Women activists wanted no more mediation between themselves and access to public space and the political arena, and longed for full citizenship rights. In 1919 "a group of Lebanese women, including 'Anbara Salam, had followed King Faysal in the harem section of his train to Damascus to submit a petition to him on women's rights" (Thompson, 2000, p. 118). At the same time, in Syria, several women activists, such as Nazik Abid and Mary Ajamy, were using women's magazines as an organizing tool to mobilize for this right. Women had supporters and opponents in the Congress during the debates that ensued around granting women the right to vote. When their efforts were rejected, women took the loss as an opportunity to work hard and to prove that they were deserving of equal citizenship to men. In 1922 women marched against the arrest of a national leader, and many were injured by the police and arrested. In 1923 the suffrage issue was brought up again, this time by the Lebanese Representative Council. Unable to attend the council meetings, women prepared a representative, Sheikh Yusuf al-Khazin, a newspaper owner, to speak on their behalf. The issue came up again for a vote in the 1925 council meeting, and it was defeated when only 3 out of 30

deputies voted in favor. Finally, in 1949 (6 years after Lebanon's independence) the Lebanese Women's Committees elected an Executive Committee to Demand Women's Political Rights. For three years, this committee led a strong fight and succeeded in changing the election law to allow for women's suffrage (Haidar, 2007).

In 1974 a royal decree in Jordan allowed women to enter public positions and participate in political parties and unions. However, in actuality, women were able only to make use of these rights in 1989. Salam Al-Mahadin (2004) argues that the capacity of women's nongovernmental organizations in Jordan to create change in the political structure, and thus society at large, was aborted and neutralized early on by the government. The Arab Women's Federation, established in 1954 with strong ties to the Arab National Movement, acted as a gender pressure group. It worked on disseminating its agenda through organized political action. It was able then to affect the legislative body before it was outlawed in 1956 in the political crackdown on all political parties and civil society institutions following an attempted coup. This crackdown, in addition to other changes in the political structure, neutralized many of these entities' powers. As such, the royal decree had little impact on the ground. Even though Queen Noor, Princess Bessma, and, recently, Queen Rania have all founded organizations and taken some steps toward the improvement of women's lives, their impact remains constricted by their political position and is limited to charitable work, issues around orphans and poverty, with little focus on rights.

Egyptian women in the region historically had the most experience in the political arena. Women gained the right to vote and run for office in 1956, but only after a struggle and a hunger strike led by Doria Shafiq in 1954 demanding from the leadership of the Free Officers Revolution (1952) full citizenship for women. Two female candidates entered the parliament in 1957. Then in 1959, women became members of the ministerial cabinet and have had some representation, though largely inadequate in recent years (at 1.8% only in 2005), until the present.

The Gulf region (excluding Iraq) had particular political trajectories that led often after independence in the 1960s and 1970s from British rule to monarchies and kingdoms, where, in general, all people do not vote. In Bahrain in 2001, the political system was changed to a constitutional monarchy where both men and women voted for the first time in 2002. In the elections of 2006, one woman won parliament seats. Whereas women and men gained the right to vote in 2003 in Oman, the council has no legislative or executive powers. In Qatar women and men gained suffrage in 1999, while they are still denied that right in Saudi Arabia.

Kuwaiti women were finally granted this right in 2005, and four women won parliamentary seats in 2009. Despite the vibrant civil society Kuwait had for many years, women were not allowed the right to vote or run for office. Women organized around this discrimination and other



rights for many years. The first demand for suffrage came from the Arab Women's Development Society in 1971 after the first women's conference was held. Its participants concluded that the constitution stipulates that the National Assembly was to be elected by both men and women. The crown prince raised the issue in a televised speech in 1980. Later in 1982 a parliamentary deputy presented a bill to parliament to amend articles 1 and 19 of the electoral law to allow women to hold office. After an extensive debate in the session, on January 19, 1982, the bill was rejected.

Women's groups in Kuwait were not happy with this decision; they lodged a formal complaint and marched to the assembly on the day of the hearing. In 1985 groups employed different strategies to register women voters, even when it was still not legal. Some organizations, such as the Girls Club, tried to strike a deal with some of the political parties for their support in exchange for their votes. Members of the Women Cultural and Social Society went to register, but their applications were not accepted. They tried to lodge a complaint with the police, claiming that their constitutional rights were violated. No immediate results were achieved.

Suffrage was reinstated as a central issue in the postwar era of the 1990s with the creation of new groups. The suffragists utilized diverse strategies from submitting petitions to and lobbying members of the National Assembly, to holding protests and seminars, networking with liberal political groups, and trying to register women voters and candidates (Rizzo, 2005). In 1999 the Emir of Kuwait issued another decree granting women the right to run for office and vote in parliamentary and municipal elections to take place in 2003. In the same month, the decree was approved by the Council of Ministers. This encouraged other women to join in the fight for political rights. However, the decree, among others, was rejected by the newly elected parliament. In response, women activists filed six court cases against the Ministry of Interior. They challenged their inability to register to vote and tried to get a ruling on the constitutionality of the Kuwaiti election law, which restricts the right to vote and run for office to Kuwaiti men. In 2000, one of these cases, by Rula Dashti (who eventually in 2009 won a parliamentary seat) made it to the constitutional court; yet her claim was once again rejected. Nonetheless, the struggle for women's political right continued on, until finally suffrage was approved in the parliament in 2005. Many leaders (28) in the suffrage movement ran for elections in 2006 even though they knew they had very little time, training, or experience in running campaigns, and none won. The women ran fierce campaigns and left their mark on society as is seen in a film that documented the campaigns of four women candidates titled *Storm From the South* directed by Walid Al-Awadi. Women candidates were often asked to speak in local *diwaniyas* (usually a man's guest house where people from a particular tribe or neighborhood gathered to discuss politics and commerce), and their own *diwaniyas* were always crowded with people wanting to hear their perspective on

the issues. In another election in May 2008, 27 women also ran for office but none won. However, the prince appointed two women to the national assembly. In 2009, four women were elected to the parliament.

Despite the fact that women's suffrage has been attained in all but Saudi Arabia, women's participation as candidates is minimal. Arab women make up, on average, 9% of parliamentarians, lower than the world's average of 16%. However, in the elections in Mauritania before the coup of 2008, women made up 22.1% of parliament seats and 37% of municipal council seats, and Tunisian women's representation in parliament stands at 22.8%. There has been a wide range of movement on the issue of political participation recently, and more countries have been accepting a quota system (that reserves a certain percentage of seats in parliament and other elected or appointed bodies for women), either in government directly or indirectly through political parties. There are several factors inherent in the sociopolitical histories of the region that, in addition to the globally recognized factors, contribute to lesser participation. These have to do with the local histories of wars and conflicts, with the lack of democratic practices and governance, and with traditional beliefs and practices of women's roles.

### **Women's Leadership in National Projects of Liberation and Armed Struggle**

Across the region, women actively participated in liberation struggles to end colonial occupation of their lands. Women's participation and leadership in national struggles have often paralleled, grown out of, or engaged with the women's movement in the region, which has a long history. Particular importance is often given to women's leadership role in the Algerian war for independence (1954–1962) from the long and bloody French colonialism, the Palestinian national struggle for independence and self-determination, and the Egyptian revolts against British rule (1919–1922). Across the region, however, in Morocco, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, women played important roles in delivering their countries from mandates and colonial regimes into the modern history. Their leadership ranged from politicizing traditional women's gender roles and spaces (“mothering” their nation), to mobilizing support, resources, and bodies through writing and organizing, to direct participation in the armed resistance.

#### **Palestine, an Ongoing Struggle for Liberation**

Many scholars and researchers have discussed the history and development of women's role in the resistance movement. In 1921, a group of urban and educated women created the Palestine Women's Union as the first explicitly political women's group in Palestine. In October 1929, 200



to 300 women attended the first Arab Women's Congress of Palestine, which was held in Jerusalem and consolidated the Palestine Women's Union and the Arab Women's Executive Committee. The conference resulted in a resolution that was taken to the government house, the high commissioner, and then participants held demonstrations at different embassies. The women were not allowed to march in the street, so they formed a procession of cars, 120 in total. The group's activities were carefully planned in advance with political sophistication alerting the press to ensure adequate coverage and thus impact. During the 1930s women organized and participated in several demonstrations against British and Zionist forces. During a visit by Lord Allenby (the commander in chief of the Allied Forces of Palestine during World War I) in 1933, the Arab Women's Executive Committee decided to organize a march to protest British rule and the Zionist encroachment on the most significant religious centers in Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Omar Mosque. Not only was it significant that women marched through the streets but also that two women leaders spoke at important religious sites, a Muslim woman speaking in the Holy Sepulcher and a Christian woman in the Dome of the Rock (Peteet, 1991).

Even though many of the women in leadership in urban centers were connected to men of power, they were, to a large extent, independent. Their independence becomes even clearer when examining the work and autonomy of the various chapters of the Palestinian Women's Union located in different cities. The closeness of the Jerusalem branch to seats of power and government corridors provided it with a more distinct and diplomatic role nationally, while other chapters had their own distinct contributions. The Haifa Arab Women's Union was led by a strong activist, Sadhij Nassar. This group was known for its radicalism, which led to several instances of arrest of Nassar. It often defied not only the British authorities but also the male leaders of the national movements. In 1933, for example, male leadership of resistance and political parties "bowed to government pressure and canceled plans for demonstrations to mark Balfour Day, calling instead for a day of silence. The Haifa AWU [Arab Women's Union] continued with its demonstrations, however, carrying children with them (a favorite tactic), and taking them around to government offices and foreign consulates" (Fleishmann, 2003, p. 23).

Women supported the political fighters and often participated in resisting occupation directly. Shaykh 'Izzidin al-Qassam, the leader of the revolt against the British is said to have helped establish literacy classes for women and also establish the group Rafiqat al-Qassam (the Comrades of Qassam), which gave women the opportunity to receive some training in the use of weapons (Peteet, 1991, p. 56). In 1947 another group, called Zahrat Al-Uqhuwan (Chrysanthemum Flowers), was formed in secret to bring supplies to the fighters and support them. The

trauma of the nakba, or catastrophe, of 1948, with expulsion and fragmentation affected Palestinians immensely, as more than 80% of the population became refugees. Families and communities were separated into different neighboring countries and elsewhere. By all accounts, women played an important role in regenerating the fabric of society. In exile, women quickly began to organize neighborhood committees and the General Union of Palestinian Women to ensure the protection of human rights and support the national struggle. Women continued to participate actively in the struggle and armed resistance as members of the Palestine Liberation Organization and various Palestinian political parties. Leila Khaled, a member of the Population Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has had an almost iconic image in the history of the national narrative of Palestine liberation.

Women active in the political process also redefined the understanding of motherhood in a variety of ways, making it a largely political role. The first that was important in the national context was the defiance mothers showed when their children were killed by hanging by the British in response to the riots in 1929. The day came to be known as Black Tuesday, and the death sentences were carried out outside the prison in Akka. In a defiant gesture, women refused to mourn the death of their sons but ululated in honor of their martyrdom. In 1930 after one execution, the mother of the deceased refused to receive condolences, indicating that she was proud that her son was a martyr for this nation. For years to come, women acted as mothers of the nation, extending their kin responsibilities as mothers to all sons and daughters of the nation, by providing aid and refuge on a regular basis.

## The Women's Movement

Despite its collective history, the women's movement became more fragmented in recent decades. Women had been active in creating organizations and women's associations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, the women's movement saw its strength and growth in relation to liberation struggles across the region. The rise of Arab nationalism also provided more spaces for women and women's organizations to be engaged collectively and regionally. In that sense, Egypt as a locale of political activity and cultural production played a central role in this movement, in addition to Palestine as an important locale in the political consciousness of the whole region.

## Egypt and the Arab Women's Movement

The women's movement in Egypt went through several transformations in relation to the historical and political context. Between the last decades of the 19th century to 1923, an emerging feminist consciousness and early social feminism arose as in the United States. This was a



period when women began expanding the domain of their public space and calling for women's education. It was also a time when women partook in the revolt of 1919 against the British colonial rule. Safiyya Zaghlul, Sa'd Zaghlul's (an important political leader in Egypt) wife, used the notion and the title by which she came to be known as the mother of Egyptians, Umm al-Misriyyin. Mothering society and the nation became the act and the voice of the women nationalists, allowing them to play an important, though less recorded, role in the imagining of the nation (Baron, 2005).

Women wrote about their desires and organized reading salons in their homes, and Aisha al-Taimuriyya and Zainab al-Fawwaz played an important role. The New Woman Society, created in 1919, worked on teaching working-class girls literacy, hygiene, and crafts. These women of upper and middle classes organized seminars and lectures in public spaces from 1909 to 1912. Speakers at these seminars included Bahithat al-Badiyya (Malak Hifni Nasif), Nabawiyya Musa, and Mayy Ziyada (a poet from Lebanon). Bahithat al-Badiyya was the first woman to deliver demands to the congress. She herself was not able to address an all-male Congress in 1911, so a man delivered the address in her stead. Her agenda included "the demand that women be allowed into mosques (as in early Islam), and have access to professions, especially those in which they could cater to other women" (Badran, 1993, p. 134). Nabawiyya Musa was a teacher and a school administrator who helped found the Egyptian Feminist Union and "argued for more education, appealing to upper-class women to finance schools for girls" (p. 134).

From the 1920s to the 1940s Huda Shaarawi and Saiza Nabarawi, founders of the Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU), pushed for a dismantling of the system of segregation. The EFU called for political rights for women, changes in personal status laws (especially for controls on divorce and polygamy), equal access to education, more professional opportunities for women in the fields of law, medicine, and education, and more opportunities in factories and commercial establishments. The group used a diversity of strategies, including lobbying government and training women. It published two journals, *l'Egyptienne* and *al-Misriyya*. "Shaarawi opened a school and health clinic in a village near Minya and a model farm in Giza in an effort to spur other EFU women to do the same" (Badran, 1993, p. 136). In 1944 Shaarawi and others created the Arab Feminist Union in Cairo aiming to take on a more regional approach to women's rights.

In the 1940s and 1950s, Fatma Ni'mat Rashid, Doria Shafiq (a protégé of Shaarawi), and Saiza Nabarawi and Inji Aflatun rose to power and recognition as leaders. As a journalist, Fatma Ni'mat Rashid wrote for *L'Egyptienne* before founding her own group in 1944, the National Feminist Party. The party intended to focus more on women's political rights and to ally itself with worker and peasant parties. "It was the first feminist group to advocate birth control and

abortion" (Badran, 1993, p. 137). After returning to Egypt from Paris where Shafiq received her doctorate in 1945, she decided to create her own group, Ittihad Bint al-Nil (the Daughter of the Nile Union), which by 1948 was served by three journals. It also focused on political rights but within a broader social and economic program. Saiza Nabarawi and Inji Aflatun worked together and framed their social consciousness work within an anti-imperialist struggle. Aflatun lived among peasants and workers and wrote about patriarchal domination at work and home. These two women and others created the Women's Committee for Popular Resistance to coordinate women's efforts in the resistance movement against the British and the king. After a hunger strike led by Doria Shafiq in 1954, Nasser's government provided equal political rights for women, although women's activities were closely curtailed in the larger clamp on leftist and Islamist groups by the same government.

This era saw many women leaders thrown in jail for their work and beliefs. The movie *Four Women of Egypt* (1997), directed by Egyptian-Canadian feminist filmmaker Tahany Rachid, chronicles Egypt's history through the life, leadership, and activism of four women born into a world under colonial occupation. All four spent part of their lives together in jail. Wedad Mitry, a lifelong journalist and student activist, was the only woman elected to the Student Union at Cairo University in 1951. That same year she joined the Women's Popular Resistance Committee (founded by a feminist, Saiza Nabarawi). Safynaz Kazem, a journalist, theater critic, and writer, who finished her graduate studies in the United States in the 1960s, later became one of the most important Islamist thinkers. Shahenda Maklad, a true Nasserist, was active in student and nationalist movements, spurred in part by the death of her husband, who fought against the feudal lords. Amina Rachid, the last of the four women, is a strong leftist despite her upper-class roots. She taught at Cairo University. All were important leaders in the political and/or feminist scenes in Egypt.

Anwar Sadat, who became president after Nasser's death, initiated the Open Door Policy in the 1970s, which brought to the surface many social ills centered on poverty, which in turn brought feminists back to the public eye to address these problems, but with a narrow angle of women's rights. As a medical doctor, Nawal Al-Saadawi (later to become one of the most known Egyptian feminists) started writing about the problems faced by women in rural Egypt, in particular, problems resulting from multiple births and clitoridectomies. Al-Saadawi located women's sexual exploitation within a larger political and economic context, arguing that it has different manifestations and thus affects upper- and lower-class women. The efforts of women's groups resulted in the changing of several discriminatory laws. Groups such as the Arab Women's Solidarity Association, founded by Nawal Al-Saadawi in 1985; the New Woman Group, founded in the late 1980s; the Society of the Daughter of the Earth, founded in 1985;



and the Communication Group for the Enhancement of the Status of Women in Egypt, among others, focused on daily social problems, including illiteracy, poverty, and health in addition to personal status codes.

### Morocco and Women's Leadership to Transform Family Laws

Despite their active participation in these struggles through a wide range of activities from leadership positions, to combat, to support and aid, to community resistance, women were denied access to political positions in the newly created government. In fact, most laws enacted after independence, whether civil and inspired by the colonial and mandate laws, or family and inspired by religious ideologies, discriminated against women.

The struggle to transform laws, particularly personal status, or family codes in the region is a very long one. Tunisia was the only country that established civil marriage and courts (immediately after independence in 1956) and passed laws that disallowed polygamy. Moroccan women activists have been the leaders in transforming family laws. There have been important attempts to transform family laws in Egypt at different moments in its history with varying degrees of success. However, the movement to change family law in Morocco had been the most consistent and most successful in the recent history of the region.

In 1946 the group Akhawwat Al-Safa (Sisters of Purity) Association issued a document with a number of legal demands, including the abolishment of polygamy and increased access to public space. Many from the group started writing or tied themselves to journals and magazines. Women's writing (especially that of Leila Abouzeid, Fatima Mernissi, and Zakia Daoud) has always been an important avenue for projecting perspective and practicing activism. Several explicitly political women's organizations were created in the 1960s, including the Union Progressiste des Femmes Marocaines (1962) and the National Union of Moroccan Women (1969). New magazines were established in the 1980s, such as *8 Mars* (March 8) in 1983 and *Kalima* in 1986, and Mernissi and Abouzeid began writing more explicitly about women's issues. In addition, leftist political parties took up women's rights overall and equality in the law and some created women's sections. The Democratic Association of Moroccan Women (ADFM) was created in 1985 by concerned feminists who decided to utilize the international attention given as a result of the UN conference on Women in Nairobi and the government's declared interest in democratization. Other groups, such as the Union de l'Action Feminine (UAF), Joussour, and others, began appearing with branches in different parts of Morocco. The UN Decade for Women (1975–1985), other UN meetings on women, and several conventions such as Committee on

the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, spurred action in Morocco, especially concerning articles that contradicted with articles in the Personal Status Codes of Morocco. From the early institution of the Code of the Personal Status, or Mudawana, in 1957, women activists were disappointed as it consisted of many articles that discriminated against women, including defining them as minors (Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2006).

ADFM chose as a main aim, early on, the transformation of the Mudawana. ADFM and other groups campaigned for many years, transforming strategies as they went along and reassessing their tactics and goals based on economic and political factors on the ground. In 1992 the UAF launched a campaign to establish equality between men and women, which included a petition with a million signatures sent to parliament demanding change in the Mudawana. The campaign raised a lot of debate between those who wanted reform, namely UAF and other women's organizations, and those who wanted to maintain the status quo, namely religious parties. The king created a 22-person commission (including 1 woman) to draft a new law. In May 1993, Hassan II announced some changes to the Mudawana that provided women with more rights, such as the right for the woman to appoint her own legal guardian and the requirement of two witnesses in front of the judge for a husband's repudiation (divorce) to be considered legal. Even though the rights were not up to par with the demands, they signaled a shift in the public debate, allowing groups to believe that they were able to make progress. Groups, such as the ADFM, strategized collectively and began to shift their communication strategies to incorporate more the language of human rights, democratization, and the need for new religious interpretations. When a socialist government came to power in 1998, it established a Plan for Integrating Women in Development in 1999 which contained among others points, ones focusing on changes to family law. Moreover, women's rights groups organized two networks of nongovernmental organizations in 1999. The first was called the Network of Support for PANIFD (Réseau d'appui au PANIFD), made up of 200 human rights, women's rights, and development associations that advocated for the adoption of the action plan by the government. The second network was the Front for the Integration of Women in Development (Front pour l'intégration des femmes au développement), made up of more than 50 women's associations that focused on coalition building and mobilizing unions and other unusual "suspects." The two pursued separate yet complementary and coordinated actions, including mobilizing support for the Rabat march of 2000 in support of women's rights. At the same time, however, another huge demonstration was organized in Casablanca opposing the plan. Even though the plan failed, it brought women's organizations more into the public eye and into leadership position. For example, King Mohammed VI of



Morocco, after having taken power in 1999, quickly moved to install women in important positions of government, such as royal counselor, head of the National Office of Oil Research and Exploration, and a ministerial appointment.

A group of about 40 women leaders visited the king in 2001 to discuss recommendations. Activists decided to create a new coalition in 2001 called the Printemps d'Égalité (Spring of Equality), to work more closely on advocating for a serious reform of family law. A key player in the Spring of Equality coalition, ADFM utilized diverse mobilization techniques, including a May 1 demonstration where kitchenware was brandished to honor all women working at home, whose work is not recognized; a sit-in at the parliament on March 8, 2002, and other sit-ins in front of courts and of different women constituencies; and also the transformation of communication strategies. This coalition initially was made up of nine women's organizations, which drafted a proposed law reform and sent it as a memorandum to the king. This work was conducted in conjunction with work of the other Maghreb countries through the Collectif 95, in Tunisia and Algeria. The collective created a proposed set of family laws, providing justification for each article in the international law and treaties, in the Shari'a and religious rulings, and in local constitutions. Those efforts were successful as for the first time the king created a Commission of Scholars to reform the Mudawana, which also included nonreligious figures and three women. The Printemps d'Égalité kept up the pressure for change through events, advocacy, conferences, and writings. Between 2001 and 2004, the commission held open hearings and met with over 80 women's organizations to receive feedback and suggestions. Women activists wanted the changed Mudawana (unlike its predecessor in 1993) to pass through parliament to ensure proper legislation and the maintenance of the democratic process. Finally, in February 2004, the legislation to reform the Mudawana, the Family Code, was passed unanimously in parliament with many improvements for women's rights.

### Women's Leadership in Education

Stereotypical representation of women in the Middle East is often of illiterate women, and if literate, this literacy is seen as a result of either Western influence (through missionaries and colonization) or the efforts of enlightened local men, such as Qassim Amin (Egypt) and Tahir Haddad (Tunisia). The reality, however, is that women in all the regions and at different moments in history have been very actively involved in teaching, learning, and creating formal and informal schooling. In Morocco, one of the main proponents of girls' education was Malika El Fassi, born in 1908, who wrote at a very young age under the name El Fatate and later as Bahithat

El Hadira. She was active in the nationalist struggle for liberation and was the only woman signatory (among 66 men) to the Independence Treaty in 1944. She wrote extensively about girls' education. She had always dreamed of studying at Qaraouine University (in Fez, founded around 859). El Fassi with the women's association in the Istiqbal (Independence) Party decided to study at the university and found King Mohammad V supportive. The women paid for the professors by selling their jewelry and giving their own money. This created a strong alliance between the women as they felt they were accomplishing something while relying on themselves and their resources.

In Kuwait, Amina al-Omar decided in 1916 that she could begin a profession by teaching girls how to recite the Qur'an. The first Qur'anic school for boys had only been established in 1887, but none was created to accommodate girls. Al-Omar was very successful, and soon many women found this to be a good profession, where they can teach young girls in their homes. They came to be known as mutawa'as (religious instructors) and were found in every quarter. Then in 1926, Aisha al-Ismiri decided to open a school for girls, and after discussing this project with the Emir Sheikh Jabir, he provided her with a small premise in one of the neighborhoods of the city. "A few years later, one of al-Ismiri's students called Badria al-Atitqi, who was only 14 years old but had successfully completed her studies, opened her own school in her house" (Al-Mughni, 2001, p. 50). More women opened more schools and many became very famous, like Mariam Al-Askar, who used printed books for the first time in Kuwait's history. The state finally realized the importance of such work and opened the first state school for girls in 1937.

### Women's Leadership in Cultural and Knowledge Production

Women have been important leaders in the domain of knowledge production, be it academic, fictional, or non-fictional, and in cultural production in all of its forms. Although research to uncover the number of poets, writers, scholars, and jurists in the history of the region is still nascent, some advancements have been made to bring to life that *herstory*. Writing and literature have always been an important element of women's activism. In the early stages, women wrote in journals and newspapers, sometimes using male pen names. In the early 1880s women in Egypt were writing in men's journals, and in the early 1890s middle-class women began founding and publishing their own journals and newspapers in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. The first women's journal in Egypt was founded by Hind Nawfal in 1892. Salima Abu Rashid founded in 1914 a magazine called *Fatat Lubnan* (Girl of Lebanon) that aimed to inspire young women. May

Ajamy found a journal called *The Bride* in 1910. In 1914 she explicitly dedicated her journal to those who believe in women's spirit to fight corruption and defy oppression. Ajamy also started the Women's Literacy Club, in 1914, to advance women's education and intellect. In 1921 Julia Dimashqiya founded a magazine called *al-Mar'a al-Jadida* (New Woman) in Beirut, urging women to take part in their society. Najla Abu al-Lam' started her magazine, *Al-Fajr* (Dawn), during the same year, to present new research and studies. Nazik Abid's magazine, *Nur al-Fayha* (Light of Damascus) insisted that the obstacle to national progress lies in the inequality between men and women. In 1923 Afifa Fandi Sa'b published *Al-Khidr* (Boudoir) to unite all Lebanese despite their differences. All these journals played an important role in mobilizing women to demand their rights and organize.

Before the advent of television, the radio played an important role in the music industry, and women like Um Kulthum, Asmahan, and others played important roles in it. Um Kulthum played a central role in defining women's leadership in the public, political, and cultural sphere. Every first Thursday of every month, across the region, men and women would sit in their homes or coffee shops where radio was available to listen to the broadcast of one of Um Kulthum's new songs. Um Kulthum (most likely born in 1902) redefined the role of women artists to a respected profession and noble one. Detailed narratives of Um Kulthum's life reinforce the important role her mother played in ensuring her education through the *kuttab* (a traditional school that taught the Qur'an and reading and writing) and in having Um Kulthum accompany her father during his recital performances in the villages. Um Kulthum transgressed so many of the stereotypical roles of women and broke ground in such a public way. She recited Qur'anic verses in a film (the realm of men only), mastered the *daour* repertoire (a strictly male form of religious recital), participated in the funeral services of Sheikh Abi Al-Ulaa, and ran for the leadership

of the Artists' Union. She founded a women's group, donated her own gold, and decided to do a tour in Arab and European cities to sing and support the Arab fighters in the nationalist struggle in Palestine.

## Future Directions

The Middle East and North Africa region is very large and diverse, making it necessary to consult additional readings and resources to get a more exhaustive picture of the domain of women's leadership historically and in the present. Women's leadership in the arena of cultural production, economic innovations, and other women's movements in countries like Yemen, Iraq, and Algeria remain to be addressed. Overall and despite the many challenges women currently face, the region is witnessing a resurgence of women's activism and leadership. Several new regional networks have been recently established or reinvented to take a leadership role on several issues of importance to women's lives, including violence against women, political participation, development, globalization and trade, family laws, and citizenship rights. The Nationality Regional campaign (<http://www.learningpartnership.org/citizenship>) is forging ahead and transforming laws in several countries. The launch of the campaign Musawah for Equality in the Muslim Family (which touches the Middle East North Africa region but goes beyond to affect most Muslim countries; <http://www.musawah.org/>) is bound to lead to transformations in the personal status laws and the interpretation of the Shari'a. The regional Equality Now Campaign to remove all reservations on Commission on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women has also led to successes in Morocco and Jordan. As a result of increased pressures from women's rights activists' advocacy and mobilization, several countries are instituting a quota system for their upcoming elections in the years 2010 and 2011 to ensure women's leadership.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

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**H**elen Clark turned 50 years old on February 26, 2000, not long after becoming New Zealand's first elected woman prime minister. At her birthday celebrations, she said that she wanted to "lead a long-lived and successful government" (Espiner, 2007, p. E4), an ambition she achieved by heading the Social Democratic Labour government for an uninterrupted period of 9 years from 1999 to 2008. Her tenure coincided with New Zealand women holding every key constitutional position, an achievement that placed the country alongside the Nordic nations in terms of gender equality. When her government lost the general election of 2008, political commentators and feminists wondered if the golden age for New Zealand women would also come to an end.

By 2009 Helen Clark, more usually known to the New Zealand public as just Helen, was New Zealand's longest-serving female member of Parliament (MP). By then, she had fought a total of 11 general elections and had led the Labour Party into five general elections, three of which she won. She had been the Labour Party leader, the country's first female deputy prime minister, the leader of the opposition and then, of course, prime minister.

Women remain grossly underrepresented throughout the South Pacific to the extent that five island nations have no female representation in their Parliaments at all. Australia, the largest country in the region, did not elect its first woman deputy prime minister or appoint its first female governor-general until 2007. Consequently, New Zealand has been the leading light throughout the region for decades as far as women's representation is concerned. This chapter explores Clark's career and shows how she used her intelligence, abilities, and education to rise to the

highest office in New Zealand and to hold the position of prime minister for 9 years.

### New Zealand: A Brief Background

New Zealand is a small country of 4.10 million well-educated people (the literacy rate for both women and men is 99%). Four fifths of the citizens are of European origin, the indigenous Māori people account for 14.5% of the population, with most of the remainder being peoples from various Pacific Islands' states. Known by tourists for its pristine natural beauty, New Zealand is located in the South Pacific roughly between Australia and Antarctica.

Following in the steps of the United Kingdom, its former colonizer, New Zealand is a unitary state and has no formal written constitution although various documents and acts of Parliament are taken as the constitutional framework. Government is based on the Westminster system with its concomitant weak separation of powers. The judicial branch of government comprises a Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, and High Court. The executive branch consists of the head of state of New Zealand, who is Queen Elizabeth II of England. Her appointee, the Governor-General Anand Satyanand, represents her in New Zealand. The governor-general appoints the cabinet on the recommendation of the prime minister, who is the head of government. The legislative branch consists of a unicameral House of Representatives, generally known as Parliament, which usually has 120 members elected by registered voters for 3-year terms.

New Zealand used the simple plurality system of voting (also known as winner-takes-all or first-past-the-post) until



1996, when the country held its first election under a mixed member proportional system known as MMP, which was based on the German model. This resulted in a Parliament comprising a mixture of constituency seats and list seats. The change from simple plurality occurred because of a desire by people to see a more representative legislature and, in this, the MMP system proved successful. The dominance of two monolithic political entities that had alternated in power for decades vanished. Although the Labour and National parties remained the largest, a number of smaller parties also won seats in the legislature, necessitating the formation of coalition governments.

## Women at the Top

New Zealand ranked 5 out of 128 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report of 2007. The World Economic Forum reached its conclusions after an examination of gender-based inequality using economic, political, education, and health-based criteria. Only the Nordic countries of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland performed better. Census figures for 2001 revealed that life expectancy for New Zealand women was 81 years compared to 76 years for men. The median age for first-time brides was 27 years, and the average age at which women gave birth to their first babies had risen to 28 years while the fertility rate had dropped to 1.97 per woman.

The foundation for women's electoral success was laid on September 19, 1893, when New Zealand became the first country in the world to give women the right to vote in general elections. In 1919, women won the right to stand as candidates and later, in 1933, the first woman was elected to Parliament. The second wave of feminism and the growth of the women's movement in the 1970s resulted in the doubling of the number of women in Parliament in 1981 (from 4 to 8 in a Parliament of 92 MPs). This was the year that Clark entered Parliament. From that time onward, New Zealand has maintained a consistently high level of female representation. The introduction of MMP in 1996 accelerated the number of women entering Parliament, changing both its composition and its culture. The 2008 general election resulted in women comprising 34% of Parliament (41 women out of a total of 122 MPs), the highest proportion to date of any New Zealand Parliament. Internationally, this level of representation of women in Parliament placed New Zealand among the top 15 countries in the world.

By 2009, New Zealand women had held every key constitutional position in the country. Besides Clark, another woman, Jenny Shipley, had served briefly as prime minister from 1997 to 1999. The country had been served by two women governors-general; a woman attorney general; a woman chief justice, who headed the judiciary; women leaders and deputy leaders of political parties; a woman speaker of Parliament; and been numerous women ministers and MPs.

Education, Clark believed, was the reason why New Zealand women had achieved so much: She thought that

the baby-boomer women [born between 1946 and 1964] in New Zealand were in the first large group of people to go through to tertiary education: that hadn't been the case before. A lot of it has been about education, and then that opening up a lot more choices for people. The baby boomers have done it without very good arrangements for childcare or family support—they have done it despite all the barriers—and our job now is to put in place the measures that make it easier for future generations of women who want to combine family and career. We are doing a tremendous amount on childcare, after-school care, paid parental leave and extending the minimum annual holiday length. It's all about trying to help people have real choices, because it's not a real choice if you can't find anyone to look after your children. (Burge, 2005, p. 16)

## Formative Years

The oldest girl in a family of four daughters, Helen Elizabeth Clark was born on February 26, 1950, and spent her childhood years in relative isolation in a conservative rural area in the middle of the North Island of New Zealand. Her father was a sheep and cattle farmer and, prior to marriage, her mother had been a primary school teacher. The absence of boys in the family allowed Clark and her sisters to receive good educations. This was unlike other rural families where the girls frequently were denied the opportunity to further their studies beyond training workers—the usual occupations taken up by girls at the time.

Clark was a shy girl who suffered a number of debilitating childhood illnesses when she started attending the local primary school. Once she reached the age of 13, she was sent away from home to become a boarder at Epsom Girls Grammar School in Auckland, where she was homesick and miserable. Her unhappiness was exacerbated by an uncomplimentary testimonial when she left.

Almost as a reaction to that, Clark was determined to excel at Auckland University, where she graduated with an M.A. (Hons) in political science in 1974. At the age of 23, she was appointed a junior lecturer and, later, to a lectureship. In 1976, she began research toward a doctorate on rural political behavior and representation, a project she never completed.

## Politicization

Together with academic success came politicization. During Clark's years at boarding school away from her conservative home life, her attitudes had become more liberal and, once at university, she found that her political beliefs aligned to those of the New Zealand Labour Party. She joined in 1971 and subsequently held office at every level of the party, including becoming president of the

Labour Youth Council, a member of the party's national executive, secretary of the Labour Women's Council, and a member of the Policy Council. Besides Labour Party politics, she engaged initially in anti-Vietnam War activities, but her interests expanded to include the antiapartheid movement in South Africa and nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Her work in promoting international peace and disarmament was so effective that in 1986 she was awarded the annual Peace Prize of the Danish Peace Foundation.

Clark's first opportunity to travel abroad came when she was awarded a University Grants Committee postgraduate scholarship in 1976 to begin research on her doctorate. The grant allowed her to travel to the United Kingdom and Sweden and to represent the Labour Party at the Socialist International and the Socialist International Women's Congresses, experiences she was able to repeat in 1978, 1983, and 1986. As she gained more senior positions, she began to travel the world in both public and private capacities.

### Role Models

Early influences in Clark's life included her history teacher at school, Anne Trotter, who later became Professor of History at the University of Otago in New Zealand, and a couple of her university professors, the late Bob Chapman and Ruth Butterworth. Further from home, former Norwegian Labour Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland was a role model, and she observed and learned from politicians such as British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President Bill Clinton (Burge, 2005, p. 20). She believed that both Clinton and Blair were policy and task focused, attributes she admired (Edwards, 2001, p. 321). Once she had become prime minister, she found that one of the rewarding aspects of her position was

the chance to be a role model to others, particularly to young women looking ahead at their lives and careers. I get a tremendous amount of mail from children, young people doing their projects on me. I go to a lot of schools and for a lot of young women I am their hero. They would like to aspire to do what I have done. I think that is great because when I was a kid we never had someone in this position to look up to. (Burge, 2005, p. 20)

### Political Ideology

Clark has described herself as a social democrat in the European model and came from the center-left wing of the party (McCallum, 1993, p. 157). She appeared to be an idealist and always had a vision for a better society; yet, for all that, she had a wide streak of pragmatism. In particular, she saw the need to reposition Labour from a party perceived to be left-wing to a party of the center. Such a move would allow Labour to be seen by the voting public as the "natural party of government," a position the conservative National Party traditionally had claimed for itself

(Edwards, 2001, pp. 322–323; Epsiner, 2007, p. E4). By making the Labour Party a centrist, broad-based party, Clark believed that all citizens would be able to enjoy prosperity, not just an elite few.

### Feminism and the Women's Movement

Although she has been seen as a champion of women's rights, the politics of the women's movement were not Clark's foremost preoccupation. Early in her career, she was a government delegate to the World Conference to mark the end of the UN Decade for Women in Nairobi in 1985 and later she was secretary of the Labour Women's Council, but her interests were more mainstream and socialist (Edwards, 2001, p. 159). She read and was influenced by Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* but firmly believed that women could do anything they chose.

### First Attempt at Parliament

Having determined on a political career, Clark first stood for Parliament in 1975, contesting the rural constituency of Piako in the central North Island. Although she had no chance of winning in the strongly conservative electorate, at the time she felt the experience would be invaluable to her later on. She enjoyed the campaign but wondered what the voters had thought of her. "I was a left-wing student politician, pro-abortion, a woman in a farming area, as different from the people there as chalk from cheese," she told Virginia Myers (1986, p. 156). As had been anticipated, the Labour Party lost the election in a landslide victory to the National Party, but Clark managed to increase the final result for the party in Piako by 125 votes (Edwards, 2001, p. 120).

### The Personal Is Political

Six years after her Piako experience, Clark won the candidacy to contest the safe Labour constituency of Mount Albert, a suburb of Auckland. It was a campaign that she described as "difficult":

As a single woman, I was really hammered. I was accused of being a lesbian, of living in a commune, having friends who were Trotskyites and gays, of being unstable and unable to settle to anything. If you elect Helen Clark, my political opponents said, she's for abortion on demand and your whole society will change overnight. I was fighting on all fronts. (Myers, 1986, p. 158)

Even though Clark believed legal marriage was unnecessary, she eventually married the man she had been living with for 5 years, Peter Davis, a medical sociologist, and much of the acrimony stopped (Myers, 1986, p. 159). Yet over the next 25 years, certain groups within New Zealand



remained obsessed with her marriage, calling it a “marriage of convenience” and speculating about the nature of their personal life: One journalist even suggested that the couple should be “prepared to fully reveal the core dynamics” of their relationship (Wishart, 2008, p. 236). Yet the couple appeared devoted to each other. They were committed adventure tourists and shared a love of skiing, climbing, and other outdoor activities.

Speculation about Clark's marriage may have arisen from her decision not to have children. In 1986, she said,

I've never had any intention of having a child. I definitely see children as destroying my lifestyle. It's inconceivable that I would become pregnant. I've taken the pill for years. I realise my attitude is unusual, but I have other interests which crowd out everything else, and I think I'd go round the bend if my small amount of spare time was taken up by children. (Myers, 1986, p. 173)

The media focused frequently on Clark's childless state, especially during the 1999 election when she was leader of the opposition and campaigning against Prime Minister Jenny Shipley, a mother of two. In a televised leaders' debate, the presenter asked Clark if her childlessness affected her ability to understand the pressures faced by families. In response, she said that her strong family background was of help in this respect, although her decision to not be a mother “might be a source of enormous sadness to me one day” (Fountaine, 2002, p. 248). When Clark had been prime minister for two terms, she was questioned again by the media about her childless state and said that she had not changed her mind, reiterating, “I could not have done what I have done and had a family: there is no question about that. It would have been impossible. And I don't regret the choice: you never look back” (Burge, 2005, p. 16).

### More Media Problems

The media have long been accused of distorting images of women and being obsessed with their physical appearance. Throughout her career, Clark has had to endure comments about her choices of hair style and clothes and has bowed to conventional views about how she should dress. In the run-up to the Mount Albert election in 1981, she deliberately changed her dress style and began wearing conservative clothing to appear less threatening to voters (Myers, 1986, p. 172). At that time, she felt that she was “defined by men, judged by men . . . my hair is too short, my voice is too deep, my clothes are too severe . . . and I am not the slightest bit fazed by it” (McCallum, 1993, p. 157).

She became hardened to the media's scrutiny and, during her second term as leader of the opposition, claimed that, by and large, her relationship with the media was constructive (Edwards, 2001, p. 336). Yet the pressure during the 1999 election campaign was exceptionally intense. In many ways, this was understandable because both main

parties were being led by women. The *Dominion* newspaper's *Guide to the Polls* (1999, p. 1) lampooned the two women in cartoons as clashing fighters wielding swords, wearing skimpy costumes and long black hair pieces. Dubbed *Xena-Warrior Princesses* after characters in a television program, the images of two warring women were not without charm but the satire became more personal when the *Dominion* printed a story asking its readers if “Helen's mouth was really hers”:

During the past month, Miss Clark's swept-up, glamorous image has been the subject of gossip by political junkies. Is that really Helen? Who is her hairdresser and when can I get an appointment? How did she get rid of the shadows under her eyes during an election campaign? When did she get her teeth done? There has even been speculation about whether the mouth in her poster image was actually hers or computer-enhanced. (“Clark's Mouth,” 1999, p. 2)

Helen ignored the taunts about her appearance and continued in her own style. Being tall and slender, she made it her personal policy to promote New Zealand's top fashion designers, showcasing their clothes both at home and abroad (Burge, 2005, p. 16).

### Not One of the Boys

Once Clark had won Mount Albert in 1981, she found her first 3 years in Parliament a “searing experience,” being difficult and unpleasantly sexist:

The main block to being a woman in Parliament is not being one of the boys; not being in the networks they operate; not hanging round the same quarters as they do. There's a lot of social life I'm not part of, a lot of late-night drinking in rooms. I'm sure a great deal of business and strategising is done there. That's where things happen, where people are told who to vote for the next day, who's lining up with whom. (Myers, 1986, p. 166)

Clark learned to cope with the sexism in Parliament, but election campaigns could still become unpleasant. In 2005, as she led the Labour Party to its third victory, the National Party ran a personalized campaign portraying her as controlling, manipulative, and bad-tempered. Billboards bore pictures of her looking dour and the National Party leader, Don Brash, called her “a petty, spiteful and deceitful woman” (Epsiner, 2007, p. E4).

Brash was a former governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand who presented himself as an old-fashioned gentleman. Following a televised leaders' debate between Brash and Clark, Brash claimed he had “gone easy” on Clark as he did not want to be seen to “aggressively attack a woman.” Clark responded that she found Brash's attitude “quaint, a little old-fashioned—patronising. I think in this day and age you don't treat women differently because they are female. I've grown up in a New Zealand where girls can do anything and we expect to be treated as equals” (Epsiner, 2005, p. 1).

Although the problem of sexism, which usually took the form of inappropriate behavior or lewd or patronizing comments, never disappeared, the presence of more women following each subsequent election continued to dilute its impact and the culture of Parliament slowly changed from being an old boys club into a more inclusive institution.

## Wilderness Years

During Clark's first 3 years in Parliament, Labour was in opposition, but the party won the 1984 election and held office until 1990. During this period, an influential faction within the government adopted a neoliberal monetarist approach to policymaking, and attempts were made to remove many of the Social-Democratic policies that defined the Labour Party. Clark found herself sidelined and passed over for promotion so, in response, she concentrated on her committee interests, which included foreign affairs, defense, security, and arms control. Eventually, she became a junior minister, and during the government's second 3-year term she was, on occasion, minister of conservation, housing, health, and labor. Ideological divisions within the government eventually caused the leadership to collapse as the monetarists and the more traditional socialists fought over policy initiatives. Clark worked steadily during this period, making sure that the neoliberals did not encroach into areas of social policy, such as housing, education, or health. As a result of her endeavors, she became deputy prime minister in August 1989 and remained in that position until the party lost the election in 1990.

For the next 9 years, the Labour Party remained in opposition. After an acrimonious leadership battle, Clark took over from Mike Moore as leader of the opposition after the party lost the 1993 election. Clark led the Labour Party for the first time at the 1996 election, but the party lost to the National Party, led by Prime Minister Jim Bolger.

## Attracting Women Voters

Although unsuccessful at the polls, the party went into the 1996 campaign determined to attract women voters through a slate of viable female candidates and a comprehensive women's policy. The party president noted,

We have managed to persuade women that Helen Clark was a credible leader. Right through the campaign we have a significantly heavier vote from women. We increased that at the end, and many women thought Helen was a credible first woman Prime Minister of the country, and that was very important to us. (Hirschfeld, 1997, p. 36)

Through internal party processes, the National Party replaced Bolger as prime minister with Jenny Shipley, who became New Zealand's first non-elected woman prime

minister in 1997. When Clark won the 1999 election for Labour, the National Party replaced Shipley with a new leader, Bill English, who lost the election of 2002. Following the National Party's loss in the 2002 election, English was replaced by Don Brash, who lost the 2005 election. Finally, the National Party replaced Brash with John Key, who led the National Party to electoral victory in 2008.

## New Zealand's First Elected Woman Prime Minister

Under Clark's stewardship, the Labour Party had been reformed and was ready for electoral success. Supported by the majority of women voters, on November 27, 1999, she became New Zealand's first elected woman prime minister, also taking on the portfolio of arts, culture, and heritage. For the next 9 years, she led the nation through a period of calm and economic stability.

## Leadership Style

Early in her career, Clark said, "I bring a total commitment . . . the skills and devotion of a workaholic" (McCallum, 1993, p. 153). She regarded herself as

a person who has ideas, can write quite well and can articulate those ideas. But with the decisions being made, I don't want to be the one who implements them. I move on to the next thing. I like to see myself more as a decision-maker than as someone who works out the details. I haven't got the sort of personality to be only an assistant behind the scenes. (p. 158)

Clark was credited with being part of a small group that turned the Labour Party from a dysfunctional organization into the "highly effective fighting organisation" (Myers, 1993, p. 158) and was applauded by the members for keeping the factionalism that had threatened the party under control.

As leader, Clark was considered the "most forthright and accessible prime minister New Zealand has ever had" (Espiner, 2007, p. E4). She opened herself to the media, giving journalists both her home and her mobile number, where they could contact her at any time (Edwards, 2001, p. 336). Commentators noted that she placed great store in trying to stay in touch with people and prided herself on being down to earth (Burge, 2005, p. 19). In return, she became known universally as "our Helen," was greeted by people with affection, and saw herself primarily as a task-focused public servant (Edwards, 2001, p. 321).

## The "Pledge" Card

One of the Labour Party's most effective campaign strategies was the introduction of a "pledge" card, an idea



borrowed from the British Labour Party. A list of the Labour Party's promises was printed on a red and yellow card the same size as a plastic credit card that was designed to fit into a wallet or purse. The front displayed the picture of a smiling Clark alongside her signature and the slogan "My commitment to you. We will deliver." When turned over, the card listed seven key policies that, when implemented, would improve the living standards of many New Zealanders. The list included promises to create jobs, improve health services, cut the cost of education to tertiary students, reverse cuts to New Zealand's superannuation scheme, restore income-related rents for state-provided housing, crack down on burglary and youth crime, and implement no increases in taxes for a large proportion of the population. At the end of her first term in office, Clark was able to refer to the pledge card and prove to the electorate that the Labour government had delivered on all its promises (Edwards, 2001, p. 283).

Again, showing that Labour had kept its promises, a letter to Labour Party members in October 2008 pointed to a number of policy initiatives showing that "Labour invests in people, young and old. Already we have introduced 20 hours free childcare and support for families through Working for Families. There's Welcome Home Loans to help first home buyers, made off-peak travel free for seniors, and continued to invest billions in health and education." Commentators agreed that Clark's government had poured money into health, education, superannuation, early childhood, and families through welfare schemes (Espiner, 2007, p. E4).

### International Recognition

One form of international recognition came to Clark when *Forbes* business magazine rated her for several years as being among the world's most powerful women. The only New Zealander to ever appear on the list, she reached number 20 in 2006. The magazine noted that she continued to promote trade ties from China to Chile for one of the world's most globalized economies. "With a 30-year career in the Labour Party, her success at forging coalitions has made her popular both inside and outside her party. Under her stewardship, New Zealand has enjoyed a resurgent economy and low unemployment. Clark continues to encourage New Zealand businesses to look to markets abroad" (Serafin, 2006).

### Women-Friendly Policies

When Clark became deputy prime minister in 1989, she made history for New Zealand women. Geoffrey Palmer, the Labour prime minister, said that "there is a significant and important message to the New Zealand electorate in that she will bring issues of concern to women close to political attention" (McCallum, 1993, p. 153).

As a minister between 1987 and 1990, Clark had initiated a number of bills. As minister for health, she introduced the Nurses' Amendment Act of 1990. Many women welcomed changes made to the practice of midwifery, which allowed midwives to take the leading role during childbirth where previously a doctor had been required to take overall responsibility (McCallum, 1993, p. 153). Also under her guidance, smoke-free laws were passed, controlling smoking in work and public places, eliminating the advertising of tobacco, and disallowing the sponsorship of sporting events by tobacco companies.

### Equal Pay and Pay Equity

New Zealand passed an Equal Pay Act in 1972. Since that time, average hourly earnings have been the standard indicator of progress. The June 2005 Statistics New Zealand Income Survey showed average hourly earnings from wages and salaries by gender and ethnicity. The historical disparity between men and women of European, Māori, and Pacific background remained, with European men continuing to do best in the New Zealand labor market. All women earned \$20.52 compared to \$24.10 for all men, with Māori and Pacific women doing least well of all the groups. Clearly, in the 37 years since the act was first passed, the gender pay gap had not closed.

In 1990, Clark noted that the pay gap "would not be closed without legislation because without it there are only good intentions and no action" (Edwards, 2001, p. 206). Consequently, the Employment Equity Bill was designed to equalize pay through a mechanism that would assess occupations filled largely by women, such as nursing, and compare them to similar skills and training done by men, such as policing. Both professions required training, irregular hours of work, and a degree of risk. Feminists were delighted when the bill passed into law in July 1990 but, when Labour lost the election a few months later, the first action of the incoming National government was to repeal the act (McCallum, 1993, p. 155).

Once Labour returned to power in 1999, work restarted on pay equity issues and, in 2004, the government introduced a Pay and Employment Equity Plan of Action. In 2007, a pay and employment equity review process began in the Public Service and the public health and public education sectors (Department of Labour). As the National government repealed the original Pay Equity Act in 1999 and the 2008 National government does not appear committed to the initiative, the future of the review process remains unclear.

### Paid Parental Leave

In 2002, Clark and the Labour government introduced the paid parental leave scheme. It was a government-funded entitlement paid to eligible working mothers and adoptive parents when they took parental leave from their

work to care for their newborn babies. Parents received paid parental leave for a maximum of 14 weeks although they also were entitled to take 52 weeks of leave without risk of losing their jobs (Clark, 2008).

### Flexible Working Hours

The Employment Relations (Flexible Working Hours) Bill was designed to give New Zealanders a work-life balance, and the provision of flexible working arrangements was seen as a key to maintaining that balance. Introduced in 2007, the bill provided certain groups of employees with the right to request flexible working arrangements, including changing their hours of work, times or days of work, or place of work (Dyson, 2007).

### Violence Against Women

The Labour government's initiatives were based on a 5-year whole-of-government Action Plan for New Zealand Women which, besides paid parental leave and pay equity, included improvements to child care and early childhood education, set up a Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families and the established Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence.

### Relationship With Māori

The Labour Party was seen by many of the indigenous peoples of New Zealand, the Māori, as their natural political home. A special arrangement continues to exist that allows for a number of seats to be reserved for Māori in Parliament. The "Māori seats," as they are known, inevitably had been held by the Labour Party. At the beginning of the Labour government of 1999, a social policy known as "closing the gaps" was introduced to lessen the disparity between Māori and European New Zealanders but the program was not a success and was retired quietly from public view. Another initiative concerning Māori was legislation introduced to determine the ownership of the country's seabed and foreshore. The resulting Seabed and Foreshore Act 2004 continues to be controversial and is likely to be changed in the future.

Clark's relationship with certain groups within Māoridom did not always go smoothly. While Māori women had been voted into Parliament where they had full speaking rights, they were constrained about where they could speak publicly within their own communities. Routinely, Māori women were denied the right to stand up and talk on some, but not all, *marae*, the official forecourt in front of a meeting house within a Māori community that is reserved for speech making by men. This long-held tradition was enforced when Clark, who was leader of the Labour Party, was challenged over her right to speak during Waitangi Day celebrations in 1998 at the

Te Tii Marae at Waitangi. Waitangi Day is an important event that marks the signing in 1840 of New Zealand's founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi, between more than 500 indigenous Māori people and representatives of Queen Victoria, the British monarch. Waitangi Day is marked annually by a national holiday on February 6, and traditional Māori celebrations are held at Waitangi, the place where the treaty was first signed.

Clark had been invited by local Māori to speak at Waitangi but, when she rose to give her address, she was loudly challenged by a female Māori activist who shouted at her to sit down. Deeply embarrassed, Clark was reduced to tears. They were "tears of utter frustration" that were used by her political enemies to suggest that she was not a strong leader. In addition, Television New Zealand played the video clip of Clark crying in its news coverage for months after the event. Clark noted that "the media are very cruel about women in tears. They will tolerate tears in men as a strength. . . . Helen shedding tears for Waitangi seemed to be a terrible weakness" (Edwards, 2001, p. 277). Once she had become prime minister, Clark went to Te Tii Marae on a few occasions but, during the last 5 years of her term, she chose to observe Waitangi Day elsewhere.

### Foreign Policy

From the start of her politicization, Clark took a deep interest in foreign policy and she derived particular pleasure from explaining and selling New Zealand's nonnuclear policy which, coupled with the country's clean, green image, has endured since the 1980s (Myers, 1986, p. 173). In 2003, New Zealand did not contribute in the Iraq War other than to send New Zealand Defence Force engineers to assist with civilian reconstruction work. In addition, New Zealand's primary role in Afghanistan was to supply special forces and to deploy police and military trainers (Clark, 2007).

### "Queen of the Pacific"

New Zealand has an interesting relationship with its close neighbors in the South Pacific. Three islands are dependencies (Tokelau, the Cook Islands, and Niue), and New Zealand contributes considerable amounts of aid money to many of the other states. New Zealand is an active member of the Pacific Islands Forum, a regional organization devoted to furthering the interests of the Pacific. Clark attended meetings and, when it was New Zealand's turn, chaired the forum but, no matter the occasion, she was always the only woman leader present in the male-dominated South Pacific region.

Following the 2006 coup d'état in Fiji, the country's fourth coup in 19 years, Clark noted in a speech to the Oxford Union that Fiji was a major issue of regional concern and that New Zealand would be part of the endeavor



to move the country back to constitutional government. New Zealand imposed “smart sanctions” against the military regime, much to the annoyance of the coup leader, Commodore Frank Bainimarama. In an extraordinary move, Bainimarama called on Fiji Indians living in New Zealand to vote against Clark in the 2008 election, claiming that “friction with Helen Clark’s government has never ceased” (“Bainimarama Urges Vote Against New Zealand PM,” 2008, p. 2). Further, Bainimarama accused Helen of fueling ethnic division in Fiji by supporting the deposed prime minister, Laisenia Qarase. “She wants to be Queen of the Pacific and she has been very vocal against Fiji and what we have been trying to fight for, which is equality for everyone in Fiji,” he said. Despite his posturing, Clark maintained sanctions against Fiji, and this policy was maintained by the National Party government when she left office.

## The Last Campaign

The Labour Party entered the 2008 election with “trust” as the campaign theme. Slogans appeared such as “the leader you can trust after nine years” and “strong proven leadership” with Clark portrayed as the “trusted” leader. But, in the end, the Labour Party was seen as out of touch and overconfident. Some legislation continued to rankle with the voting public, particularly the controversial so-called anti-smacking law. The new legislation repealed section 59 of the Crimes Act, which had allowed parents to use reasonable force when disciplining their children. The passage of the anti-smacking legislation in June 2007 annoyed many people and was seen as a failure of political management. Although Helen, personally, was seen as capable leader, the loss of public approval resulted in a loss at the polls.

For many commentators, the fifth Labour government, which was dominated by academics, teachers, and trade unionists, represented the end of the influence of the baby boomer generation. Clark and her cohort were born soon

after World War II between 1946 and 1964 and were preoccupied with issues such as nuclear disarmament, peace activities, and human rights. The new prime minister, John Key, was born in 1961 and came into politics from a career in investment banking. At this point, it is too early to predict in which direction the country will go under his leadership.

## Summary

The Labour Party adored Clark and members were stunned when she resigned as leader on the night that she lost the election. One reason for her popularity was that she had kept the party united and in power for 9 years, an achievement not seen since 1949, the year before Clark was born. She was succeeded in the leadership by a man, Phil Goff, but the new deputy leader is a woman, Annette King.

Feminists will be heartened that more women than ever before entered Parliament in 2008. On the other hand, they will observe a return to male dominance with the gradual erosion of women leaders as positions such as that of prime minister, governor-general, and Speaker of the House are filled once again by men.

In March 2009, Clark was appointed the administrator of the United Nations Development Programme for a term of 4 years. The position is the third highest ranked in the United Nations. In her farewell speech to Parliament, Helen noted she had made her maiden speech 27 years earlier in 1981 at the “tender age of 32” and had been prime minister for 9 years. She mentioned themes that had resonated throughout her long political career. These included her “deep belief in equality” and her government’s core values of “fairness, opportunity, and security.” She believed that, over time, her government’s programs had made a substantial difference in bettering the lives of many New Zealanders (Clark, 2009, p. 4). As she concluded her speech, in a gesture of great honor, Clark was draped in a Māori feather cloak that had belonged to the late Māori queen, Dame Te Atairangikaahu.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN ASIA

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Women in Asia represent a quarter of the world's population. They are now taking a multitude of leadership roles and overcoming barriers such as illiteracy, poverty, violence, and discrimination. From housewives to leaders, women who have changed Asia have shown courage, shared immense popularity, and sacrificed their personal lives. Students of Asian Studies have wondered why so many women have been elected prime ministers and presidents in Asia and more are likely to follow.

### Historical Influences

The entire world was affected after the World War I. It gave rise to poverty. Movements against colonialism started as protest in the Indian subcontinent, or South Asia. Women's role in politics started as a movement for independence, against anticolonialism in Asia and antiracism in Africa.

On the Indian subcontinent, the rise of women's organizations and the beginning of women's participation in politics took place from 1914 to 1927. Indian women's struggle for freedom found their expression in the militant Gandhian and Khelafat movements. The All India Muslim Ladies Conference (Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam) was founded in 1914 to uphold the importance of education for Muslim women as a means of emancipation and enlightenment. Anjuman was dedicated to advancing education and rights for Muslim women.

The National Council of Women in India was founded in 1925 to be a part of a worldwide organization that worked at national and local levels for the advancement of women. In cooperation with Women in India and the All India Women's Conference, the National Council of Women in India prepared a statement supporting adult

suffrage at a conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark. The right to vote was considered important to ensure that women's opinions played a role in the framing of laws that would directly benefit their welfare. The vote was considered one of the rights that women had to fight for to establish their other rights.

The leader of the nonviolence movement in India, Mahatma Gandhi, encouraged women to participate in all aspects of national life including the satyagraha initiated by him. His teachings centered on *ahimsa* (nonviolence), constructive activity, and *satyagraha* (love, nonviolence, and self-sacrifice)—all characteristics attributed to women by Gandhi. He was often quoted by many, "If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women—who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?" Women in India responded to Gandhi. This struggle for freedom became means to liberate women.

### The First Woman Prime Minister in Asia

In 1960 Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the first woman prime minister of Sri Lanka and the first woman prime minister in the world. She was prime minister from 1960 to 1965. Her daughter, Chandrika Kumaratunga, was president of Sri Lanka from 1994 to 2000. She appointed her mother Sirimavo Bandaranaike to the honorary post of prime minister from 1994 to 2000.

Indira Gandhi became the first woman prime minister of India in 1966. In 1971 she was reelected as prime minister. In 1979 she resigned after a no confidence vote was brought against her by the president of India. In 1980 she was again sworn in as prime minister. On October 31, 1984, she was assassinated by her Sikh body guards. Her legacy continues. Her daughter-in-law, Sonia Gandhi, is a

member of Parliament and president of Congress Party. As president, she brought her party to power twice, but she did not hold any ministerial post.

The other leading politicians in India include regional leaders such as Jayalalitha in the South, Mayawati in the North, and Mamata Banerjee from West Bengal as minister of railways in 2009. A "Dalit queen," as she was known, Mayawati of the "untouchable" Dalit caste, held considerable influence because she was supported by the Dalits in India. In the 2009 Indian national election, she failed to get the majority she was hoping for. Congress invited Mamata Banerjee to join the government instead. The Congress Party-controlled government was elected in 2009. The first Dalit woman, Meira Kumar, was elected as speaker of the Parliament. The first woman president of India, Pratiba Patel, was elected in 2007.

In the Muslim majority countries of South Asia such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, women have dominated in leadership roles and held power. Benazir Bhutto was elected in 1988 as the first woman prime minister of Pakistan. She was dismissed by the president of Pakistan, who used the constitutional means to remove her on charges of corruption in 1990.

Bhutto was reelected prime minister in 1993. She was again dismissed by the president in 1996 on corruption charges. She went into self exile in England, from where she led a movement for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. In 2007 she returned to Pakistan to take part in the 2008 election, but she was assassinated in 2007. In Bangladesh, two women, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, have been holding the positions of prime minister and leader of the house and leader of opposition off and on from 1991 until the present term ends in 2012 and are likely to continue doing so for 10 more years.

While women leaders in other parts of Asia are advancing and creating more space and places for women, Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) is still being held under house arrest by the military government in power. She was first put under house arrest in 1989. In the 1990 general election her party won by a wide margin and she became the prime minister-elect. But the results were nullified by the military junta and she has been kept under arrest ever since except for brief periods. In 1991 she won the Nobel Peace Prize. In July 2009 the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visited Myanmar to see her and seek her release, but he was deeply disappointed as she was undergoing a closed trial and being kept in a high security prison. On August 11, 2009, her house arrest was extended for 18 months. While the country prepares for an election under the Senior General Than Shwe's "disciplined democracy," recently announced laws in March and April 2010 mean there is no prospect of the elections in 2010 being free, fair, or inclusive. Burma wants a general election, not an election of generals; such is the view of prodemocracy people.

Women make half of the labor force in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, and Vietnam. In these countries, democracy is weak. In Southeast Asia, only

Indonesia and the Philippines have seen three women presidents. Throughout Asia women have continued to push for their rights within authoritarian and military regimes as in Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Ideological and social advantages possessed by traditional women in Asia are said to be disappearing in the process of modernization.

In a changing and globalized world, multinational and national companies have provided job opportunities as well as have taken advantage of Asian women's cheap labor. Women work in unsafe working conditions in the garment sector and are under pressure to produce more. Both in the traditional and the changing roles, Asian women face new and more complex problems of human rights.

### Assassinations and Family Ties

Women leaders have shaped the world in which they live without much help from the outside. Yet they have been accused of corruption, nepotism, and autocratic rule. "Discredited" and "corrupt" politicians have also bounced back with more popularity. Indira Gandhi was discredited after she imposed a state of emergency in India in 1975 when the civil rights of individuals were restrained. She was unseated from the Parliament and was briefly put behind bars. She lost the election in 1977, and her party also lost heavily. In 1980 she regained her popularity and was reelected prime minister and served until she was killed in 1984. Benazir Bhutto was prime minister of Pakistan in 1988 and again in 1990. She was dismissed by the president of Pakistan in 1990 for corruption charges. In 1993 she was reelected and became prime minister. Once again she was dismissed by the president in 1996, on charges of corruption, and she went into self-exile and campaigned for restoration of democracy in Pakistan. In 2007 she returned to Pakistan to a tumultuous welcome from her people to take part in the election scheduled for January 2008, but she was assassinated in a bomb blast at an election rally on December 27, 2007.

Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia, two former prime ministers of Bangladesh, were imprisoned from 2007 to 2008 on corruption charges brought by the military-assisted caretaker government that has ruled the country under emergency powers from January 2007 until the election in December 2008. Charges of corruption are ignored by supporters, especially when these charges are brought by military rulers as excuses to stall democracy and usher in military rule. The unelected and unconstitutional caretaker government in Bangladesh tried to build their own power base and a new political party, but they failed. They put 450,000 political activists and citizens in jail and became involved in corruption during the time they were in power. Ultimately there was pressure from home and abroad to call for a national election and hand over power since the people rejected the government. A new election date was declared, and the political prisoners were released by court



order to take part in the election in December 2008. In the election Sheikh Hasina and her party Awami League won and formed a government while the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, headed by Khaleda Zia, remained as the main opposition in the Parliament. In January 2009 Sheikh Hasina was sworn in as the prime minister and Khaleda Zia as the leader of opposition, thus continuing the cycle of holding the office of a prime minister and a leader of opposition consecutively by the two women leaders.

## Women as Leaders

A woman as homemaker is a leader in her house. A woman entrepreneur who sells her vegetables or her crafts is in a leadership position in her own business. She conducts her business with her natural skills against all odds. Today most women in small businesses in Asia carry mobile phones to make contacts with their businesses and homes. If these women were educated, they could do better. Women in Bangladeshi villages, for example, are clever and enjoy respect from their families when they earn extra income. Women now run for local offices under a quota system, where higher education is not a bar.

Leadership roles are not necessarily limited to political leadership. Leadership qualities of women have allowed more educated and elite women to be elected to the national Parliaments. Leadership at the local level is growing slowly. Without quotas, women do not stand a chance, particularly in local elections. No matter how a country or region is represented by several women political leaders, it does not necessarily speak of the general condition and status of women in that society. Lack of education keeps women behind in holding leadership positions. But women's votes are sought by all as almost all over Asia there is now adult suffrage and women vote for whomever they please.

A leader may not be the head of an organization, a party, or an institution, and a head of a political party may not necessarily be a leader. In South Asia powerful women leaders, such as Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia, and Sheikh Hasina, came from political families or are close kin of popular political leaders. They did not have an institutional base or administrative track records. The Western media has credited their power base to the popularity of their husbands or fathers who were assassinated and to the sympathy for the assassinated's widows or daughters. Many of these women leaders have great personal charisma and their role in the restoration of democracy makes them very popular among ordinary men and women, including party followers once given the opportunity.

Leadership qualities come from unusual sources. Indira Gandhi was more inspired by her mother than her high-profile political father Nehru. Indira Gandhi (1980) wrote,

Many people know the part played by my grandfather and my father. But in my opinion a more important part was played by

my mother. When my father wanted to join Gandhiji's movement and to change the whole way of life, to change our luxurious living, to give up his practice, the whole family was against it. It was only my mother's courage and persistent support and encouragement which enabled him to take this big step which made such a difference not only to our family but to the history of modern India, and I know that this situation must have taken place in many homes in India. (p. 12)

It is often heard that a mother has shaped the minds of future leaders although she herself had very little education. Many successful women and male leaders are likely to acknowledge the leadership qualities imbued at an early age by a woman who was most likely uneducated but exceptional; take, for example, the tribute paid by the President of the United States Barack Obama to his grandmother. The wisdom of women in traditional societies has given an additional quality to women.

## Importance of Women as Leaders

A woman is still defined as a man's wife, sex object, mother, housewife—not in relation to her own action in society—as Betty Friedan (1963) described in her book, *The Feminine Mystique* (p. 18). She could have been describing Asian women. At first there was no vote for women, and where there was, women voted as their husbands did. The Western feminist movement, as it is known in the Western world, was mostly absent in Asia where the women's movement first took shape as an anti-British movement and freedom from colonial rule.

In Asia, more women are visible in politics than ever before. When asked why there should be more women in politics, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the world's first female prime minister replied, "Because they are not considered. Women's problems are not considered now. Women have to work very hard, not necessarily at a desk in an office. They have family problems that are different than what men have" (qtd. in Liswood, 1995, p. 109).

Getting more women into political office is as important as getting women's issues discussed in Parliaments. Female politicians can represent those interests. Female politicians can draft legislation and support legislation that directly promotes the social, educational, and economic equality of women. In Asia, women politicians do not see themselves as feminists because they would like to be judged as a leader and not on their gender. Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan and Indira Gandhi of India commented in many interviews that they did not see themselves as feminist leaders but as leaders of their people. This sentiment is common in Asia.

Women leadership matters in Asia. The women members of Grameen Bank, the bank for the poor in Bangladesh, have shown that they have enormous capacity once they have an opportunity. The Grameen Bank has become a world model for helping women without collateral to obtain credit. The women have set a record of



paying back almost 99% of what they borrowed. They have been role model leaders in a country where large numbers of industrialists are defaulters of bank loans while poor women have proven to be more bankable. Women workers consider a woman leader as one of them. Women working in the garments sector in Asia have greater voice and acceptability in many areas, including decision making and their own marriages. Job satisfaction and regular wages keep them engaged in this low-paying service, in spite of unsafe working conditions and long hours. To them, women leadership matters; a woman leader is one of them. Naila Kabeer (2008) notes, "Gender varies across countries. Although women have been oppressed throughout history, women have made remarkable progress in education, life expectancy, labor force and reproductive control" (p. 23). A lot of the credit goes to women leaders in those countries where women have made progress.

### **Women Have Turned the Traditional Role and Obstacles Into Advantages**

Caste and ethnicity are obstacles that women face in addition to patriarchal family systems that discourage women from taking part in elective representation and political power. In India, this very obstacle is being turned into an advantage; for example, low-caste women use their voting power to vote for low-caste candidates who represent these socially disadvantaged women in national and local elections.

Benazir Bhutto broke the rule that Muslim women cannot lead prayers and therefore cannot lead a nation by becoming the first Muslim woman prime minister of an Islamic republic. The two leading political leaders of Bangladesh, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, have also broken rules and have been prime minister and leader of opposition in a Muslim country from 1991 to 2010. In the democratization process and development in Asia, the role of women politicians is crucial. The women in Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, Iraq, and Afghanistan, where democracy is new, are now eager to participate in public office. Women there have been associated with the struggle of restoration of democracy; few have held cabinet positions and none has held a top political position.

Women have shown rare courage when they have led unarmed civilian movements to oust autocratic governments and military rule. Over the past 15 years, women have led successful people's power uprisings against dictatorships in Asia. Corazon C. Aquino in the Philippines (1986), Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan (1988), Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina Wazed in Bangladesh (1990), and Megawati Sukarnoputri in Indonesia (1998) led and organized mass protests against nondemocratic regimes. They led their countries to democracy. This is an uncommon and unique feature of Asian women's participation in active politics. They have joined and led independence movements and have successfully ousted powerful military and dictatorial rulers. Fierce participation in freedom movements

has given them a strength and character unlike women leaders in the Western world.

In Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Malaysia, many Muslim leaders have tried to stall the rise of women leaders. Yet patriarchy or religion did not stop women from leading antifundamental, antiterrorist, and antidictatorship movements. The women leaders, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina, and Megawati Sukarnaputri, were all from political dynasties, but their fight for power has not been easy. The challenge for all women leaders remains in setting examples of good governance and democratic practices.

Because of political assassinations, dynastic leadership has become more prominent in South Asia. Assassinations give rise to dynastic successions in South Asia because of family-based political foundations.

In the Philippines, after the assassination of the popular leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, his widow, Corazon Aquino, led the people's power movement against Ferdinand Marcos's regime. Corazon Aquino came to power with a huge people's mandate, but she too had to survive six attempted coups; during the last one she had to depend on U.S. military air support.

In Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi came to politics when her father, General Aung San, who was the father of modern Burma, was assassinated in 1947. She became involved in politics to free her country from military rule, but she was put under house arrest by the army government in 1989. In 1990 she and her party won the election, but the results were nullified. In 1991 she won the Nobel Peace Prize. She has been under house arrest or in prison for 13 out of the past 20 years. After Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged by the military government in 1979, his daughter, Benazir Bhutto, took up the leadership of her father's party. She won the elections in 1988 and became prime minister at age 35. She was assassinated on December 27, 2007. Her son has been declared the political heir while her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, who leads the party, became president of Pakistan in 2008.

In Bangladesh, from 1972 to 1979, members of the armed forces have assassinated two elected presidents in Bangladesh. In 1976, Awami League was the party in power when members of the army assassinated the entire family of President Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. General Ziaur Rahman was placed to power in 1979 and he restored multiparty democracy and formed the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. It was the beginning of the contest between Bangladesh's two main political parties: the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Awami League. When President Ziaur (Zia) Rahman was assassinated, General Hussain Muhammad Ershad took over power and continued Zia's reforms, but he was not as popular as Zia. The widow of Zia took over leadership of her husband's party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, and the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took over leadership of her father's party, the Awami League, and together they ousted the government of Ershad and brought the country back to democracy. In 1991 in the general election the leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party was elected



prime minister of Bangladesh while Sheikh Hasina became leader of opposition.

Women as political leaders have come to the limelight after assassinations of their father or husband while in office. Political assassinations are higher in South Asia than in any other region. Between 1948 and 2008, 11 prominent political leaders were assassinated in or out of office in South Asia. After the independence of India, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948. The first prime minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan, was assassinated on October 16, 1951. In Sri Lanka, Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was assassinated in 1959. The president of Bangladesh, Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and his entire family, except for two daughters, was killed by a section of the army on August 15, 1975. The prime minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was sentenced to death by a military junta and was hanged on April 4, 1979. President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh was assassinated on May 30, 1981. Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984. An alleged bomb planted inside a plane killed the president of Pakistan, General Ziaul Huq, on August 17, 1988. Indira Gandhi's son and the next Indian prime minister after Indira, Rajiv Gandhi, was assassinated on May 21, 1991, by a Tamil woman suicide bomber at Sriperambudur in Tamil Nadu. On May 1, 1993, the president of Sri Lanka, Ranasinghe Premadasa, was assassinated. In 2008, Benazir Bhutto, the former prime minister of Pakistan, was assassinated. As a result of the assassinations in Sri Lanka, Bandaranaike's wife Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her daughter Kumaratunga, whose husband was a leader of a political party and was also assassinated, came to lead their respective husbands' political parties and became prime minister and president of Sri Lanka. Bandaranaike was prime minister of Sri Lanka three times. In Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman's widow Khaleda Zia took over her husband's party, BNP, and became prime minister twice. Bangobandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh, whose daughter Sheikh Hasina Wazed became leader of her father's political party, became prime minister in 1996. In India, Indira Gandhi was elected as leader of her father's party, Indian Congress, although she was not immediately elected prime minister. After her assassination, her son Rajiv Gandhi was made prime minister. His widow Sonia Gandhi would have been a prime minister if she had wanted to and if there had been no objection due to her Italian birth by a section of people including the opposition. She has brought her party to power twice as head of Congress.

### **How to Get More Women in Decision-Making Roles**

It is now well established that it is only in countries where there are quotas that the presence of women in institutions exceeds much more than 15%. In India, the number of women elected is quite low. Women members of Parliament form 9% of the national legislators and 10% in the state assemblies in India. This percentage has gone up from 4.41% in 1952 to 8.01% in 2004, but it has never exceeded 9%. In

2010 the Indian Parliament passed a bill in favor of a 33% reserved quota for women. After having waited 14 years, the Indian Parliament passed a bill in the upper house in March 2010 on reservation of 33% of seats for women in the Parliament. Sonia Gandhi, president of Congress, is credited for the bill being passed in spite of opposition the bill is expected to be passed in the lower house. Among South Asian countries, India and Sri Lanka have the lowest women's representation in legislative assemblies, as they do not have a quota system to promote women's representation. Being ruled by women leaders did not change the statistics, but the quota system did. The main policy response to the underrepresentation of women in formal structures has been to increase representation through quotas in institutions of local governance. In 1992, the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India sought to democratize local governance and provide one-third reservation for women in all villages, blocks, and district-level bodies and in the posts of chairperson and vice chairperson across all of these bodies. The 74th Amendment extended the same provisions to municipal corporations in urban areas. The impact of these reforms was dramatic and immediate: After only one round of elections, more than 1 million women entered local government—and elected office—for the first time. There is considerable evidence to suggest that despite numerous institutional, cultural, and social constraints, the participation of women in local councils has an empowering effect. The developmental impact of such participation has been seen in the issues prioritized by women. In the Indian context, women have worked toward obtaining drinking water, sanitation, housing, schools, primary health centers, and day care facilities for children. In Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal women enjoy the quota system, and their representation in the Parliament is relatively higher than rest of Asia.

### **Summary and Future Directions**

Women make up half of the population of the world but only 18% of the world's population are women parliamentarians. Even in advanced democracies the representation of women in national legislatures has increased only marginally from 9% in 1995 to 16% in 2004, which is much lower than the critical mass of 33% envisaged at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. Asia also represents the same trend, although Asia has experienced more women leaders in high offices in the developing world.

Representation does not imply progress of women and ensure their access to economic, professional, and political opportunities. One of the goals of a democracy is to ensure that everyone has an opportunity for representation in public institutions. It has been further argued that unless historically excluded groups, whether women or racial minorities or disadvantaged groups, are represented in legislatures and decision-making bodies, their interests will not be articulated and will suffer from neglect. It is this exclusion that provides the strongest justification for



politics of presence of women, particularly in Asia where women contribute to the labor force, industry, agriculture, small business, and microfinance. A more balanced representation in governance would lead to better decision-making and policy priorities that reflect people's concerns and take into account the needs and interests of women. Effective representation may involve making a case for quotas as we see in South Asia and elsewhere.

The question of quota systems to ensure women's greater participation is debatable. Those arguing against quotas say that women should not make progress by positive discrimination (i.e., the setting of quotas); they must be there because of merit. Those in favor say quota systems concerning the representation of women do not stop women from competing directly with male candidates but reserves voices of women. In South Asia more women are being elected in the local elections due to the quota system that reserves a certain percentage of seats for women.

Effective participation cannot be ensured by legislation alone. Engendering of state institutions does not always mean gender equitable policies. An enabling political, social, cultural environment in which women acquire access and education to express their concerns, and an enabling environment that is responsive to such concerns, is what is needed to improve leadership and the status of women.

Women are normally regarded as receiving favors from others. But they have power to give too. Nobel Prize

Laureate Amartya Sen has always argued that nothing is as important in the political economy of development as an adequate recognition of political, economic, and social participation, and leadership of women. Empowering women not only improves the well-being of women and their families but also leads to broader social changes. In Bangladesh, Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank and Sir Fazle Hasan Abed of Bangladesh's Rural Advancement Committee have contributed to the empowerment and education of women at all levels. Their influences have traveled outside South Asia.

Asia is a diverse and complex continent. Having women as leaders has helped their role as catalysts of change, but it does not safeguard major concerns that face women in Asia, such as poverty, violence, conflicts, human trafficking, lack of education, health care, and resources needed for equal opportunity, and participation of both men and women. Democracy is popular in Asia, but it has not been easy to sustain democracy.

The restoration of democracy is a long struggle. Asia is changing rapidly. The role of women leaders in Asia will have to be assessed in the context and background of history, culture, and politics. Their role in democracy and how they have changed their world remain to be assessed. Asia is not an isolated continent. Economic, political, social, and environmental changes will continue to shape the role and status of women in Asia.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN JAPAN AND TAIWAN

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This chapter compares and contrasts the role of women in politics in Japan and Taiwan, two East Asian nations. What explains the relatively high representation of women in the Taiwanese political system, whereas in Japan the numbers are so much lower? What is the evidence for change and progress in each nation, and what are the obstacles to further improvement in women's representation? Do women act collectively once they gain seats in the political system?

Interviews on women and political representation in Taiwan were conducted December 14–31, 2007, in Taipei; for the Japanese case, the research is based on interviews conducted over the past 5 years as well as drawing on material from my previously published *Gender Policies in Japan and the United States* (Gelb, 2003).

### The Political Role of Women in Taiwan

Research on women in Taiwanese politics focuses on answering several questions. Among them are the following: What is the explanation for women's relatively high representation in Taiwanese politics? To what extent were mandates for such an increase present in the Constitution, legislative mandates, or both? What was the role of the women's movement in pressing for an increased role for women? How has the election of a "critical mass" of Taiwanese women affected policy change?

At the turn of the 21st century, Taiwanese women held about a fifth of the seats in the legislative *Yuan* (Parliament). In 2009, they comprise 33 out of 113 (29.2%). For the KMT (Kuomintang—the present incarnation of autocrat Chiang

Kai-Shek's political party), 20 out of 80 (25%) are female representatives; for the DPP (Democratic Progressive Party), 12 out of 27 (44.4%) are female. Smaller parties have only a handful of women in the legislature.

Article 136 of the 1946 Constitution provides the primary explanation for women's comparatively good representation in Taiwan, particularly in relation to other Asian neighbors such as Japan and Korea. The Constitution guarantees women representation in legislative assemblies at all levels of government. In practice, in the multimember district systems that prevailed until the most recent post-war election, one or more seats were "reserved" for women. About 10% of seats were reserved in this manner. It is particularly notable that there were competitive elections even during the authoritarian era dominated by the KMT, which effectively ended when the opposition DPP won the election in 2001. (It emerged as a rival to the dominant KMT in the late 1980s.)

DPP Taipei Mayor Chen initiated increased representation of women after he was elected mayor in 1994. Female candidates were recruited to be competitive, and sometimes to replace their imprisoned husbands who were unable to run for office during the period of martial law that lasted for 20 years. Despite limitations on freedom of assembly and speech during the martial law period, women's groups existed, although they were formally established only after the restrictions were lifted in July 1987. (The first truly democratic election was held in 1992; in 1996 the legislative Yuan replaced the prior National Assembly.) They included the KMT office of women's activities. Hsiu-lien Annette Lu, who had been exposed to American feminism while studying in the

United States, launched the Taiwan feminist movement on International Women's Day in 1972. Although she was arrested, the Women New Awakenings Foundation continued to advocate for feminism and women's rights. Most interviewees indicated that her example inspired an entire generation of Taiwanese women.

Since democratization, a large number of women's groups have flourished. Peng Wan-Ru was also an important figure in Taiwan's women's movement for the promotion of women's rights and equality between the sexes. Peng Wan-Ru held important positions in many women's organizations, including the Homemakers Union and the New Awakenings Foundation. She later headed the Women's Affairs Committee of the DPP until her brutal murder in 1996. The advocacy of other feminists who pressed for the transformation of the political system to gain greater representation for women appears to have affected women's significant political presence as well (Huang, 2002).

In 1996, the DPP instituted a quota system that provided that every one of four candidates should be women. This policy applied to party nominations and party offices. The reserved seats system helped to increase women's representation, and as women's income and education increased, women became more competitive and more were elected, exceeding the number of reserved seats. At that point, the quota became a limit on female representation. Women pushed for a higher quota and also a quota for the cabinet as well, proposing a constitutional amendment to attain this goal. In 1997–1998 the proposed amendment was derailed and the cabinet quota was not achieved, although the DPP supported this change. The effort to extend the one-quarter reserved seats to the ministerial cabinet proved too controversial to gain adoption. Women did gain a one-fourth quota system for party offices and election nominees.

The KMT was not interested in following the model of seeking increased women's representation until it lost the 2000 presidential election. After this defeat, it adopted a one-quarter reserved seat policy for women and increased the role of women in the party's Central Committee. All Taiwanese political parties have followed suit. (The DPP no longer needs the one-quarter quota because the number of women nominees has surpassed it at this time.) A constitutional amendment in 2005 mandated that half of party candidates should be women. It should be noted that policies to provide favorable treatment to female candidates were met with strong opposition from some male and female party members, although this position did ultimately prevail.

Women have also held posts in the cabinet of up to one fifth in the recent past, though at present their numbers are lower in that body, arguably more powerful politically than the legislature. After the election of (former Mayor) DPP Chen Shui-Bian as prime minister in 2000, he fulfilled his promise to women's groups to appoint one-quarter women to his cabinet. His appointments were to important positions as well, including domestic affairs, transportation, and

chairperson of the Mainland Affairs Council. However, a year later, the percentage dropped to 15%, and none of the top ministries was headed by women any longer.

On January 19, 2006, Tsai Ing-wen became Taiwan's second female vice premier; she served only until May of that year when her party was defeated at the polls. Vice President Annette Lu was reelected to a second term in 2004. In that year, 6 of the 48 cabinet members were women and 3 of the 13 grand justices were women. Three of the 15 members of the DPP central standing committee and 12 of the 30 members of the DPP central executive committee were women. Ten of the 31 members of the KMT central standing committee were women. There were 46 women in the 221-member legislative Yuan. According to constitutional amendments passed in June 2005, at least half of the nominees for at-large overseas legislators must be women. As of 2009, 11 of the members of the legislative Yuan were women from the DPP and 20 from the KMT, a decline from the numbers reported earlier (G. Chang, Taiwan Economic and Cultural Affairs Bureau, New York, personal communication, April 2, 2009). In 2009 Tsai Ing-wen served as chairperson of the opposition DPP.

Women hold 10% of high-level positions in the civil service but have far better representation at the middle management levels (Clark & Clark, 2009, p. 614). Interviews conducted in the 1990s found that female legislators in Taiwan pursued a legislative agenda that prioritized feminist and caring issues, representing their constituency well in this regard (Clark & Clark, 2009, pp. 615–616).

As is true in other Asian nations, and Western ones as well, a number of women serving as elected representatives were "legacies"; that is, they took over the positions of their fathers or other family members, including husbands. The latter was particularly true during the 20-year period of martial law, when numerous men were imprisoned and their wives came forward to take their places. Although they first were elected due to public sympathy, later they achieved independent status and fewer than half of the nominees for office were from political families (S.-Y. Huang, interview). However, a number of senior women serving in the legislative Yuan came to political power this way. A few women entered politics in part as a result of their prior activism, either in women's or youth/college groups (S.-Y. Huang, interview).

Women were also the beneficiaries of the multimember, proportional representation system that prevailed until the election period in 2008. The impact of the newly adopted single member district system, a system that often results in more limited electoral possibilities for women, will need to be evaluated in the future, although in the newly adopted system, some seats in the proportional representation elections continue to be reserved for women. The present Taiwanese legislative election system is highly complex, with multiple seats available for each district and multiple contenders vying for votes in each district.

Unlike women in some other nations, there seems to be little interaction among women who serve in the legislative



Yuan, even among members of the same party, other than informal, nonpolitical ones; they do not form networks or meet to propose and develop policy (L.-C. Cheng, interview). Political conflicts, particularly between opposition party members, limit cooperation, although it has occurred on certain issues such as domestic violence policy.

Women in the legislative Yuan have worked on some issues together (L.-C. Cheng, interview), dealing with specific issues related to women's status, including women's inheritance rights, abortion, equal opportunity health, and domestic violence policy. In the case of abortion, right-wing groups have sought to limit access for women, thus far with no success. Women in Taiwan have also obtained menstrual leave,<sup>1</sup> 2-year maternity leave for child care purposes (presently there is discussion about extending this to employers with fewer than 30 workers), as well as laws against sexual harassment. There was a general perception that the DPP is much friendlier to women's issues than the KMT; even a member of the KMT indicated that it deserved great credit for promoting women to public office and reaching out to recruit female candidates (S. Cheng, interview). Women in the legislature are continuing to work collectively for improvements in domestic violence laws. The elected women interviewed also indicated that despite the important progress for women in politics, women in the workforce continue to face sex discrimination and lower pay.

When asked whether Taiwan is a "women friendly" state, most respondents replied "yes" or "moderately so" (L.-C. Cheng, S. Cheng, S.-Y. Huang, interviews). Some women interviewed attribute greater openness to women's participation to the idea that Taiwan is an "immigrant" society, with less traditional values (L.-C. Cheng, S. Cheng, S.-Y. Huang, interviews). Also, as a democratizing society with a reformed political system, Taiwan is more receptive to women's concerns than more traditional nations. Several respondents expressed concern over corruption in the Taiwanese electoral system, often taking the form of bribes, which may limit women's opportunities, in addition to creating other problems.

As is the case elsewhere, it is arguable that despite the importance of women's gains in the legislature in Taiwan, the major political power in the political system resides in the ministerial cabinet where women are less represented, at least at present (L.-C. Cheng, interview). Several respondents indicated that it is difficult to find "qualified" women with expertise to serve as ministers. (It is not clear why this would be so, given the high level of educational and professional attainment among Taiwanese women.) In the cabinet of prior Prime Minister Chen, 13% of the ministers and vice ministers were women, or 6 of 41 (M.-C. Lan, interview). In the 2009 cabinet of Prime Minister Liu, women comprise 28%, 11 of 39 members (G. Chang, personal communication, April 2, 2009).

Of the initial research questions mentioned at the outset, the reasons for the high representation of women was the question most readily answered. As a result of constitutional and legislative mandates, as well as the

development of a fledgling democracy, there was greater receptivity to women's demands for greater representation than in many, more traditional Asian nations.<sup>2</sup> The role of a "critical mass" of women seems relatively negligible: Although there are numerous women-related policies that have been noted, most women interviewed did not perceive these as part of a cooperative effort among women. Whereas one or two women among those interviewed had ties to women's movements, this was less true for the KMT, now the party in power.

## Women in Japanese Politics

In Japan in 2009, women comprised 9.4% of the House of Representatives, the more powerful lower house, and 18.2% of the upper house, the House of Councilors, a small increase from 2007 in this body. As of 2007, women were 14% of the Diet's two houses: 23 of 118 in the House of Councilors and 45 of the 479 members of the House of Representatives. In the dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), they were 27 of the 303 members, 10 of the opposition party Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) members, and 4 of 31 of the Buddhist-based Komeito, often a coalition partner of the LDP in recent years (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006; Martin, 2009, p. 402). Minor parties, such as the Communists (JCP) and Socialists (SDPJ) also nominate women to office at all levels; in 1989 Takako Doi served as the female head of the Socialist Party. Women's representation in politics has been pressed for by a variety of groups, including the Ichikawa Fusae Memorial Society, with origins in the immediate postwar period, and the now defunct Women's Solidarity Foundation, founded and headed by the deceased former Diet member, Tamako Nakanishi.

Women's electoral opportunities have been enhanced by proportional representation for a portion of seats in the upper house; efforts by the LDP to balance single member and proportional seats to its own advantage resulted in a slight decline in women representatives in 2001–2002. A new trend toward cross-partisan legislative sponsorship on some issues by female Diet members has been observed. Less formal, for example, than the U.S. Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, the trend toward interparty cooperation is nonetheless an important indication of the significance of increased female representation.

## Local and Prefectural Representation

Although not well represented in local executive positions at the municipal level, women have done better in elections in more diverse and larger urban areas: They comprised 16.1% of city representatives in major cities in 2006, and 21.5% in the capital Tokyo, in comparison to 7.2% in prefectural (provincial) governments overall (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006). Today, about 20% of advisory council



members are women, an increase of 10% from just several years ago, and women still comprise a very low number of high-level public managers: 1.5% (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006). The low representation of women in local assemblies is notable although there has been a steady increase of women elected at the local and national levels of government (Gender Equality Bureau, 2001, p. 15). Ten percent of local government representatives were female in 2008 though 56% of village assemblies and three prefectural assemblies had no female representation at all (Ichikawa Fusae Memorial Association, 2009). A major breakthrough for women in local politics occurred when the first phase of the April 2003 unified local elections recorded solid gains for women candidates. The April 14, 2003, poll included elections for 44 prefectural assemblies. In the 2,634 contested seats, a record 164 women were elected to office. Although not well represented in local executive positions at the municipal level, women have done better in elections in more diverse and larger urban areas: They comprised 16.1% of city representatives in major cities in 2006, and 21.5% in the capital Tokyo, in comparison to 7.2% in prefectural governments overall (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006). Results in the second phase of the April 2003 unified local elections produced a small increase in the number of female mayors in Japan. Six women mayors were elected in the nation's 677 cities, but just three women mayors representing Japan's 2,562 towns and villages. As in the first half of the unified local elections, overall results for female candidates in the various races for municipal office were quite good. Out of the 10,246 seats up for election in 387 local assemblies, a record-high 1,236 women won seats. This surpassed the record set in the previous 1999 unified local election in which 1,084 women were elected (Curtin, 2003d).

The follow-up to the first round of the local elections was also something of a political milestone. For the first time ever, nearly 10% of the 3,846 declared candidates in prefectural races were female. Of the 383 women who threw their hats into the male-dominated ring, a respectable 42.8% won, a considerable advance nationally. For the first time women won seats in the two previously all-male bastions of Yamagata and Hiroshima prefectural assemblies (Curtin, 2003c).

This was the third successive unified local election in which the number of women elected increased: In the 1995 unified local elections, just 79 women were elected to prefectural assemblies. Although the baseline was very low, this figure soared by an impressive 72.2% to 136 women in the 1999 elections. The year 2003 saw a more modest rise of 28 more women, representing a 20.6% increase. Even so, out of the 2,634 seats contested in this round of prefectural assembly elections, an overwhelming 2,470 were won by men (Curtin, 2003c).

As of 2007, women were 19% of the representatives in Nagano prefecture, were 17.3% in Tokyo, and had no representation in rural Fukui prefecture (Ichikawa Fusae Memorial Association [FIMA], 2007). Women running for

local office have attempted to use their connections to community issues, including recycling, food safety, social welfare, and education, to build upon their roles as wives and mothers, for the large number who are not employed outside the voluntary sector (Martin, 2009, p. 403). By 2007, if 30% is used as a cut-off for a critical mass, then 23 city/ward assemblies have achieved it; 10 of these city/ward assemblies are in Tokyo and the remainder are located in other urban locales—Saitama, Chiba, Osaka prefectures (FIMA, 2007).<sup>3</sup> These numbers mark considerable progress in some urban areas.

## Mayoral Elections

Results in the second phase of the April 2003 unified local elections produced a small increase in the number of female mayors in Japan. Six women mayors were elected in the nation's 677 cities, but just three women mayors representing Japan's 2,562 towns and villages (Curtin, 2003d).

In the 2003 election, female mayoral candidates did particularly well in urban areas. Two women were elected mayor in the western Tokyo suburbs of Kunitachi and Mitaka while another female candidate won in Hiratsuka, located in nearby Kanagawa Prefecture. Kunitachi Mayor Hiroko Uehara was reelected for a second term, having become the first female mayor in Tokyo in April 1999. In the Hiratsuka mayoral race, Ritsuko Okura was elected the municipality's first woman mayor, defeating the incumbent, Itsuo Yoshino. Part of her election success was based around her strong opposition to a merger plan with neighboring towns (Curtin, 2003d).

Like the recent emergence of women governors, female mayors are a relatively new addition to the Japanese political landscape, although there seems to be considerable reluctance by the voting public to electing women to executive office. Women have been more successful in gaining electoral office as deputy governors and vice mayors.

Harue Kitamura was elected Japan's first female mayor in 1991 for the city of Ashiya in Hyogo Prefecture. She stepped down in April 2003 at the age of 74, having successfully served for 12 years. Just before leaving office she gave a frank interview in which she spoke freely about the challenges she faced in a male-dominated political world. She observed, "There is no advantage to being a woman in politics" (Curtin, 2003d, n.p.). Prior to holding office, Kitamura had been nominated by citizen's groups, and she had a history of interest in local politics as well as an interest in gender issues.

Unlike what appeared to be the dramatic increase in the number of women governors after February 2000 (though in fact the gains have not been sustained), the rise in numbers of female mayors has been relatively slow. As noted earlier, although Harue Kitamura was elected Japan's first woman mayor in April 1991, by June 1998 there were only four women holding the post. This figure included two women mayors of cities and another two for smaller municipalities. In December 2002, the number reached six, when



the youngest Japanese woman elected mayor, Aya Shirai, took up her post at Amagasaki city hall in Osaka Prefecture. She was just 42 years old and represented the new breed of relatively young women entering politics. Shirai was a former flight attendant who operated a local job training center and ran with the support of citizens groups but no major parties ("Former Stewardess Relishes Amagasaki Challenge," 2002). However, even though the April 2003 local elections again increased the number of women mayors, the numbers were still less than 1% of the total.

In 2003, women represented a mere 0.9% of city mayors and an abysmal 0.1% of mayors in towns and villages. This clearly shows that although the number of female mayors has been rising since 1991, the rate of increase is painfully slow. Until representation at the local executive level increases, Japanese women will lack a proper voice in local government, arguably in the area of politics in which they should be most closely involved (Curtin, 2003a).

In 2009, the time of this writing, there were nine female mayors in Japan, including the new mayor of Yokohama who won an upset victory on the Democratic party ticket on August 30, 2009. Fumiko Hayashi, former chairwoman of the Daiei supermarket chain, was elected mayor of Yokohama, a city of over 3.5 million. Although she ran as an independent, Hayashi rode on the coattails of the Democratic Party of Japan's landslide victory in the national election. The 63-year-old Hayashi campaigned on her experience of turning around Daiei Inc. and pledged to cut public debt and provide assistance for working parents using the expertise she gained as a corporate executive ("Former Stewardess," 2002).

## Governors

Japan never had a female governor until Fusae Ota's groundbreaking victory in February 2000. Until the year 2000, there were no women governors in Japan; 3 years later there were 4 out of 47, and they were heading fairly important prefectures: Hokkaido, Osaka, Chiba, and Kumamoto. (Okawara, 2003). The fact that by April 2003 there were 4 women governors out of a total 47 is almost the equivalent of a Japanese political miracle. The April 2003 gubernatorial election for the vast northern island of Hokkaido produced a surprise victory for Harumi Takahashi, who became Hokkaido's first and Japan's fourth female governor. She joined the ranks of the other three women governors, Fusae Ota (Osaka), Yoshiko Shiotani (Kumamoto), and Akiko Domoto (Chiba), at that time. In just 3 short years, Japan went from having no female governors to a position where women made up a modest 8.5% of all governors. However, despite the optimism that a trend toward election of more women governors was developing, this hope has not been realized to date. As of 2009, there were only three women governors, a decline from the peak, although some observers thought their numbers would increase incrementally as representative of ordinary citizens who felt ignored

by the current discredited political order (Curtin, 2003c). The present governors are Harumi Takahashi, Hokkaido; Micko Yoshimura, Yamagata Prefecture; and Yukiko Kada, Shiga Prefecture.

Before Takahashi's win in Hokkaido, the three existing female governors had already formed themselves into a new kind of political force representing women, somewhat equivalent to the role of a caucus in U.S. politics. In November 2002, they jointly submitted a package of detailed policy measures to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. These policy initiatives, focused on the needs of ordinary citizens, covered five key areas: (1) food safety, (2) better emergency medical care for children, (3) an improved environment for raising children, (4) reducing domestic violence and child abuse, and (5) women's health issues. They also emphasized the necessity for more women to play key roles in society. The women governors also expressed the belief that one of the main reasons why Japan has been mired in economic decline for more than a decade is because the ordinary person's perspective is absent from the national decision-making process. Additionally, they hoped that one day half of the nation's governors would be women. To promote this philosophy, they jointly organized a forum in their respective prefectures to broaden understanding of their fundamental core objectives (Curtin, 2003c).

In recent years several controversial and independent minded figures, including women, have been elected to the post of prefectural governor. Their victories have sometimes caused major political shockwaves, occasionally changing the course of national politics. In this context, the March 2001 upset victory of Akiko Domoto in Chiba Prefecture was an instrumental factor in propelling the reform-minded Koizumi into the premiership. As of 2009, there have been a total of five female governors in Japanese prefectures. On the northern island prefecture of Hokkaido, Harumi Takahashi, an independent candidate, unexpectedly won in an upset in the 2003 election, becoming the territory's first female governor. She became the fourth woman to be elected governor in Japan. Takahashi had been a former Hokkaido government official with no previous political experience. Although she stood as an independent, she was backed by the three parties in the governing coalition. Yukiko Kada, had been an environmentalist advocate who opposed the domination of the LDP incumbent. She was backed by the Socialist Party only (SDPJ) and ran as an independent (Yanagawa, 2002).

The data presented here suggest that women in politics in Japan, at least at the local and prefectural executive levels, have had difficulty building increased momentum upon their modest gains to date. As in national politics, the major parties have an abysmal record of female representation in local government. It is the small parties where women have made real gains. In 2003, out of the 1,309 winning candidates backed by the nation's biggest political party, the LDP, just 16 were women (1.2%). The main opposition DPJ did better with 24 women winning from its list of 205 endorsed candidates (11.7%). Women achieved



their best showing in the JCP where 45 of the 107 party seats were won by women. There were 44 women who won as independents (Curtin, 2003d).

## Representation in National Politics

In Japan, where approximately 40% of the members of Parliament are second or third generation politicians (or "legacies"), it is difficult for newcomers to break in. For example, recent Prime Minister Koizumi's father and grandfather were politicians before him, as is true for the present Prime Minister Taro Aso. Pundits say that in order to win one needs *kanban*, *kaban*, and *jiban*, or name recognition, a bag of money, and a constituency. An organization named WINWIN (deliberately modeled after EMILY's List in the United States) has supported female candidates monetarily to try to increase women's numbers in politics and fill some of the constraints presented by the political system. WINWIN is primarily a fund-raising organization, but its members also help out by giving campaign speeches and doing other support work. As of 2003, it helped to elect 17 women to both houses of the Diet, and in recent lower house elections, 5 of the 10 women they supported won (Curtin, 2005).

Though women are still underrepresented at all levels of Japanese politics, a record number of women were elected for the first time in the 2005 elections. Women were one third of newly elected lawmakers in this election (Curtin, 2005). As of 2008, they held 9.4% of the seats in the lower house or 45 of 480 (the most important) and 18.2% of the upper house (44 of 242; Martin, 2009, p. 402). The low representation persisted though women have turned out in larger numbers than men in all elections since the 1960s (p. 403). As of August 31, 2009, a record number of women were elected to the Japanese House of Representatives, increasing their numbers from 43 to 54, now the highest ever, at 11% ("Lower House Gets Facelift," 2009). Forty of the newly elected women were Democratic Party candidates. The DPJ fielded 46 female candidates against prominent former ruling coalition males, mirroring a successful tactic that had been used by former Prime Minister Koizumi, who ran a large number of women in the 2005 elections as "new faces" (McCurry, 2009).

Women have also lacked significant representation at the cabinet or ministerial level. At present, in the Aso LDP government, 2 women serve in the cabinet out of 18. This is a marked decline from high point of 6 out of 17 members in 2002 during the second Koizumi government. Present female cabinet members as of 2009 are Noda Seiko (Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Science and Technology) and Obuchi Yuio (Minister of Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality). As is often true in Taiwan and elsewhere, these female politicians were "legacies": Obuchi's father and grandfather were prominent politicians and her father served as prime minister. Noda's grandfather was the construction minister and she grew up in a political family. Her political career got a boost

when she was selected as one of Koizumi's "assassins"—new politicians whom he chose to attempt to defeat entrenched factions within his (dominant) party, the LDP. An avowed conservative, Noda has been active on several feminist issues, including efforts (thus far unsuccessful) to permit married women to retain their maiden names. To protest this system, Noda and her partner did not officially marry for many years. She has spearheaded efforts to alter the low birthrate in Japan, and she has expressed concern for infertility issues publicizing her own situation.

In Japan, a crucial by-product of increased representation for women in legislative politics has been greater reliance on *giin rippo*, Diet members' sponsored legislation. Although *giin rippo* as a more general trend is not limited to women's issues, as Pekkanen and others note, often such bills have been the product of opposition parties and as such they have been doomed to failure (Pekkanen, 2000, p. 112). However, in several cases, Diet women across party lines have successfully collaborated on legislation.

What characterizes successful efforts? It appears that legislation dealing with protection of victims has been most accepted to date. Second, successful policies may involve a limited government budgetary commitment which makes them more palatable. Finally, the adoption of these laws has involved compromise and collaboration not just among women but also among the LDP and opposition parties. In the absence of key LDP support, they cannot succeed. Bills proposed by opposition parties, alone and collaboratively, fail and are discarded (Y. Kobayashi, personal communication, August 9, 2002). Successful gender-related policy adoption also has involved active lobbying by women's groups who have gained the ear of female Diet members, often through their association with opposition parties but occasionally with sympathetic members of the LDP as well. Such citizen groups may have helped to publicize issues and keep them in the public arena with continuing scrutiny from the media (Pekkanen, 2000, p. 133).

Cross-party sponsorship cannot prevail in those instances where the LDP is divided and opposition party members are also opposed to policy. The key to effective cross-party collaboration by Diet women necessarily involves participation by LDP Diet women and their leadership on policy initiatives as well (Y. Kobayashi, personal communication, August 13, 2002). This was true for the passage of the domestic violence law in the House of Councilors, through the study group (*chosokai*) and project team effort, and also in the House of Representatives for the anti-child pornography/anti-child prostitution bill. A proposal for selective or dual surname legislation has encountered much opposition from male and female LDP members (among others) and cannot garner the same support, despite efforts to use the *giin rippo* process again by an LDP Diet woman (S. Noda, interview). Another factor upon which members' legislation is premised is the existence of coalition government, which necessitates compromise and bargaining between the LDP and the opposition parties. The exigencies of electoral instability and the potential of female swing voting in unstable electoral



conditions may play a role as well (Pekkanen, 2000). Finally, successful efforts to date have involved international gender equity norms as applied by Japanese women, although this may not always be the case in the future. Although LDP women, active on other issues, expressed their dismay with the revision of the Eugenic Protection Law, particularly the name Mother's Body Protection Law (*botai hoga ho*), on this issue they did not make common cause with opposition party women who also opposed the name and content of the new proposal. Each party supported its own bill, and the result was one disappointing to feminist interests. On some issues, LDP Diet women may be constrained by the opposition of their male counterparts, or they may wish to claim sole credit for legislation for their own reelection benefit or that of their party, making cooperation difficult (Y. Kobayashi, personal communication, August 13, 2002). It is therefore premature to speak of gender-based Diet members' legislation as a definite and enduring trend. Nonetheless, informal groups of Diet women continue to be active in proposing some legislation, particularly via efforts to revise the domestic violence law through a cross-party project team similar to the one employed earlier in 1999–2001.

Another aspect of women's increased representation in policymaking in Japan relates to the role of "femocrats," female bureaucrats who may help to advance a feminist agenda. The MOL (Ministry of Labor) Women's Bureau and the Bureau and Council for Gender Equality have created a base for advocacy of women's issues in the Japanese government as "state feminists," although they may be relatively weak in terms of their policy-making clout (see Kobayashi, 2002, who argues this position forcefully). For the first time, some feminists have gained a policy-making role among Japanese bureaucrats, although the dangers of cooptation may be significant. Much of the evidence in the passage of gender-related policy—including the EEOL (Equal Employment Opportunity Law) and its amendments, as well as the Basic Law for Gender Equal Society—suggest the importance of femocrats in bringing feminist issues to the fore in policy making at multiple levels of politics.

## Future Directions

The evidence presented in this chapter clearly suggests the importance of gender quotas and affirmative action in increasing the representation of women in political office. Although quotas and preferential reservation of seats are not always determinant of either the numbers or quality of representation for women, the case of Taiwan is instructive. A constitutional commitment, made concrete by a democratizing political culture and political system, created new opportunities for women in the legislative and executive sectors of government. Although representation for women in Japan has increased nationally (partially due again to proportional representation which permitted more successful female candidacies in the upper house), their numbers lag far behind those in neighboring Taiwan,

largely due to the absence of special measures to increase women's role in the elective and appointive political spheres. Collective efforts to achieve aspects of a "women's agenda" have nonetheless been somewhat more successful in Japan than Taiwan, perhaps surprising given the relative numbers of women holding office in each country and the constraints of the political systems in each. However, the issues addressed collectively crossing party lines among women relate to issues such as abuse of children and women, on which there is little partisan conflict.

This chapter has suggested that it is likely that in the absence of special efforts to increase women's political role in Japan's affirmative or positive action, there will be only incremental changes with regard to increasing female representation. However, the August 30, 2009, lower house elections for the Japanese Diet augur the domination of a new major political party, the DPJ, and this huge landslide and change in power have already had repercussions for increased women's representation and attention to a gender related policy agenda. Regarding equal participation by men and women, the DPJ platform asserts,

We strive to eradicate fixed gender roles, discrimination, and unequal treatment wherever it exists in society. We shall modify or devise family laws to accommodate diverse lifestyles. We shall also guarantee reproductive health and rights, implement measures to prevent sexual harassment and violence, and enact comprehensive legislation to strengthen policy on women's issues. These steps shall help us build a society in which men and women are equal participants. (Democratic Party of Japan Web site: <http://www.dpj.or.jp/english>)

The Democrats also proposed easing parenting costs and encouraging more women to have babies through a policy of giving families 26,000 yen (\$275) a month per child through junior high. This policy is intended to raise the low birthrate and is not related to gender equality, but it may have the impact of promoting increased labor force opportunity for Japanese women. As noted earlier, the DPJ's selection of a record number of female candidates has led to a record increase of the number of women in the powerful lower house of the Diet. Although women still represent just 11% of the total membership of this body, this is the second significant upward turn since the millennium. Perhaps the newly elected women of the DPJ will act to mentor and support future female candidacies.

## Notes

Interviews on women and political representation in Taiwan were conducted December 14–31, 2007, in Taipei. The following women who hold or have held office in government were interviewed:

Chang, Fu-Mei, Minister of Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission

Chen, Yu Chiou, Secretary-General of National Culture Association, former Minister of the Council of Cultural Affairs

Cheng, Li-Chiun, Minister of National Youth Commission

Cheng, Suming, former Culture Minister  
 Hsiao, Bi-khim, Legislator  
 Huang, Sue-Ying, Legislator  
 Lan, Mai-Chin, Legislator

Interviews on women and political representation in Japan:  
 Akamatsu, Reiko, Founder WINWIN, former Head Women's  
 Bureau, Ministry of Labor  
 Komiyama, Yoko, Member, House of Councilors  
 Noda, Seiko, Member, House of Representatives

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1. Menstrual leave is common in East Asia, a leave of up to 2 days for discomfort; it exists in Japan, Korea, Indonesia, and the Philippines, sometimes as a demand of labor unions but often, as in Japan, with a history dating back to at least the 1930s if not earlier.
2. Similarly, in the process of devolution of the British Isles, new political systems were created in the 1990s, and women leaders achieved greater numbers in Northern Ireland and Wales.
3. There are 1,787 wards in Japan, but the 23 in Tokyo occupy a special status.
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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, UKRAINE, AND BELARUS

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Women's leadership and representation in post-Soviet states has declined dramatically since the Soviet period, even though women in these states have many of the characteristics associated with higher levels of women's leadership in other countries: almost 100% literacy rates, a large proportion having higher education, extremely high labor force participation, and, especially in Russia and Ukraine, high levels of urbanization. Adverse economic circumstances, in addition to a resurgence of traditional discourses about women's proper place in the private sphere, the regeneration of patriarchal religions, and a steep rise in corruption and violence, have all contributed to making the public sphere unfriendly to women leaders. Until basic attitudes about gender undergo transformation, society becomes more tolerant of women leaders, women have access to the resources that men do, and the public sphere becomes a safer place in which to operate, the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles is unlikely to change.

In 1991, the Soviet Union broke up into 15 separate countries along the ethnic lines constructed and reified by the Soviet state over 70 years. The 15 can usefully be grouped by region and linguistic/historical commonalities: Russia/Ukraine/Belarus (predominantly Slavic and Eastern Orthodox); Armenia/Georgia/Azerbaijan (the Caucasus region, characterized by religious and linguistic diversity); Latvia/Lithuania/Estonia (the Baltic region, non-Slav, Catholic or Protestant); Kazakhstan/Turkmenistan/

Uzbekistan/Tajikistan/Kyrgyzstan (Central Asia, predominantly Muslim and Turkic-speaking); and Moldova, consisting of territory that had previously belonged to Romania and ceded to the Soviets after World War II (Romanian speaking with a large Slavic minority). The Baltic states have emerged as full-fledged democracies, firmly oriented toward Europe. The status of women in those states more closely resembles those of the former communist countries of Central Europe than that of the former Soviet republics. Since this is the case, we do not address them in this discussion. We first describe the communist system and its impact on women over the territory of the Soviet Union before turning to the three Slavic states in a more detailed way. (For a discussion of the remaining nine states, see Davis and Nowacki, Chapter 42, in this handbook.) Since 1991, the 12 post-Soviet states have diversified politically and economically. These similarities and differences have had profound consequences for the current status and political representation of women.

### The Communist Period

Despite the egalitarian goals of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Soviet state became a totalitarian dictatorship. All state, social, and economic institutions were controlled by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The transformations of predominantly peasant or

nomadic societies into a modern, unified international superpower was truly remarkable, but these transformations had many unintended consequences, including the continued second-class status of women in the society, the party, and the state.

Soviet policies promoted the education of women on equal terms with men, moving them into the labor force and inducting them into the Communist Party and other state institutions. However, the "essential" or purported biologically determined nature of women and men was never questioned. The party-state may have proclaimed that women were equal to men and may have enshrined that principle in the various Soviet constitutions, but gendered divisions of labor between public and private spheres continued. Thus was born the infamous "double burden" that remained throughout the Soviet period, in which the vast majority of women worked full-time jobs and did all of the household chores. Those who were ambitious joined the Communist Party, as well, and thus had a "triple burden": job, household, and lengthy party meetings outside of work.

Women did the overwhelming majority of the shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry, child care, and private plot farming, and this without the aid of the labor-saving devices taken for granted by consumers in capitalist economies. Shortages of everything abounded, and people had to stand in three lines to make a single purchase. Shopping by itself took many hours a week. Convenience foods did not exist, and women were relegated to the kitchen. This division of labor was seen as "natural" and remained unquestioned during the entire Soviet period, because once the state had proclaimed the equality of men and women, the question of gender inequality could not be raised. The so-called woman question had been solved, according to the Communist authorities (Einhorn, 1993).

Meanwhile, women were defined by the Soviet state not only as workers but as mothers. In this role, the pronatalist state provided them with separate maternity hospitals, a large network of child care facilities, and special privileges such as larger apartments and stipends if they had more than two children. The title of Mother-Heroine of the Soviet Union was granted to women who had 10 or more children. Because Soviet reality was complicated due to chronic housing shortages, crowded living conditions, and the problems associated with procuring food and necessities for children, most women in urban areas of the Soviet Union had only one child. Slavic women especially were encouraged by the state to have more children, since women of Muslim heritage maintained somewhat higher birthrates over time, giving pause to Soviet military planners contemplating armed forces made up primarily of non-Russians. Pronatalist policy was reinforced by a lack of contraceptive technologies and sex education, under which desperate women had up to eight or ten abortions to limit their families.

## Traditional and Cultural Impediments for Women

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Attitudes that gender roles are biologically determined that were held by the vast majority of Soviet citizens, including beliefs about the proper place of women in the private sphere, as well as the belief that politics is a "dirty business" unsuitable for women, plus the time and energy commitment involved in the double and triple burdens, go a long way toward explaining the dearth of women in political life and in leadership positions in general.

Religion is an important explanatory factor relating to the position of women and their opportunities for leadership in the postcommunist states. Communist authorities carried out radical campaigns to stamp out religious beliefs in conformity with the official Marxist ideology of radical atheism. Many Russian Orthodox and Muslim clerics and other religious authorities were killed or imprisoned; thousands of religious schools, churches, and mosques were closed in the late 1920s through the 1930s. The Communist Party strongly encouraged, if not forced, the unveiling of Muslim women in Central Asia and the Caucasus. It banned polygamous marriages, the payment of bride price for a young girl by the groom's family, bride kidnapping, and other customs relating to marriage and the treatment of women that had been associated both with Islamic and traditional ethnic practices (Northrop, 2004). In Uzbekistan, for example, a wave of murders of unveiled women was perpetrated by Uzbek men as a way of showing noncompliance with Soviet policy (Kamp, 2006). While the Soviet state carried out a long-term struggle against what it called "vestiges of the past" in terms of cultural and religious traditions up into the 1970s, religious belief and practices continued in underground forms, kept alive mainly by women in the private sphere.

With the fall of communism and the rise of ethnic identities and nationalisms, religion became a renewed source of legitimacy for post-Soviet regimes. Thus, Russian Orthodoxy was recognized as the official state religion in the Russian Federation. Islam was recognized and promoted as part of the ethnic heritages of Uzbeks, Tajiks, and other traditionally Muslim peoples. Unfortunately for women, the particular forms of Christianity and Islam that were officially promoted underscored the traditional roles of women as presiding over the private sphere, subordinate to fathers and husbands, and as multiple childbearing mothers.

## Postcommunist Legal Structures and Political Institutions

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Some democratization of political life occurred in most of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, which was reflected in their various constitutions. Soon after 1991, all of the post-Soviet states adopted new



constitutions that recognize fundamental human and civil rights. Equality is guaranteed regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, language, religion, social origin, political ideology, or individual and social status, in accordance with international principles and laws. All states have signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and all have signed on to the 1995 Beijing Conference's goals of promoting gender equality. Even in majority Muslim states, constitutions remain secular despite some internal and external pressures to adopt some principles from Shari'a law, especially regarding women.

Issues specific mainly to women, such as shocking rates of domestic abuse, the trafficking of women and children, and widespread prostitution as a way to earn a living, as well as problems with the provision of adequate child care, women's and children's health care, and the welfare of pensioners (the vast majority of whom are female) certainly exist throughout the post-Soviet states, especially with the drastic decline in state resources devoted to these areas. For those countries that are now energy or other commodity exporters, their state finances have somewhat recovered in the past decade and the state can provide more in the way of a social safety net. However, female representatives to Parliaments have not championed these issues much more than male representatives (Shevchenko, 2002). Instead, these issues have been more of a focal point for women's organizations beyond the formal state apparatus.

### The Russian Federation as Context for Women's Leadership

The Russian Federation is the world's largest country, spanning 11 time zones. Its population is ethnically diverse

but dominated by ethnic Russians, who constitute some 85% of the population. The country is divided into 88 regions and republics, similar to states in the United States, some of which are based upon the ethnic identities of original inhabitants, such as the Tatars of Tatarstan, regarded legally an "autonomous" republic. The Russian economy essentially collapsed in the mid-1990s, with a contraction in production of 50% (as compared to the approximately 30% contraction of the U.S. economy during the Great Depression of the 1930s). One result was a severe health and demographic crisis, with birthrates plummeting and mortality rates, especially for men, increasing in a way unprecedented for a developed industrialized state. Life expectancy for men fell to 57 years, a state of affairs that continues into the present. Unemployment, endemic alcoholism, the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases, coupled with a drastic drop in state funding for unemployment benefits and public health care, affected both men and women. The demographic crisis put women under more social pressure to bear children. Many women leaders responded by making social policies designed to ameliorate the worst effects of the economic transition central to their work as leaders.

The post-Soviet period can be divided into two eras, the first of which (1991–1999) saw some efforts at democratization, a high degree of political freedom, decentralization of power to the regions and legislative assemblies, and the calamitous effects of the transition to a capitalist economic system under Boris Yeltsin. The second period (2000–2009) is characterized by recentralization, an extension of executive power and weakening of the legislatures, a more authoritarian political order that discouraged dissent, and economic growth based on the exports of oil and natural gas. In the latter period the country was ruled by Vladimir Putin from 1999 to 2008, and from 2009 by Dmitri Medvedev, Putin's handpicked

	<i>Size</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Ethnic Composition</i>
<b>Slavic Countries</b>			
Russia	17 million sq. km	140 million	85% Russian 4% Tatar 2% Ukrainian 1.2% Bashkir
Ukraine	603,700 sq. km	45.7 million	78% Ukrainian 17% Russian
Belarus	207,600 sq. km	9.6 million	81% Belarusian 11% Russians 4% Poles

Table 41.1 Demographics

successor, with Putin operating in the background as prime minister. Relatively high prices and the high volume of Russian petroleum exports allowed the state to become financially solvent again, although corresponding increases in state support for social welfare and health care have not materialized as quickly as wealth was created. The current worldwide recession and collapse of petroleum prices have again increased unemployment and consequent social problems.

The 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation created a bicameral legislative structure, with a 450-member lower house, called the Duma, and an upper house, the Federation Council. Five Duma elections have taken place since the fall of the Soviet Union. Electoral law provided for half of the Duma seats to be elected through majoritarian elections (single member districts) and half through proportional representation (PR). An upper house, the Federation Council, consists of governors and parliamentary speakers of the 88 regions and republics. However, governors of regions are now appointed by the president of Russia rather than popularly elected.

## Ukraine and Belarus

The populations of Ukraine and Belarus speak Slavic languages and use the Cyrillic alphabet (though with some differences from the Russian version) and have substantial portions of the population who subscribe to an Eastern Orthodox Church. In Ukraine, around 75% belong the Russian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), or the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate). About 80% of Belarusians belong to the Belarusian exarchate<sup>1</sup> of the Russian Orthodox Church. Politically, the countries are quite different. Belarus is ruled by Aleksandr Lukashenko, who is often called the last dictator in Europe. There have been few reforms, economic or political, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and Lukashenko proudly boasts that Belarus still has collective farms. Ukraine, on the other hand, has had three different presidents (Leonid Kravchuk, Leonid Kuchma, and Victor Yushchenko) and has pursued a number of different policy avenues since 1991. The Ukrainian record of democracy has been mixed.

## Pathways to Power: Women in Legislatures

Opinion polls have shown that women in Russia tend to have more positive attitudes toward gender equality than men and believe that women should have an equal role in running the state (Hesli, Jung, Reisinger, & Miller, 2001). Sixty percent of Russians support the use of quotas for women in elections to executive and legislative offices. Yet, organizing women around their support for gender

equality in ways that translate into candidate nominations and votes for women have been fraught with difficulties in the post-Soviet period because of negative attitudes about politics, and especially about women's participation in the "dirty business" of politics. As compared to the Soviet period, when quotas were in place that gave women about 30% of seats in elected bodies (of course, in elections that were not competitive and whose candidates were chosen by the Communist Party), in the post-Soviet period women comprised 13.7% of the elected deputies to the lower house of parliament (the Duma) in 1993, 10.1% in 1995, 7.8% in 1999, 9.8% in 2003, and 14% in 2007. Women also have slightly increased their presence in the upper house. What explains these variations over time?

Under Yeltsin, nothing resembling a coherent party system developed either at the federal or regional level, and this meant that most candidates for parliament ran as independents rather than with party labels. Women had different electoral resources than men because of their professional backgrounds, relying on name recognition rather than personal access to funding. Many successful women candidates were head doctors or principals of schools or had high visibility positions in the Soviet state organizations and, through their professional activities, were known to the electorate. Many male candidates, in contrast, were overwhelmingly business executives and enterprise directors and had access to ready cash. Due to the variation in electoral resources and the fact that parliaments wielded real power during the Yeltsin era, running for these offices was attractive to men, with a resulting decrease in women's representation of almost 50% between 1993 and 2003.

Women did poorly in elections despite the relative success of a women's political party, Women of Russia (WOR), which was active in the early to mid-1990s. Women of Russia had its roots in the old Soviet women's committees and an organization of women naval veterans. It did surprisingly well in the 1993 Duma election, garnering millions of votes and overcoming the national 5% barrier for representation on the PR side and gaining two additional seats on the single member district side. Yet, WOR was never again able to overcome the 5% threshold, and support for WOR grew fainter over time. In fact, the emergence of WOR probably attested to the weakness of women's political organizing (Moser, 2001). WOR came about as a response to the failure of other parties to make women's issues priorities, and its failure in 1995 showed that its avowed commitment to gender equality was not enough to gain votes. In the 1990s, the political party most friendly to the election of women was the reformed Communist Party of the Soviet Union (KPRF), which emerged as an opposition party based on a platform of more state intervention in the economy, a larger social safety net, and a less Western-friendly foreign policy. It advocated Soviet-style gender equality and thus placed women in relatively prominent positions on its party lists and provided some resources to candidates running in single



member districts. The KPRF had the most developed organization of any party, as well as substantial resources that it inherited from the Soviet period. If women political candidates decided to affiliate themselves with a party in this early period, it was the KPRF more often than not.

This situation began to change with the imposition of “competitive authoritarianism” by Vladimir Putin as president of the Russian Federation. In rebuilding “vertical power,” Putin promoted the consolidation of a few strong political parties, reforms that have ended up benefiting the election of women to representative institutions (Nowacki, 2008). Ironically, as legislative institutions have lost power relative to the executive, more women have been elected to them. While a stable party system consisting of a relatively low number of strong political parties might sound like a positive development, under Russian conditions it has meant undercutting true opposition parties. Women, to the extent that they were affiliated with United Russia, the dominant party associated with the president, began to be elected in greater proportions. A shift also occurred in the electoral resources available to women candidates, with women benefiting from “administrative resources,” or those provided by the state to help with their election (such as coverage by state-owned television), similarly to male candidates. Successful female candidates for the federal Duma in 2007 included not only those with previous government experience and social prominence (such as Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman cosmonaut), but also those who were notably younger in comparison to women elected previously. This is due to their placement in relatively high positions on the United Russia and other party lists by party selectorates.

Before Putin's reforms, most of the parties that contested elections were formed as personal vehicles for individual leaders, and represented patronage networks that generally left women out. Further, women's prominent placement on party lists may not have made, nor now make, any difference to voters, since both women and men voters are disillusioned with politicians in general, and many women voters do not believe that women politicians can make a difference. Moreover, the placement of women high on party lists would seem to contradict the central value of Russian national patriotism, enshrined in most party platforms and constructed in ways that conflate masculinity with a strong state and femininity with morality, which is of secondary concern on the official agenda of fighting terrorism originating in Chechnya, strengthening the national economy, and recovering Russia's international position as a great power. In Duma elections before 2003, women were more successful in getting elected in the majoritarian single member district races than on the party lists in the proportional tier.

Do elected women deputies make a difference for the interests of women as a large social group once in office? Not necessarily, as there is no agreement on general women's interests and, among female politicians, very little

solidarity on ideological stances or political issues affecting women. Yet in Russia, women and men are united by a traditionalist view of gender, which in fact supports the arguments that because of their reproductive function women are responsible for families and children and that women's place is in the private sphere. These views were reinforced during the ostensibly more egalitarian Soviet period and have only intensified with Russia's transition to a market economy. Opinion polls have shown that most Russians believe that because jobs are scarce, they should go to men, who are seen to provide the main financial support of families.

Although male legislative representatives could be as engaged as female representatives in the areas of health, education, family welfare, and environment, research from other countries has shown that female legislators give more priority to these issues than male legislators. This is not necessarily true in Russia, although one prominent Russian illustration of this general principle is current Duma deputy and former WOR leader Yekaterina Lakhova, who chairs the Duma Committee for Affairs of the Family and Children. She has been promoting the development and implementation of policies that would provide assistance to families with children as a way to deal with the demographic crisis. Interviews with women politicians in various regions and at differing territorial levels in Russia show that they believe that males give less attention to issues of concern to women and that women are better at achieving results in these policy areas.

## Pathways to Power: Women in Executive Positions of Government

### The Russian Federation

One trend that has continued from Soviet times is a glaring underrepresentation of women in top executive positions, such as heads of government ministries, governors, city mayors, and presidential representatives to the regions. One hopeful sign, however, is the fact that the percentage of women who have served in these positions in the Russian regions since Soviet times, not at the highest levels but at deputy and lower levels of the executive, has increased from 2.2% to 8.5% (Moses, 2008). Of the highest offices in 18 sample regions, in 2006, 56 were occupied by women. The highest positions were first deputy governors, with Yelena V. Babinovskaya in Kaliningrad, Irina I. Skorokhodova in Yaroslavl, and Galina S. Izotova in Vologda. There were 26 deputy governors, 3 deputy chairs of the regional legislatures, 2 chairs and 7 deputy chairs of the capital legislatures, and 15 capital city deputy mayors. Nevertheless, of the 88 regions and republics, Valentina Matvienko is currently the only female governor (of St. Petersburg, which counts as a region by itself and thus is ruled by a governor rather than a mayor).

At present, no woman has been head of state or prime minister of the Russian Federation. According to *The Worldwide*



*Guide to Women in Leadership*, approximately 10 women have served as government ministers and 18 as deputy ministers since the fall of communism (Christensen, 2009). Several were advisors to the president. Most of them had portfolios in health, culture, education, population, social welfare, or youth and family affairs, traditional areas of women's expertise. A few were involved in finance, business, and interethnic affairs. Obviously, this number is a tiny fraction of the total number of government ministers and deputy ministers.

In 2007, to much media fanfare, Putin appointed two women to serve in his cabinet and who were retained in the cabinet after Medvedev's election in 2008. Elvira Sakhpizadovna Nabiullina (1963–), an ethnic Tatar, is the minister of economic development and trade. Tatiana Alekseyevna Golikova (1966–), is the minister of health and social development. Their career paths show that they are highly educated and qualified; they are also relatively young and had served in the federal government for some years before their appointments. Nabiullina, with a degree in economics from Moscow State University, worked in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade from 1994, and became a deputy minister in 1997. She left after a year to work in the think tank of German Gref, a highly placed economic advisor to the president, and then went back to become the first deputy minister at the same ministry. From 2003 to 2006, she headed the Center for Strategic Development and the commission for Russia's presidency of the G8. She replaced Gref as minister in 2007.

Golikova, known for her skill in mathematics and budgets, has two economic degrees from prestigious institutes. She became an economist in the State Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance in 1990. From 1992 to 1995 she was the chief economist in the same department, then deputy head from 1995 to 1998, head of the department for a brief period, then head of the Budget Policy Department. From 1999 to 2002, she was a deputy finance minister, first deputy finance minister from 2002 to 2004, then deputy again from 2004 until her appointment as minister of health and social development in 2007. She is also deputy chair of the Federal Antinarcotics Service. In 2003 she married Viktor Khristenko, the current minister of industry and trade.

These women are the exceptions rather than the rule. As one moves down the rungs of the Russian Federation executive bureaucracy, one finds increasing proportions of qualified women. But because of traditional attitudes about women in power among leaders and publics alike, those who do rise to the top can be seen as tokens, gestures in the direction of representing women in the highest levels of government. These women are certainly as qualified (and sometimes more so) than their male counterparts, but they rise not so much due to their professional qualifications as to their being protégés of high-status males and to their demonstrated loyalty to the leadership. Because reestablishing the Russian Federation as an important global power is high on the Russian leadership's agenda, it wants to be seen as comparable to other global powers. And because women's political representation and leadership has been

promoted by the international community and global governance organizations, it is one dimension of comparison that Russian leaders wish to have perceived in a more favorable light. Not to be outdone by France, Germany, and the United States (in which, respectively, Segolene Royal ran for president against Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel was elected the first woman chancellor, and Hillary Rodham Clinton ran to become the Democratic Party's nominee for president of the United States and then was named secretary of state), besides appointing two women to his cabinet, Putin also promoted the candidacies of several young, attractive women on the United Russia party lists for the 2007 Duma elections. Foreign journalists noted these activities as "sexing up the Duma."

Until just recently, when some younger women were elected to representative bodies and appointed to executive governmental positions, the career paths of many successful women leaders had their roots in Soviet era organizations. These included in particular the Soviet Women's Committee and the federal trade union organization, whose structures at the various territorial levels mirrored those of the Communist Party. One example of a female leader with these origins is Valentina Nikolaevna Pivnenko of the Republic of Karelia, who began her career in the Karelian branch of the State Timber Industry and became the head of the Department of Labor and Wages. A member of the Communist Party for 20 years, she was elected head of the Karelian Oblast Committee of Trade Union workers and then elected chair of the Karelian Republic Trade Union Council in 1992. She was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Karelia and became its chair in 1994. As such, she automatically got a seat in the Federation Council, the upper house of the Russian Federation legislature, and was one of only two women to serve in that body. She was elected as deputy to the federal Duma in 1999 and reelected in 2003 and 2007.

Aside from women with roots firmly planted in the communist system, notable in the earlier years of democratization under Yeltsin were prominent women critics of the Kremlin who served as ministers and even presidential advisors. One example is Galina Starovoitova, a defender of the rights of ethnic minorities, who served as presidential advisor for ethnic and international relations in the early 1990s. Her outspokenness about the right of Chechnya to self-determination and her publicized intention to run for president in 2000 led to her assassination in 1998. One of the best-known women in politics in the early 2000s was Irina Kakhamada, a talented leader of the Union of Right Forces (a liberal opposition party) from 2001 to 2004, who served from 1997 to 1999 as minister-chairperson of the State Committee for Small Business Support and Development as deputy speaker of the state Duma from 2000 to 2003. She also ran against Putin and others as a presidential candidate in 2004 (and received 3.8% of the vote).

As Putin consolidated power, however, women who showed themselves to be staunchly supportive of the president were rewarded accordingly. One example is Valentina Ivanovna Matviyenko, who has had a long



career in politics. She was a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and chairperson of the Committee of Women's, Family and Children's Issues and member of the Presidium from 1989 to 1991, and held Russian ambassadorships to Greece and Malta under Yeltsin. From 1998 to 2003 she served as deputy premier minister in charge of social policy, and is the former head of the Foreign Ministry's department for relations with Russian regions. In 2003 she became President Putin's representative to northwest Russia before she was elected governor of St. Petersburg.

## Ukraine

Ukraine's parliament is the Rada with 450 seats. Currently all seats are elected through PR with a 3% threshold. Members of Parliament (MPs) serve a 5-year term. Since independence, Ukraine has had four parliamentary elections, in 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006. Through 1998, the country had a majoritarian electoral system but in 1998 switched to a system in which half of the seats were decided through majoritarianism and half were PR by party list. Then in 2006, the electoral law was changed again, this time to a strictly PR system. In theory, the change of electoral system should increase the representation of women, as women tend to succeed more in PR than majoritarian systems.

In 1991, only 3% of the members were women in the republic-level Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (elected in 1990), a low figure compared to other Union republics. The first election after independence raised that share to 5% (23 women) and in 1998, the percentage of women rose to 8% (35 women) but dropped again in 2002 to 5% (24 women). The switch to half the seats elected through PR seemed to benefit women, as in 2006 the switch to a fully PR system led to 8.7% women (39). So generally, women have been poorly represented in the Ukrainian Rada. However, two women lead parties in Ukraine. Yulia Tymoshenko is the leader of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, as well as the All-Ukrainian Union Fatherland, and currently is the prime minister of the country. Inna Bohoslovskaya heads the Party Viche and Natalya Vitrenko heads the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine.

Yulia Tymoshenko is an interesting case. She is rich and powerful, having garnered a fortune in the gas industry during the transition era. Some refer to her as the gas princess. *Forbes* magazine ranked her number 17 in its 2008 poll of most powerful people in the world. In 1984, Yulia Tymoshenko (née Grigean; she married Oleksandr Tymoshenko in 1979) graduated from the economics faculty of Dnepropetrovsk State University. Both Tymoshenkos were active in the Komsomol, the Young Communist League. Komsomolists had special privileges that other Soviet citizens did not, including the right to transfer paper rubles into more lucrative currencies and special rights to open new businesses under the Law on Cooperatives (1988). While active in the Komsomol, the Tymoshenkos started a video rental business that became highly successful, which they later privatized.

This successful venture capitalized other businesses. In 1991, she ran the Ukrainian Oil Company, which later became the Ukrainian version of United Energy Systems (and oil and gas pipeline conglomerate) in the mid-1990s. How she got from Komsomol video rentals to United Energy Systems is unclear at best; one can only assume that connections and force of personality were the primary reasons for her success. She has had business dealings with the elite of Ukraine, including Pavlo Lazareko, Viktor Pinchuk, Ihor Kolomoyskyi, Rinat Akhmetov, and Leonid Kuchma. All but Akhmetov came from her home town of Dnepropetrovsk (this town in eastern Ukraine is renowned for their tight-knit mafia-style business elite).

Tymoshenko was elected to parliament in 1996 and became cochair of the Gromada Party. She changed parties in 1999, joining the Fatherland Party as its chairwoman and was appointed vice prime minister of Ukraine. Toward the end of the reign of Leonid Kuchma, Yulia and Oleksandr Tymoshenko were subjected to many charges of corruption and wrongdoing; they were never convicted and claimed the charges were "political" in nature.

Yulia then quit Fatherland and formed her own eponymous party, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, in 2001. In 2004, she entered a coalition with Viktor Yushchenko and was very prominent during the Orange Revolution, one of a number of "color" revolutions that were spontaneous mass protests against corrupt elections. In Ukraine's case, the 2004 presidential elections were obviously falsified and thousands protested for weeks in central Kyiv (they were called "orange" because Yushchenko's political party used orange as its color and everyone who supported Yushchenko wore orange, whereas the opposition wore blue). After new elections, Yushchenko became president and Yulia Tymoshenko became prime minister. She was ousted from the post in 2005 but returned in 2007 and remained prime minister in 2009. She ran for president in 2010 and lost to Viktor Yanukovich.

Tymoshenko is one of the only female oligarchs in the post-Soviet territories and the only one to gain wealth without a more dominant male partner. (Others include Elena Baturina, wife of Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov; a hereditary female Kazak oligarch, Mounissa Chodieva, who co-owns a metal company with her father; and Irina Abramovich, wife of oligarch Roman Abramovich).

Inna Bohoslovskaya (Bogoslovskaya) is another successful Ukrainian politician. She graduated from the Kharkov Legal Institute (now called National Legal Academy of Jaroslav Mudrogo) in 1982 and worked in the legal profession for several years, rising to an appointed post as a lawyer for the Rada in 1992. In 1998, she ran against 14 men for a seat in the Rada from her hometown of Kharkov. She earned 34% of the vote, twice that of her nearest competitor. She attributed her success to the perception that men are more corrupt than women and that the people of her district were tired of corruption. She founded a political party called Party Viche and was chairwoman of the party. In 2007, her party agreed to run under the umbrella of the Party of Regions, a party run by Viktor Yanukovich that



primarily supported Russian speakers in Ukraine and closer relations with Russia. In May 2009, she quit the Party of Regions and ran for the presidency in 2010. She resurrected the Party Viche and currently serves as its chairwoman.

Natalya Vitrenko has chaired the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine since 1996, quite a feat given the fluidity of the Ukrainian party system. She is very anti-Western and pro-Russian. Vitrenko campaigns against economic and political reforms. Her party has not done well in elections, and they have not yet earned enough votes to cross the threshold for representation in the Duma.

Ukraine has also had a fairly large number of women working at high levels of the government. In 2008 the chair of the State Property Fund was Valentyna Semenyuk, the minister of labor and social policy was Liudmila Denisova, and women have served as ministers of justice, health, and family and youth. A variety of ministries have also seen women deputy ministers. In 2009 women also held posts as ombudsman, chief of staff to the minister of the interior, and deputy defense minister; also, 2 of 18 constitutional court justices are women.

In May 2009 President Viktor Yushchenko appointed Kyiv Governor Vera Ulyanchenko as the head of his secretariat. Ulyanchenko graduated from the Philology Department of Kyiv State University. She has also served as assistant to the then-Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko (2000–2001), as a member of the Our Ukraine parliament group and as a freelance presidential adviser (2005–2006). She ran the Kyiv regional administration from July 2006 until her appointment in May 2009 to the presidential administration. She is well connected; her husband, Viktor Ivchenko, runs the State Agency for Investments and Innovations.

Violence against women and sexual harassment are serious problems in Ukraine. The U.S. State Department Report on Human Rights offers copious evidence that police pressure women not to press charges in rape cases and that though laws for punishing offenders exist, they are rarely prosecuted. In 2008, 83,400 individuals were convicted of “acts of domestic violence,” which includes a wide range of crimes, such as battery, but does not include rape. Prostitution is widespread and trafficking is a huge issue in Ukraine. According to the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior, over 117,000 women and girls have been exploited by traffickers in the past decade (U.S. Embassy, Kyiv, 2009).

## Belarus

Belarus has a bicameral legislature called the National Assembly—Chamber of Representatives (110 seats) and Council of the Republic (64 seats). Representatives are elected in single member districts. The upper house is composed of 56 elected members, and 8 are appointed by the president. All serve 4-year terms.

Historically, there have been five elections for parliament since independence, all under President Lukashenko: May 1995, November/December 1995, 2000, 2004, and

2008. In the first election of May 1995, there were 260 seats available; after several rounds of elections, 63 seats still remained vacant as a result of election irregularities and low turnout. The Communist Party and the Agrarian Party won most of the seats. The next parliament was elected under new electoral rules adopted in 2000. The House of Representatives would now have 110 seats. The opposition mostly boycotted these elections. The voting was deemed flawed by international observers but free and fair by Russian observers. There were still many vacant seats, but 87 men and 10 women were seated in parliament (9.09% women). In 2000, 108 people were elected in the first round of voting; none was from the opposition. Thirty-one women were seated in parliament (29%). Turnout was 90.14% of the electorate. Most observers agree that these results indicate Lukashenko's growing control and dominance over Belarusian political life. The tactics and turnout were very reminiscent of Soviet times.

In 2008, Belarus again elected almost 32% women to parliament, or 35 members out of 110, this time with a slightly more believable level of voter turnout of 76.74%. The current Council of the Republic has 19 women out of 64 (almost 30%).

Two party leaders in Belarus are women: The Women's Party-Hope is headed by Valentina Matusevic and the Belarusian Communist Party, a propresidential party, is led by Tatiana Golubova. In the executive, Belarus has had a woman minister of taxes and duties, Anna Deiko, and women have headed the Ministries of Health, Labor, and Social Security as well as the National Bank. There have been several women vice ministers for foreign affairs, health, education and culture, and social affairs. Almost all of these women have come up through the Communist Party or the Komsomol.

In October 2007, the Belarusian Supreme Court upheld a Ministry of Justice suit to liquidate Nadzeya, the Belarusian Women's Party, because of “irregularities” in the party's charter. The party was founded in 1994 and chaired by Alena Yaskova. The party opposed the regime of Lukashenko and never won any parliamentary seats. Nadzeya was part of a broader coalition called United Democratic Forces of Belarus.

## Leadership Alternatives: The Nongovernmental Sector

Beyond the official governmental structures, women have taken important leadership roles in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Many observers have commented that, since the fall of the Soviet Union, NGOs—especially those having to do with women's issues and human rights—have become feminized (Hemment, 2007; Henderson, 2003). Thousands of NGOs were established all over the post-Soviet territories, and some had access to international funding as Western governments and NGOs poured millions of dollars into certain kinds of post-Soviet NGOs.



The sizes of these organizations, their funding sources, missions, and effectiveness vary widely. More recently gender has been “mainstreamed” by international funding organizations. That is, women’s issues are folded into more general NGO activities promoting economic development, civil society building, and democratization. Post-Soviet NGOs vary by the extent to which they are “elite” or “local.” Elite organizations are connected to international and foundation funding; located in the capital cities; and led and staffed by women often with academic backgrounds who are savvy about donor objectives and grant writing and familiar with the international discourses on gender, as well as with the international platforms for action, such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform, and the Millennium Development Goals. Local NGOs tend to be located in peripheries, are not connected to outside sources of funding, are run by unpaid volunteers, and are less familiar with globalized feminism or the international women’s movement as promoted by institutions such as the United Nations or the European Union. The local groups criticize the elite NGOs for being disconnected from real women’s lives. Some networking between various groups exists, but groups tend not to cooperate with each other, although numerous international, federal, and regional level conferences on women’s issues have taken place among NGOs, academics interested in Gender Studies and feminism, and state officials. And NGOs tend not to have any connections with elected women politicians or candidates for political office, as compared with the ways in which civil society organizations support women candidates in Western political systems.

Issue areas of particular concern to women’s NGOs in Russia are economic support and business networking, domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, and human trafficking. Numerous NGOs at the regional level support women small business owners and entrepreneurs, as well as offer technical education to women to make them more competitive in a capitalist job market. Other NGOs throughout the Russian Federation have been active in setting up rape crisis centers and hotlines, counseling centers, shelters for women and children escaping domestic violence, and procedures for intervening in human trafficking networks. A parallel can be drawn between tactics used by the old Soviet dissent movement with regard to holding the communist authorities accountable for international laws and conventions on human rights that they had signed and holding the Russian national and regional authorities accountable today for the UN CEDAW agreements, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender equality, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. One tragic result of economic collapse and incomplete recovery, endemic corruption, connections between organized crime, violence, and top government officials, coupled with the second-class status of women, is the lack of enforcement of laws on forced prostitution, trafficking, and domestic violence. Young women in particular are most

at risk, especially because alternative employment is often not available. Ironically, too, it is they who are exhorted by the state, the church, and nationalist organizations to bear children and to find husbands who will support them. Unfortunately, their options are limited, and they may be the ones who are financially responsible for supporting extended families and elderly relatives. The effectiveness of NGO efforts varies in mitigating these problems for women, but it is clear that consciousness-raising among government officials and society in general has made some headway, and these issues have appeared more frequently on legislative and executive agendas.

One other notable nongovernmental women’s organization that has wielded considerable influence and attracted many women who might not otherwise become politically active is the Committee of Soldiers’ Mothers of Russia. Formed in the 1990s, it has many branches all over the Russian Federation (Caiazza, 2002). Its chief purpose is to provide organized assistance to young men who would avoid military service and to those already in the military whose human rights have been violated. All young men aged 18 are required to serve 2 years in the military. They may be given deferments for attending university or other institutions of higher education, and they may be given waivers for illness and physical disability, but the vast majority of young men end up serving. The Russian Army is notorious for the poor treatment of its soldiers; the brutal hazing of young recruits that goes on in basic training; the dismal quality of food, housing, and medical treatment; and very high suicide rates among recruits. Members of the Committee of Soldiers’ Mothers of Russia were spurred to action by the wars in Chechnya, which were particularly lethal in the 1990s. They have been successful in raising awareness among parents about human rights for soldiers, winning court cases regarding human rights violations of soldiers, and gaining freedom for young men who had been sent to prison for refusing to serve in the military. They are also active in international peace movements (Caiazza, 2002). The committee’s success can be explained in part by the high credibility that motherhood has in Russian society. Women in this group use their status as mothers to leverage a paternalistic state. The committee has been led by Tatiana Yurcvna Znachkova, elected in 2003 and reelected in 2006.

Whereas Ukraine has a flourishing NGO sector, Belarus does not. The Lukashenko government has strongly discouraged international funding for NGOs seeing them as a plot to destabilize society, and more importantly, the president. NGOs, indeed any group outside official control, are seen as suspect. Groups devoted to women’s issues do exist; for example, in Belarus the women’s club named “Discussion” was founded in 1993 and still exists, but is not influential at all. In 1999, about 2,200 NGOs existed officially in Belarus; then Lukashenko passed a new law requiring re-registration of all NGOs and many were denied the right. By the end of 2008, there were 2,300 registered NGOs, many of which have complained of harassment. The



legal environment is very hostile to NGOs and fund-raising is highly constrained (NGOs can only raise funds for approved priorities like mitigation of Chernobyl's effects). Also, NGOs are not allowed to charge fees for services. The government cancelled discounted office rents for nonprofits (including NGOs) in 2007, and the need to pay market rents has hurt NGOs. To counter this situation, a coalition of women's groups led an advocacy campaign in 2008 that led to government approval for the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2008–2010. Because NGOs are often targets of government harassment, they cannot play a strong role in communication or building civil society, and they tend to limit their memberships to people they can trust, which means NGOs are becoming more disconnected from the mass of people over time.

Ukraine has more than 50,000 registered NGOs, and they receive about 30% of their funding from abroad. NGO registration remains difficult, but refusals are decreasing. Membership remains low in NGOs throughout Ukraine and the level of professionalism and activism varies across the country, with the highest levels in the major cities. Private funding is a relatively new development, and corporate and private foundations now directly fund many NGOs. In 2001, a coalition of women's NGOs led lobbying efforts to pass a new law on preventing domestic violence, but the law has been poorly implemented and has serious flaws. For example, Article 19 states that police do not have to arrest someone for domestic violence if the victim "provoked the abuse" through action or dress. Women's groups have increased in autonomy and effectiveness in the past 10 years primarily because 10 years ago, they were mostly captives of the state without an agenda of their own. However, only about 5% to 8% of NGOs are focused on gender issues.

Vira Nanivska of the International Centre for Policy Studies, who was the director and now honorary chair of the first full-fledged think tank in Ukraine (established 1997), says there is generally very low awareness in society of the existence and importance of NGOs (Nanivska, 2001). Most local NGOs do not have access to computers, phones, and other modern communications infrastructure.

In Belarus and Ukraine, rape is underreported and underprosecuted. Most women fear that the authorities will blame them and that prosecution is like being raped again. There were 307 reports of rape in 2007. The laws prohibiting rape do not recognize marital or spousal rape. There is also no specific law that deals with domestic violence, and most human rights workers claim that domestic violence is prevalent and not often reported.

Official laws grant 3 years of maternity leave with a guarantee of job availability upon return. Despite laws protecting pregnant women from dismissal, it is common in Belarus for employers to circumvent those laws by hiring women under short-term contracts and simply not renewing them when women become pregnant. According to official statistics, 64% of the unemployed in Belarus are women.

Human trafficking is a huge problem, but the government does not recognize it. Officially, Belarus acknowledged 430 total trafficking victims in 2008 (U.S. Department of State, 2009a). Women are lured by traffickers by promises of modeling jobs, marriage, training to become travel agents, or au pair opportunities. NGOs estimate between 2,500 and 11,000 women per year are affected in Belarus.

## Future Directions

Evidence indicates that, until the status of women in Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian society changes, relatively few women will be able to or want to become leaders. The Russian Federation ranks 84th and Ukraine ranks 113th among the world's countries in terms of the percentage of women serving in national parliament, and this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2010). Belarus has a much higher ranking, number 20, but is much more authoritarian than the other two, and the parliament has far fewer real powers. Traditional attitudes about gender, economic difficulties, and a rebirth of patriarchal religions all reinforce gendered divisions of labor and the notion that women belong in the private sphere. Add to the mix an authoritarian federal government that makes support of the status quo and the current political leaders the criterion by which people get elected to office, as well as one that suppresses dissent and human rights activism, and we understand why many women never even consider politics, whether in the official structures or in NGOs. Even fewer women make it into high-level executive political positions, such as government ministers or presidential advisors, although a couple of bright spots are seen in their leadership of NGOs dedicated to improving ordinary women's lives, and their presence in the executives below the national level at positions of deputy governors and mayors. Women still acquire higher educations and qualifications at rates similar to men's but less often become business executives or go into the military or security services, the most common roads to high political office. Further, lack of state support for child care means that women bear more of the burden of families; this in turn limits the amount of time they can devote to a political career. Sadly, much of the energy and talent of more than half of the population is underutilized as long as women's status is second class and leadership attributes are considered to be most characteristic of men.

## Note

1. An exarchate is run by a bishop of the Orthodox Church. In the case of Belarus, the Belarusians adhere to the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and so do not have a truly national Orthodox Church of their own.



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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN EURASIA

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In 1991, the Soviet Union broke up into 15 separate countries along the ethnic lines constructed and reified by the Soviet state over 74 years. The 15 countries can usefully be grouped by region and linguistic/historical commonalities: Russia/Ukraine/Belarus (predominantly Slavic and Eastern Orthodox); Armenia/Georgia/Azerbaijan (the Caucasus region, characterized by religious and linguistic diversity); Latvia/Lithuania/Estonia (the Baltic region, non-Slav, Catholic or Protestant); Kazakhstan/Turkmenistan/Uzbekistan/Tajikistan/Kyrgyzstan (Central Asia, predominantly Muslim and Turkic-speaking); and Moldova, consisting of territory that had previously belonged to Romania and ceded to the Soviets after World War II (Romanian speaking with a large Slavic minority). The Baltic states have emerged as full-fledged democracies, firmly oriented toward Europe. The status of women there more closely resembles that of the former communist countries of Central Europe than that of the former Soviet republics. Since this is the case, we do not address them in this chapter. The Slavic cases are dealt with in Chapter 41 (in this handbook) along with the general history of the region as a whole.

Since 1991, the nine post-Soviet states discussed here have diversified politically and economically. These similarities and differences have had profound consequences for the current status and political representation of women.

### Snapshots of Women's Leadership in Each Region

#### Central Asia

The Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are located between the Caspian Sea and China, bordering the Russian Federation to the north and Afghanistan and Iran in the south. The region's geographic location and large reserves of oil and natural gas make it strategically important to foreign interests, including those of Russia and the United States. During the Soviet period all had relatively large minorities of Russians and other Slavs, encouraged to immigrate by Soviet modernization and development projects, which had repercussions after independence in 1991 for debates about who comprises "the nation." Although the five became separate nation-states, a sense of "Central Asian" and "Eastern" identity is present among the indigenous populations, a sense of having distinctive historical trajectories and cultural roots that distinguish them (Buckley, 1997). These identities are used as explanations for the relative absence of women in politics and the persistence of patriarchal structures and values (Kandiyoti, 2007; Megoran, 1999).

Central Asian women were the subjects of a double bind in the Soviet period: to behave in ways acceptable to



	Size	Population	Ethnic Composition
<b>Central Asia</b>			
Kazakhstan	2.7 million sq. km	15.4 million	53.4% Kazaks 30% Russian
Kyrgyzstan	198,500 sq. km	5.4 million	65% Kyrgyz
Tajikistan	142,700 sq. km	7.3 million	80% Tajik 15% Uzbek
Turkmenistan	488,100 sq. km	4.8 million	85% Turkmen 5% Uzbek 4% Russian
Uzbekistan	447,400 sq. km	27.6 million	80% Uzbek 5.5% Russian 5% Tajik
<b>Caucasus</b>			
Armenia	29,800 sq. km	2.9 million	98% Armenian 1.2% Yezedis (non-Muslim Kurds)
Azerbaijan	86,600 sq. km*	8.4 million	90.6% Azcri 2.2% Lezgin/Laz 1.8% Russian 1.5% Armenian
Georgia	69,700 sq. km	4.6 million	83% Georgian 6.5% Azeri 5.7% Armenian 1.5% Russian
<b>Moldova</b>			
Moldova	33,843 sq. km	4 million	78.2% Moldovan 14% Russian or Ukrainian 4.4% Gagauz 2% Bulgars

**Table 42.1** Demographics

\* This area includes territory occupied by Karabakh/Armenian forces since the war over Nagorno-Karabakh entered a cease-fire in 1994 but recognized internationally as part of the territory of Azerbaijan.

traditional social perceptions of the proper roles of women and to become modern Soviet citizens with jobs and visibility in the public sphere (Corrin, 1992). The presence of westernized minorities had an effect on gender relations, with Slavic women perceived by many indigenous men as “loose” and Turkic/Tajik women seen as more “moral” and respectable. Indigenous women were the objects of general Soviet policy and so, over time, became modernized. With the fall of communism, however, many pressures to return to the domestic sphere arose. Central Asia also experienced widespread unemployment and poverty, which was worse in the rural areas.

All five Central Asian states are Muslim and the role of Islam in these societies has clearly intensified, although extremist movements have not gained much social traction. Islam is seen by state authorities as a traditional part of national identities that should be recognized and restored. As in many cultures worldwide, women are portrayed as the “natural” preservers of tradition and as mothers of the nation. Since religion has been legitimized in the post-Soviet period, women have reemerged as religious teachers and leaders of ceremonies in capacities unique to Central Asian Islam (Kandiyoti & Azimova, 2004). These women are called *otins* or *bibi-khalife* and officiate at births,

deaths, and weddings. The women must have substantial religious knowledge and training. Some women serve as *dastarhanji* organizing ritual and community events.

In general, throughout the region, women are even less present in the executive branches of government than in the Slavic former Soviet states. The politics of the Central Asian states are dominated by "strongmen" presidents, several of whom have been entrenched since independence in 1991 and who depend on clan-based patronage networks to maintain themselves in power. The effects of corruption and organized crime are widespread. Human and civil rights abuses are rampant, including a lack of enforcement of domestic violence, rape, and human trafficking laws (see U.S. Department of State human rights reports).

Significant differences among the five Central Asian states affect the incentives and disincentives for women's leadership. Each of the five Central Asian states can be classified as authoritarian, although Kyrgyzstan stood out after independence as a place of real democratization and moreover experienced a significant liberalization movement in 2005. Turkmenistan has the most oppressive government of the five, with Uzbekistan not far behind.

Quotas for the election of women to national Parliaments exist in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan; this has resulted in a much increased presence of women (see International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance [IDEA], Stockholm University, & Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.). With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, however, one cannot say that elections are free and fair, and Parliaments have relatively little power in any case. Since independence, very few women have served in the government in high positions as ministers or deputy ministers. For example in 2008, there was 1 female minister (out of 18 ministers) in Kazakhstan, 3 out of 16 in Kyrgyzstan, 1 out of 17 in Tajikistan, 2 out of 28 in Turkmenistan, and 3 out of 16 in Uzbekistan (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). Most are probably part of the patronage networks that operate in each state (again with the exception of Kyrgyzstan). It is unclear how much power these female ministers wield. On the one hand, they lead ministries that deal with women in important ways (social welfare, education, women's issues). On the other, evidence indicates that women's status and well-being are seen as secondary to more pressing problems faced by state leaderships, including economic growth and diversification, infrastructure development, national defense, cross-border issues, and foreign affairs. We now consider each state in turn.

#### *Kazakhstan*

Kazakhstan is by far the largest of the Central Asian states with an economy larger than all of the other four combined, with GDP (gross national product) per capita of about \$11,400 (and thus one would expect more women to be in politics, given the greater resource base). It is rich in metals, oil, and gas, with a large agricultural

sector, but has significant air, water, and soil pollution problems. Of the Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan always had the largest concentration of non-Kazakhs on its territory in Soviet times. Russians outnumbered Kazakhs on their own territory right up through the end of the Soviet period. With the fall of communism, many Russians emigrated back to the Russian Federation (Olcott, 1997). Politically, it is an authoritarian presidential republic led by Nursultan Nazarbaev, who has been in office since Soviet times, with the other branches of government having very little real power.

Since 1991, a relatively low number of women have been government ministers: 17 have served as government ministers or deputy ministers and are of both Kazakh and Slavic ethnicities. The highest position for 13 of these was deputy minister. As with Russia, the majority of portfolios relate to policy areas commonly associated with women's perceived expertise: labor and social affairs, social welfare, tourism, education, and health. A few have had finance and justice portfolios, and recently a woman served as deputy minister of agriculture. The most prominent of these women are Byrganym Sariyevna Aytimova, Natalia Artyomovna Korzhova, and Aitkul Baigazyevna Samakova (Christiansen, 2009).

Kazakhstan has a bicameral Parliament consisting of a Senate and the Mazhilis (or lower house). The Senate has 47 seats, 15 members of which are appointed by the president, with other members elected by local assemblies. The Mazhilis has 107 seats, 9 of which are elected by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, a presidentially appointed advisory body designed to represent the country's ethnic minorities. The remaining members of Parliament (MPs) are popularly elected to serve 5-year terms. In the most recent Mazhilis election in 2007, women had 17 seats, or 15.9%; in the Senate election of 2008, two females gained seats, or 4.3% of the total. In the Mazhilis the ruling party Nur-Otan has 98 of the seats (parties must achieve a threshold of 7% of the electorate to qualify for seats). Other parties exist and contest for seats. One of them has a woman leader, the Rukhaniyat (Spirituality) party, Altynshash Zhaganova (Christiansen, 2009).

#### *Kyrgyzstan*

Kyrgyzstan is a poor country with a GDP of about \$2,100 per capita. However, the country is rich in minerals and its largest export earnings come from gold. Its economy is currently growing at about 6% per year. The government of Kyrgyzstan has been more active in promoting women's rights than others in the region. It also suffers from corruption, electoral manipulation, and control over the media, but in relative terms it has a better record than the other states. Initially, Kyrgyzstan was led by Askar Akayev, who presided over some liberalizing reforms. A range of organizational activities were allowed, decentralized local administration and governance was encouraged, and there was relatively more freedom of the press. The



Kyrgyz state was receptive to outside assistance in organizing local groups, and probably more overtly democratizing activity by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was permitted there than in other states. Akaev was ousted in 2005 in the so-called Tulip Revolution, and NGOs were active in the overthrow of the government. Akaev seems to have coined the term *Tulip Revolution*. The media had tried other names modeled on the Czech/Slovak Velvet Revolution, Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and Rose Revolution in Georgia. As the upheaval occurred in the spring, tulip seemed appropriate.

The Kyrgyz are united by a strong sense of identity based on nomadism. This is significant for women, because nomadism assumes less gender segregation, less religious influence, and more active roles for women in the public and private spheres than the national narratives of neighboring Muslim groups. The Kyrgyz see themselves as less "Eastern" and more democratic, which applies to women, who are visible in public life and more independent than in the other Central Asian states. Roza Otunbaeva, then Kyrgyzstan's foreign minister, declared at the Beijing conference in 1995:

And today, in search of our . . . self identity as a nation, when some try to lead us astray to the unknown ways we state firmly: not one of our women predecessors ever covered her face or let her husband beat her. We will not allow this [to] happen now, one thousand years later! (qtd. in Simpson, 2006, p. 18)

After the ouster of Akaev, the former prime minister, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, was elected president. Between 2005 and 2007, the Parliament took on more power relative to the president. A new Constitution and constitutional amendments were passed that were later declared illegal, and President Bakiyev engineered new elections and created a new political party to support him, one of whose cochair is Elmira Sultanovna Ibraimova.

At present Kyrgyzstan has a Parliament of 90 members, of which 23 (25.6%) are women. According to the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, in the 2005 election, when the country moved from a bicameral to a unicameral Parliament with a majority/plurality electoral system, no women were elected to Parliament. In 2007, the number of seats in the chamber was increased from 75 to 90, and seats were filled from party lists using a proportional representation (PR) electoral system. Under that system, parties were required to ensure that at least 30% of the candidates on their lists were women (International IDEA, Stockholm University, & Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.).

Approximately 30 women have served as ministers or deputy ministers of government, of which half were deputy ministers, a better record than in much larger and wealthier Kazakhstan (Christiansen, 2009). Prominent among these is Roza Isakovna Otunbayeva. Among opposition members who were barred from standing in the elections

of 2005, she helped to trigger the Tulip Revolution that brought the downfall of President Akaev. She served as interim foreign minister following the overthrow of Akaev but lost her seat in a by election (Pannier, 2008). In 2007, she regained a seat in Parliament as a member of the Social Democratic Party. As of 2007, no women occupied the positions of governor or head of local government. Other career woman politicians include Uktomkhan Abdullaeva and Ishengul Sadykovna Boljurova.

### *Tajikistan*

One of the poorest countries in the region, Tajikistan's GDP per capita is approximately \$1,800, and only 7% of the land is arable. Tajikistan has some mineral resources and plans to develop more hydropower for export. Tajiks speak a language related to Persian, thus distinguishing it from the other four Turkic speaking countries. About 400,000 Russians fled the country in 1992–1997, during a clan-based civil war. Tajik identity is not cohesive, and this was made worse during the civil war. This very mountainous and landlocked country receives aid from neighboring China, among other countries, and is strategically important as an access point into Afghanistan. It is characterized as conflict prone and a potential "breeding ground" for extremists and religious fundamentalists. Thus, women's issues are placed far down an agenda of more pressing problems (Simpson, 2006).

Tajikistan is a source country for women trafficked through Kyrgyzstan and Russia to the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Russia for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation; men are trafficked to Russia and Kazakhstan for the purpose of forced labor, primarily in the construction and agricultural industries; boys and girls are trafficked internally for various purposes, including forced labor, forced begging, and sex. Due to a lack of employment opportunities, approximately one half of the labor force, or about 1 million people, work abroad, primarily in Russia, and send remittances home. Tajikistan is also a transit route for the drug trade in opium.

The president of Tajikistan since 1994 is Emomali Rahmon, last elected in 2006 with 80% of the vote. The main opposition parties boycotted the presidential election, including the Islamic Renaissance Party, one of the few viable Islamist parties in Central Asia. Since independence in 1991, 26 women have served as government ministers, of whom 14 were deputy ministers. Most had portfolios in education, culture, health, social welfare, and women's issues. Several were in finance, and more recently women ministers and deputy ministers had portfolios in water resources and energy (Christiansen, 2009).

Opposition parties are allowed to run for office and have a few seats in the National Assembly. No women are party leaders. Women are relatively well represented, however, in the bicameral Assembly. The upper house, or Majlisi Milli, consists of 35 seats, whose members are indirectly elected by local deputies. In the last elections of



2005, 23.5% of these seats were held by women. The lower house, or Assembly of Representatives, has 63 seats directly elected by the population; 17.5% of them are women (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009).

#### *Turkmenistan*

Located on the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, 80% of Turkmenistan consists of the Karakum Desert; only 4.5% is arable. However, it is characterized by extensive oil and gas reserves and has experienced high levels of economic growth in recent years as a result of increases in oil prices worldwide. Its GDP per capita is approximately \$6,700, but economic statistics on Turkmenistan are unreliable. Economic growth is expected with the opening of a pipeline to China in 2011.

Turkmenistan is the most authoritarian of the five Central Asian states, and all formal opposition to the president is deemed illegal. President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the head of the only political party, the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, came to power with 89% of the vote in the country's first multicandidate presidential election in 2007 after the death of "president for life" Saparmurat Niyazov, who had ruled since Soviet times. Turkmen society is clan-based, but women have high levels of literacy and some employment outside the home. They also have not been as secluded as others in other parts of Central Asia, nor were they veiled to the same degree. Little information exists on their participation in formal politics, but it is clear that they are underrepresented. Only 19 women have served as ministers or deputy ministers since independence in 1991 (Christiansen, 2009).

Turkmenistan has a unicameral National Assembly (or Majlis), of 125 seats. All elected officials are preapproved by the president and are members of the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan or its "popular movement" parent organization, the Revival Movement. In the Parliament elected in 2008, there are 21 women (16.8%). The president of the assembly is a woman, Akja Tajiyevna Nurberdiyeva, as is the secretary general, Enegul B. Dollayeva. However, these women have little power or influence in authoritarian Turkmenistan.

#### *Uzbekistan*

At the heart of Central Asia lies Uzbekistan, mostly consisting of sandy deserts and punctuated by irrigated river valleys. Only 10.5% of the land is arable; 60% of the 27.6 million people inhabiting Uzbekistan live in dense rural communities of these valleys. Uzbekistan is by far the most populous of the Central Asian states and is the home of ancient Islamic centers of learning and civilization. The state is highly involved in the economy, with numerous state-owned enterprises. GDP per capita is \$2,800, and income inequality since independence has increased sharply.

Uzbekistan has been ruled by President Islom Karimov since 1990. He was last elected in 2007 with 88% of the vote. All official political parties support the president, and other candidates contested these elections as a purely symbolic gesture toward multicandidacy. One of the candidates was Diloram Tshmuhamedova, the leader of the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party.

Only 8 women have been ministers, and 4 have served in the position of deputy minister as their highest position, for a total of 12 (Christiansen, 2009). Notable are Shakhlo N. Makhmudova, Galina Karimovna Saidova, and Farida Akbarova.

Uzbekistan has a bicameral Supreme Assembly consisting of a Senate (upper house) of 100 seats, 84 of which are elected by regional governing councils and 16 appointed by the president; 15% of the senators are women. The lower house, or Legislative Chamber, consists of 120 seats, all elected through popular vote. Women are 17.5% of the legislators. Uzbekistan instituted a quota for women in 2004. Fresh elections are due in December 2009.

### **The Caucasus**

The Caucasus is located in the southwestern-most corner of what was the Soviet Union. The region has borders with the Russian Federation, Turkey, Iran, and the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The northern edge of the region is dominated by the Caucasus Mountains and is characterized by a high degree of ethnic and linguistic diversity. Historically, this region between the Black and Caspian seas has been contested by empires and invaders. It is still a zone of substantial conflict on both sides of the mountains since the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991. The northern Caucasus region is part of the Russian Federation and includes Chechnya, which has a short border with Georgia and has been the site of two wars since the early 1990s. Daghestan (which borders Azerbaijan) and Ingushetia, also Russian provinces, have experienced violence as well. The three countries that comprise the south Caucasus (sometimes called Transcaucasia) are Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Militarized conflict zones are particularly difficult areas for the promotion of women leaders.

These countries have some similarities but in other ways are quite different. Each country has its own language and different alphabets. Georgia and Armenia have their own alphabets, and Azerbaijan has historically used Cyrillic but since independence has changed to a Latin script. Armenian is an Indo-European language, Azeri is Turkic, and Georgian is in the Kartvelian language family, which is not known to be related to any other existing language. They have important religious differences as well: Armenia was the first nation to adopt Christianity in 301. The Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church is headed by its own Catholicos (similar to a patriarch or pope). Georgia was second in 337 (the Georgian Orthodox Church, which has its own patriarch). Most Azerbaijanis



practice the Shi'ite variant of Islam, though around 20% to 25% are Sunnis. In addition, most Azeris are not devout or practicing Muslims though the influence of Islam is thought to be growing. Interestingly, the two Christian countries have lower representations of women than the one Muslim country in this region (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009).

The countries of the south Caucasus have been sites of violent interstate and intrastate conflict since 1991. The first war in the region was over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous region of southwestern Azerbaijan that was inhabited by mostly ethnic Armenians (~75% in the 1989 Soviet census). Around 30,000 people died in the conflict, and a million or more were displaced. A Russian-brokered cease-fire halted the war in 1994 though sporadic violence still occurs. Georgia has two breakaway regions: South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Both the Ossets and the Abkhaz won wars against Georgia; these conflicts also have been in cease-fire since 1994. De jure (by law) each of these three regions remains a part of their respective states, but de facto (in fact) they each operate as a sovereign country, albeit without international recognition. (Russia recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent following a brief war with Georgia in summer 2008, but no other country has recognized them.)

A feeling in all three countries that security is of paramount importance to the state and nation may be one reason why women's representation has fallen so dramatically. These traditional societies see security as primarily men's work, and as that is the top priority (in some cases, the only priority) that means that men have a political advantage at present. Other reasons for lack of gender equity include preferences for traditional gender roles in all three countries, economic/wealth inequalities between men and women, and highly personalized politics that depend on wealth and connections, to which men have more access in the Caucasus.

In all three countries, traditional gender attitudes are common but are more pronounced in rural than urban areas. Women have generally lost ground in all three states since independence, including in business and politics. The early independence period (late 1980s to early 1990s) was characterized by substantial female involvement in popular movements, politics, and demands for reforms, but this has waned over time. Economically, women have suffered more than men from the collapse of production in the early independence period and from economic struggles since that time.

The highly personalized politics in the Caucasus region also work against women. Many parties are simply organized around strong personalities or individuals with money and connections rather than ideologically or by interests. And because men held most of the real power in the Soviet era, post-Soviet power has also tended to be held by men.

Gender discrimination is pervasive in all three Caucasus countries, although women tend to be highly educated, as in all former Soviet countries. Female professors and engineers

are fairly common. However, these resources have not transferred into political power in these states.

### Armenia

Armenia has a 131-seat legislature called the National Assembly (*Azgayin Zhoghov*). Most of the political power rests with the president in this political system. Elections are held every 5 years, and the election laws have changed several times. At present, 90 of the seats are elected through party lists (proportional representation) and 41 in single member constituencies. There is a 5% threshold that parties must cross to earn any seats in Parliament.

Five parties gained seats in the 2007 parliamentary elections, and despite what looks like a range of parties, most parties in Parliament are progovernment (meaning they support the president) and exhibit few real differences of opinion on issues. Women have not fared well in parliamentary elections. They have won a few seats in PR races but no majoritarian seats. In 1995, 12 women were elected, or 9.1% of Parliament seats. In 1999, parliamentary elections yielded 127 men and 4 women, or 3.05%. In the Parliament elected in 2003, women won 7 of 131 seats (5%). Women gained slightly in 2007, winning 12 seats, or 9.1%. Prior to the 2007 election, a new electoral law required party lists to raise the quota for women from 5% to 15%. However, the law did not state what positions women should have on the lists, and so many women were placed so far down that the likelihood of gaining a seat was almost zero for many of them. In local elections, women fared even worse. Women held only 15 of 926 local government positions.

In executive positions, women have held a small number of deputy minister positions and a few ministerial posts, often in social and cultural affairs. Women have served as ministers of social protection, trade, urban affairs, culture, and youth affairs. By 2008, only 15 women had served as minister or deputy minister.

### Azerbaijan

The presidency is the only real power in Azerbaijan. The *Milli Mejlis* (Parliament) consists of 125 people directly elected for 5-year terms. The system is highly corrupt and clan based; the president is the arbiter of disputes and guarantor of order. His blessing matters more than anything else in the system.

By mid-2009, three parliamentary elections had occurred in Azerbaijan, in 1995, 2000, and 2005. Elections are scheduled for November 2010 as well. In 1995, 15 women of 125 MPs were elected, or 12.1%. In 2000, 13 women were elected, or 10.48%. Prior to 2005, 100 seats were elected in single member districts and 25 by proportional representation, but starting in 2005, all seats were elected through majoritarian districts. This seemed to have little impact on the election of women. In 2005, again 15 women were elected, or 12.1%.



Azerbaijani elections are generally not considered free and fair. Administrative means are used to bully candidates, the media are not free to cover elections fairly, and electoral violations abound. The results are still contested by NGOs, the Azeri political opposition, and many outside groups. Prominent women include cochair of the Green Party, Taran Mammadova, and leader of the Liberal Party, Lala Hacıyeva. In local government, only 4.1% of members of municipal councils are women, and there were 20,346 members of municipal councils in 2005.

Only a few women have served in high administrative positions and then usually in the Ministries of Culture, Women's Affairs, Education, Social Affairs, and Health.

### *Georgia*

The Georgian Parliament has 150 seats, half elected by proportional representation and the other half through single member districts. Since 1991, there have been five elections for Parliament: 1992, 1995, 1999, 2004, and 2008. All of these elections have taken place within the context of either a civil war (1991–1992) or wars on Georgia's territory with the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The issue of territorial integrity remains the primary issue for most politicians and much of the public. According to the Constitution, the Parliament must be unicameral until the restoration of territorial integrity.

Following a particularly corrupt election in 2003, President Eduard Shevardnadze was forced to resign due to the Rose Revolution, a popular uprising led by three people: Mikhail Saakashvili, Nino Burdjanadze, and Zurab Zhvania. Nino Burdjanadze served as both interim president of Georgia and as speaker of Parliament. She is the highest ranking woman ever to hold office in Georgia.

The Parliament elected in 2008 has nine women, or 6% of the seats. Eight women won via the PR system and one in a majoritarian district. President Mikhail Saakashvili's National Movement Party won 59.5% of the vote, and the main opposition block won 17.7%. There were numerous allegations of improprieties, vote rigging, and manipulation. In the 2008 parliamentary elections, women composed about 28% of the party list candidates. No woman was number one on any party's list, and only three parties had women in the top five slots. Of local government bodies, 11% are women. Historically, the 2008 elections were a low spot for women in Parliament while 2004 was the highpoint. In 2004, 22 women were elected (9.36%); in 1999, 17 women (7.23%); and in 1995, 16 women (7%). The speaker of Parliament was a woman, as was the head of the majority party, and women held several important committee chairmanships. For example, Georgia's Way Party chair, Salome Zourabichvili, and Magda Anikashvili MP, deputy chair of the Committee on Health and Social Affairs and a leader of the Christian Democrats.

Georgia has had many more executive and administrative women than the other countries of the Caucasus. Some members of the Security Council have been women, there

have been women as ministers for natural resources and environmental protection, culture, infrastructure and development, foreign affairs, civil integration, justice, education and science, refugees, resettlement, and housing, as well as a number of state ministers. Quite a few deputy ministers have been women.

### **Moldova**

Moldova is often referred to as the poorest country in Europe. Unemployment is high, though 62% of the unemployed are men, which is unusual in the region. Most Moldovans are Orthodox Christians. Moldovan is a romance language, closely related to Romanian.

Moldova is a parliamentary democracy whose president is indirectly elected by the Parliament. Like Belarus, Moldova has not seen much political or economic reform. Moldova has an unsettled territorial conflict centering on the Slavic communities living on the eastern side of the Dniester River. The Trans-Dniester region is a tiny sliver of land on the banks of the river between the rest of Moldova and Ukraine that declared unrecognized independence at the end of the Soviet period. The *de facto* regime there insists on retaining Soviet and communist traditions and has expressed interest in becoming part of Russia. The region is widely known as a headquarters for organized crime, smuggling, illegal arms sales, and money laundering.

The Moldovan Parliament has 101 seats in a unicameral Parliament. Members serve a 4-year term and are elected by proportional representation. There is a variable threshold for representation in Parliament. An unaffiliated candidate must earn 3%, a party must clear a 4% threshold, and electoral blocs must clear either 6% or 8% hurdles depending on their size. During the discussion of the 2006 electoral law, several drafts proposed a 30% quota for women on party lists, but the law was not passed.

Five elections have been held since independence in 1994: 1994, 1998, 2001, 2005, and April 2009. In 1994, 99 men and 5 women were elected (5%). In 1998, 92 men and 9 women were elected (9%). In 2001, 87 men and 14 women (14%) won seats and chose a woman speaker, Eugenia Ostapciuc. The 2005 elections resulted in 79 men and 22 women (22%). One explanation for this increase is that the Christian Democratic Popular Party adopted the zipper principle for their party lists (alternating men and women) and won 11 seats (or 9% of the total). Not all parties that featured many women were as successful, however. The Republican Party of Moldova's party list contained 52.6% women (30 out of 57) and its head is a woman, Galina Hortolomei, but it won no seats in the 2005 Parliament. In 2009, elections were held in April with runoff elections in July. This Parliament was unable to elect a president and so was dismissed. In December a new election was held and that Parliament also failed to elect a president. Because the Parliament was unsuccessful in electing a president twice, it must be dissolved and new elections held. However, new elections cannot happen



more than twice in 12 months. Mihai Ghimpo, who is also speaker of the Parliament, will be acting president until another election can be held in late 2010.

In the early 2009 election, the Communist Party list (a center-right party) had 15 women within the top 50 spots (highest at number 3) and 12 in the bottom 52. The Communists have held the largest number of seats in every Parliament elected since 1998 (unofficially, they won 59% of the seats in 2009 or 60 seats). In the December 2009 election, 22 women were elected to Parliament.

In local elections, there has been only one woman elected as chair of a regional executive committee, but 138 women mayors were elected out of 851 (16%) in 2003. This was an improvement over the 93 women (9%) elected in 1999. Other high-ranking women included women in the posts of minister of justice and minister of finance in 2005 and a woman as first deputy minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. In 2007, a woman headed the Ministry of Social Protection, Family, and Children as well as the Supreme Court, Interethnic Bureau, and Customs Service.

There are currently no laws in Moldova regarding sexual harassment, though most women say it is a common problem. Until recently, domestic abuse was considered acceptable provided it did not result in serious injury, however, in 2008, the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence was passed criminalizing domestic abuse. There have already been serious enforcement issues.

### *The NGO Sector*

It is important to note that women leaders exist outside of formal political structures. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, NGOs have become feminized. Thousands of NGOs were established all over the post-Soviet territories, and some had access to international funding as Western governments and NGOs poured millions of dollars into certain kinds of post-Soviet NGOs, mostly those claiming to build democracy or civil society. The sizes of these organizations, their funding sources, missions, and effectiveness vary widely. More recently gender has been “mainstreamed” by international funding organizations. That is, women’s issues are folded into more general NGO activities promoting economic development, civil society building, and democratization (Hemment, 2007).

Post-Soviet NGOs vary by the extent to which they are “elite” (connected to international and foundation funding; located in the capital cities; led and staffed by mainly academic women who are savvy about donor objectives and grant writing, familiar with the international discourses on gender, and familiar with the international platforms for action, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women [CEDAW], the Beijing Platform, and the Millennium Development Goals) or local (located in peripheries, not connected to outside sources of funding, run by unpaid volunteers, less familiar with globalized feminism or the international women’s

movement as promoted by institutions such as the United Nations or the European Union). The local groups criticize the elite NGOs for being disconnected from real women’s lives. While some networking between various groups exists, groups tend not to cooperate with each other, although numerous conferences on women’s issues have taken place among NGOs, academics, and state officials. And NGOs tend not to have any connections with women politicians, as compared with the ways in which civil society organizations support women candidates in Western political systems.

Moldova has 7,000 registered NGOs. Women’s groups are well represented. There is an NGO promoting 50/50 representation in Parliament called Women’s Political League 50/50, as well as groups like Gender Center of Moldova, National Women’s Study and Information Center, and groups related to professions (for women doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc.), ethnicities, and issues.

In the Caucasus, there are women’s organizations working on peace-building issues as well as gender issues. An umbrella group to facilitate cross-border cooperation called Working Together—Networking Women in the Caucasus was founded in 1999 and led by Nina Tsikhistavi. They do training and capacity building for women’s NGOs as well as cross-border networking.

Azerbaijan has approximately 3,100 registered NGOs and has a number of women’s groups, including the Women’s Rights Monitoring Group led by Zahila Tahirova and Women for Peace led by Durdana Mamedova, Gulnar Kasumova, and Sadjida Abdulvagabova. But women’s groups are a minority of Azeri NGOs. Groups depend heavily on foreign funding. The Association of Women with University Degrees formed a coalition in 2008 with the Ganja Regional Women’s Center to conduct advocacy against early marriage. The Azerbaijan Gender Information Center ([www.gender-az.org](http://www.gender-az.org)) is one of the few with a Web presence.

In Armenia, there are an estimated 4,000 NGOs of which 40% are headed by women (in Yerevan, only 33% are headed by women). Many of the NGOs have been funded by foreign donors, as little local capacity for funding exists though the government provides some small-scale funding.

Georgia has the largest number of NGOs in the Caucasus, with over 10,000 registered; not all are active. Some accounts estimate that almost 40% of Georgian NGOs deal with women’s issues or are headed by women. Georgia has a national Women’s Coalition of Georgia (WCG) that holds yearly conferences. In 2008 the WCG collected 32,000 signatures on a petition to change electoral laws to bring more women into politics. They advocated a quota system to bring the number of women to 50% of Parliament. The Parliament is required to study and discuss the initiative, as of mid-2010 they have not yet done so.

Central Asia has fewer NGOs than the Caucasus. Government attitudes toward NGOs are quite negative. And since most NGOs in the region are funded by external



groups, NGOs are often seen as dangerous and subversive by local governments. Women's groups have made strides throughout Central Asia in bringing attention to human rights and gender issues but remain a small part of the NGO environment in most countries. Environmental groups have also made some progress in getting issues onto national agendas. Kyrgyzstan has the most registered NGOs in the region, with estimates ranging from 9,000 to 20,000; however, not all are active. In May 2008, the Alliance for Women's Legislative Initiatives (AWLI) was founded with more than 122 individual and group members. The AWLI paved the way for a new Law on Gender Equality in August 2008. Women's NGOs are tasked with formulating and monitoring action plans for the law, and so they are growing in number and influence. Kazakhstan has approximately 7,200 NGOs. The Kazak government has begun funding NGOs through grants (about \$3 million), and funding from the Kazak business community is growing, but NGOs still depend heavily on international funding. Only around 4% of Kazaks belong to an NGO and 38% report awareness that NGOs exist.

The number of NGOs in Tajikistan is extremely difficult to count, and estimates vary widely. According to Human Rights Watch, 1,390 organizations managed to reregister following the passage of the new Law on Associations in 2007. Hurdles to registration, particularly bureaucratic ones, are very high and the process is expensive. Turkmenistan has the most hostile environment for NGOs in Central Asia, and many Western relief agencies have left the country. Internet access is difficult to obtain. Uzbekistan has about 830 NGOs. Prior to a ban in 2005–2006, the number was closer to 5,000. However, each branch is counted as a separate group; for example, the Business Women Association of Uzbekistan has branches in seven cities and so counts as seven groups. Uzbekistan bans most international funding for groups and has a public fund that generally only funds groups favorable to the regime.

Throughout the region, NGOs have challenges that go beyond funding, limited visibility with the public, and authoritarian governments. First, many NGOs are dependent upon a charismatic leader or founder, and without that founder, the organization often dies. Second, there is a brain drain out of NGOs. People learn skills in the local NGOs but once they have skills, the people move on to better paying international work. Many groups are not transparent and lack basic office and communication equipment.

## Future Directions

Looking comparatively at the post-Soviet cases, some interesting generalizations can be made. The country with the highest representation of women in Parliament is Belarus, with 31.82%, but it is arguably one of the

least democratic states, and the Parliament has little legitimacy or power in a political system dominated by President Lukashenko (see Chapter 41, in this handbook). Kyrgyzstan and Moldova are next with 25.6% and 21.8%, respectively. Kyrgyzstan seems to have more equal footing for women because of its relative democratization as well as an electoral law that requires 30% of party lists to be women. Kyrgyzstan also has a culture that has traditionally included women as leaders. Moldova, like Belarus, has not had much democratic reform, and Parliament is not powerful. But some parties have adopted the zipper principle for their party lists and this has helped women get elected. In the middle of the pack are Russia, Azerbaijan, and the other four Central Asian countries. Georgia, Ukraine, and Armenia are at the bottom (6%, 8.2%, 8.4%). The Georgian and Armenian cases can be best explained by the great significance of security issues in politics, very traditional attitudes toward women, and economic hardships that hit women hardest. Ukraine is a more difficult case to explain, as fairly traditional attitudes toward women and a problematic economy exist, but the lack of women's success cannot be explained by these factors. Success in Ukraine is attributable to connections. Women who are well connected have done well in Ukraine. Despite the lack of parliamentary representation, Ukraine has had a female head of government, something few post-Soviet states can boast. The success of Yulia Tymoshenko is more attributable to her connections, business success, and large financial resources than to gender. It would seem that having access to financial resources helps women to overcome other obstacles.

If the trends toward increasing authoritarianism in the region continue, and if presidents continue to accrue more power at the expense of legislatures, we are likely to see more women represented. Women in the legislatures have public relations value to authoritarian states and are used as a symbol of progress, but in reality these legislatures, and the women who serve in them, have no real power or influence.

More problematic for women, religion became a renewed source of legitimacy for post-Soviet regimes. Islam was recognized and promoted as part of the ethnic heritages of Uzbeks, Tajiks, and other traditionally Muslim peoples. In the Christian parts of the region, Orthodoxy is dominant. Unfortunately for women, the particular forms of Christianity and Islam that are officially sanctioned and promoted underscore the traditional roles of women as presiding over the private sphere, subordinate to fathers and husbands, and as multiple childbearing mothers. Islamism (extremist variants of Islam ranging from Salafism and Wahhabism to other fundamentalist forms) is rising in some parts of Central Asia. If these forms of religion become more common, women will be forced into the background.

All of the post-Soviet states have adopted new constitutions that recognize fundamental human and civil rights,



but enforcement and attitudes lag significantly. Equality is legally guaranteed regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, language, religion, social origin, political ideology, or individual and social status, in accordance with international principles and laws. All states have signed and ratified CEDAW and have participated in the 1995 Beijing Conference's goals of promoting gender equality. Even in majority Muslim states, constitutions remain secular despite some internal and external pressure to adopt some principles from Shari'a law, especially regarding women. However, women's issues are often not addressed, and there are few women leaders in government, business, or other sectors.

Issues specific to women, such as shocking rates of domestic abuse, the trafficking of women and children, and widespread prostitution as a way to earn a living, as well as problems with the provision of adequate child care, women's and children's health care, and the welfare of pensioners (the vast majority of whom are female), certainly exist throughout the post-Soviet states, especially with the drastic decline in state resources devoted to these areas. Though awareness of women's issues is growing, positive change is slow.

Women's groups in the region often interact very little with organs of the state. They do not seem to perform the mediating roles that interest groups play in Western societies. Instead, they tend to work on issues that shore up the crumbling safety nets and help marginalized communities.

They fill cracks in the social infrastructure of states. They also serve to promote social and individual healing following the traumas of change stemming from the economic and political collapse of the Soviet Union.

In legislatures across the region, female representatives have not made names for themselves championing women's issues. They vote very much like male representatives and because most of these states are authoritarian, all legislators vote mostly for the interests of the government. Women's issues have been taken up by women's NGOs beyond the formal state apparatus, but many of them lack resources, funding, and influence. Few have substantial enough resources to have communication capabilities, though in Georgia and Ukraine, the situation is better than in the other nine states.

As the worldwide recession of 2008–2009 continues to hit the region, the few gains women have made are likely to recede. Funding for NGOs will become scarcer, unemployment will hit women harder than men, and pensions will fall (again, harming women more). Women continue to make less money and be more at risk for poverty throughout the region. Some women have done quite well, but their successes have not translated into gains more broadly for women. Though women have made some inroads into national legislatures, they have made more progress in highly authoritarian states where their participation is merely symbolic. So the short-term future is not looking very good for women in Eurasia.

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## PART V

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# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE BUSINESS AND PROFIT SECTOR





## OVERVIEW: WOMEN LEADERS IN THE BUSINESS AND PROFIT SECTOR

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Women have been leading in the business and for-profit sector for longer than our memories and possibly our history can accurately account. This chapter starts, necessarily, with definitions. Leadership is the process whereby an individual influences a group of other individuals to find and/or achieve a common goal. The processes are inherently behavioral although they derive from individual, cultural, and social cognitions (which include values, scripts, intentions, and other expectations). Leaders require a repertoire of individual competencies, or human capital, that include skills, abilities, self-concepts, and intellectual, social, emotional, and practical intelligence as well as motivation to lead. In addition, leaders also bring their social capital (relationships that they can draw upon for support, information, and access to other people and networks). Thus the specific acts of a leader (e.g., communicating and executing a specific decision) derive from her human and social capital and the social, economic, political, and temporal context within which she acts.

Leadership behavior in the for-profit sector is similar to leader behavior in other domains, and many of the volumes of research on women leaders commingle data from the business sector with that from public service, government, and nongovernmental sectors. However, the constituents or stakeholders, the cultural expectations, and scorecard are different for those in the profit sector, which is a hugely varied arena. The leadership issues facing women on Wall Street (big financial firms) are different from issues of women leading in health care, manufacturing, and different technology domains, and on main street (see Moore, in this handbook; Roth, 2006). Profit-sector leaders are

accountable up a chain of command to the chief executive officer (CEO) and even she (or he) is accountable to board of directors and they to the stockholders or owners. Even the entrepreneur “reports to” partners, investors, and customers. Thus business organizations have responsibility and accountability hierarchies where through delegation (and trust), responsibility and objectives flow down from the owners to the top leaders into the employees and teams. Accountability flows up the chain of command. The scorecard (Kaplan, 2005) or measure of business performance (and in the best of worlds, this is also a measure of leadership performance) ultimately relates to the organization’s mission and includes financial performance (e.g., profitability, stock price, sales growth, costs, return on investment), customer satisfaction, efficiency and quality of internal business processes, and the learning and growth of the people and the organization. A leader’s performance and effectiveness relates to how well she (through her team or employees) contributes to these.

For this chapter, there is insufficient time, space, and language ability to review the role of women business leaders internationally although there are many (see Werhane, 2007, for further reading). This chapter is also bound to topics not addressed in other chapters in this handbook. First the chapter addresses differences between leaders and managers and what are called big-L leaders and little-L leaders, as what follows looks at women in the pipeline to executive positions. Next a brief history of women in the U.S. for-profit sector is given for exemplars and context, and some statistical information on women’s roles in the U.S. business sector is offered. From there the pragmatics of career progression to higher levels is

explored, as well as more influential leadership positions pointing to choices that women (and men) face. Research on women business managers and leaders is examined, as well as what business schools provide that may be of particular value to women students.

This chapter portrays organizations as hierarchies, and most larger firms are shaped this way. However, some large organizations are experimenting with vastly flatter, more collaborative structures (e.g., Cisco) and in these contexts leadership is likely to have different requirements. This short chapter takes an "objectivist" orientation. The measures of business success (the growth of an enterprise and the hierarchical rank of the leader) are Western, capitalistic, and masculine. However, there are other measures of success that can be used, such as organizational sustainability, innovativeness, social responsibility, personal growth, helping others, and career satisfaction. The positions offered here can be (justifiably) critiqued for the exclusion of race, ethnic, underclass, and feminist frameworks. Page and time constraints and the context of this handbook point me to make more declarative and normative points than I wish to as a scholar and a teacher (see Lamsa & Sintonen, 2001, for further readings in this area).

## History of Women in the For-Profit Sector

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The history of U.S. women in business is overviewed in the *Life* magazine special report (1976) "Remarkable American Women 1776–1976." While many women in the sections "winners in a man's world" and "the tastemakers" were women of law, politics and media, others were businesswomen, including Helena Rubinstein (cosmetics, personal fortune of \$100 million in 1965); Tillie Lewis (tomato grower and food processing, annual sales of \$145 million in 1976), Rebecca Lukens (ironworks, personal fortune of \$100,000 in 1854); Mary Wells Lawrence (advertising), whose annual salary of \$350,000 was the highest pay of any women executive in 1976; Olive Ann Beech, who ran the business of Beech Aircraft Corporation (8,000 employees and sales of \$267 million in 1976), while her husband did the design work; Sarah Breedlove, an entrepreneur whose hair care products made her the nation's first black woman millionaire when she died in 1919; and Joan Ganz Cooney, who created the TV shows *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* and who was president of the Children's Television Workshop with 262 employees and an annual budget of over \$10 million in 1976. Women in the United States have been successful leaders in the for-profit sector for most of U.S. history.

Women's participation in the workforce has increased over time and in proportion to men (whose participation has decreased). Studies show that women's participation rate in the labor force has increased significantly. In 1950 the participation rate of women in the labor force was only 33.9%, but from 1970 through 1990 the rate steadily increased, reaching 57.5%. In 2000 the participation rate

of women in the labor force reached 60% and is projected to stay the same through year 2020 (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2000).

Industry statistics for 2006 show that women constitute more than half of all workers within the financial, education, health services, and leisure and hospitality industry sectors. However, women represent a substantially lower portion of the workforce in mining, construction, manufacturing, transportation, and utilities. As to job type, nearly 50% of women workers are currently employed in three occupational groups: sales, services, and administrative support (BLS, 2000).

The proportion of women managers in the workforce has also seen a steady increase. Between 1972 and 2002, the proportion of managerial jobs held by women more than doubled, from 20% to 46%. However, women are still underrepresented in technical business sectors such as engineering, and many "managerial" jobs are still more clerical and service-oriented jobs. A brief analysis of women in CEO positions within the companies on the Forbes 500 list found only 12 in 2007 ("12 Women CEOs," 2007). The increased proportion of women in managerial positions is due in part to the increase in proportion of working women with a college education. In 1970 only one tenth of women in the labor force held a college degree as compared to one third in 2006. However, there are still significant strides to be made in recognizing the increased influence of education on women.

## Leadership at Different Levels

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Although most leaders also "manage" some of the time and managers sometimes "lead," it is useful to distinguish these roles as ideal types. John Kotter (1990), a Harvard Business School scholar of leadership, provides a useful and simple distinction. Managers provide stability and consistency (e.g., they plan, budget, organize, staff, control resources, and problem solve), whereas leaders' mandate is to bring change to organizations to aid its survival and growth (e.g., they establish direction, align people and resources, inspire and motivate people) and in doing this they create some of the problems managers need to solve. Leaders (often in consultation with others, including managers) decide on changes for their organization (whether it is an entire business or a unit within an enterprise for which they have responsibility). Managers reporting to that leader implement those decisions and changes through their departments and teams. My favorite rubric for this difference is that leaders need to get others to "do the right thing" for the organization's well-being, while managers "do things right" (use good techniques and processes). Of course, some leaders and managers (many headlined in scandals) do not pursue what is "right" for the organization, and act in self-serving, unethical, and often illegal ways.

Many people think that leadership is only associated with a title or rank in a hierarchy or position in a system



(e.g., executive, director, supervisor, team leader). In the years of teaching leadership to M.B.A. (master's in business administration) and arts management students, I have developed a mnemonic for students. Big-L leaders have the title, rank, authority, and role expectations of leadership. They are formally recognized and given legitimate power by the organization for a specific unit's performance. They have discretion to hire, fire, evaluate, train, assign tasks, administer rewards (often financial), and, through their budgets, allocate scarce resources to projects and tasks. The highest-level Big-L leaders are the CEO and other chief executives (often referred to generically as CXO), such as chief information officer (CIO) or chief financial officer (CFO), presidents of firms, and sometimes chair of the board of directors. The president and chair of the board may or may not be employed by the firm (in this case, they often receive fees for service, not salary). Increasingly, the board is chaired by someone outside the firm. Little-L leaders are middle managers, supervisors, team members, and employees who may, on occasion or frequently, influence others toward finding or achieving a common goal. They are not expected by others to be leaders but may emerge as leaders when needs or opportunities arise, exerting influence, bringing change, and then returning to their everyday responsibilities of getting their job done. Without the authority of office, rank, or control of a budget, Little-L leaders comprise the large body of potential future executives and Big-L leaders.

Big-L leaders (with legitimate power) exist at levels below the CEO, as directors or managers of business functions (e.g., marketing), manufacturing plants, facilities, and business units. These are middle managers. Note that some people have the title of manager but have no authority over others or a budget; they manage accounts, systems, and technology. At each level in a hierarchy the Big-L leader has different responsibilities and needed competencies (one could say the L changes in size and font). The leaders at these different levels of the organization constitute the "pipeline" of talent that may rise to executive levels (a career path that may take 20 to 25 years). The basic steps in this leadership pipeline, according to Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel (2001), are (1) managing self, (2) managing others (first line supervision), (3) managing managers, (4) managing functions (e.g., managing all the research and development or finances of the large firm), (5) managing a business unit within a large firm (e.g., managing a bank within a financial services firm), (6) managing a group of businesses (e.g., managing all the banks in North America), to (7) managing an enterprise (e.g., CEO). Many large organizations have other pipelines within functions, ending at a CXO (e.g., chief operating officer, chief information officer, etc.). However, these chief officers all report to the CEO who reports to the board of directors.

This is the context of women leaders in the business sector. Other than as entrepreneurs or employees of small business, they operate most often in hierarchies and in

large organizations that are globally dispersed. Although women constitute a significant proportion of the workforce and management talent in U.S. business, they do not (yet) occupy proportional top executive positions. Women are in the pipeline or on a career track to potential executive leadership responsibility. In their ascent to higher levels of leadership in the business sector, women in the United States face many challenges.

## Challenges of Business Leadership for Women

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The values and important metrics of the profit sector (the scorecard) hinge on "profit" but also include proximal causes and correlates of profit (e.g., market share, returns on investment, capitalization, patent filings, number of employees) and the growth of these over a period of time. An axiom (that deserves to be challenged) is that those firms that don't grow, die. A second axiom is that businesses operate with limited resources of financial, human, and social capital, and limited time. Choices must be made. In what technology, products, markets, people should the firm invest? When and for how long? How much? In a downturn, what business lines need to be closed, which people laid off, which markets abandoned? A third axiom is competition. Businesses seeking their own success do not care about other firms' success or survival (although frequently businesses care very much about the health of their supply chain and industry). Indeed, some business strategic plans are to take market share from a competitor (hurting that competitor and possibly driving that competitor out of business). Threatening other firms or being threatened by them seems a fact of life in the profit sector.

To lead in the business sector, women must be willing to play by those rules (or gain sufficient influence to change the rules). She will be measured by her success in making the "right" decisions and implementing changes toward those goals (and the other elements of the scorecard—customer satisfaction, efficient and effective systems, and employees who, through learning, avoid obsolescence and keep the organization innovative). However, leaders may also embed in their business other values in addition to competitive financial and related measures of success. That is, women can make their business or business unit a place that contributes to profit *and* develops minority opportunity, is family-friendly, environmentally "green," "fun," creative, "beautiful," or even doing the will of God. However, the leader must choose carefully the values she wants to pursue (other than profit) since a firm cannot simultaneously optimize on very many objectives or goals. Again, choices must be made with scarce resources, including the attention of employees and the market. Too many values or goals to pursue can cause confusion, paralysis, and failure.

To have career success and gain influence in an organization, the leader must align her business unit's objectives and values with those of the larger organization. As a



result, she might not have the freedom to choose among values outside their contributions to the firm's profit and scorecard due to organizational cultural pressures and organizational politics. To do otherwise would result in poor performance and eventual dismissal. However, once aligned with the overarching values, a leader (Big L or Little L) can introduce another value to be achieved, perhaps several values, for her unit. Beth Everts, now president of the Greenbriar branch of Frost Bank in Houston, began her career as a college graduate in banking operations at First City National Bank (which failed), followed by some time in real estate development, then back to banking at Nations Bank in lending. She left that bank when it was sold and went to work in a small bank that was bought by Park Bank, and later Frost acquired Park. She achieved goals her male superiors did not think she could by knowing the bank's mission and values and playing appropriate politics. However, she has been able to insert into her organization a consideration absent from other banks within Frost. "We've got less turnover than other officers because many of the other presidents don't do what I do" (e.g., "fire" abusive customers, practices unofficial "flextime" allowing staff time off to attend to family events) (B. Everts, personal communication).

## Career Issues for Women in Business

### Hard Work and Networking

It has been said that business women may define career success differently than men do (O'Brien, 1998), but generally there are two dimensions of success in the managerial and leadership domains: (1) Being effective (being recognized as getting the job done well through other people) is associated with the manager being present as a team leader, spending time developing her staff, communicating with her direct reports, paying attention to the tasks at hand, and so forth, and (2) being a "rising star" (getting faster promotions to greater responsibilities and higher rank) is associated with spending time away from her direct reports and with organizational peers and superiors, socializing and politicking, and networking both within and outside the organization (e.g., taking active roles in a professional association, serving on charitable boards, etc.) According to the scholars (Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985) who identified this pattern, only 10% of managers are both effective and fast rising, probably because of personal values for one over the other but also because of constraints on time (presumably much networking occurs after business hours at happy hours, conferences, over dinner, and on the golf course). This also means that ineffective managers are often rewarded with promotions (the Peter Principle resulting in inept managers caricatured on TV sit-com *The Office* and in the comic strip *Dilbert*) and that being good at your job is not necessarily rewarded with career progression.

Women (and men) who want a "balanced life" (with time for family, friends, and personal expression) may not want to devote the time or energy to achieve effectiveness along with ascent. Some make a choice. The woman who chooses to be effective and eschews politicking networking may be caught having her work be less visible and possibly less valued by key decision makers (Fondas, 1997). She is less likely to get higher positions and responsibilities. On the other hand the woman who chooses ascent over effectiveness runs the risk of becoming incompetent or disliked in eventual positions. She may be incompetent because she does not dwell long enough and get involved in sufficient detail in each position to learn what is necessary and as a result makes poor decisions. She may be disliked because the ascendant behavior pattern is aggressive, competitive, often self-serving, and leaves her team(s) to struggle without committed leadership that helps them to develop.

One of the major theories of leadership suggests that the best leader is one who can alter her style of behavior, depending on the nature of her direct reports (her immediate team) and the type of tasks the group does (House, 1996). This theory (path-goal) has as a basic premise that the role of leaders is to remove barriers and facilitate the work of their employees and that leaders need a repertoire of behaviors. In this model, the leader who sacrifices effectiveness for ascent strategies would be a poor leader. There are certain types of employees (new hires, younger, less experienced workers, those with certain personalities and competencies) that need more involved, directive, task-oriented, monitoring, and teaching-focused leaders. Other employees (experienced, highly trained professionals or specialists with certain other personalities and competencies) need less direction. The effective leader's behavior with these employees is less about monitoring and more about social and emotional support. There are types of tasks where the leader needs to be more involved and directive (tasks which are novel, have high uncertainty, or generate organizational conflict and political behavior within the organization). Other tasks such as those that are repetitive and routine (e.g., call centers, routine teller transactions, etc.) need less direction and more support from the leader.

Hard work, a range of behavioral skills, along with good communication, time management, and emotional intelligence, are key to the career progression to Big-L leadership (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). It is also important to achieve as much "line" experience and avoid dwelling long in "staff" positions. Line positions directly contribute to profits and loss (e.g., functional areas such as sales, marketing, finance, production), staff positions support the line (e.g., public relations, communications, purchasing, internal legal council, sometimes human resources; Karsten, 1994). Line positions are the route to the highest levels of leadership, especially if the woman has a number of "stretch assignments," ones that are difficult and highly visible. By one estimate (Wittenberg-Cox



& Maitland, 2008), only 10% of women managers in the United States are in line positions. However, in addition to this focus on hard work contributing directly to organizational measures of success, ascending leaders need considerable political savvy.

## Politics

Organizations operate with scarce resources and are “pointed facts of life”; that is, as one climbs a ladder of increasing responsibility and authority, there are fewer and fewer positions. Most schemata of organizations show them as triangles or pyramids. There is only one CEO and a small number of executives, a larger number of middle managers, even more first-line supervisors, and most (depending on the organization and industry) are “individual contributors” (who do no management of others at all). Competition for positions of greater authority and responsibility and for the opportunities to shine can be fierce.

Whenever there are scarce resources (also when there is organizational change, ambiguity, conflict, weak leadership, and other situations), political behavior is likely. Political behavior is when individuals act outside their job descriptions and assigned goals to attempt to influence the allocation of scarce resources or to secure an advantage over other individuals (or over other units in the organization). Political behavior can be positive (seeking win-win solutions, operating on trust, etc.), instrumental in the trading of favors or information, or downright nasty with opponents attempting to derail their rivals. Savvy managers do not avoid conflict and they pick their battles. They defend their turf (as when someone else is taking on their tasks and responsibilities, which can happen in corporate reorganization). They recognize the signs of sabotage (reduced network-supplied information, “unusual questions from the boss about future educational plans, and conversations that end abruptly when one joins the group” (Karsten, 1994, p. 149). Because they have a range of behavioral choices—including coalition building (from their years of networking), assertiveness, and use of pressure—they take action.

Playing politics and wielding power are often difficult for women who face stereotypes and expectations from others of being nurturing and cooperative and who also tend to use communications that signal deference over command (Tannen, 1990). Wanda Wallace, CEO of a consulting practice on leadership, says, “I think women struggle with how to use power, and how to compete without trying to kill someone. Competition is often more personal for women. Rather than saying: ‘You win this one and I’ll maybe win the next one?’ they see it as black and white. Women need some understanding of the middle ground” (Wittenberg-Cox & Maitland, 2008, p. 229).

One useful political tactic is building coalitions to support a change or secure a resource to the mutual advantage of those who join. A woman who has good communication, networking, and emotional intelligence skills will

have greater opportunities to join or form coalitions. She will be able to assess the degree of agreement and the degree of trust she can place in the others. According to Block (1987), high trust and high agreement coworkers are allies; high trust and low agreement coworkers are opponents (and very useful since disagreement about ideas is generally conducive to better decisions). More problematic are those we have little trust in, whether they agree with us (bedfellows) or disagree (adversaries). (For strategies on dealing with these different levels of agreement and trust, see Block, 1987; Fisher & Torbert, 1995.)

## Getting Access

Four factors are thought to impact career success of women: These are (1) stereotypes and discrimination, (2) work–life balance, (3) opting out or defining success differently (see Moore, in this handbook; O’Brien, 1998), and (4) and getting access to developmental opportunities (Hopkins & O’Neil, 2007). Getting access includes the admonition to get line positions and stretch assignments to demonstrate and develop competence. It also includes mentoring and networking.

Mentoring (more so than networking) is a crucial means of gaining access and developing the personal skills necessary to succeed in organizations and higher positions within an organization or industry. Mentoring is the process of forming and maintaining lasting relationships with senior managers. Studies have shown that mentored employees have higher compensation and greater career advancement and satisfaction than those who are not mentored (Allen, Poteet, Eby, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). Mentors both inside and outside the employing organization provide role modeling, direct advice, and coaching, and help develop self-confidence and professional identity in environments where a woman may feel isolated, invisible, or overly visible. Mentors also provide access to social networks within which the woman can demonstrate competence and gain access to opportunities otherwise not available.

Finding mentors (there may be several in a person’s life) may be as “easy” as a company-sponsored match-up, often with a senior woman (or man) in the organization. This may be easy, but it requires mutual rapport and motivation to spend time together to build trust. Suzanne Clark, CEO of the *National Journal* and formerly COO of the National Chamber of Commerce, tells students, “Choose your boss, not your job.” By this she suggests a trade-off between salary and job description on the one side and a supervisor who will mentor. The mentor may be the better choice, especially early in a career. Sometimes, one must seek out, ask, or otherwise tactfully impose oneself with the senior person. A woman might want to have one mentor be a senior male—especially to break through the barriers listed earlier. Recognize that a mentor can only work developmentally with a small number of protégés, so finding and gaining that access will take time. When the mentor or the protégé leaves the job that brought them together job and



moves to a new organization, the relationship may continue. Finally, just as a mentor helps a woman in her career, she might usefully become a mentor to those who follow behind her. The intrinsic rewards for mentoring someone are the pleasure in helping someone grow, overcome obstacles, and make and execute informed choices.

Another form of access occurs through networking. Networking is the establishment of professional and supportive relationships with a variety of individuals and groups. These include (a) mixed-sex national professional associations (there is one for nearly every profession, business function, and industry), (b) nationally organized all-women groups such as the National Association for Female Executives or the Business and Professional Women's Association, and (c) regional groups of women. Each can be found through a Web search. The general rule of thumb for networking is to seek several diverse groups (thereby giving the woman access to different information, talents, and resources). Networking is more than collecting cards at a meeting, conference, or cocktail party. It involves sending thank-you notes to people one meets and who give their time. (A handwritten note has more impact in today's environment of spam and frivolous electronic messaging.) It involves staying in touch with one's contacts without bargaining them with e-mail or phone calls. Appropriate communications may be made at holidays, when one moves to a new job, and so on. Finally the best of networking involves volunteering to help the other first, before any favor is asked. In this way Beth Everts, then-president of Frost Bank in Houston, gave time and financial support to women managers who joined any community or professional association as long as they were actively involved in committees or task forces of those associations.

Both mentoring and networking usually occur outside regular business hours. This means spending nonwork (unpaid) hours essentially "working" relationships for the long term. Networking can also extend into one's continuing education (one of the values of an executive M.B.A., e.g.), volunteer activity, and personal, recreational, and even spiritual communities.

### Work-Family Balance

The careers of women are less linear than those of men, who are more likely to make steady progress in terms of increased responsibility and pay. Women are more likely than men to take time off to attend to family, either as a stay-at-home mother or as a caregiver for unwell or disabled family members. This pattern of career interruption, sometimes called the "mommy track," has engendered debate on the losses to organizations that employ women who wish to start families (loss of their training, experience). There are also problems of reentry of women to the workplace (explaining the gap, demonstrating currency in skills, and reentering with a lower position and lower salary than she had when she left, being "behind" her age peers in career advancement). Although some men take the

role of stay-at-home father, more women than men (and often in times of relative prosperity in the United States) opt for this "off-ramp" career move. One study (Hewlett & Luce, 2005) showed nearly 40% of professional women take voluntary leave from work (compared to 25% of men). Whereas women took this leave to have more family time in 44% of the cases, men took voluntary leave from work mostly for career change (e.g., full-time M.B.A.) in 30% of the cases and for family time in 12% of the cases. This same study found that the longer the woman stayed outside the workforce, the lower her earning power was when she returned, 11% less with 1 year out and 37% less with 3 years out.

Some organizations are trying to make the return from this kind of extended leave easier for women by creating part-time jobs (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer), providing on-site day care (e.g., SAS, Patagonia), and attempting to create "flex careers" (Booz Allen) that allow women to work part-time on an as-needed basis to keep skills fresh until they are ready to return full-time (Hewlett & Luce, 2005). Family-friendly workplaces are noted yearly in lists prepared by magazines such as *Fortune* and *Working Mother*.

In a study of nearly 300 mid-career managers, Kirchmeyer (1998) found that women felt as successful as men but were more likely to have had these interruptions, less likely to have children, more likely to be unmarried, and earned less money. Other researchers show that even with the same skills, education, family support and power, similar industry, similar career gaps or exits, and motivation to be transferred, women lagged behind men (Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1992). It is difficult for a woman to have it all—a family and a high-earning, high-responsibility career (and time for exercise, good nutrition, a hobby, or a spiritual life). One researcher has identified problems for ambitious women that include (a) fewer choices in marriage partners, (b) less time to nurture relationships that do begin (29% of high achievers and 34% of ultra-achievers work more than 50 hours a week), and (c) a career pattern for success (devotion to work for the first 10 years in a career), which means a ticking biological clock (Hewlett, 2002). She recommends that women determine what they want their life to be like at age 45 and take action now, give urgent priority to finding a life partner, have their first child by age 35, choose a flexible career, find an employer that supports work-life balance.

### Barriers of Many Sorts

The original barrier found for women (and minorities) in corporate America was the glass ceiling. In addition to that barrier, women face "glass escalators" (the acceleration of men through the organizational ranks; Maume, 1999) and "glass cliffs," the tendency for women to be chosen for leadership positions that are associated with greater risk of failure due to organizational crises (Ryan & Haslam, 2007). There are undoubtedly glass walls, or invisible



barriers that keep women from the kinds of jobs that allow them to ascend organizational hierarchy (e.g., line jobs, stretch assignments, jobs with unfamiliar responsibilities and opportunity to create change). Finally, there are “sticky floors,” or the tendency for women to get mired in the issues and details of everyday life, such as finding a mate, having children, and balancing family and work life (Engberg, 1999).

These barriers are systemic in nature, attributes of organizational culture and policies. They are often invisible and possibly unimportant to those unaffected and hard to “prove.” Other chapters in this handbook should help to elaborate the context and systems that constrain women and point to the remedies.

## Summary and Future Directions

Attention to the special issues and needs of women managers was once an attractive course offering in business schools. I taught in such a specialized part-time undergraduate program at Pepperdine University. Although women make up about 30% of the M.B.A. class at many business schools, few of these schools offer any directed coursework toward those women. What substitutes for coursework in many business schools are clubs for women business students, such as local chapters of the National Association of Women MBAs. If a course or a club does not exist to meet the special needs of women students, they can follow the advice given in this chapter, form a coalition, and start a club. Such a vehicle makes it legitimate to bring in women executives in the community to speak and possibly engage in mentoring.

Scholars have identified women in management as a domain for research. Recently the journal by that title repositioned itself to be more rigorous (and therefore more influential) and renamed itself *Gender in Management*.

Topics extend beyond women in the profit sector and beyond women in the United States, and include topics such as dual career couples. The journal also provides book reviews.

Major business magazines and newspapers also focus attention on women leaders once a year. For example, since 2003, each November *The Wall Street Journal* has published “Women to Watch,” a list that focuses on women the staff thinks will make a big impact in the year ahead. *Fortune* publishes its list of the 50 most powerful women in business and the 25 highest paid. *Forbes* publishes its list of the 100 most powerful women (in business, media, philanthropy, and politics) and measures power by a metric that includes public profile and financial heft.

There is a wealth of research, theory, and practice associated with women business leaders in the United States. That knowledge compounds when the research and practices in other countries and other cultures is added.

The practice of management (and leadership) is likely to undergo some changes as organizations such as Cisco attempt to redesign their corporations to be more collaborative. The feminine (which is different from biological sex) may have important roles to play in these horizontal, team-focused, decentralized, and virtual structures. (For reading on the particular advantages of the feminine, see Helgeson, 1995a, 1995b.)

Finally, as this book goes to print, the United States and most of the world economy is slowly emerging from a significant recession. Uncertainty and anxiety abound. Consumers and businesses remain slow to spend in many sectors, banks make little credit available to small and growing businesses, thousands of people are jobless, and new jobs are scarce. While the role that women will play in the recovery is unknown, at least one article in a recent *Washington Post* suggests that inclusion of more women in banking will bring a balance to the excessive “testosterone” risk of the past (Sullivan & Jordan, 2009).

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN THE UNION MOVEMENT

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Women's role as leaders in the union movement is closely related to women's involvement as union members as well as their participation in paid labor. Since colonial times, women have participated in the American labor movement as activists fighting for better working conditions for themselves as well as supporting fathers, husbands, and other male workers. However, the relationship between women and the labor movement must be described as ambivalent. Although unionization has always been beneficial for women as well as all people of color, unions at times excluded these groups. However, whenever labor supply was scarce—during wars or times of economic growth—not only the labor market but also unions opened up new possibilities for women as well as for all people of color. Women's union leadership thus reflects the changing status of women in society. The transformation of the labor movement and different types of unionism affect the obstacles and opportunities to women's union leadership. Ruth Milkman (1990) distinguishes four types of unionism—craft unionism, new unionism, industrial unionism, and public-sector unionism—and argues that each of these four types reflected the state of gender relations of the time during which the union was founded. Craft unionism, representing for instance building trades, printing, or cigar making, was characterized by the exclusion of women from unions of skilled craft workers, while new unionism, representing textile and garment workers, was shaped by a paternalistic attitude of male union leaders toward women members. Industrial unionism, which organized workers in manufacturing, represented an egalitarian attitude, whereas public-sector unionism took on feminist issues such as affirmative action and pay equity.

However, as Dorothy Sue Cobble (1991) points out, occupation-based craft unions appear to be better suited to organize the postindustrial workforce than were industrial unions. The involvement of women in union leadership thus reflects segregated labor markets as well as different union philosophies. Moreover, different types of leadership—local, regional, and national, appointed or elected—need to be distinguished. I therefore contextualize women union leaders by giving a historical overview over the involvement of women in the U.S. labor movement, highlighting individual union leaders. This chapter is divided into three parts according to women's involvement in union leadership. It furthermore includes the discussion of the impact and importance of women's organizations, training, mentoring, union structures, and resolutions for promoting women's union leadership.

### **Pioneers: Women's Union Leaders and Industrialization (1870–1970)**

Beginning in the 19th century, women workers employed in the needle trades and textile factories were involved in strikes and joined organizations; however, these organizations tended to be short-lived (Foner, 1979). In 1868 feminist Susan B. Anthony formed the Working Women's Organization #1, which represented the interests of women typesetters and clerks working for the newspaper *The Revolution*, which Anthony coedited with Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Anthony participated in the convention of the National Labor Union as a representative of the National Woman Suffrage Association (Foner, 1979,

p. 132). Female labor reform associations disappeared as a result of the failure of the 10-hour (workday) movement of the 1840s and the replacement of workers by Irish immigrants. Whereas Massachusetts refused to pass a law that would restrict working hours, New Hampshire adopted such legislation, but employers were entitled to force their workers to sign contracts agreeing to longer working hours (Foner, 1979, p. 80). Hostile to organizing unskilled workers, the craft unions of printers, typesetters, and cigar makers, which formed the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886, initially excluded women and people of color from membership. Later it extended admission to these groups and supported equal pay for equal work (Foner, 1979), largely to prevent (white) male skilled workers' pay from being undermined by a cheap, unorganized female labor force.

Elizabeth Chambers Morgan, born in Birmingham, England, became a factory worker when she was 11 and migrated to Chicago with her husband, Chicago's leading socialist Thomas J. Morgan, whom she married in 1868. She formed the Ladies Federal Labor Union No. 2703 in 1888 and obtained a charter from the AFL in the same year. Morgan was involved in the formation of the Sovereigns of Industry, which was part of the cooperative movement, and was active in the Knights of Labor where she became a master workman, a position from which she resigned in 1887 as a result of her disagreement with the conservative leadership (Foner 1979, p. 215). In the early 1890s, the AFL briefly appointed Mary E. Kenney, Leonora O'Reilly, and E. E. Pitt as organizers. O'Reilly, an Irish garment worker, left school for work at age 11 and joined the Knights of Labor and participated in her first strike at age 14. She was involved in the formation of the New York Women's Trade Union League as well as in the Wage Earners League and participated in the waist-makers strike and the Kalamazoo strike (Foner, 1979).

In contrast to the AFL, the Knights of Labor included women and black workers, supporting equal pay for equal work to protect white men's wages. Several women held the position of master workman, responsible for districts of the Knights of Labor. In 1886, Elizabeth Rodgers presided over 50,000 men and women in Chicago, while Leonora M. Barry represented almost a thousand women in upstate New York (Foner, 1979). Rodgers was a cofounder of the Chicago Working Women Union, which collapsed only after a few years in 1881. She had served as a supreme judge of Chicago's District No. 24 and was a delegate to the Trade Assembly. Married to a leader of the Knights of Labor, in 1886 she was listed as housewife when she participated as a delegate in the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor in Richmond, Virginia. At this convention, the Knights established a Department of Woman's Work, the first labor organization in the United States to do so (Foner, 1979, p. 198). Leonora M. Barry was born in Ireland and migrated to upstate New York in her youth. She started to work as a machine hand in a hosiery mill after becoming a young widow in order to support herself and

her three children. In 1884 she joined the Knights of Labor and became a master workman only 2 years later.

The neglect of the growing number of women workers through the male-led labor unions and labor federation led to the formation of the National Women's Trade Union League (NWTUL) in 1903. Inspired by the British Women's Trade Union League, middle-class reformers active in the settlement house movement formed the NWTUL to support the unionization of women workers. The organization also supported protective legislation, which was an ambivalent issue because it improved women's working conditions but also resulted in their exclusion from better-paying jobs. The NWTUL was led by Mary Morton Kehew, Mary Kenney O'Sullivan, and Jane Addams, the latter being the founder of Hull House in Chicago. Branches were established in New York, Boston, and Chicago (Tax, 1980).

Another important settlement house resident was Florence Kelley. Born in Philadelphia in 1859, Kelley was a graduate of Cornell University and was friends with European socialists, among them Friedrich Engels, whose book *The Condition of the Working Class* (1844) she translated. Her plan to describe the conditions of the American working class failed because of a lack of statistics; this led her to campaign for the creation of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 1889, she formed the Working Women's Society of Society. From 1891 through 1899, she lived at Hull House in Chicago and was appointed as chief factory inspector for the State of Illinois in 1893. In 1899 she became the head of the National Consumers League (which she founded) and lived at the Henry Street Settlement in New York until 1926. In 1908 she was one of the 19,000 members of the women's rights organization Equality League, and in 1909 she helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Sklar, 1995; Tax, 1980).

The famous Uprising of the 20,000 (New York garment workers who went on strike in 1909) launched the beginning of "new unionism": the unions of the garment workers, such as the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (founded in New York City in 1900) and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union (founded in 1914), organized skilled and unskilled workers in the industry in contrast to the craft unions, which restricted the membership to skilled workers supported by the NWTUL and the National Consumers League. Although the majority of the members of the garment workers union were female, the leadership was male and paternalistic. Nevertheless, the garment workers unions had some famous women organizers, such as Pauline Newman, a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant who arrived in New York in 1901 and became a factory worker, who became an organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and worked for the union for more than 70 years (Orleck, 2004). Newman combined connections to Jewish Socialists with her involvement in the Women's Trade Union League. Her leadership in strikes earned her the nickname "East Side Joan of Arc." The fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory on March 25, 1911, in which 146 workers died (Tax, 1980,



p. 234) and which was the largest industrial disaster that had ever taken place in the City of New York, led to the establishment of the Factory Investigation Commission and the appointment of Newman as one of the first inspectors. Subsequently, she became a liaison between the labor movement and the government and had access to leaders of the Democratic Party. In 1920, the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau was established. Newman served on the U.S. Women's Bureau Labor Advisory Board, and, after World War II, she became an appointee to the United National Subcommittee on the Status of Women and the International Labor Organization's Subcommittee on the Status of Domestic Laborers (Orleck, 2004).

Born in Ireland in 1830, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones became one of the most important socialist women organizers. Familiar with the Knights of Labor and militant strike action, she was involved in and led the struggles of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) since becoming a UMWA organizer in 1891 (Foner, 1979). She was involved in the Latimer strike (1897), as well as in the Ludlow strike (1913). Her tactics included organizing women, who put pressure on relatives and other male workers to join unions and to prevent them from scabbing (i.e., acting as strike breakers). A founding member of the Social Democratic Party and the Industrial Workers of the World, also known as Wobblies, Jones was involved in establishing a union of domestic servants and led the "March of the Mill Children" from the Philadelphia area to New York in 1903, highlighting the injustice of child labor. Although this march, which was also referred to as "Mother Jones' Crusaders" and "Mother Jones' Industrial Army" did not change federal legislation, it did impact child labor legislation on the state level. In 1904 she resigned as a UMWA organizer and became a lecturer for the Socialist Party of America. Mother Jones remained active in the labor movement until her death in 1930. She became the namesake of the progressive magazine *Mother Jones*, founded in 1976 and devoted to social justice. Mother Jones also was memorialized in Upton Sinclair's novel *The Coal War* about the strikes in the Colorado coal fields, which led to the 1914 Ludlow massacre. *The Little Red Songbook*, a collection of official songs of the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies) was taken up by Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie during the American folk music revival.

The New Deal not only was crucial for the unionization of all workers but also brought a significant and permanent growth in government, particularly in social welfare programs, and opened up clerical and professional jobs for African Americans in these programs. In 1935, the Wagner Act, guaranteeing workers the right to organize, was passed. In the same year the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO) was founded. It organized workers industrywide, across race and gender. Unionization expanded in growing industries, including the automobile, rubber, and electrical industries. Although the industrial unions of the CIO organized women alongside men, most of them failed to target women workers in their mass organizing. Because of the sex

segregation of the labor market, the unionization of women did not increase as long as the organizing drives were focused on male-dominated jobs. Except for the United Office and Professional Workers of America (UOPWA), the unions affiliated with the CIO tended to neglect the organization of women workers. The CIO granted a charter to UOPWA in 1937 and expelled the union in 1950 for refusing to exclude communist members. Like other left-led unions, UOPWA had a progressive position with respect to race and sex and demanded equal pay for equal work. Furthermore, UOPWA engaged in strikes, a tactic typical for industrial unions. Having organizing jurisdiction over industries dominated by office workers, UOPWA concentrated on small firms including direct-mail shops, credit clearinghouses, publishing firms, and advertising agencies. Many of the direct-mail workers were women (Strom, 1985).

The labor shortage of World War II created job opportunities for women of all racial-ethnic groups. White professional women moved into the fields of banking, insurance, civil service, education and health, and into the war industry. African Americans found jobs in factories and offices. White workers protested, sometimes violently, against African American employment in war industry jobs. But militant African American male workers were able to force the CIO-affiliated United Auto Workers (UAW) to support the hiring of African American men and women. In 1944 the UAW formed a Women's Bureau, which was headed by Lillian Hatcher, an African American autoworker. The war economy also opened new job opportunities for Chinese American women, who were employed in civil service, professional fields, factories, and office work outside of Chinatown. Many found employment as sewing machine operators in small sweatshops in Chinatown and became members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.

Olga Madar, born in Pennsylvania in 1915, worked on the assembly line while earning a degree in physical education. In 1941, she gave up her teaching career to take a higher-paying job at the Ford Willow Run bomber plant, where she also got involved in the UAW. In 1947, she became director of UAW's Recreation Department and used this position to integrate organized bowling leagues. Almost 2 decades later, in 1966, she was elected member-at-large to the UAW international executive board, the first woman in this position. Four years later, she became UAW's first female international vice president, again as a pioneer of women's union leadership. Her responsibility included the Departments of Conservation and Resource Development, Recreation and Leisure Activities, as well as Consumer Affairs. In 1971, she played a crucial role in launching the Michigan Women's Caucus and the Network for Economic Rights, which supported the equal rights amendment (ERA) and fought for equity in the workplace. Madar, who was active on behalf of workers, women's, and civil rights in a wide range of civic organizations, was a founding member and first president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. She retired from UAW in 1974 but continued to represent



retirees' interests. Madar died in 1996, and in 2004 she was posthumously inducted in Labor's International Hall of Fame (Walter P. Reuther Library, n.d.b).

Addie Wyatt, another founding member and first vice president of CLUW, is an ordained minister of the Church of God and combines fighting for civil, workers', and women's rights serving on the President's Commission on the Status of Women and, together with her husband, as labor advisor to Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Born in Mississippi in 1924, Wyatt worked as a meatpacker from 1941 until 1954 and was a union activist in the early 1950s. In 1976 she was elected international vice president of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union and thus became the first African American woman labor leader of an international union.

The AFL and the CIO merged in 1955 and formed the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations. Some unions such as the UAW and the Teamsters joined the federation in the 1980s. Unionism in the second half of the 20th century was affected by the economic shift from manufacturing to the service sector, the increase in women's participation in the paid labor force, and the women's and civil rights movements. These developments resulted in the unionization of service- and public-sector workers and farmworkers and in an increase of women among the union membership.

Although the public-sector labor market that was formed in the 1960s organized more women workers than the previously discussed unions representative of the other three types of unionism, these unions did not target women workers as "women." Rather the extensive organization of women was an unintended side effect of the general goal of organizing public-sector workers in the postwar period (Bell 1985). Initially, public-sector unions targeted blue-collar workers. Later on they focused on service workers, many of them African Americans, and finally they organized office workers. Thus between 1950 and 1975, a period in which women got nearly half of state and local government jobs, large numbers of women were organized even though the organizers themselves tended to be male.

An additional organizing drive in the 1960s and early 1970s targeted farmworkers throughout the Southwest. Dolores Huerta, one of the most prominent Chicana labor leaders, was one of the cofounders of the United Farm Workers (Rose, 2004). Born in a mining town in New Mexico in 1930, after her parent's divorce, Huerta grew up in California where she helped out in her mother's restaurant. Huerta admired her father's union activism and she herself, after World War II, became involved in civic activism. In the late 1950s, she became a political activist and lobbyist for the Community Service Organization. In the early 1960s, she cofounded the National Farm Workers Association with César Chávez, although Chávez's role is often highlighted at the expense of recognition of her work. Employing innovative techniques such as hunger strikes and a national consumer grape boycott (the Delano grape

strike of 1965), as well as a lettuce boycott in the early 1970s, the United Farm Workers achieved extraordinary contract gains in pay and benefits and was instrumental in passing laws regarding working conditions, including regulations governing occupational safety and pesticide use.

The few women in staff and officer positions in the labor movement did not necessarily know each other. U.S. labor unions in general did not have women's departments until the beginning of the 1970s. On exception is the UAW, which has maintained a Women's Bureau since 1944.

Born in Washington, D.C., in 1927, Gloria Tapscott Johnson received her B.A. and M.A. from Howard University and taught at Howard and worked as an economist for the U.S. Department of Labor before joining the International Union of Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers (IUE). She became chair of the IUE Women's Council and member of the IUE national executive board. In 1957 the IUE held its first women's conference to respond to the needs of their women members and to provide leadership training (Johnson 1993). Johnson was one of the founding members of the Coalition of Labor Women and served as that union's president from 1993 through 2005. In 1993 she became a vice president of the AFL-CIO. She also served as chair of the National Committee on Pay Equity from 1993 to 2000.

Although the situation of women differed in these four types of unionism, overall, women were underrepresented in union leadership. However, the increase in female membership brought about change in women's union participation and policy shifts in the unions. Once they became union members, women became active in their union, sought leadership posts, and fought for the inclusion of "women's issues" on their union agendas. The gains women made in the public-sector unions affected the labor movement as a whole.

### **Demanding Equality and Women's Rights: The Impact of Second-Wave Feminism (1970s–1990s)**

The decline in traditionally organized blue-collar private-sector industries, the increase of women's labor force participation, and the organization of public- and service-sector workers contributed to the restructuring of the U.S. labor movement. In the 1960s, public-sector unions such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and service-sector unions such as the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) organized hospital workers, including nurses, retail clerks, electrical workers, teachers, and government employees, many of them women. However, the increase in working women's unionization did not automatically result in any corresponding increase in leadership positions within labor unions. Although in 1971 women constituted about 20% of union membership, they held only a few leadership posts in a quarter of all unions (Glassberg, Baden, &



Gerstel, 1980). In the beginning of the 1970s, the AFL-CIO executive board, which consists of union presidents, was all male; only one department head of the labor federation, the librarian, was a woman. Not only at the national level, but also at the regional level, the 51 state federations reported only six women staff members, and no woman held the position of an AFL-CIO regional director (Wertheimer & Nelson, 1975).

Union women in leadership positions were therefore often the only women on the executive board of their local or district council, or, in a few cases, among the national leadership. The few women who achieved leadership positions in their unions fought for the interests of women workers in various unions, especially (but not only) in those unions with a high percentage of women members, such as the textile workers unions, the communication workers (who organized telephone operators), and the hotel and restaurant workers union.

The Great Depression forced Myra Wolfgang (1914–1976) to abandon her art studies. She moved to Detroit where she started to work for the Detroit Waiters' Local 705 (which later became Local 24, Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employers Union) in 1932 and quickly became the recording secretary as well as a union organizer. In the 1930s, she supported the strike of autoworkers by organizing a soup kitchen as well as leading a sit-down strike and negotiating a contract with Woolworth Co. In the early 1950s, she was involved in organizing Miami's nonunion hotels and in 1953 she became an international vice president for the Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employees Union. In addition, in 1960 she became secretary-treasurer and chief executive officer for that union's Local 24. She fought for women's and workers' rights, including minimum wage laws, child care centers, and job training programs for mothers (Walter P. Reuther Library, n.d.a).

Union women fought for women worker's rights not only within unions but also as lobbyists and other appointed and elected positions. When President John F. Kennedy established the President's Commission on the Status of Women in 1961, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, Esther Peterson, a former union organizer and then director of the Women's Bureau, became executive vice chairperson of the commission. A Danish immigrant and trained teacher, Peterson became involved in the labor movement in the 1930s, supporting striking garment workers. In 1938 she became a paid organizer for the American Federation of Teachers. One year later she joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, and in 1944 she became the union's first lobbyist in Washington, D.C., where she got involved in raising the minimum wage and extending the coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act. When her husband was assigned as diplomat in Sweden, Peterson moved to Europe for 10 years and became active in the women's committees of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. In 1957 she returned to Washington, D.C., with her family and in 1958 became the first

woman lobbyist for the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO. Appointed as assistant secretary of labor and director of the U.S. Women's Bureau in 1961, she was a driving force behind the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (AFL-CIO, n.d.; O'Farrell & Kornbluh, 1996).

Furthermore, union women such as Caroline Davis (director) and Dorothy Haener (staff member) of the UAW Women's Department were part of President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women and among the founding members of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. Haener belonged to the dozen of women who joined Betty Friedan in a hotel room in Washington, D.C., to discuss the formation of a women's rights organization (i.e., NOW). Haener recalls that in the first one and a half years of its existence, NOW used the resources of the UAW Women's Department, which provided letters, press releases, applications, and reports. However, due to the fact that NOW endorsed the ERA, whereas in 1966 UAW was opposed to the ERA, the UAW women had to pull out of NOW because they could not support an organization that opposed UAW policy positions. Haener paid her dues but could not be active in NOW. In 1970 UAW changed its position on the ERA and Haener could become active in NOW again and served several years on NOW's executive board (Haener, 1996, p. 180).

Involved in and inspired by the women's movement in the 1970s, women labor activists started to organize women's conferences and to form organizations to organize women workers into labor unions and to urge labor unions to address the interests of women workers. Two different strategies, exemplified by two organizations can be distinguished: organizing within or outside the established labor movement. The first strategy was pursued by the founders of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), an organization that was formed in Chicago in 1974. The women union leaders involved in the formation of CLUW hoped to create an organization that would (a) convince the male-dominated labor unions that women represent a powerful constituency, (b) bring more women into union leadership, and (c) put women's issues on the agenda of the labor movement. Having encountered sexism in the labor movement, the founders of CLUW sought to convince the male union leadership that, as a result of the increasing labor force participation of women, neglecting this group of workers would weaken the labor movement. In April 1973, eight women labor leaders—Addie Wyatt of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, Ola Kennedy of the United Steelworkers, Olga Madar and Edith Van Horn of the UAW, Alice Weatherwax and Jean Thurmond of the American Federation of Teachers, Joyce Miller of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and Helga Nesbitt of the Communication Workers of America—met in Chicago to discuss how union women, working together, could make the trade unions “responsible to the pressing needs of 4 million organized women and 30 million unorganized women in this country” (Foner, 1980, p. 505). The founding conference was attended by more than 3,000 women who, under the motto “We didn't



come here to swap recipes," adopted the four goals of CLUW: bringing women into union leadership, organizing women workers into unions, putting women's issues on the labor agenda, and involving women in political action.

In the 1960s and 1970s women of the women's rights movement and some women in the labor movement took opposing sides concerning the ERA. Women who belonged to unions (e.g., UAW) that organized women workers who worked alongside men tended to support the ERA, whereas most union women, in particular those who represented women workers in highly segregated sections of the labor market, were against the ERA. The controversy around the ERA played a crucial role in the formation of the CLUW. Although CLUW's founding convention took place after the AFL-CIO had changed its position on the ERA, CLUW is often credited for bringing about this change. This can be explained by the fact that preparations to form CLUW were already under way in 1973 and that CLUW as an organization has supported the ERA since its inception. However, some prominent women labor leaders who were involved in the formation of CLUW were opposed to the ERA. Myra Wolfgang, of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, had testified against the ERA in 1970. In contrast, Olga Madar, a staff member of the UAW, testified in favor of the ERA. Madar became CLUW's first president in 1974 and argued that one reason for forming the CLUW was to overcome the differences between women in the labor movement and women in the women's movement regarding the ERA (Roth, 2003).

The founders of CLUW believed that their goals of bringing more women into union leadership and putting women's issues on the labor agenda could best be achieved from within the labor movement, and they sought the approval of male union leadership. These women labor leaders rejected the notion of creating independent organizations or "dual unionism," which is consistent with long-standing international union practice and policy in which they were well schooled. CLUW offered leadership training at the chapter level and at the national level, for example, by holding educational conferences prior to the meetings of the national executive board meetings or biennial conventions. In addition to training and education, CLUW offered mentoring structures to its membership. The CLUW Center for Education and Research, founded in 1978, surveyed the participation of women in union membership and leadership and produced publications on a range of issues of concern to union women. Joyce Miller, who followed Olga Madar as CLUW president in 1977, became the first woman on the AFL-CIO executive board. Turnover in CLUW's national leadership was low, which is also typical of male union leadership (Roth, 2003, chap. 5) and reflecting the relatively small number of women in union leadership.

In 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 11375 resulted in the creation of the Federal Women's Program with the aim to encourage and monitor the hiring of women in federal government and requiring all agencies and departments of the federal government to

appoint coordinators to implement the program. To encourage the implementation of the newly established program, in the same year, the feminist organization Federally Employed Women (FEW) was founded; some of the founding members were Federal Women's Program coordinators. The activities of FEW included studying the activities of the Federal Women's Program, raising feminist consciousness within the bureaucracy, and offering training programs for women employees of the federal government (Banaszak, 2010, chap. 4).

Lois Gray (1993) distinguishes four routes to union leadership: being the founder of a union, inheriting the office, earning it based on expertise, or being elected from the rank and file (which might take up to 20 or 30 years). Gray, who notes family responsibilities, underestimation, sexual stereotyping, and male bonding, as well as lack of access to training, support networks, and mentoring, as obstacles to union leadership, notes that technical expertise has so far been most typical for women in union leadership. She notes that CLUW president Joyce Miller (1977–1993) was education director before she became vice president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union and in 1980 was the first woman to be elected to AFL-CIO's executive board.

Karen Nussbaum, founder of Nine-to-Five, represents a different way to the top. While CLUW's leadership was convinced that it would be possible to change the labor movement from within, other activists formed organizations outside the institutionalized labor movement. One of the most prominent is Nine-to-Five, founded in 1973. Nine-to-Five is an organization of women office workers in Boston. The membership of the organization includes women office workers and student and feminist movement activists (Seifer & Wertheimer, 1979). Nine-to-Five's achievements include winning a state regulation in Massachusetts denying licenses to insurance companies that discriminate against women, and bringing about substantial equal pay, promotion, and training reforms in several companies. In 1973, Nine-to-Five obtained a charter from the Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, to establish Local 925 and cover women office workers with bargaining contracts. From 1973 until 1993, Nussbaum was an organizer and president of District 925 of the Service Employees International Union, and she joined the union's executive board in 1984.

### **Survival and Renewal: U.S. Unionism in the Beginning of the 21st Century**

With a low rate of union density (12% in 2009) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010) and a feminization of the labor force, the participation of women is crucial for the survival of the U.S. labor movement. The election of John Sweeney—who, together with Richard Trumka and Linda Chavez-Thompson, ran against Tom Donahue and Barbara Easterling in the 1994 AFL-CIO election—represents a



turning point for women in union leadership. Born in 1944 as a second-generation Mexican American, Linda Chavez-Thompson started working in the cotton fields at age 10. She first became active in the labor movement in 1967, when she became a secretary of a construction workers' local in Texas. Four years later, she joined the AFSCME as an international representative. In the following years, she became a business agent and executive director of her local and was elected to the executive board of the San Antonio Central Labor Council and the Texas AFL-CIO. In 1988, she was first elected an international vice president of AFSCME and in 1993 the first Hispanic woman elected to the executive council of the AFL-CIO. In 1995, Chavez-Thompson was elected executive vice president of the AFL-CIO. She thus not only became the first woman but also the first person of color and the first Hispanic to be elected to a top AFL-CIO office. At the age of 63, she retired from her post in 2007. She is still serving as a vice chair of the Democratic National Committee, a position in which she was first elected in 1997 and last reelected in 2005 for a 4-year term (Kornblut, 2005).

In addition to Chavez-Thompson's election, in the Swccney-led AFL-CIO the percentage of female-headed AFL-CIO departments increased from 6% to 50% and the first AFL-CIO Working Women's Department was created in 1996. Karen Nussbaum (founder of Nine-to-Five and from 1993 to 1996 director of the Women's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor) became director of the Working Women's Department of the AFL-CIO in 1996. Nussbaum conducted the "Ask a Working Woman" Survey, which focused on the needs and interests of working women. Nussbaum points out that with "5.5 million women members the AFL-CIO is the largest working women's organization" in the United States (Nussbaum, 1998). In addition to the creation of the Working Women's Department, the AFL-CIO executive board was expanded from 35 to 54 and the leadership was diversified, with the addition of seven women, four of them women of color (Cobble & Michal, 2002). With these measures, the AFL-CIO sought to implement the 1995 Resolution on Diversity and Full Participation. However, the Working Women's Department was dissolved in 2002 in order to cut costs, and some of its functions were integrated into the Civil and Human Rights Department. Three years later, the AFL-CIO convention adopted the resolution "A Diverse Movement Calls for a Diverse Leadership" and adopted changes to the AFL-CIO constitution, which required delegations to future conventions to reflect the racial and gender diversity of its membership. Furthermore, at least 15 positions on the AFL-CIO executive council shall be held by women and people of color thus significantly increasing their participation in leadership positions (Nussbaum, 2007, pp. 174–175).

In 2005, the same year in which the AFL-CIO pledged to promote diversity within the labor federation, some of unions most active in organizing low-wage workers, many of them women, foreign-born, or people of color, left the labor

federation and formed Change to Win (Milkman, 2005). Although all leaders of the unions affiliated with Change to Win are male, the federation is chaired by a woman, Anna Burger, who has been labeled by *Fortune* magazine as "the most influential woman in the U.S. labor movement" (SEIU, n.d.). Elected secretary-treasurer of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in 2001, Burger began her union career as rank-and-file union activist in 1972. Later on she became the first female president of SEIU's Local 668 and SEIU's national field director. In addition to her labor activities, she was involved in antiwar protests and feminist rallies in the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1984, she has been an active delegate to the Democratic National Convention, was involved in Barack Obama's presidential campaign, and in February 2009 was named to President Obama's Economic Recovery Advisory Board.

Women not only achieved leadership positions in the AFL-CIO, but the number of women in national unions also increased significantly (Cobble & Michal, 2002). Between 1978 and 2000, the percentage of women officers and board members increased from 3% to 38% in AFSCME, from 15% to 32% in SEIU, from 4% to 18% in the Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employees Union, and from 7% and 15% in the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, to 30% in the now merged textile workers union UNITE. However, all these unions are unions with a large proportion of women members (between 48% and 66% in 2000), thus the participation in women's union leadership still does not reflect their percentage of union membership. In 2008, women represented 44% of the American union membership, and workers in education, training, and library occupations had the highest unionization rate (39%; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). In 2000, women constituted 60% of the members of the AFL-CIO-affiliated American Federation of Teachers and 39% of the top leadership of this union, whereas they represented 61% of the membership and 33% of the top leadership of the National Education Association, which does not belong to the AFL-CIO (Milkman, 2007, p. 79).

Furthermore, the involvement of African American and Latina women in labor union leadership is increasing (Dickerson, 2006). Four out of the seven women who became members of the AFL-CIO executive board were women of color. Niki Dickerson (2006) reports that rather than mentors, self-reliance and diligence, as well as the support provided by minority networks, played a crucial role in these women's journey to the top. Furthermore, advanced leadership training seminars as well as workshops at minority caucus conferences were seen as helpful by the interviewed women labor leaders.

## Summary

At the beginning of the 21st century, women constitute almost half of union membership and a growing percentage



of union leadership in U.S. unions. Nevertheless, due to the segregated labor market, which is reflected in membership and leadership, Milkman (2007) speaks of "two worlds of unionism." The involvement of women in union leadership has brought new issues to the labor agenda. As long as the pay gap persists and only reluctantly narrows—in addition to wages issues such as pay equity and comparable worth,

as well as fair pay legislation—living wage ordinances guaranteeing a minimum wage are of interest to women. Furthermore, sexual harassment in the workplace, child care, maternity leave, and reproductive rights are of concern to working women. Women in the labor movement have successfully framed these "women's issues" as "worker's issues" (Roth, 2003).

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## WOMEN AS LEADERS IN INTERNATIONAL MICROFINANCE

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The face of poverty in the world today is female and young. According to the United Nations, women account for around 70% of the world's poor—those approximately 3 billion people in the world who live on less than the equivalent of US\$2 a day. Unfortunately, due to the current financial and economic crisis, that number is increasing. The World Bank estimates that another 53 million people are likely to be trapped in extreme poverty as a result of this crisis. Women are among those who are most at risk. As recently noted by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang, the current crisis is expected to touch adversely and disproportionately the lives of poor women.

The financial crisis is expected to have serious, widespread impacts on the real economy and particularly on the lives of people already in poverty. Historically, economic recessions have placed a disproportionate burden on women. Women are more likely than men to be in vulnerable jobs, to be underemployed or without a job, to lack social protection, and to have limited access to and control over economic and financial resources. Policy responses to the financial crisis must take gender equality perspectives into account to ensure, for example, that women as well as men can benefit from employment creation and investments in social infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>

To put a human face on this issue, here is what a poor woman living in Africa is apt to look like today. She is probably just under 19 years of age and resides in a rural area. She is now single but soon will marry a man (or will be given in marriage to a man) who is approximately twice her age. Over the next 20 years she will mother six or seven children. And, she most likely will have little to no

access to the formal financial services that many living in the developed world take for granted.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, this African woman might be lucky enough to be one of the 110 million women in the world who has gained access to microfinance. If she is, then the picture changes dramatically. For example, she might be borrowing small amounts of money to invest in raising chickens. She might be investing the profits from her chicken business in an interest bearing savings account that only she, and not her husband or her husband's relatives, can access. She might be remitting a portion of her profits each month to her ancestral village to pay for her mother's food and lodging. She might even be leasing a beehive and using the profits from her small beekeeping business to pay the school fees of her daughters. And should something catastrophic happen to her or one of her businesses, she might receive proceeds from an insurance policy that will help to cushion the blow. In short, when a poor woman gains access to financial services such as those described here—microcredits, microsavings, microremittances, microleasing, and microinsurance, she gains access to a financial safety net that not only can help her escape the trap of poverty but also can help those around her.

Microfinance, which has become increasingly well-known in recent years as a result of the 2006 award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Muhammad Yunus<sup>3</sup> and the Grameen Bank that he founded in Bangladesh, is commonly understood to encompass financial services that are directed to poor and low-income clients. Among the best known of microfinance products are loans known as "microcredits." These microcredits can be as small as US\$25 or as large as US\$1,000 or so, depending on the economy where the loans

are made. Generally, microcredits are short-term in nature (a year or less in duration) and are intended to be used as working capital to expand existing businesses. For example, a female client might use her microcredit to buy seeds to grow vegetables that she then will sell from a roadside stand; or, she might use her microcredit to purchase equipment, such as a second-hand sewing machine, to expand her village tailoring business.

Although the size of these microcredits can be very small, they are not handouts. Borrowers are expected to repay these loans, and repay they do. Repayment rates in the microfinance world typically are very high, with 97% to 98% of microcredits typically repaid on time when due. The reason for these high repayment rates is due to several factors. Some providers of microfinance rely on group lending methodologies whereby clients borrow together as a group and collectively guarantee each other's repayment. Other microfinance providers encourage timely repayment by increasing loan sizes gradually so that clients are motivated to take their microcredit obligations seriously given the implicit promise of continued access to future larger borrowings so long as existing microcredits are repaid in full on time. Still others may take collateral from their borrowing clients. However, most microfinance is character-based lending, not asset-based lending. Microfinance's reliance on character and informal collateral or guarantees, rather than pledges of assets, is a pragmatic response to the situation of many living in poverty or in societies where women are not allowed to hold title to land or other property. For a woman who has little to no physical assets that she can call her own, her character may be her only valuable asset.

The amounts that microfinance clients borrow may be small, but the impact of these loans on the lives of the borrowers and their families can be big. To some observers, the extension of a US\$25 loan to a poor woman in Africa or elsewhere in the world may seem like a mere financial transaction, and a trivial one at that. But most working in microfinance will be quick to point out that these small loans and other financial services can change, sometimes significantly, the lives of the borrower and her household.

The Latin root of the word *credit* is *credere*, which means "to believe." This is particularly apt in the microcredit context. When a microcredit is extended to a poor woman, not only money changes hands; belief and trust also are exchanged, often with amazing results.

Professionals working in microfinance like to swap stories about how their female clients grow in confidence as they borrow, repay, and borrow again (each of these repeated borrowings is called a "loan cycle") to meet the working capital needs of their small businesses. At times the burgeoning self-esteem of the female client is visible physically—even to the eyes of a relative stranger. An American woman working in microfinance in Uganda tells the story of how she learned to estimate the number of loan cycles female clients had received simply by counting the number of seconds during which female clients could maintain eye contact with her. First-time borrowers often

were unwilling to look her in the eye at all. Instead, they would avert their eyes, look away or stare at the ground, even when being addressed directly. In contrast, female clients that were borrowing microcredits for the fourth or fifth time not only would look this American woman directly in the eye, but some even dared to complain about their microcredits' financial terms—arguing for lower interest rates or longer repayment dates.

Microfinance clients also often will talk about how access to financial services has changed their lives and the lives of their children. In Tanzania a female client made a point of thanking a microfinance provider for the Tanzanian woman's soft knees. Befuddled, the microfinance provider asked a translator to repeat what the client had said. After several conversations in Swahili with the Tanzanian client, the translator explained. Because of the small loans that had been extended to this Tanzanian woman to help her grow her business, she now generated enough income from her business to pay for her children's school fees and food, and as a result, she no longer needed to kneel in front of her husband to beg for money for the children. In short, a series of small loans had improved the economic stature of this woman in her home and enabled her to keep food on the table and her daughters in school.

Stories like these would come as no surprise to Muhammad Yunus, a pioneer in microfinance and the founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Yunus sometimes uses the analogy of bonsai trees and flower pots when talking of the poor. A seed may fall from the largest tree in the forest. If it is lucky enough to fall on good soil, it will grow to reach the heights of its parent. But if that same seed were to fall instead into a flower pot, its potential will be dwarfed and its size will be limited to that of a bonsai tree, merely a miniature replica of its towering parent. So is the case with the poor man or woman, Yunus has suggested. Poverty dwarfs people's potential. Freed from the limitations of poverty, the poor can achieve as much as anyone on this planet. The brilliant insight of Yunus, which earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, was that an important step in helping people escape poverty is to offer them access to financial services.

In his Nobel acceptance lecture, Yunus recounted how he came to discover the power of providing small amounts of credit to poor women, starting with a loan of US\$27 of his own money.

I became involved in the poverty issue not as a policymaker or a researcher. I became involved because poverty was all around me, and I could not turn away from it. . . . I was shocked to discover a woman in the village, borrowing less than a dollar from the money-lender, on the condition that he would have the exclusive right to buy all she produces at the price he decides. This, to me, was a way of recruiting slave labor.

I decided to make a list of the victims of this money-lending "business" in the village next door to our campus. When my list was done, it had the names of 42 victims who borrowed a total amount of US \$27. I offered US \$27 from my own pocket to get these victims out of the clutches of those



money-lenders. The excitement that was created among the people by this small action got me further involved in it. If I could make so many people so happy with such a tiny amount of money, why not do more of it?

That is what I have been trying to do ever since. . . . Today, Grameen Bank gives loans to nearly 7.0 million poor people, 97 per cent of whom are women, in 73,000 villages in Bangladesh. (Yunus, 2006, n.p.)

Now in 2010, approximately 25 years after the founding of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, there are approximately 10,000 providers of microfinance in the world. These providers (also called “microfinance institutions” or “MFIs”) take many business and legal forms, ranging from nonprofit, grant-funded organizations to for-profit, prudentially regulated financial intermediaries.

Many of these providers of microfinance use unconventional distribution methods to offer financial services and products to the poor. Credit officers may travel to where their clients live or work, meeting under trees or in homes to make loan disbursements, for example, rather than requiring clients to travel to the bank to conduct their financial transactions through teller windows in formal bank offices. Some microfinance providers now are experimenting with “branchless banking” distribution methodologies, which rely on the use of third-party agents like neighborhood gas stations and food stores, or even mobile phones, for transacting banking business with their more rural-based clients.

According to the Microcredit Summit Campaign, as of the end of 2007, approximately 154 million clients were being served by microfinance providers around the world, of whom 110 million were women (approximately 70%; Daley-Harris, 2009, p. 3). This percentage of female clients grows larger still when you look at the poorest clients, people living on less than US\$1 a day, being served by microfinance. Of this group of 106.6 million people with access to microfinance, 88.7 million are women (slightly over 83%). Not surprisingly, these percentages will vary significantly from region to region. For example, women account for nearly 90% of all microcredit customers in Asia but less than 33% in the Middle East.

This focus on women is not accidental. Targeting female clients is a natural outgrowth of the poverty alleviation focus of many microfinance providers. Investing in women yields high returns not only for the women but also for their households and communities. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) calls this the “double dividend” generated by gender equality. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has found that “women’s empowerment helps raise economic productivity and reduce infant mortality. It contributes to improved health and nutrition. It increases the chances of education for the next generation” (qtd. in Kristof & WuDunn, 2009, p. xx). Investing in women, it turns out, is a good investment for many far-reaching reasons.

With such an overwhelming emphasis on female clientele, one might expect that most of the people leading the

microfinance sector would be female. There certainly are many extraordinary women working in microfinance, for example, Roshaneh Zafar, who left a job at the World Bank to return to her native country, Pakistan, to launch a microfinance institution named Kashf, which means “miracle” or “revelation,” and which has done pioneering work in Pakistan as it targets its services to female customers living in low-income households. Or, look at Ingrid Monro, a Swedish woman who, after leading the African Housing Fund, founded a microfinance institution in Kenya in 1999, called Jamii Bora Trust (which means “good families”). Jamii Bora started as a club of 50 beggars and slum dwellers and is now the largest microfinance institution in Kenya. Or consider Monique Cohen, who hails from New Zealand, and, after a long career working in development, left her job at the U.S. Agency for International Development to launch Microfinance Opportunities, a nonprofit organization headquartered in the United States that helps providers of microfinance around the world to put their clients first by spearheading initiatives in client assessment, financial education, and microinsurance.

Despite the successes of these extraordinary women and others like them who work in the microfinance sector, in recent years the overall number of women in leadership in the microfinance sector has been declining, not growing. In a March 2008 article titled “Sector Targets a Majority of Women, Employs a Minority,” a journalist from the Indian-based magazine *Microfinance Insights* noted: “We’ve always found it a little ironic that microfinance is talked about as a tool to empower women, and yet there’s not a ‘mother of microfinance’ . . . with all due respect, it’s always Muhammad Yunus we hear about” (“Sector Targets,” 2008, p. 28). The article then points to a troubling downward trend in the women working in microfinance today.

This trend most clearly shows up in recent studies conducted by Women’s World Banking (WWB), a large global network of 54 microfinance providers and banks around the world. The WWB network currently serves 13 million clients directly through its microfinance providers, and another 10 million indirectly through its bank partners and others. Registered in 1979 as an international nonprofit organization in the Netherlands,<sup>4</sup> WWB was established to “be a voice and change agent for poor women and entrepreneurs.” Its vision is to “continue to build a network of strong financial institutions around the world and ensure that the rapidly changing field of microfinance focuses on women as clients, innovators and leaders” (see Women’s World Banking Web site, [www.swwb.org/mission-vision](http://www.swwb.org/mission-vision)).

Given WWB’s express commitment to advancing women’s leadership in microfinance, to see this decline occur within its network is all the more disconcerting, although WWB is to be commended for its transparency in pointing out this troubling trend. During the period between 2003 and 2007, the percentage of women in board positions within the WWB network dropped from 66% to 58%. During this same period, the percentage of women represented in senior management within the WWB network



declined from 66% to 51% (WWB, 2009). Similarly, in every region in the world where WWB works, its network has seen a decline in the percentage of female staff in recent years.

Again, there are regional differences in this trend. In Latin America, women represented 86% of senior management in WWB's network in 2003; by 2006, female representation in senior management in these Latin American microfinance providers had dropped to 60%. Similar declines are evident in Asia and Africa. In Asia, the percentage of women represented in senior management in the WWB network dropped from 58% in 2003 to 46% in 2006. In Africa, the percentage of women represented in senior management in the WWB network dropped from 60% in 2003 to 50% in 2006. Only in Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region has there been an upward trend in female representation in senior management within the WWB network during the 2003–2006 time period.

There are many reasons why women are playing less of a leadership role in microfinance than in the past. In part, this can be explained by changes taking place in the microfinance sector as a whole—particularly the funding patterns of microfinance. The aggregate amount of microcredit in the world today is over US\$30 billion. The 1,200 microfinance institutions reporting to the Microfinance Information eXchange (MIX) have in total \$32 billion in assets (Lascelles & Mendelson, 2009, p. 5). Although this may seem like a large amount, particularly when some microcredits are being lent in denominations as small as US\$25, the supply of microcredit in the world today is but a fraction of the outstanding demand, which some have estimated to be as much as US\$275 billion. If these demand estimates are correct, the microfinance sector is facing a funding gap of well over US\$200 billion. Donor grants cannot begin to fill that big of a gap.

From a purely business perspective, microfinance can accurately be described as a high-volume, small transaction business. In recent years some microfinance providers have enjoyed annual growth rates of 30% or more. Although growth rates are slowing in light of the financial and economic crisis, there is still a voracious appetite in the microfinance sector for loan capital to fund microcredit portfolios.

Realizing that there is a limited amount of grant funding available, many microfinance providers have looked to other sources of capital to finance the growth of their operations. This capital can come from a variety of sources—from lenders, equity investors, or even from the general public in the form of deposits. To attract and manage these new sources of funding successfully, microfinance managers need to be as skilled in running the “liability” side of their balance sheets as they have been in running the “asset” side of their balance sheets. Put differently, leaders in microfinance that have shown that they can (a) raise donor grants skillfully to fund their microcredit portfolios and then (b) manage those microcredit portfolios to ensure that repayment rates remain high are *less* in demand today than

in the past. Certainly, there is still a need for microfinance managers who are intent on maintaining high microcredit portfolio quality and who are skilled in engaging donors, but today's cutting-edge microfinance leader needs to couple those skills with new skills. Today's microfinance sector leaders and managers must be able to attract capital from a much wider variety of investors and lenders, and, once attracted, must be able to manage successfully the varying financial and social return expectations of these investors and lenders. No longer is it sufficient to develop a microcredit portfolio that enjoys a high repayment rate, but the microfinance provider itself also now needs to demonstrate that it can service its own debt obligations on time and in full. And for socially responsible investors like Oikocredit, responsAbility, and Calvert Social Investment Foundation,<sup>5</sup> that are willing to trade some amount of financial return for demonstrable social returns from their microfinance investments, there is growing pressure on microfinance providers and those who lead these institutions to quantify the development impact of microfinance operations on the lives of their microfinance clientele. In sum, many of the skills necessary to manage a growing microcredit portfolio have shifted in recent years in response to changes in the funding sources available to the microfinance sector.

As microfinance has evolved, so too has its leadership to respond to the changing needs of the sector. Existing leaders, often women, have had to grow and change to stay relevant to the sector. When they do not change (or are perceived as being unable or unwilling to change), they are replaced with new talent recruited from complementary sectors, including the more formal financial or banking sector, which in much of the world often is male dominated.

The predominant role of men in finance and banking is not, however, only a developing world problem. One can see this trend in the developed world too. A recent Catalyst study found that the share of women working in the investment dealer and retail private clients business of the Canadian capital markets industry remained the same or smaller in 2008 than that of 2000 (Apostolidis & Ferguson, 2009). This occurs in the United States too, as *New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof (2009) noted. In his column, Kristof called attention to the overwhelming dominance of men at the board tables of much of the crumbling U.S. banking and financial sector by observing that Wall Street is one of the “most male-dominated bastions in the business world.” What banks around the world need, he suggested, is not just bailouts, but “women, women and women.” The optimal bank, in his view, would have been Lehman Brothers *and* Sisters.

Unfortunately, in much of the developing world and emerging markets, that male domination in business and finance is likely to continue given the gender bias often present in the education of women managers and professionals. For example, today only 2,600 women are currently enrolled in M.B.A. programs in the 50 major business schools in Africa. The lack of highly educated and trained female managers and professionals in the



developing world has far-reaching implications beyond the microfinance sector.

What is happening in the microfinance sector is illustrative of a pervasive pattern in many developing countries and emerging markets. So much so that in March 2008, the investment bank Goldman Sachs announced a new initiative to increase by 10,000 the number of women over the next 5 years who will receive a business and management education in the developing world and emerging markets. According to Goldman Sachs (2008), “Increasing the entrepreneurial talent and managerial pool in developing and emerging economies—especially among women—is one of the most important means to reducing inequality and ensuring more shared economic growth” (para. 6).

Goldman Sachs is not the first and not the only organization to recognize the importance of investing in women. Groundbreaking research and leadership in this area has been conducted by a variety of institutions ranging from the World Bank and the United Nations to nongovernmental organizations like Vital Voices Global Partnership. Perhaps most famous is the work done by another Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen, who has described the extraordinarily positive development impacts that can be generated by investing in women. Sen (2000) has claimed that “the changing agency of women is one of the major mediators of economic and social change. . . . Nothing, arguably, is as important today in the political economy of development as adequate recognition of political, economic and social participation and leadership of women” (pp. 202, 203).

Investing in the business education of women in the developing world, over the long term, could have a happy spillover effect onto the microfinance sector. In the meantime, however, women are likely to continue to opt to leave or to be pushed out of leadership positions in the microfinance sector. In yet another survey conducted by WWB in 2008, 54 women leaders and managers in microfinance, representing 23 microfinance providers from 17 countries, were asked to identify factors likely to impact women’s career advancement in microfinance (WWB, 2009). Commonly cited challenges to women’s professional success in the microfinance sector included the pressure of rapid growth of microcredit portfolios and clients, aggressive expansion targets, and competition. More specific comments from the survey included the following:

- The sector has become more commercialized. There is more money, so men are vying for the same positions. The rules of the game have changed.
- Nothing much has changed. Young women will have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to prove their worth.
- The work is so demanding and women must sacrifice a part of their family life to work in this sector. Women have to be prepared for extensive field work and travel.
- [Microfinance] organizations today tend to have a more masculine character, with more emphasis on making profits than on addressing the parallel demands of career women. (WWB, 2009, n.p.)

Whether women are pushed or jumping on their own volition, the speed and direction of this downward trend in female leadership has caused some to suggest that a glass ceiling might be emerging in the microfinance sector as women-founded and women-focused microfinance institutions turn increasingly to male leadership, management, and staffing. As has been the case in more commercially oriented sectors, however, the more apt metaphor may be one of glass houses, as there appear to be as many glass walls as glass ceilings confronting women working in the microfinance sector. Women working in microfinance, like their sisters working in other business sectors, face lateral barriers that can limit their careers. Women executives in other industries have complained of the following barriers to career advancement: exclusion from informal networks, stereotyping, lack of mentoring, personal and family responsibilities, lack of accountability of senior leadership, and limited opportunities for visibility (Wellington, Kropf, & Gerkovich, 2003). Unfortunately, as the WWB survey indicates, many of these lateral barriers also are present in today’s microfinance sector.

What is less clear is the impact these vertical and lateral barriers are likely to have on the microfinance sector’s ability to serve its largely female clientele. Does it matter if the leadership and management of the microfinance sector defeminizes? Should the microfinance sector mirror its target clientele—that is, the poor women that it serves? And if it does not, what, if anything, is lost?

These are a few of the questions that women working in microfinance began to ask in 2003. Over the summer of 2003 an informal group of women professionals in microfinance began convening in Washington, D.C., to discuss the changing profile of microfinance professionals and the impact of these changes on the delivery of microfinance services to poor women around the world. As word of these meetings grew, so did the number of attending women. At one point, the number of women joining these after-work meetings outgrew the number of available chairs so that women began carrying their own chairs to the downtown Washington, D.C., home where these informal meetings were taking place. Among the questions that these women grappled with were the following:

- If women were to play a smaller leadership role in the microfinance sector, how well would the microfinance sector’s predominately female customer base be served?
- How can microfinance providers attract and retain the necessary human resources to build sustainable business models?
- What role can women professionals now active in the microfinance sector play in supporting their female colleagues around the world to grow and advance professionally so as to stay relevant to the rapidly changing needs of the microfinance sector?
- Is working in the microfinance sector a long-term, tenable career choice for women?
- How can women professionals working in microfinance best nurture themselves, each other, and their female clients?



By summer's end, more than 30 of these women contributed US\$200 each to launch a new professional organization, a first for microfinance, where questions like these could be tackled industry-wide. The discussion of what to call the organization captured both the sense of fun and the serious intentions of its founders. One possible name included "WHAM" for Women Helping to Advance Microfinance, until one of the founders, Kate McKee, who at the time was working as director of the Microenterprise Development office at the U.S. Agency for International Development and now holds a senior advisor position with the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, pointed out that the use of the word "helping" marginalized the role of women in microfinance. She persuasively argued that women were not merely helpmates to the advancement of microfinance; rather, women all over the world were indeed advancing microfinance. Consequently, the "H" was quickly dropped and the new organization was christened Women Advancing Microfinance (WAM) International.<sup>6</sup>

In its first years of existence, the presidency of WAM has been assumed by Deborah Burand, Amy Davis-Kruize, Beth Houle, and, currently, Anne Folan. This revolving leadership role for the presidency and other leadership positions within WAM was quite intentional, as the founders believed that WAM should offer its members chances to grow and exercise their leadership skills.

The mission of WAM International is to advance and support women working in microfinance and microenterprise development through education and training, by promoting leadership opportunities, and by increasing visibility of women's participation and talent while maintaining a work-life balance. WAM's four core values are the following:

- To advance the provision of financial services to the poor
- To advance and support women's leadership in the microfinance industry through education and training, by promoting leadership opportunities, and by increasing visibility of their participation and talent while maintaining a work/life balance
- To extend economic opportunities to women globally
- To continue to raise gender issues with a collective voice

Soon after the launch of WAM International, its founders began to be approached by women professionals in microfinance around the world who also were interested in advancing the WAM mission and values. What started as a Washington, D.C.-centric club of concerned women working in microfinance (as practitioners, investors, technical assistance advisors, fund-raisers, donors, and policy-makers) now counts nearly 500 members around the world comprising 13 WAM chapters, and more chapters are in the process of being launched.

As WAM has expanded globally so too has its goals—what was initially an exclusively microfinance-focused organization is now broadening to include support for women who work in the companion field of microenterprise development. Similarly, as WAM chapters have launched

around the world, their differing activities and emphases have reflected the interests and needs of their membership. What these chapters hold in common is adherence to the values and mission of WAM International. How they bring those values and mission to life, however, varies. For example, one of the earliest WAM chapters, WAM Uganda (founded in spring 2004), hosted a workshop/retreat that included personal finance training for its members. A more recently founded chapter, WAM Ecuador (founded in spring 2007), has begun to help other Latin American women to found WAM chapters in its region. The WAM CEE and NIS (Central and Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States, founded in spring 2004) has made sure that women in microfinance are featured speakers at its annual regional conferences and that research conducted about the state of microfinance for the CEE and NIS also includes benchmarking the roles played by women professionals in microfinance. And, the original WAM chapter, WAM DC, has engaged in a broad range of activities—including hosting a series of workshops on public speaking and résumé development, sponsoring a mentor program for its members, and, in 2008–2009, supporting the launch of a WAM chapter in the Middle East/North Africa region. Additionally, each year WAM honors one of its members whose work has been especially valuable in advancing WAM's mission. This award, the WAM Woman of the Year award, has been given to Jennifer Hansel of WAM DC (2006), Maria Sara Jijon Calderon of WAM Ecuador (2007), Kasia Pawlak of WAM CEE and NIS (2008), and, most recently, Beth Porter of WAM Northern California (2009).

WWB also has taken important actions to respond to the declining number of women in leadership positions in the microfinance sector and improve gender diversity in microfinance providers. One of these is the WWB's Women's Leadership Development Program, which was launched in 2005 in partnership with the Center for Leadership and Change Management at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. Another pioneering action of WWB is its recent development of the Organizational Gender Assessment (OGA), a diagnostic tool for helping microfinance institutions to identify challenges and opportunities in their attraction, retention, and promotion of qualified female staff members. In 2008 WWB worked with the Pakistan microfinance provider Kashf to use the OGA. While Kashf is known to be a leader in microfinance in advancing gender diversity within its staff, the OGA pointed to ways that Kashf could enhance gender equality; suggestions included the following:

- Building a reputation for Kashf in the market as a good place for women to work
- Strengthening and standardizing special programs to support women staff members through the promotion pipeline
- Creating accountability systems that empower managers at all levels to be champions of gender diversity (Lynch, 2009)



## Summary and Future Directions

The poor of today's world are largely female and young. Microfinance has proven to be a powerful tool for helping the poor escape from poverty. Women today account for around 70% of those being served by microfinance.

Ironically, however, while the target clientele of microfinance is largely female, the microfinance sector is defeminizing in its leadership around much of the world. This loss of female talent in the microfinance sector has not gone unnoticed, thanks to the work of networks like Women's World Banking and WAM International. But these efforts are hampered by the lack of consensus within the microfinance sector over the importance of maintaining gender diversity in the sector's leadership. The implications, however, of this decline in female leadership have not been fully realized by many in the microfinance sector.

In a world where women are disproportionately poor and, in today's crisis environment, are disproportionately at risk of falling into extreme poverty, one might wonder why the microfinance sector has not taken a longer and harder look at how it invests in those who are dedicated to lifting women out of poverty, especially its female talent. One explanation is that the business case for investing in the women leaders of microfinance has not been made persuasive or loud enough to be heard and acted upon by stakeholders interested in the fate of the sector. That business case needs to be made if poor women are to continue to be served well by the microfinance sector.

As Chetna Vijay Sinha, the female founder of the Mann Deshi Mahila Bank in the Satara District of the Indian state of Maharashtra, argues, there are very good business reasons to attract women to work in the microfinance sector.

I feel that if you are lending to women in microfinance, as we do, it is imperative that you have mainly women on your staff. For example, our loan services for gold were developed by the women clients themselves. The reason we have them as services today is that women credit officers listened and understood our clients' needs. A deep sense of understanding goes hand in hand with very good communication skills. We have found that men can handle the job, but it is difficult for them to go into such details with clients. (Creado & Koshi, 2008, p. 25)

As microfinance providers face more competition, for clients and for resources—human and financial—the business case for investing in female talent should become more obvious to all. Some studies already have shown that microfinance institutions with women in leadership positions appear to enjoy greater returns on assets. In microfinance, as in many other industries, having greater gender diversity in leadership and on management teams correlates positively with greater returns. But there is much more work still to be done to build and present the business case for gender diversity and the value of preserving female leadership in the microfinance sector.

Yet even when such a business case is made, it should not rest on financial returns alone for the microfinance

sector faces another challenge, a challenge that is perhaps unique to most other sectors and industries. That is, current investors in microfinance are *not* purely profit maximizers. Rather, some of those now funding microfinance appear willing to sacrifice some amount of financial gain in return for generating a quantifiable, positive, social impact on the lives of the poor. Accordingly, the most convincing business case to be made for building a more gender-sensitive microfinance sector is one that also must be grounded in the social and development impact of microfinance on its target clientele. As microfinance becomes more client-centric, it should, by definition, become more female-oriented given the large number of poor women in the world in need of access to financial services. Grooming and retaining female talent and leadership in microfinance is an important step toward meeting and responding to the needs of the target clientele of microfinance. There is an old Chinese proverb that claims that women of the world “hold up half the sky.” If this ever were to be true, it should be true of those holding up the world of microfinance.

## Notes

1. Statement by Mr. Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, to the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2, 2009.

2. This picture of a poor woman living in Africa is drawn from remarks made by Obiageli Ezekwesili, World Bank vice president for the Africa Region, on May 8, 2009, at the “Women and the Changing Global Outlook” conference organized by the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., and the National Geographic Society. In this presentation, she cited findings of the latest edition of the annual World Bank publication, *Africa Development Indicators 2008–2009: Youth and Employment in Africa—The Potential, the Problem, the Promise* (2008).

3. In July 2009 U.S. President Barack Obama named Dr. Muhammad Yunus one of 16 recipients of the 2009 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor.

4. The origins of Women's World Banking can be traced back to the first UN World Conference on Women, which took place in Mexico City in 1975. As Michaela Walsh, the first president of Women's World Banking, has recalled, “I had bankers tell me that [microfinance] wouldn't be relevant in the banking world, that it would never be profitable business” (Remarks by Walsh on Women's Day, March 7, 2008, at the International Labor Organization). Joining Walsh in founding Women's World Banking were women leaders like Ela Bhatt, founder and president of SEWA (India), the world's first and largest trade union for undocumented women workers.

5. Oikocredit International, launched in 1975, is a worldwide cooperative with headquarters in the Netherlands. It is active in 69 countries ([www.oikocredit.org](http://www.oikocredit.org)). responsAbility Social Investments AG, based in Switzerland, is a provider of professionally managed social investments that give investors a double line return: positive social developments and reasonable financial returns ([www.responsability.com](http://www.responsability.com)). The Calvert Social Investments Foundation is a U.S. nonprofit organization, based in Bethesda, Maryland, that reached US\$215 million in total assets in 2008 ([www.calvertfoundation.org](http://www.calvertfoundation.org)).

6. Shortly after WAM was launched, several men working in microfinance asked whether they too could launch a chapter. Some suggested jokingly that a male-oriented chapter should use a different name, like "MAM" for Men

Advancing Microfinance. In the end no MAM chapters were founded and, instead, some of these men have joined their respective local WAM chapter or participate in WAM events more generally.

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## WOMEN AS ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESS OWNERS

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The word *entrepreneur* has a precise definition: It means an individual who founds a firm that creates new markets and customers. The term *business owner* has a wider reach: It includes those who take over an established operation or acquire majority control. Here the terms *entrepreneur* and *business owner* are used interchangeably. This chapter also follows the federal definition for a woman-owned business. In 1997, to state more accurately which businesses should be eligible for set-asides in government procurement and federally funded programming, the Economic Census redefined women-owned firms as those in which ownership is 51% or more of the business.

In the United States, according to the Center for Women's Business Research (2008–2009), there are 10.1 million privately held businesses that are at least 50% woman-owned; of these, 7.2 million are 51% woman-owned. The 50% woman-owned financially stable and growing firms generate nearly \$2 trillion in revenues and provide some 13 million jobs. Businesses operated by women of color make up slightly more than one fourth (26%) of this total. Firms with at least 51% woman-ownership generate \$1.1 trillion in revenues and provide 7.3 million jobs.

For some time, women have been founding firms at rates higher than men and recently have been entering fields once considered nontraditional, for example, construction, transportation, and warehousing. At three times the rate for all start-ups, women of color constitute the fastest growing group of female entrepreneurs. The phenomenon is global. Worldwide, women-owned firms constitute more than one third of all businesses.

This chapter reviews the prominent literature in the field to describe the rise in women's entrepreneurship and offers some ideas about the current situation.

### Early Studies

Research on entrepreneurs is a relatively young field, and like all emerging disciplines, over the years has varied widely in topics covered, research design sophistication, methodologies, the types of data gathered, analytical tools and the populations studied. Early work on entrepreneurs predominantly focused on male business owners, the larger group (Moore, 1999, 2000; Moore & Buttner, 1997; Stevenson, 1986), and researchers mostly assumed that women entrepreneurs had the same value sets, characteristics, and drive as men. Until the mid-1980s, studies of entrepreneurs either tended to imply that large numbers of women were not likely to start new businesses or assume that those who did acted no differently from men (Moore, 1990, 1999; Moore, Buttner, & Rosen, 1992). Consequently, studies lumped the findings for both sexes together.

Research that concentrated solely on female business owners first began to appear in the late 1970s and grew slowly; until the late 1980s women's entrepreneurship can fairly be called a neglected area of academic study. One reason was that women sole proprietors and corporate business owners were not initially defined as separate categories in the Census Bureau and the Small Business Administration (SBA) statistical reports. More accurate reporting of business ownerships by these agencies and the Departments of Labor and Commerce has corrected many of the data problems,

and additional statistics are being published regularly. Today, the collaborative research efforts of Catalyst, the Center for Women's Business Research (known from 1985 to 2001 as the National Foundation of Women Business Owners), and the Committee of 200 Foundation contribute in the collection of accurate and reliable data. Armed with better information, researchers have been increasingly able to move beyond the initial stages of descriptive statistics to provide sharper profiles of the modern female entrepreneur.

Early studies showed that male and female entrepreneurs were alike in many characteristics: ways of banking, self-respect, honesty, ambition, capability, independence, and imagination. Both groups took a hardworking approach and set strategic goals for their businesses. Like men's firms, the firms women founded were fiscally stable. But the research findings also began to pose questions about the ability of the male model to explain women's entrepreneurial styles, and some work began to identify distinct types among women business owners. The "Traditionals" were so named because their firms, associated with stereotypical female work roles, consisted of the mostly small, low-income, low-equity, slow-growing sole proprietorships operated by women with limited experience and access to capital. In the 1980s, the "Moderns" began appearing in numbers: These women more closely fit the classical definitions of an entrepreneur. Research also began to show that in some operational categories, female entrepreneurs differed from men, particularly in their leadership styles but also in their management, networking, negotiating, decision-making strategies, and greater tolerance for high-risk investments (Moore, 1990).

## The New Female Entrepreneurs

Rapid changes in the world economy over the past decades, particularly corporate restructuring and the introduction of knowledge technologies, flattened organizations and put an end to old notions of lifetime organizational employment. Simultaneously, finding that maintaining a desirable standard of living required more than one income, women entered the labor force in record numbers. In the United States, by 2008, women accounted for more than one half (51%) of all workers in the high-paying management, professional, and related occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). As Elaine I. Allen, Nan Langowitz, Amanda Élan, and Monica Rivera Dean (2008) have recently confirmed, although the desire to be in charge, to be one's own boss, is a strong reason for founding a business, people already in the workforce are 3 to 4 times more likely to start one. The success of women entrepreneurs in particular can often be traced back to the financial, marketing, management, technical, and networking skills and self-confidence they gained from working for others.

Female entrepreneurs with previous corporate experience, most commonly for 10 to 12 years, tend to fall into

one of two groups. The "Intentionals" understood the advantages of practical experience and worked for others to gain it before fulfilling lifelong ambitions of creating businesses of their own. The "Corporate Climbers," by contrast, started out pursuing the American dream of advancing within an organization. A growing sense of their own personal ability to run things along with corporate restructuring, downsizing, rightsizing, and systemic attitudinal and perhaps organizational barriers to career advancement led many to consider entrepreneurship. Few women entrepreneurs started businesses because they were pushed out, however. Although some launched their own business in reaction to the negative impact of hitting a corporate roadblock, the overwhelming majority of those who exited corporations were motivated by the pull of an entrepreneurial idea, the joy of seizing a marketplace opportunity, and the challenge of controlling their own destiny and time. Whatever their reasons for leaving an organization, nearly all understood that amid rapid technological changes and culture shifts, the day of counting on a traditional pattern of career progression was over. The new business landscape required an aptitude for evaluating risks and finding opportunities both within and outside corporate life.

Entrepreneurs are more likely to survive if they ultimately leave their previous organization to establish a business in the same type of firm or industry. But most feel out the terrain before becoming a full-time, dedicated entrepreneur. Consequently, nearly two thirds (65%) of all new women business owners are employed elsewhere at the time of their business start-ups, and they are more likely than men to layer full-time and part-time work and delay making a complete break from the organization to concentrate on their venture. Whereas most female entrepreneurs start firms in fields where there is a medium level of female participation, many have been branching out into such traditionally male industry areas as communications, transportation, wholesale trade, manufacturing, and construction (Hackler, Harpel, & Mayer, 2008). The most successful female entrepreneurs generally establish businesses in sectors or industries similar to their previous work environment or deal in familiar products and services.

Some recent findings suggest that in founding businesses, women follow a strategy that differs from the male model of venture creation. In fact, as can be seen in the variations among women business owners, entrepreneurship can be viewed as a choice in one's ongoing career development. "Classic Entrepreneurial Women" aim at business ownership early in life. "Corporatepreneurs" begin their careers working for others and later become venture owners. "Boundarypreneurs" readily cross back and forth between entrepreneurial and corporate ventures. "Technopreneurs" rise from the streaming impact of new technologies. High-growth start-up owners, the "Gazellepreneurs," tend to be better educated, younger, and usually are found in firms outside the high-tech fields. "Mommypreneurs" are women whose motherhood concentration does not necessarily mean they opt out of the organizational and entrepreneurial



environment to stay home but rather choose to extend their careers to embrace the roles of motherhood and work, either simultaneously or consecutively. And the interconnected world economy has brought the rise of the important and distinct group of “Globalpreneurs.” This list of career types is by no means exhaustive. Other types of female entrepreneurs include the “Blocked Corporate Careerists,” “Parallel Pathers” (who pursue two careers simultaneously), “Spiral Careerists” (who jump from field to field), and within organizations, the “Intrapreneurs.”

Four factors appear to interact to influence choices and increase a woman's prospects for success as an entrepreneur: her personal and behavioral characteristics, the environment, her educational attainment, and her employment experience. No matter how individually talented, capable, and motivated she is, the choices a woman makes are inevitably set within environments that range from restrictive to supportive. Her success is probably dependent on whether that environment enabled her to gain educational and business experience and whether she was willing and able to take advantage of the opportunity.

## Performance and the Dynamics of Ownership

Female entrepreneurs are a diverse group. At one end of the spectrum are the large majority of women-owned firms that have no employees. At the other end is the small group of women-owned firms doing business in the million dollar range and up, many of whom are likely to have government contracts. The middle group consists of smaller established firms.

According to the Center for Women's Business Research (2008–2009), the increase in the number of black, Hispanic, Asian American, and Indian/Alaskan Native women-owned businesses has been dramatic, especially the increase among Hispanic women during the years from 1987 to 1996. Between 2002 and 2008, when other businesses grew by 9%, those owned by women of color grew 30%. While Latinas have the largest number of these firms, and African American women the next largest, Asian Americans outpaced all others in growth. The greatest growth in minority women-owned firms has been in non-traditional sectors of the economy.

Female entrepreneurs today represent the fastest growth segment among small businesses. But the total numbers of women-owned firms still lag behind the numbers of male-owned firms, and collectively the gross sales and incomes of their businesses are substantially lower. Studies of financial performance show mixed results. The return on assets and employment growth of women-owned firms are similar to male-owned, and some research suggests that women's businesses are not more likely to go out of business or be less successful than those owned by men. Other findings show that women entrepreneurs face a higher probability of discontinuance.

A considerable body of research highlights the role of family life dynamics in ownership roles for women (Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). Entrepreneurship does not solve all problems, especially when starting a business impacts the role of mother and wife. But it may solve some. As noted by Julie R. Weeks (2008), women who start or wish to grow their businesses in order to achieve greater work-life balance are just as successful as owners motivated by other goals. Any problems in doing this may not result from entrepreneurship per se but from the conflict between career goals and family. The struggle for balance is often accomplished by paying for personal assistance and coming to terms with the fact that one cannot do it all. Another way to overcome this barrier is to become a mixed-sex entrepreneurial team. It is also no accident that the majority of home-based businesses have been opened by women between the ages of 30 and 40 who are mothers.

As entrepreneurs, women tend to be skilled and confident. They maintain good networks and stay alert for opportunities. Social or cultural barriers do not appear to inhibit or exclude them from growing their companies; neither do the situational variables of level of education, marital status, and dependent children affect business performance (Allen & Carter, 1996). Among the individual factors that may aid female entrepreneurs is that because women still do over 80% of the family shopping, they stay in touch with trends and fresh ideas.

The ability to access sources of capital to grow and expand a business contributes significantly to high performance. But many women entrepreneurs are constrained by a lack of capital and the small size of their businesses. There is considerable evidence that many women experience difficulty in acquiring loans and, as a result, perceive gender discrimination in obtaining financing (Constantinidis, Cornet, & Asandei, 2006). As Candida Brush et al. (2006) point out, for most women-led ventures, start-up and growth are often funded by the bootstrap options of personal investment and debt. However, an extensive study of debt financing and banking relationships concludes that gender does not affect either loan turnaround rates or rates of loan application (Madill, Riding, & Haines, 2006). The same is apparently not true for race. Lloyd Blanchard, Bo Zhao, and John Yinger (2008) report that black and Hispanic owners face a substantial discrimination in loan approval that is driven by stereotypes about the ability of the owners to succeed. For women, the disparity in obtaining financing, it appears, may result not from gender but from the types of businesses they operate and the intentions of the owners. Michael H. Morris, Nola N. Miyaski, Craig E. Watters, and Susan M. Coombes (2006) suggest that while business growth in women-owned firms varies for a number of reasons, a decision to expand is a deliberate choice a woman owner makes very carefully after gaining a clear sense of the costs, benefits, and trade-offs. In accessing similar sources of capital, women tend to use the credit lines for growth and expansion and men to smooth cash



flow and consolidate debt. One avenue to acquiring capital for funding venture growth is to use business angels who are entrepreneurs who provide venture capital in competitive bids for early-stage companies. But as Jeffrey E. Sohl and Laura Hill (2007) state, little is known about the incentives to become angels or whether women angels actually invest in women entrepreneurs.

## Management

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Women business owners set higher achievement and financial goals and place greater emphasis on product quality than do men. To achieve these aims, they manage interactively, meaning they construct unique, one-to-one interpersonal relationships with subordinates rather than utilizing an authoritarian or hierarchical leadership style. Instead of sitting atop an organizational pyramid, women lead as if they are located at the center of a wheel, connecting directly to each subordinate by a spoke, with employees linked to each other along the rim. Women also incorporate an ethic of justice in addressing workplace dilemmas, particularly when they make decisions with financial implications for the business (Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2004). For example, they are more likely to make workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities. Beyond the business itself, women owners establish networks of overlapping relationships that connect family, business, and society and enlist trusted advisors, including spouses or significant others, to serve as confidential sounding boards for concerns and solutions. In fact, as Allen et al. (2008) have found, a social network that includes other entrepreneurs is a strong predictor for launching a business in the first place.

Common elements in three research models help explain why women business owners tend to provide work environments consistent with their own values and establish organizational cultures that minimize conflicts among employees. The river of time model (Powell & Mainiero, 1992) highlights the interplay of women's concerns about career and personal achievement and concerns about family and personal relationships. The integrated perspective model (Brush, 1992) emphasizes the power of women's relationships, which integrate the personal and professional life. Projection theory (Cohen, Swerdlik, & Phillips, 1996) suggests that women attempt to order circumstances in ways that make them consistent with their internal motivations.

## Private Organizations and Government

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As more women became business owners, private organizations arose to facilitate their common aims. Among the most influential is the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), currently comprising more

than 80 chapters and 9,000 dues-paying members and representing every industry in the United States and through affiliations in 33 countries around the world. NAWBO concentrates on building social capital with the objective of creating and developing strategic alliances, coalitions, and networks to positively affect the business landscape for women owners. In 1980 NAWBO began seed funding for the Committee of 200 Foundation, today one of the most powerful groups of women entrepreneurs in the nation. In 1987 NAWBO was influential in opening up local Rotary clubs with its informal business networks to women's memberships. Under the auspices of NAWBO, the National Foundation for Women Business Owners (NFWBO; renamed the Center for Women's Business Research in 2001) became active as a research organization. In 1998 the NFWBO not only continued to focus on research and report findings but began connecting women owners to public policymakers to improve business opportunities. The same year, the Association of Women's Business Centers, created as a national nonprofit organization to represent women business owners through a network of women's business centers, became instrumental in establishing education, training, mentoring, business development, and financing opportunities. The Women's Business Enterprise National Council, a coalition created in 1997 in partnership with women's business organizations, today provides access to a national standard of certification and facilitates the flow of information.

Early actions of the federal government that facilitated the rise in women's entrepreneurship include the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972, which hastened the entry of women into the labor force, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974, often cited as one of the most important factors in the growth of women-owned companies. The addition of gender in reporting by the Business Census, in 1977, for the first time recognized women-owned sole proprietorships as a segment of the economy worth tracking. In 1979 President Jimmy Carter's Executive Order 12138 created the Office of Women's Business Ownership, a pilot loan program and government procurement and outreach initiatives. The 1988 Women Owned Business Act (HR 5050), largely crafted from the work of the NAWBO to bring attention to the importance of women-owned businesses and their vital role in the economy, launched a project that led to the establishment of the Women's Business Centers program. The 1988 act also amended the civil rights-inspired Equal Credit Opportunity Act to include business loans, established the National Women's Business Council (tasked initially with identifying barriers to women's businesses and reporting annually to the president and Congress), and directed the Business Census to report on C-class corporations that were 51% owned by women, a change that increased the accuracy of reporting the number of women-owned firms. The 1997 Small Business Reauthorization Act made the Women's Business Centers program a permanent part of



the SBA's entrepreneurial development efforts and changed the method by which they were to be funded to ensure long-term stability.

Although the creation of a system of Women's Business Centers and the subsequent legislative initiatives designed to provide training and technical assistance to new and nascent women business owners with a focus on socially and economically disadvantaged populations appeared impressive on paper, in practice, administration of the program under the SBA did not fulfill the aims of the legislation. Pressure from the Association of Women's Business Centers and bipartisan congressional support led to an audit conducted by the SBA Office of the Inspector General in 2007. Along with hearings before the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, the audit revealed the Women's Business Centers had been severely hampered by SBA legal interpretations that, among other things, curtailed federal funding for the centers and delayed disbursement of specifically targeted funds, decisions that forced 98 of the 100 centers to lay off staff. For seven straight years (2002–2008), there was no increase in the SBA budget.

## Women Entrepreneurs Globally

Women-owned firms worldwide now constitute more than one third of all entrepreneurial activity. The reasons are diverse, ranging from the absence of other choices in some low- and middle-income countries—as reported by half of these entrepreneurs, perhaps because of reduced access to labor markets and lower levels of education—to those observed in middle- and high-income nations where women have a higher level of education, greater access to resources, and high self-efficacy, factors that contribute to their ability to survive and thrive in their businesses as do men (Minniti, Allen, & Langowitz, 2006).

Among the reasons women in the middle- and high-income nations start businesses are the changes in the economic and corporate environments similar to those seen in the United States, new definitions of success among women, the search for balance between work and family commitments, growing opportunities, and the waves of rapid technological, social, and economic change that influence organizations and require individuals to customize their careers. International studies of women business owners highlight three broad groups: “Nascent,” those who have committed resources or have started a business; “New,” those who paid salaries for more than 3 months but less than 42 months; and “Established,” those who own and manage a business that has been in operation for more than 42 months (Minniti et al., 2006). Researchers also note that while the increase in the numbers of entrepreneurial women varies across nations, growth is higher in middle-income than in high-income countries. The difference can be attributed to the fact that in areas of the world where

educational levels are lower, women's entrepreneurial activity can be driven by necessity. In the high-income countries, by contrast, where new women-owned firms show a shift toward business services, opportunity is the motivational force. As in the United States, women in high- or middle-income clusters who are already employed have the option to start a business because of their access to education, resources, social capital, and opportunities in the consumer-oriented sector.

Recently, interest in women business owners around the world has increased markedly, and a variety of supporting organizations have come into existence. These diverse groups include the Italian Committee of Enterprising Women, the Federation of Women Entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, two national groups in Spain, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, and the efforts of leaders in countries as different as Latvia, Syria, the United Kingdom, and Finland. Major international organizations include the Eurochambres Women Network, which addresses all European Chambers' women owners and professionals and provides support in exchange and dissemination of best practices, along with participation in public-private partnerships on the local, national, and European levels, and Female Europeans of Medium and Small Enterprises, an umbrella organization representing 35 associations of women entrepreneurs from nine European countries. Networks such as PROWESS in the United Kingdom and ProWomen in Europe sponsor many events, including conferences on women business owners. Organizations that promote women business owners globally, connecting stakeholders, conducting research, and distributing timely information, include the National Association of Women Business Owner's Institute for Entrepreneurial Development, the National Women's Business Council, the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, the Center for Women's Business Research, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, eWomen Network, Quantum Leaps, Inc., and Womenable.

Research on women entrepreneurs globally covers many topics. Examples include the effects of the transitioning economies of Lithuania and the Ukraine; breaking the bamboo curtain and glass ceiling in China; moving beyond the circle of family and friends to seek external financing in Bulgaria; generational differences among Asian immigrant entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom; strategic entrepreneurial alliances across Africa, the United States, Europe, and Asia; government support programs in Indonesia; the problems women face in New Zealand; difficulties unique to women owners in Canada and their success in overcoming them; the equal community initiatives in Spain and Portugal; and the saga of women business owners in the war-torn area of North East Sri Lanka, who are the primary breadwinners for their families and measure their success in terms of self-fulfillment and a balance between family and work. This list by no means exhausts the studies currently being published.



## The Future for Women Entrepreneurs

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A growing number of young women today understand that whatever their aims, the reality is that the path of life is neither smooth nor predictable; at some time they can find themselves responsible for making a living for themselves and their family. The wise know they must be prepared to earn a living and understand the financial basics.

Young women seem to understand the importance of formal education. Female students now make well over half (58%) of the enrollment in 2- and 4-year U.S. institutions of higher learning. At a number of small liberal arts colleges, large public universities, and distinguished private research institutions, the female-to-male student ratio hovers near 60:40. With the exception of schools of engineering, women are in the majority in nearly all specialties. Since 1982, women have earned more bachelor's and master's degrees than men and in 2008, for the first time, more first professional and doctoral degrees. Women now constitute the majority of the total graduate and professional school population. Business schools and departments reflect these trends. Women make up the majority of graduate students in business, but, though enrolling in business courses in greater numbers, are still in the minority at the undergraduate level. Grassroots initiatives concerned with entrepreneurship education have also sprung up, some supported by private organizations. Programs include the education of young women students and an academic credit internship designed to help understand the advantages and rewards of owning one's own business by placing students with entrepreneurial women.

Interest in entrepreneurship is at an all-time high. More than 2,100 U.S. colleges and universities now offer at least one course in entrepreneurship, and a number of institutions provide a sequence of courses leading to a degree. According to one study, students graduating with an entrepreneurship major not only start companies but are more successful if they elect to work for others.

Only a handful of institutions offer a course in the specific topic of women's entrepreneurship, and much of the existing business curriculum is still geared to the college and university population of an earlier era. Few courses in the business curriculum have begun to take into account the growing body of research documenting the differences between the ways men and women operate in business settings or the unique circumstances women business owners are likely to face. Recent research has also suggested that women enrolled in entrepreneurship courses as they are now taught in universities and colleges do not appear to be as engaged in the courses as male students are, and women are less likely than men to consider entrepreneurship as a future career objective. In addition, the overwhelming majority of students in present entrepreneurial courses are male (Menzies & Tatroff, 2006). The course content, delivery, metaphors, and the use of stereotypes in class—particularly in many of the business cases that are

used in teaching—may have something to do with this (Gupta, Turban, & Bhawe, 2008; Mattis & Levin, 2008). There is little doubt that a refocus is needed to reach a wider student audience. The basic business information and skills to be developed are relevant not only to starting a business but to growing, developing, and sustaining a successful work life career.

## Practical Implications of Today's World and Some Solutions

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Business owners with large, high-volume firms typically have resources available in the form of extensive networks. Government resources are in place to assist new and nascent women owners, particularly those from socially and economically disadvantaged populations. But the largest group of women business owners does not have easy access to the up-to-date technological and educational knowledge they need. A review of more than 300 entrepreneurship programs reveals that few focus on the needs of the large majority of women owners (Moore & Meyer, 2008). Content in typical entrepreneurship programs ranges in focus and substance from variations on the traditional types of male-oriented entrepreneurship offerings that have been in place since the early 1970s to such women-oriented topics as leadership, networks, mentorships, stereotypes, getting along in male-oriented environments, and the like. While offerings can address the needs of aspiring, neophyte, and start-up microbusiness owners and the typical college student, they do not address the varied informational needs of women entrepreneurs in the middle: women's capabilities as leaders, owners, and managers; growth opportunities at the various stages of entrepreneurial development; concrete information on the best techniques for financing a new venture; market plan development; negotiation approaches; strategic planning; human resource requirements; high-tech best practices; and suggestions for utilizing social capital and dealing with setbacks in the economy.

One way to bridge the knowledge gap is to design comprehensive college and university certification programs aimed at women who want to make the transition from the public or private sector. The program needs to address the full knowledge gap by including those who want to launch a business as well as established female entrepreneurs who need information to grow their firms or manage a business that has expanded. A special program is needed for owners who need succession planning to enable the next generation to take over smoothly. G. Dale Meyer introduced an entrepreneurial woman in transition concept at the Center for Women in Charleston, South Carolina, that was further developed by Dorothy P. Moore and Meyer (2008) in a flexible certification program. This approach recommends modules in finance, accounting, marketing, management,



and negotiating skills; the necessary elements for completing feasibility studies and a business plan; assistance in identifying funding sources; and the development of a cohort support group with entrepreneurial mentors. Ideally, the program will address the void in present offerings and target a spectrum broader than the typical college student to focus on meeting the needs of those at various stages of transition.

In the present market, there are many challenges for the woman entrepreneur. Key questions involve the educational and training approaches. Will future professors be more perceptive of the needs of women students and more aware of the limitations of the “male model concept” that is presently built into ease selection and delivery? Will colleges and universities be willing to restructure their courses to offer flexible programs for women in transition and for young students who aspire to acquire the knowledge needed to be entrepreneurial, many of whom must hold down jobs to pay for their education?

## Women Entrepreneurs and the Business Cycle

The rapid expansion in the number of women entrepreneurs in the United States occurred during 3 decades when economic conditions were generally very favorable. Between February 1961 and December 1969, the economy expanded for 106 consecutive months. In the 1970s there were several fluctuations in the business cycle, but the economy expanded in 96 of the 118 months, outpacing the months of economic decline by more than 4 to 1. The early 1980s saw the worst recession in the past 40 years: skyrocketing oil prices, an official unemployment rate over 10%, and unofficial estimates of unemployment as high as 16.3%. However, the 16-month period of severe economic decline that began in July 1981 was relatively brief, and beginning in November 1982 the United States entered another long era of nearly unprecedented growth: 195 months of economic expansion measured against two 8-month periods of economic decline. The expansion peaked in December 2007, faltered in early 2008, shuddered amid the banking crisis that struck late in the year, and plunged into recession (Leonhardt, 2009; National Bureau of Economic Research, 2008, 2009).

The effects of the freezing supply of credit, downturn in global economic activity, and unprecedented government efforts to rescue the economy have yet to be measured, but the serious decline in business activity at all levels and rapidly rising employment figures, as measured in January 2009 (Leonhardt, 2009), though still less severe than 1982, bode ill for many small businesses. Slumping sales, slow paying and delinquent customers, the lack of cash reserves, and the unwillingness of banks to lend along with rising costs that cannot be passed on all

threaten to add greatly to the half-million small businesses that close each year (Covel, 2008). The numerous women entrepreneurs with marginal resources, particularly in the retail trades, will be among the first groups of small business owners affected by a recession whose end—at the time of this writing—is nowhere in sight.

The collapse of credit markets and severe economic downturn will be the first opportunity for researchers to study the effects of a severe recession economy on women entrepreneurs. Because government funding and bailouts so far have been directed to the mega-sized banks and businesses, the effects of tight credit markets will be most severely felt by small firms. Without continuous ready access to credit, entrepreneurs will be among the initial victims of an economic decline through no fault of their own except bad timing. The kind and degree of support offered by government will be important to their future. At a minimum, the statutes already on the books designed to enable small firms to compete for government contracts should be enforced. Government programs will also need to pay attention to the effects of the recession on minority and women-owned businesses, to the fact that the set-asides for small business are being interpreted to favor male owners, and to recent SBA interpretations of the statutes that limit the number of loans available to women owners.

## Summary and Future Directions

We know a great deal about women’s business ownership today, but much remains to be learned. Findings have highlighted both the opportunities and the barriers that aspiring women in enterprise face in obtaining financing, support systems, entrepreneurial education, and enforcement of the right of access to government procurement contracts. Much of the present day work is still exploratory. For this and a number of other reasons we are a long way from developing a model of business ownership for women entrepreneurs.

We may be closer to an understanding of women’s career mapping strategies. Research across the study fields of gender and diversity, careers, and women’s entrepreneurship suggests some premises for a model of how women use entrepreneurship and small business development in managing their careers in today’s techno-global business environment, shifting culture, and rapidly changing business cycle.

The rapid growth in the number of women business owners, their movement into every industry sector, and their overall contribution to today’s economy has been an important story. But the scholarly research has not kept up. There are several reasons for this. The first is the binding paradigm of the one-size-fits-all-male-model of the entrepreneur. Another is the fact that despite a high quality of scholarship, articles dealing with women as entrepreneurs



are disproportionately missing from the major journals in the fields of management and entrepreneurship. Their absence sends a clear signal to young scholars in the major research institutions that editors, mostly male, do not consider research on women owners as important or worthy of professional journal space as other topics.

It is also difficult to compare research results. Not only do female entrepreneurship study populations and research designs vary in their levels of sophistication, respondent mix, selection of analytical tools and methods, and academic rigor, but there are problems in comparing findings, particularly among studies conducted worldwide. Consider the seemingly simple matter of defining the term *small business*. Governments do it differently, and this makes it difficult to conduct a comparative analysis of women's contributions across nations.

While women entrepreneurs have made important contributions to economic development and wealth creation, there is little information on the specific contributions to the economies they represent. This opens a wide research area because small and medium-sized businesses make up such a large proportion of all exporters of manufacturing goods. In combination with the knowledge that women owners have grown at almost double the rate of men, the fact women owners have made a major contribution in the international market is a much needed area of research and exploration.

Further, while prestigious schools of business are only now beginning to recognize the need to offer special programs to address the needs of women in transition, it is important to determine whether they are still trying to

pitch a "one type program" to meet the needs of both men and women and what women are taking away from these offerings. Most of the programs that have been recently created are geared to women seeking an executive M.B.A. and leadership initiatives. There are still less than a handful of programs in academic settings across the United States that address the specific needs of women who wish to open up their own businesses.

Interesting areas of future study will include how women owners who primarily operate their businesses online compete in a relatively gender-free global marketplace. Will the removal of stereotypes related to gender (and also race and disability) show differential effects on their businesses? What will the long-range impact of the downturn in the present economy be on women entrepreneurs and owners? Will it impact their businesses more negatively than those owned by men? Finally, as more women receive higher education and develop stronger credentials, will the number of businesses they own become equivalent to the number of, and in similar industries with, those owned by men? Given that many of the present entrepreneurship courses are offered in business strategy, management, organizational behavior, or other disciplines, as noted by Brush et al. (2006), at what point will the publishing norms change to reflect the value of research on women entrepreneurs? Presently Anne de Bruin, Candida Brush, and Friederike Welter (2006) indicate the presence of a bias for young professors in their specific discipline for tenure reviews. Will women be the majority owners of the new "greener and energy-saving" firms in the revitalization of the economy and environment?

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## SPOTLIGHT: Mary Kay Ash

"There is no more potent role model for the self-made woman than Mary Kay Ash," Harry Smith, cohost of the television show *CBS This Morning*, told a national television audience on the morning of November 28, 1995, as he introduced Mary Kay Ash. This was not hyperbole; she had established her cosmetics company on a \$5,000 investment in 1963 and by 1995, Mary Kay Cosmetics had grown into a global company with wholesale revenue exceeding \$850 million and more than 300,000 women serving as independent beauty consultants (sales agents). Her success was unquestionable. However, what set her apart from other female titans of her time—Estée Lauder, Elizabeth Arden, Jackie Cochran, and Helena Rubenstein—was her commitment, her mission, to empower women in what was essentially an exclusive male domain, commerce and business, and she did it adroitly while demonstrating the qualities underlying so many of America's most successful tycoons.

### Early Years

Mary Kay Ash was not the first female tycoon, or the first woman, to succeed in the cosmetics industry. Helena Rubenstein opened a salon in Australia in 1902. Elizabeth Arden followed suit on New York's Fifth Avenue in 1909, 9 years before Ash was born. By the time Ash was 11 years old, Helena Rubenstein was a wealthy international sensation and Elizabeth Arden's company was generating annual sales of \$2 million. Estée Lauder founded her company in 1946 and was generating sales of \$14 million by the time Ash opened her small storefront in Dallas, Texas. All these women were remarkably successful and their cosmetic companies grew into massive enterprises: For example, in 2008 Estée Lauder sales exceeded \$7 billion worldwide.

Some of the forces motivating these women are traceable to their earliest years. Arden, Lauder, Rubenstein, and Cochran came from exceedingly poor families. Their poverty compelled these women to strive for material and financial stability and security, leaving behind but never losing memories of their hardships. Ash, née Mary Kathryn Wagner, was no exception. Poverty and hardship were constant factors in her early years, but her early experiences in the workplace—the bias she encountered in the business world because she was a woman—and her unstable domestic situation shaped the person she would become.

### Family Responsibilities

Mary Kathryn Wagner was born in 1918 in Hot Wells, Texas, where her parents ran a hotel. Two years later, her father developed tuberculosis and the family moved to Houston where he entered a sanatorium and her mother ran a café. They lived in one of the poorer sections of town. According to Ash, she assumed responsibility for taking care of her father when he returned home and the running of the household at age 7 while her mother worked to support the family. Ash cooked his meals, cleaned the house, purchased her clothes, and used the city's transportation system to get around, all with her mother's encouragement, "You can do it!"—a maxim Ash would hammer and emphasize to her future workforce of independent consultants.

### Honing Communication Skills

In high school, Ash displayed a competitive streak and a love for spirited debate. She placed second in the Texas state speaking championships while earning straight As in school, presaging a well-developed sense for communication, an important component of the marketing skills she would employ in her future enterprise. After graduating in 1935, she could not afford college so she married Ben Rogers, a former gas station attendant who was emerging as a radio personality with the Hawaiian Strummers, a local band.

### Gaining Selling Experience

To supplement the household budget, Ash sold a series of books called the Child Psychology Bookshelf, and, later, cookware and other home care products. The door-to-door book sales netted her approximately \$7,500 in 9 months, an astonishing amount in those years. She was quick to acquire selling and marketing skills and techniques, two qualities she would model, mold, and magnify in subsequent years en route to becoming one of America's most prolific and capable marketing and selling gurus.



## Direct Selling

In 1939, Ash went to work for Stanley Home Products, an 8-year-old direct sales outfit. She sold brooms, mops, toothbrushes, and furniture oil through "home shows" conducted at a customer's residence. Direct selling, where product and service sales are marketed to customers by independent sales agents at homes or other locations away from the retail or wholesale facility, was not a new concept. Peddlers and hawkers were a traditional part of U.S. commercial history when much of the population was rural and sedentary, economically or physically unable to travel long distances to shops and stores in larger cities. These salesmen would visit homes by foot, mule, horseback, or wagon, bringing a cornucopia of goods with them. Many of America's greatest tycoons began as itinerant peddlers, from Levi Strauss to William Wrigley Jr.

The emerging cosmetics industry was a natural breeding ground for direct sales, where women could be more sanguine trying out lotions, perfumes, and skin care products in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. Sarah Breedlove Walker and David H. McConnell were early pioneers in direct selling of cosmetics. McConnell, who like Ash, began as a door-to-door book salesman, handed out introductory gifts of perfume vials, before launching the California Perfume Company—subsequently Avon—in 1886 to sell cosmetics and perfumes to women in their homes.

## Party Plans

Stanley Home Products employed the "party plan," where its sales representatives demonstrated the company's products to groups instead of individuals. Ash, a diminutive woman, had to lug heavy samples cases to these parties, typically a group of selected women who were friends, relatives, or people who shared common interests. Three weeks into her job, she attended Stanley's annual convention. When she saw the coronation of the company's top salesperson as Queen of Sales, it spurred her into setting a difficult goal—to become the Queen of Sales at the next convention. She recalled that when she mentioned her intention to Stanley Beveridge, the firm's founder, "He took my hand in both of his, looked me square in the eye and after a moment said, 'Somehow I think you will.' Those five words changed my life" (Hattwick, 1988, p. 23). Perhaps it did, but Ash was also very pragmatic in her quest for success. She interviewed that year's queen to get advice on how to become successful, taking 19 pages of notes. More than that, she was learning how one successful company was motivating its employees and sales personnel to achieve better results.

## Effective Goal Setting

The following year, Ash achieved her mission, becoming Stanley Home Products' Queen of Sales. She attributed her success to setting the goal and then breaking it down into smaller, manageable, increments. She recruited 150 independent sales agents to work for her and earned a portion of their commissions. This success did not translate into any meaningful promotion or management role in the company. Whether this reflected the company's bias against women—few companies in the United States at the time promoted women to management or executive posts—or the desire of the company to keep her in sales where she was so effective, is unknown. Instead, Stanley moved her to Dallas to open a new territory and stopped paying her a percentage of her recruits' sales.

Her domestic life was not faring any better. Shortly after her husband returned from service at the end of World War II, he sought a divorce, leaving Ash with three children, Richard, Ben, and Marylyn. Ash called it "the lowest point" of her life. "I felt like a complete failure as a woman," she said (Hattwick, 1988, p. 22). It is unclear whether this rupture in her domestic condition affected her work at Stanley, but in 1952, after 12 years, Ash decided she had had enough, and she quit.

## Impact of Gender Bias on Ash

With extensive experience in direct sales, Ash quickly got a job with the World Gift Co., a Dallas, Texas, organization where she subsequently became national training director. She loved her work and, after 10 years on the job, expected a promotion; however, when an underling, a man she had trained, was promoted in her stead, Ash resigned. She recalled her experience on *CBS This Morning*:

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I was so hurt that such a thing could happen that I went to my desk and wrote out a resignation, and I left that afternoon. But the next morning, if they called me, I would have gone back. But they didn't call. So I wa—in my frustration, I sat down to write a book to help women over some of the obstacles that I had encountered, and I didn't know how to write a book. And so I simply took a legal-sized pad, put down everything good those companies had done—the two companies I had worked for, 25 years—and got that on paper, and then I began to think about the problems, wrote those down, and decided: What would I have done had I had the opportunity and the responsibility? And I wrote out my answers very much like a crossword puzzle. Then I read the whole thing and discovered that inadvertently I had put on paper a marketing plan that would give women an open-end opportunity to do anything they were smart enough to do. (Smith & Zahn, 1995, n.p.)

### 1963: The Watershed Year

Ash was the quintessential phoenix about to rise from the ashes. She was a 45-year-old unemployed divorcée with three children, yet determined to overcome the abyss in which she found herself. Nineteen sixty-three was a watershed year for her and also a dynamic and uncertain time in the nation. The Vietnam War, racial tension, and the feminist movement were ripping apart the country's old and thread-worn social, political, and economic fabric. It was a time of liberal movement and an emerging awareness of the need to seek new ways to address old problems.

### Feminist Movement of the Time

It was the beginning of a second wave of the women's movement, sparked by the 1963 publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and the publication in October of a report on the inequalities American women faced in all walks of life by John F. Kennedy's President's Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt.

### Not the Traditional Feminist

Ash did not fit the traditional feminist profile. She was politically conservative, religious, and a firm supporter of the traditional role of women in the home as housewives and mothers. However, she strongly felt the inequality and inherent injustice in the business world, where women not only earned considerably less for doing the same work men did, but were also excluded from the executive suite and management roles. She believed women were as intellectually and mentally fit as men for considerably higher roles and responsibilities in commerce. She saw no inconsistency in mixing traditional values with recognition of women's ability and potential in business.

### Formation of Mary Kay Cosmetics

That year Ash also fell in love with George Hallenbeck. They were married in July, agreed to jointly establish a new organization—her "dream company," as she called it—and invested their life savings, \$5,000, in the start-up. A month later, George died.

Again, Ash plunged ahead. She turned to her 20-year-old son, Richard, to join her and run the financial and administrative end of the business. On Friday, September 13, Beauty by Mary Kay—later to become Mary Kay Inc. and Mary Kay Cosmetics—opened its doors in the Exchange Bank office park in Dallas, with nine independent beauty consultants. The entire inventory of skin care products fit on a single \$9.95 Sears steel shelf. She acquired the rights to some skin care products for \$500 from the family of a deceased man who developed them. "I knew that these skin care products were tremendous, and with some modifications and high-quality packaging, I was sure they would be big sellers!" she said (O'Neil, 2003, p. 32).

### Adoption of Direct Sales and Home Parties

Her other children, Ben and Marylyn, soon joined her. They worked 16- and 18-hour days, performing every function of the business, no matter how trivial or menial. This was one of her ethos: a strong work ethic bordering on the manic. Ash also adopted many of the techniques she had learned—and refined—at Stanley Home Products and World Gift Co., relying on direct sales, house parties, and motivational conventions. However, Ash was determined to make a significant contribution to women's ability to become economically independent. Not only was she determined to employ women as her selling consultants, but she also sought ways to empower them in management roles. "Instead of a door marked For Men Only, our company opened its doors wide with welcome—*especially* for women," she said (Gavenas, 2008, n.p.).



## Beauty Consultants

The company evolved quickly, selling its products through a network of saleswomen called beauty consultants, all independent contractors who signed agreements to purchase a "beauty showcase," essentially the skin care product inventory, at a 50% discount from the retail price—and received training on how to conduct the "skin care class" in private homes. They sold their products at retail prices to friends, family members, and other individuals and also received a bonus for recruiting other beauty consultants. Beauty consultants were encouraged to recruit other consultants and were paid a small percentage of such recruits' sales.

The company was highly organized, the consultants subject to very specific rules and regulations. A small product line allowed the beauty consultants to know their wares well. It was a soft sell, not a hard one. Consultants were not permitted to smoke or chew gum. In the early days, everything was cash and carry—Mary Kay did not extend credit. Even the beauty consultants had to pay in cash or by check, and they, in turn, made sure their customers paid likewise. And Mary Kay's products were not cheap; they were pricier than cosmetics available on drugstore shelves. Such price markups made it possible for the company to provide beauty consultants with a larger slice of the sale. Home parties were limited to six guests to ensure active involvement in the "consultation" by all guests. Mary Kay made a \$34,000 profit in the first 3½ months and sales of \$192,000 in the first year. Sales in the second year leaped to \$800,000.

## Flamboyant Marketing and Motivation

Flamboyance and Ash are synonymous. She decided to select a color the public would associate with her company, product line, and name. Elizabeth Arden had painted the doors to her salons a rich red, Charles Lewis Tiffany opted for robin-egg blue for his packaging, but Ash wanted something to reflect the feminine side of her business and chose pink. Pink became the trademark for her company.

She produced her first annual "seminar" in 1964. It was held in a warehouse, attended by 200 people, with meals served on paper plates. But as the company grew, the seminars matured into extravaganzas with entertainment comparable to the best offered by Las Vegas. Because of the huge number of beauty consultants currently involved with the company—numbering more than 2 million—Mary Kay Inc. also holds several regional "seminars" a year. The seminars serve a seminal purpose: motivating the company's beauty consultants to become top sellers, and Ash made sure those who sold the most were rewarded in a lavish display of inducements and gifts, an array of awards and bonuses for success, including cash, jewelry, furs, trips—and pink Cadillacs—for her sales directors. She encouraged her consultants to prioritize their lives with God first, family second, and work third, firmly believing it would provide them with personal and financial success. The theme at the company was, and still remains, empowerment with financial independence and enrichment.

She married Mel Ash in January 1966. Ten years later, she took her company public, but by 1985 it was back in family hands. In the interim, he died.

## Company's Growth

Except for a brief interlude from the mid-1970s to mid-1980, the company grew at an annual rate of nearly 30%, first appearing in the Fortune 500 in 1992. Today, the company spans more than 30 markets worldwide with more than 2 million independent consultants. More than 200 of them have earned a million dollars in commissions, and nearly 100,000 have qualified for Ash's unique program, getting the use of a pink Cadillac or Pontiac in the United States, a pink Toyota in Taiwan, and a pink Mercedes in Germany, for a year. And Mary Kay Inc. makes a perennial appearance on the list of the best companies to work for.

Recognition of her success has come from different sources. She was named Texas Woman of the Century, voted Lifetime TV's most influential woman in the 20th century, and received the Horatio Alger Distinguished American Award. She wrote three books, all best sellers; more than 1 million copies of her autobiography have been sold.

Ash remained active in the company until she suffered a stroke in 1996, the year she founded the Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation, a nonprofit that provides funds to combat cancers and domestic violence affecting women.

Ash died on Thanksgiving Day in 2001.

—Daniel Alef, Santa Barbara Historical Museum

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## WOMEN LAWYERS AS LEADERS

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This chapter begins with an overview of the history of women in legal education and the legal profession, including references to some of the pathbreaking women lawyer leaders. It then highlights women's experiences in certain segments of the legal profession, including as Supreme Court advocates, judges, and members of women's legal advocacy groups. Following snapshots of women's contemporary experiences in law firms, government service, the judiciary, and legal academia, the chapter offers a few thoughts on why it matters that women have served, and continue to serve, as leaders in the legal profession.

### A Brief History of Women in Legal Education and the Legal Profession

Women first entered the law as a profession in the United States in the immediate post-Civil War period, with their numbers growing modestly but steadily through the end of the 19th century. Some of the early "firsts" for women in legal education and the legal profession include the following:

- Arabella Mansfield, who, in 1869, became the first woman admitted to any state's bar when she successfully read for the Iowa bar
- Washington University in St. Louis Law School, located in Missouri, which in 1870 became the first law school to open its doors to women
- Ada Kepley, who, in 1871, graduated from the Union College of Law in Chicago, becoming the first woman to graduate from any law school
- Charlotte Ray, who became the first African American woman to join a state's bar when she became a member of the bar of the District of Columbia in 1872 (Clark, 2005)

Notwithstanding the U.S. Supreme Court's 1873 rejection of Myra Bradwell's claim that Illinois had violated the Privileges and Immunities Clause when it refused her admission to its bar on the basis of sex (*Bradwell v. Illinois*, 83 U.S. 130, 139 [1873]), women succeeded in joining their states' bars in ever-growing numbers, such that by 1900, there were 1,000 women lawyers in the United States, prompting the establishment of the National Association of Women Lawyers in 1899. Although most of the earliest women lawyers (as with most 19th-century lawyers generally) entered the legal profession by apprenticing with a lawyer, an increasing number of law schools began to admit women in the second half of the 19th century—some from their founding (e.g., Howard University in 1869 and the University of Michigan in 1870) and some by amendment to their admission policies (e.g., New York University in 1890).

Because law was a public profession, involving legislative enactments and court decisions of a public origin and import, women's mid-19th-century entry into legal education and the legal profession challenged prevailing ideas of appropriate spheres of activity for women and men. The dominant belief system at that time held that women's "natural," and for many religiously ordained, domain of activity was the private sphere, as caretaker of the home and family, while men's "natural" sphere was the public one of law, business, and ideas. Justice Joseph Bradley reflected this sentiment in concurring in the U.S. Supreme Court judgment rejecting Myra Bradwell's appeal from the Illinois bar's denial of admission, declaring it unnatural for women to practice law:

The civil law, as well as nature herself, has always recognized a wide difference in the respective spheres and destinies of man and woman. Man is, or should be, woman's protector and

defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of the family organization, which is founded in the divine ordinance, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic spheres as that which properly belongs to the domain and functions of womanhood. (*Bradwell v. Illinois*, 83 U.S. 130, 141 [1873]; Bradley, J., concurring)

By entering into the public realm of law, women lawyers transgressed the boundaries of women's separate domain, which, as Bradley's opinion suggests, was not lightly tolerated. Likewise challenging the separate spheres ideology, some of these first women lawyers were actively involved in politics, playing leadership roles in the campaign for woman suffrage and, later, leading battles over other issues of progressive social welfare, including labor law reform.

The American Bar Association (ABA), the legal profession's leading voice, first admitted women lawyers as members in 1918, 40 years after its 1878 founding. One year earlier, in 1917, the nation's first Women's Bar Association (WBA) was established, in Washington, D.C., by Ellen Spencer Mussey and Emma Gillett, who had previously founded the nation's first law school for women, in 1896. The ABA's membership policy change and the WBA's founding were both prompted in significant part by the marked growth in women's participation in the legal profession (particularly in legal education) during World War I. In the 4-year period immediately preceding women's admission to the ABA, the number of women enrolled in U.S. law schools grew by almost 75%, from 609 in 1914–1915 to 1,068 in 1918. At that time, law school enrollments nationally stood at between 21,000 and 25,000 (Doerschuk, 1920, pp. 25–26). Among the leading law schools admitting women for the first time in the war and postwar periods were Yale Law School, in 1918, and Columbia, in 1927. Despite this growth, women still constituted only .01% of the legal profession at the start of the 1920s, doubling to .02% by 1930.

World War II saw a temporary expansion in women's opportunities in the law—both in law school and the larger profession—as men were called up for military service. This was followed by a dramatic decrease in women's participation in the postwar era, though a small but steady number of women continued to practice law in government agencies and firms at this time. One such lawyer was Beatrice Rosenberg, who worked in the U.S. Justice Department for many decades during this period, briefing and arguing criminal cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. courts of appeal. Rosenberg's leadership in the law was recognized by the District of Columbia Bar Association's establishment of an annual award for outstanding public service by a federal government lawyer.

During the relative quietude in women's opportunities in the public domain of the 1950s and 1960s, Pauli Murray emerged as an important African American woman leader in the law. Indeed, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg recognized

the critical role that Murray had played in the nascent second wave of the women's rights movement by naming Murray on the counsel page in the brief Ginsburg filed in the first sex-based equal protection case she took to the U.S. Supreme Court, *Reed v. Reed*, even though Murray had not been involved in that particular case. Among other achievements, Murray was the first African American woman named to the law faculty at Yale, serving as a non-tenure track Tutor in Law and Senior Fellow from 1962 to 1965 (Murray, 1989, p. 345). Murray's writing while at Yale focused on the analogy between race and sex discrimination. While at Yale in 1962, Murray prepared a memo on the race/sex discrimination analogy for President John F. Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women, titled, "A Proposal to Reexamine the Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to State Laws and Practices Which Discriminate on the Basis of Sex *Per Se*." According to Murray (1987), work on this memo served as "an intensive consciousness-raising process leading directly to my involvement in the new women's movement that surfaced a few years later" (pp. 347–348). Murray's most famous article, coauthored with Mary Eastwood, was "Jane Crow and the Law: Sex Discrimination and Title VII" (1965), which analyzed provisions of the then-new civil rights statute as applied to women.

For many female law students, the years 1968–1969 and 1969–1970 marked the divide between the conventional milieu of the post-World War II era and the feminist and other activism of the late 1960s and early to mid-1970s. One obvious change was the formation of a "critical mass" of women in law schools, which liberated some female law students, both individually and collectively, to identify publicly as women for the first time, speaking out and taking action against sex discrimination in law school and beyond, just as women were doing so in the broader culture as part of the second wave of the women's rights movement embodied in the 1966 founding of the National Organization for Women (NOW). Whereas many of their predecessors had sought to avoid drawing attention to their gender beyond the obvious fact of it, women law students of this era (and beyond) felt freer to choose the extent to which they were defined by gender through their actions and associations. Some alumnae, as well as faculty and administrators, spoke of becoming radicalized around women's rights issues by the law school experience itself, where they had not previously identified themselves with feminist values or concerns.

The momentum building from student interest in women's rights led to the first teach-in on women and the law hosted at Yale Law School in 1971. Teach-in organizers distributed a list of courses offered on women and the law at colleges and law schools nationwide. They also distributed sample syllabi and other teaching materials from these courses. The first casebooks on sex discrimination law were published in the aftermath of this conference by some of those in attendance, specifically *Sex Discrimination and the Law: Causes and Remedies* (1975) by



Barbara Babcock, Ann Freedman, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Susan Deller Ross, and *Text, Cases, and Materials on Sex-Based Discrimination* (1974) by Kenneth Davidson, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Herma Hill Kay.

Few of the first women on U.S. law schools' tenure-track faculties wrote about issues related to women in the law. This is consistent with social science findings on the effects of a lack of critical presence of women in a given field. Just as most women law students were reluctant to draw attention to themselves as women prior to the growth in women's enrollments in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the first female law faculty members were reluctant to draw attention to themselves as women in their teaching and scholarship, given the challenges of fitting in as one or two women among several dozen faculty members. Nevertheless, Herma Hill Kay, the first woman member of the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) law faculty and its first female dean, taught family law beginning in the 1960s and wrote articles and proposed legislation calling for dramatic change in divorce law through reliance on no-fault principles and in the law governing the distribution of property at divorce through the introduction of equitable principles intended to redress women's historic loss of economic well-being following divorce. As women on tenure-track law faculties grew in number in the 1980s, they began to offer courses and publish articles related to women's legal rights, including feminist jurisprudence, sex discrimination, and domestic violence, as in the work of Catharine MacKinnon of the University of Michigan Law School, Susan Deller Ross of Georgetown University Law School, Nadine Taub of Rutgers-Newark Law School, Wendy Williams of Georgetown University Law School, and others.

The past several decades have produced a dramatic increase in women's law school enrollments, followed by a relative stasis in the past 10 years. Thus women constituted 9.4% of J.D. enrollments nationally in the 1971–1972 academic year, 20% in 1974–1975, 36% in 1981–1982, and a high of 49% in 2001–2002. The most recent data place the J.D. enrollment of women at 46.7% for the 2007–2008 academic year (American Bar Association, [www.abanet.org](http://www.abanet.org)).

What follows are highlights of women's leadership in particular segments of the legal profession.

## Women Lawyers as Leading Supreme Court Advocates

Directly challenging the dominant separate spheres ideology of the late 19th century, Belva Lockwood, a Washington, D.C., lawyer (and 1870s Equal Rights Party presidential candidate) applied and was rejected for membership in the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1876. Lockwood lobbied Congress to amend the Supreme Court bar admission rules to include women, and in 1879 Congress authorized women to be admitted to practice before the Court. In 1880 Lockwood became the first

woman to present oral argument in the Supreme Court in *Kaiser v. Stickney* (Clark, 2005).

Following Lockwood's admission, other women lawyers began to move one another's admission to the Supreme Court bar, such that by 1900, 20 women had joined. Many of these women were recognized as the leading women lawyers of their day, having achieved other significant "firsts" in the legal profession. For example, Ellen Spencer Mussey and Emma Gillett, two of the earliest Supreme Court bar members, founded the first law school for women in 1896, the Washington College of Law (now of American University). The Portia Law School, exclusively for women, was founded in Boston in 1908 and was later renamed the New England School of Law. Then, for one year beginning in 1915, the Cambridge Law School, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, also opened its doors exclusively to women.

Many of the earliest women Supreme Court bar members participated in the Equity Club, a correspondence society of early women lawyers, many of whom were graduates of the University of Michigan Law School (Drachman, 1998). In their annual letters, which were duplicated and circulated to the membership, the women lawyers expressed concern, among other things, for how best to integrate work with family life, with several concurring that working with a lawyer-husband, lawyer-father, or both, was the best approach. They also conferred as to whether women lawyers should wear hats in court, where male lawyers did not, but proper women did. In the end, the hats remained on for the earliest women lawyers, where dominant ideas as to appropriate gendered conduct trumped expectations of professionalism.

The earliest women Supreme Court bar members worked as solo attorneys or in small firms (typical of most practitioners of their day). They did not litigate women's rights claims before the Court, with the exception of Lockwood, who challenged Virginia's male-only bar admission policy and lost. By comparison, female Supreme Court practitioners in the first half of the 20th century were located principally in local, state, and national government agencies. Again, however, they did not litigate women's rights claims before the Court. A breakthrough occurred in the 1960s and 1970s when Constance Baker Motley and Ruth Bader Ginsburg appeared repeatedly before the Court in race- and sex-discrimination cases on behalf of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and the ACLU Women's Rights Project, respectively. Since that time, women Supreme Court bar practitioners have been affiliated, in roughly equal numbers, with government agencies, advocacy groups, and law school faculties and, to a much lesser extent, as members of the leading law firms. Today's female advocates participate in women's rights cases along with the full panoply of subject matters heard by the Court.

When Justice Ginsburg briefed and argued the leading women's rights cases of the 1970s,<sup>1</sup> the litigation agenda of the ACLU's Women's Rights Project (which Ginsburg founded in 1972 and led until 1974) was grounded in formal



equality principles, that is, on the belief that similarly situated men and women should be treated the same under the law. In reflecting on this strategy, Justice Ginsburg (2002) has more recently observed, "In one sense, our mission in the 1970s was easy: the targets were well defined. There was nothing subtle about the ways things were. Statute books in the States and Nation were riddled with what we then called sex-based differentials" (p. 1441).

The project's litigation campaign brought about a revolution in sex discrimination law, overturning a century of Supreme Court precedent that had tolerated, indeed embraced, differential treatment of women and men, premised in significant part on separate spheres ideology. One of the biggest challenges confronting Ginsburg and the project had been how to persuade the Court that sex-based differentials were harmful to men and women, rather than simply being benign or even beneficial to women (Clark, 2005). Justice Ginsburg later described the project's mission as one of educating

decision makers in the nation's legislatures and courts. We tried to convey to them that something was wrong with their perception of the world. We sought to spark judges' and law-makers' understanding that their own daughters and granddaughters could be disadvantaged by the way things were. (Ginsburg, 2002, pp. 1442–1443)

In seeking to capture the significance of the project's litigation campaign, UC Berkeley Dean Herma Kay has noted,

Quite literally, it was [Ginsburg's] voice, raised in oral argument and reflected in the drafting of briefs, that shattered old stereotypes and opened new opportunities for both sexes. She built, and persuaded the Court to adopt, a new constitutional framework for analyzing the achievement of equality for women and men. In doing so, Ginsburg in large part created the intellectual foundations of the present law of sex discrimination. (Kay, 2004, p. 20)

In forging the intellectual bases of sex discrimination law through their own advocacy, women lawyers blazed their own way, rather than depending on male advocates to represent or assist them.

## Women Leaders in the Judiciary

Women began to enter the federal judiciary as Article III judges (for which candidates are presidentially nominated and Senate confirmed) for the first time in the mid-20th century. The first woman named to an Article III judgeship—on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati, Ohio—was Florence Ellinwood Allen, in 1934. Franklin D. Roosevelt's appointment of Allen was prompted by the efforts of many politically influential women, including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary Dewson, head of the Democratic National Committee's Women's Division.

Shortly before retiring from active service as a federal judge, Allen became the first woman chief judge of an Article III court, holding the position of chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit from 1958 to 1959. As chief judge, Allen was the first woman to serve on the Judicial Conference of the United States, the judiciary's governing and policy-setting body (Clark, 2004). Allen saw herself as a role model for women, noting, "I have tried with all that is in me to justify the presence of women on the courts" (Cook, 1982). She observed further,

It's so worth-while being a judge, because, if I make good, I can help prove that a woman's place is as much on the bench, in City Council, or in Congress, as in the home. This entrance of woman into other fields of activity can but demonstrate that her latent capabilities are unmined gold that the world cannot afford to be without. (Field, 1921, qtd. in Russ, 1997, pt. 7)

Allen nevertheless recognized that "her work must be as nearly letter-perfect as possible because people are ten times more critical of a woman in an unprecedented position than of a man in the same position" (Marshall, 1926, p. 5).

Allen's federal court appointment was followed 15 years later, in 1949, by that of Burnita Shelton Matthews to a newly created seat on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Matthews's candidacy had been advocated by India Edwards, Dewson's successor as chair of the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee. Thereafter, Constance Baker Motley (formerly of the NAACP LDF and, at the time, the Manhattan Borough president) became the first African American woman appointed to the federal bench when she was named to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by Lyndon Johnson in 1966.

Sandra Day O'Connor was the first woman nominated and confirmed to the U.S. Supreme Court, under Ronald Reagan in 1981. Ruth Bader Ginsburg joined O'Connor as the second woman on the Court when she was named by President Bill Clinton in 1994. Both O'Connor and Ginsburg have provided significant leadership, through speeches, interviews, and otherwise, with regard to the Court's recognition of international law, which has in turn subjected them to intense criticism, including death threats. O'Connor resigned from the Court in 2006, leaving Ginsburg as the sole female justice. In August 2009, Judge Sonia Sotomayor of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was sworn in as the third woman, and the first Hispanic, to serve as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. In 2010 Solicitor General Elena Kagan was nominated to be the third woman on the Court.

Turning briefly to women's experiences on state and local courts, women entered into service in these judiciaries several decades before doing so in the federal system. Indeed, as early as the 1910s and 1920s, women served on specialized matrimonial and juvenile courts as well as courts of general jurisdiction at the state and local levels. Kathryn Sellers, for example, was the first woman to serve



on the juvenile court in the District of Columbia, beginning in 1918, while Mary O'Toole became the first woman judge on the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, starting in 1921, and Florence Allen was elected to the Ohio Supreme Court in 1922, in the immediate aftermath of the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, guaranteeing women's right to vote.

Just as many of the earliest women lawyers were active in the woman suffrage and subsequent women's rights movements, so too were many of the first women judges. Allen and Matthews, for example, campaigned for woman suffrage while they were still in law school (Clark, 2004). Like Allen, Matthews was active on behalf of women's civil and political rights before ascending the bench, having served for decades as general counsel to the National Woman's Party (NWP). There, Matthews campaigned for passage of the equal rights amendment (ERA) with NWP President Alice Paul, whose militant advocacy of woman suffrage and life-long support of the ERA made her a particularly important early woman-lawyer leader. Allen and Matthews's federal court appointments were considered by many to be testaments to their women's rights leadership (Clark, 2004). In addition to working on behalf of women's rights causes, many of the first women judges played leadership roles in the country's largest and most influential bar associations. These earliest women judges also participated in various social service organizations before ascending the bench, often providing political support for their appointments. Allen, for example, was active with the New York League for the Protection of Immigrants while in law school, which later worked on behalf of her candidacy for appointment (Clark, 2004).

Women's entry into the judiciary in growing numbers in the late 1970s and early 1980s helped spur the 1980s and 1990s formation of gender, race, and ethnic bias task forces at the local, state, and federal court levels. In conducting these self-studies, many of the courts highlighted avenues for improving procedural and substantive fairness and increasing the respect accorded parties, counsel, judges, and other court personnel. Having played a critical role in the bias task force movement, the NOW Legal Defense Fund (now "Legal Momentum") partnered with the National Association of Women Judges to form the National Judicial Education Project (still ongoing), whose training programs and materials have contributed significantly to raising male and female judges' awareness of domestic violence and sexual harassment issues, among others.

### **The Importance of Women's Legal Advocacy Groups in Pressing for Women's High-Level Governmental Appointments**

Women's legal advocacy groups have played, and continue to play, a key role in pressing for women's high-level

governmental appointments in the past several decades. This was nowhere more evident than during the Carter administration, when women's advocacy groups lobbied heavily for women's executive and judicial branch appointments. The pressure brought to bear by these groups altered the political environment in which Carter operated, simultaneously goading and assisting Carter in his commitment to diversify the federal bench by sex, race, and professional background (Clark, 2002).

Carter's commitment to appoint more women judges coincided with, and was a product of, women's rapid entry into the legal profession in the 1970s. The ever-growing number of women lawyers, together with a heightened consciousness of women's rights, fed the pressure that women's legal advocacy groups were able to exert with regard to judicial appointments. The groups' effective advocacy and persistent attention to women's judicial appointments kept the issue on the presidential agenda throughout Carter's term in office. Their efforts were assisted by those of high-ranking women lawyers in the White House and Justice Department, including Margaret McKenna, Sarah Weddington, and Barbara Allen Babcock.

When Congress created scores of new judgeships at the district and court of appeals levels in 1978, women's legal and political advocacy groups lobbied Carter hard to fill these seats with women. The National Women's Political Caucus' (NWPC) Legal Support network, for example, forwarded names of women candidates suggested by its membership to Carter to fill these judgeships. The NWPC's Legal Support network worked in coalition with other women's rights organizations, many of them led by women lawyers, including the American Association of University Women, B'nai Brith Women, California Women Lawyers, Equal Rights Advocates, Federation of Organizations for Professional Women, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, the Women's Division/National Bar Association, the Women's Equity Action League, the Women's Legal Defense Fund (now the National Partnership for Women and Families), and the Women's Rights Project of the Center on Law and Social Policy (now the National Women's Law Center) to advocate the cause of women's judicial appointments.

Likewise promoting Carter's realization of his commitment to appoint more women judges was the formation of the Federation of Women Lawyers Judicial Screening Panel, which conducted prenomination screening of Carter's judicial candidates parallel to the ABA's Federal Judiciary Standing Committee and the newly established screening commission of the National Bar Association, the nation's leading organization of African American lawyers. The leadership provided by the women lawyers screening panel proved critical to the record appointment of women to the federal bench in the late 1970s.

Also furthering Carter's success in appointing record numbers of women to the federal bench was the first chairmanship of the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary by a woman, Brooksley (Landau) Born, in 1980.



Born played a critically important role in facilitating women's and minorities' appointments by revising the committee's ratings criteria to place less emphasis on length of experience in recognition that this criterion disadvantaged women and minorities who were relatively recent entrants to the profession. Following these changes to the ratings criteria, Carter's female judicial candidates received much higher evaluations by the ABA, thus promoting their likelihood of confirmation.

Women lawyers in elected positions were also instrumental in providing leadership on women's appointments. Notable examples include Representatives Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) and Barbara Jordan (D-TX), the latter of whom served on the House Judiciary Committee in the 1970s.

Lastly, the 1980 establishment of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) marked the formation of a critical mass of women judges pressing for other women's judicial appointments, such that NAWJ pressed Carter and Reagan to pledge to appoint a woman to the Supreme Court in the 1980 presidential election campaign, ultimately leading to O'Connor's appointment to the high court in 1981.

As an ongoing matter, women's leadership of some of the most influential state and local bar associations has continued to put pressure on elected officials to recognize women at the highest levels of government, including as judges. Some of the first female bar association leaders were Marna Tucker, the first woman president of the District of Columbia Bar, in the early 1980s, and Barbara Paul Robinson, the first woman president of the Bar Association of the City of New York, in the early 1990s.

### Snapshot of Women Leaders in the Legal Profession Today

According to the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), 45% of associates in private law firms today are women, including 49% of first-year associates, while only 16% of equity partners (those receiving a proportionate share of a given law firm's profits), 15% of governance committee members, and 8% of managing partners are women (NAWL, 2008). Among the Fortune 500 companies, 37% of in-house counsel are women, while only 13.7% of general counsels are (Catalyst, 2001, pp. 7, 47).

At the same time, women comprise 35% of federal government attorneys, but only 18.5% of those at the supervisory level (Catalyst, p. 59). That said, a significant number of women lawyers serve in President Barack Obama's administration at the highest levels, including in the cabinet and White House, among them Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton (who had attained unprecedented support in the Democratic presidential primaries in 2008), Solicitor General Elena Kagan, Chief Domestic Policy Advisor Melody Barnes, and Deputy White House Counsel Cassandra Butts, not to mention First Lady Michelle Obama.

Turning to legal academia, women constitute 31% of law faculties today, though they are largely clustered in lower-paying, less-prestigious, non-tenure track positions. Only 10% of U.S. law school deans are women (Angel, 2006, pp. 169, 175), including, in recent years, former Dean Judith Areen at Georgetown, former Dean Elena Kagan at Harvard, former Dean Kay at UC Berkeley, and former Dean Kathleen Sullivan of Stanford Law School.

Women hold 22% of federal judgeships today, with George W. Bush appointing women to 21% of judicial vacancies as compared to Bill Clinton's 28%, Ronald Reagan's 8%, and Jimmy Carter's 15%. With only two women currently serving on the U.S. Supreme Court, women's representation there is 22%. By contrast, women hold 28% of judgeships on state courts of last resort (pending the approval of Kagan).

That women serve at a greater rate on state courts, for which candidates must run for election in 38 states (at least at certain court levels) than they do in the Article III system, for which candidates are presidentially nominated and Senate confirmed, is remarkable. Nevertheless, "direct," or popular, accountability of state court judges has resulted in some significant "recalls," or losses in retention elections, for women judges, principally over their perceived willingness to apply the death penalty, as with the losses of Rose Bird, Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, and Penny White, Associate Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court. Leading women judges in the state courts have included Shirley Abrahamson in Wisconsin, Judith Kaye in New York, Margaret Marshall in Massachusetts, and Rosalie Wahl in Minnesota. Chief Justice Marshall is currently serving as chair of the Conference of State Chief Justices, which is the state courts' equivalent to the U.S. Judicial Conference. Previously, Chief Judge Kaye had served in this role.

One sign of progress in women's leadership in the legal profession was the ABA's 1995 election of its first female president, Roberta Cooper Ramo, nearly 120 years after the association's founding. Two women have followed Ramo into the ABA's top post to date. Prior to this, in the 1980s, the ABA established a Commission on Women in the Profession, with Hillary Rodham Clinton as its first chair. The commission has issued a number of important reports on women's retention and advancement in the legal profession and recognizes female lawyer-leaders each year with the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Awards at the ABA's annual meeting.

### Future Directions

Why is it important that women have served, and continue to serve, as leaders in the legal profession? What follows is a neither mutually exclusive, nor exhaustive, set of reasons for the significance of women's participation: (a) promoting public trust and confidence that justice will be done by furthering the perceived legitimacy of the legal system and the legal profession through its greater reflection of the diversity



of the American people; (b) having “insiders” in the profession, especially those operating at high levels, who can advocate the even-today largely “outsider” perspective of women (Kenney, 2003); (c) shattering stereotypes and modeling possibilities for current and future generations of women and men; and (d) bringing different perspectives, values, and styles of professionalism to the law from men because of women’s different lived experiences (Clark, 2006).

The pronounced stasis in women’s legal opportunities of the past 10 to 15 years suggests a need for effective leadership by male as well as female lawyers in combating both complacency regarding women’s achievements in the

profession and deep-rooted stereotypes such as those concerning working mothers’ commitment to, and ambition within, the legal profession.

## Note

1. Between 1971 and 1979, Ginsburg filed merits briefs on behalf of parties in a total of nine cases, arguing six. In addition to its party representation, the project submitted amicus briefs in 15 other cases raising sex discrimination questions before the Court at this time.

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## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN CORPORATE AMERICA

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The statistics documenting women's advancement paint a mixed picture. On the one hand, although women's representation in the U.S. workforce is near equal to that of men's (49.8% as of fall 2009; Belkin, 2009), women are consistently underrepresented in upper management (Catalyst, 2007; Gutek, 1993; Wells, 2001) and receive less compensation when controlling for career type, level, age, and education (Schneer & Reitman, 1995; Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1992). For example, in 2008 women made up 50.8% of managerial, professional, and related positions in the U.S. labor force, yet they held only 15.7% of corporate officerships in the Fortune 500, 15.2% of Fortune 500 board seats, and 3.0% of Fortune 500 chief executive officer (CEO) positions (Catalyst, 2009). Moreover, the average full-time but young (16–24) female worker earns 91% of what young men earn; however, as time goes on her relative wage rate declines (for all full-time workers, women earn 80% of what men earn; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

On the other hand, the trajectory of women has been quite positive. When the 1980s started there were no women in any top executive jobs in the Fortune 100 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). So there has been some change in the past generation. Moreover, in 1979 the average full-time female worker earned 62% of the average full-time man's wages, compared to today's 80% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). And finally, women are now starting more of their own businesses than are

men. The number of women-owned sole proprietorships grew 33% between 1990 and 2000, compared to a 23% growth rate for all sole proprietorships. Between 1983 and 2005, the number of self-employed women grew 77%, compared to a 6% growth rate for men in the same period. So depending on one's perspective, the glass is either half-empty or half-full.

The aim of this chapter is to offer advice on how to continue filling the glass. First, we briefly review the career trajectories of successful women CEOs, showing how their strategies tend to cluster into three different approaches to success. Then, based on research in management, psychology, law, and economics, we offer suggestions for young women on how to negotiate their environments to maximize their success and leadership potential.

### Profiles of Successful Female CEOs

To borrow a metaphor drawn by Debra Meyerson and Joyce Fletcher (2000), consider height as a replacement for gender. Now, imagine a working world where short people dominated—say those who are under 5 feet tall. All of the physical structures (doorways, desks, chairs, file cabinets) are designed for short people. When tall people start entering the workplace, the first response of both the short people and the tall people is to try to assimilate these tall people. For example, the tall people learn to bend down to



fit under low doorways or type with their keyboards on their knees. Clearly, this approach does not work very well, as the tall people start to develop many physical (and emotional) ailments. The next approach, then, is for tall people to be separated. These tall people are put into a more “tall adaptive” environment and are segregated into jobs that they may be able to do better (such as reaching high bookshelves). Thus the tall people can use their unique skills to support the short people in their “core missions,” and tall people begin to be funneled into these “tall people” jobs. The problem with this, of course, is that the tall people do not necessarily want to be segregated and relegated to a support function. And just because they may be better at reaching high bookshelves does not mean that they necessarily find it fulfilling.

Finally, people come to the realization that tall and short people can get the same jobs done in different ways. They can both do the traditionally reserved “short people” jobs, although they may do it differently, and the “short” way of doing things in the past was not necessarily the best way to do things anyway. So what is required now is to restructure the entire system so that it values all types of employees and various different approaches to accomplishing work tasks.

This fable of the tall people in a short world might be said to represent the (re)entrance of women into the workforce. After World War II, the workplace was demographically dominated by men. The systems and structures that grew up to support this “organizational man” assumed, among other things, that he was the primary worker outside the home with a spouse who was the primary domestic caretaker. When women began to reenter the workforce in the 1970s (because they were in the workforce in large numbers during World War II as the men were off fighting), they found that the workplace was a less comfortable fit. And women generally took the same three approaches delineated earlier: Some tried to assimilate (to fit in), some separated themselves (either allowing themselves to be segregated into “female” jobs or, in reactance to this trend, opting out of the traditional system and striking out on their own), and some tried to restructure the workplace so that it better accommodates the styles (both lifestyles, such as flexible work hours, and interpersonal styles, such as teamwork and cooperation) of women, as well as those of men.

There is no inherently correct approach to take; personal and contextual factors strongly influence the viability of each of these approaches. The women presented in this chapter as being representative of each approach followed a mixture of strategies as they climbed their way to the top and were situated within distinct contextual environments. The categorization and supporting evidence are used to illustrate these approaches rather than to champion one over the other. In fact, as we detail in the final section, it is likely that women have to bear in mind many factors when considering when to use one type of strategy over another.

## Assimilating

To assimilate means to make yourself similar to your surrounding environment so as to fit in. This approach tries to figure out the “rules of the game,” meaning the implicit norms and coordination mechanisms that work within this system. This is being like one of the guys, and indeed it was a common strategy of the 1970s and 1980s when women even strove to dress like men with their oversized shoulder pads and floppy bows that mimicked men’s suits and ties.

Many women are assimilators, particularly those going into industries with strong male norms, such as investment banking, law, the military services, or construction. It is difficult to not be an assimilator when you are both in the minority demographically and when the workplace context represents a strongly male-dominated culture. Successful assimilators understand that it is a man’s game yet are willing to play by those rules to find their own success within traditionally gendered organizations.

### Carly Fiorina

One successful assimilator was Carly Fiorina, who rose to be president and CEO of Hewlett-Packard and the first woman to ever lead a Fortune 100 company. She received her bachelor of arts degree (B.A.) in philosophy and medieval history from Stanford University in 1976 and her master of business administration degree (M.B.A.) from the University of Maryland, Robert H. Smith School of Business in 1980 followed by a master of science (M.S.) in management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management in 1989. Fiorina actually entered the corporate world as a temporary employee, working for Kelly Services. She noted in her speech at the 2006 International Council of Shopping Centers convention in Las Vegas that her time in these roles helped her learn how to navigate the business world. She first signed on with AT&T as a sales representative in the male-dominated network-systems division. Ten years later, she became its first female officer, and 5 years after that she was named the head of North American sales. In the mid-1990s, when AT&T decided to spin off Bell Labs and Western Electric as a separate company, Fiorina was charged with leading the project. She played a key role in planning and implementing the 1996 initial public offering (IPO) of stock and company launch strategy. That spin-off company became Lucent Technologies, in one of the most successful IPOs in U.S. history.

Fiorina then became president of Lucent’s service provider division. In 1996 Fiorina was appointed president of Lucent’s consumer products business, reporting to company president and COO Rich McGinn. In 1997 she was appointed chair of Lucent’s consumer communications joint venture with Philips consumer communications and, later that year, was named group president for the global



service provider business, overseeing sales and marketing for Lucent's largest customer segment. In 1998 *Fortune* magazine named her the most powerful woman in business. The following year, Hewlett-Packard selected Fiorina as its new CEO, giving her the distinction of the first woman ever to lead a Fortune 100 company.

We consider Fiorina's strategy to be primarily one of assimilation, given her successful rise within the system. It is likely that her early exposure in support positions in organizations and as an outsider (a temp), gave her both the "insider" knowledge of how things really get done in organizations as well as the external perspective to see these rules objectively. She learned the ropes, and as she did, she rose successfully within her company (AT&T and then later Lucent Technologies).

Unfortunately for her, she happened to take over Hewlett-Packard just as the boom in the technology sectors was coming to a close. Fiorina spearheaded the acquisition of Compaq, which became hotly debated, and earned her a reputation as "divisive" and "disruptive." Though the merger appeared successful for a few quarters, profits soon began to decline. Shortly afterward, in 2005, she was ousted by the Hewlett-Packard board, and at that time the stock was worth less than it had been when she joined the company in 1999.

### Ann Hopkins

Ann Hopkins is probably best known for her successful suit against her employer, Price Waterhouse, which might make her sound more like a segregator or restructurer than an assimilator. Nonetheless, before her suit, she was a first-class assimilator. A self-described Texas "army brat," she grew up with a respect for authority and a can-do attitude to whatever the rules of the game might be. She earned a B.A. in 1965 from Hollins College in Roanoke, Virginia, and 2 years later earned a master's degree in mathematics from Indiana University. In 1978 Hopkins began working for Price Waterhouse and was a senior manager in the firm's Office of Government Services (OGS) in 1982 when she was nominated for partnership. OGS's nominating proposal praised Hopkins's "outstanding performance" and said she was "virtually at partnership level." In fact, her supervisors said that Hopkins's "strong character, independence and integrity" are well recognized by her clients and peers (Glaberson, 1988, n.p.). She had played a critical role in connection with a large State Department project and had billed more hours and generated more business than any other candidate.

In 1983, 88 people were eligible to become partners at Price Waterhouse, and Hopkins was the only woman among them. Of the 88 people nominated, 47 of them made it. Despite her clearly superior credentials, Hopkins's nomination was put on hold after several male partners voiced concerns that she was too "macho" and might

benefit from "charm school." It was at this point, that Hopkins switched strategies from assimilation to segregation.

Instead of heeding their "charm school" advice, Hopkins quit Price Waterhouse and filed a lawsuit under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. In June 2001, the U.S. Supreme Court held that Price Waterhouse had engaged in unlawful discrimination and set a legal precedent that shifted the burden onto employers "to convince the fact finder that, despite the smoke, there is no fire." Ms. Hopkins, then a senior budget officer at the World Bank, declared herself "delighted" by the decision.

The Court's decision was based, in part, on the "intolerable and impermissible Catch-22" at play: The same aggression that allowed Hopkins to be successful in sales was, in the end, the firm's justification for passing her over for promotion. Engaging in business practices identical to those of her male counterparts brought her several remarkable achievements, but in the end it was not a viable route to success. Hence, she switched her strategy.

### Separating and Striking Out on One's Own

Because the separation strategy within existing corporations often funnels the newcomers (women) into support positions rather than line positions, advancing within these confines often proves difficult. This is not to deny the successes of the women who have been able to rise to the peak of these support positions; however, director of human resources is a far cry from CEO, and line positions such as the latter are the ones with the most power, prestige, and pay. A common reaction to the sex segregation of work is for women to opt out of the existing workforce and rebuild organizations that accommodate the needs and desires of women more effectively than existing institutions. As such, successful separation strategies often result from women working from outside the system rather than from within it. Separators generally face a certain level of discrimination within the system that they find intolerable and thus decide to opt out, in part to create their own rules. Naturally, this requires an imagination and vision as well as a tolerance for risk.

### Oprah Winfrey

Talk show host and media mogul Oprah Winfrey is one of the wealthiest and most influential women in American business. In 1998, for example, she was named one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. Born in Kosciusko, Mississippi, Winfrey first grew up on a farm with her grandmother where she began her broadcasting career by learning to read aloud and perform recitations at the age of 3. Her official debut began at age 17, when she was hired by WVOL radio in Nashville (where she was living with a strict father). She won the title of Miss Black



Tennessee at age 18. The notoriety gained here may have given Winfrey's budding radio and television career the one final push it needed. By 19, she was anchoring a news broadcast on a local Nashville television station while pursuing her B.A. in communications from Tennessee State University to which she was awarded a full scholarship. She moved to Baltimore in 1976, where she coanchored a nightly news program and cohosted a morning talk show. In 1984, after being told that she was not impartial enough to read the news, she moved to Chicago to take over a failing morning show called *A.M. Chicago*. Over the space of several months the show climbed from the bottom of the rankings to the number one spot, even outdoing Phil Donahue by 10,000 viewers. In 1986 *The Oprah Winfrey Show* went national and was an instant success.

Despite her early successes in radio and television, Winfrey recognized that the interests of women were underrepresented in these media outlets as well as in corporate America more generally. This dearth of female-friendly outlets for support and acknowledgment was one of the primary drivers of her mission to bring women's issues to the forefront of the media by launching her various media companies and products (from her own TV show to book clubs and magazines). She is a separator because she recognized an underserved market and that she was able to serve it and preserve how she wanted to play the game.

Winfrey was a cofounder of Oxygen Media, and she also owns Harpo Productions and *O, The Oprah Magazine*, all of which target an almost exclusively female audience. Topics she often covers on her show and magazine include weight loss, parenting, and other issues typically associated with an exclusively female demographic. Marketing to this demographic has brought her unparalleled financial success: She was the first black female billionaire in the United States, and she reportedly earns around half a million dollars per day from her TV show alone.

## Mary Kay Ash

Mary Kay Ash is the founder of the cosmetics empire that bears her name: Mary Kay Inc. Ash began her career in sales in 1939 as a medical student, selling door-to-door part time to support herself. She attended the University of Houston until 1943 when she was married; when that union ended in divorce, she returned to sales for Stanley Home Products. She proved so adept that she soon moved to sales as a full-time job. She became the national training director at World Gift Co. but was frequently passed over for promotion and eventually quit after 25 years in corporate sales. In 1963 she started her own cosmetics company with her son in a small Dallas storefront. In the first year alone, they brought in \$200,000 in profit. The company briefly went public in 1968 but went private again in 1985, and it remains one of the largest private firms in the United States. By 2004 Mary Kay Cosmetics had sales of over

\$1.8 billion in 30 markets and had an independent sales force of 1.3 million people.

The Mary Kay product line and company policy are both extremely female centered. Their sales demographic is almost exclusively female, and the vast majority of its sales associates are female as well, because the job offers the flexible scheduling often desired by mothers reentering the workforce. Additionally, Mary Kay Ash often said that she measured her company's performance on "P&L," which stood not for "profit and loss" but for "people and love," a slogan that would simply be unacceptable in a more gender-balanced work environment.

We consider her a segregator because of her realization that she had been funneled into middle management at World Gift. As training director she had risen to the highest support position that the company seemed willing to allow her. When she was repeatedly denied further opportunity for promotion, she strove to build a better company that did not stifle the opportunities of its female employees but rather accommodated and celebrated their unique needs as members of a valued workforce.

## Restructuring

Like assimilation, restructuring is another strategy that stays within the system rather than opting out and creating an entirely different organization, *de novo*. Yet, by restructuring the woman tries to change the system from within. Restructuring is usually most successful when the woman has a certain amount of status and thus might be a strategy for later in women's careers (or for a smaller domain, such as a workgroup one is supervising, within a larger corporation). Successful restructuring may also require an external shock to the organization from the environment. As many consultants of organizational change have noted, it may be necessary to create an urgency or need for a change before people will alter "business as usual." There is a general tendency toward keeping the status quo, because change heightens uncertainty.

## Anne Mulcahy

Anne Mulcahy received her B.A. in English and journalism from Marymount College in Tarrytown, New Jersey. Naming her as Xerox's first female CEO in 2001 could have been regarded as a desperate last-ditch effort to save the company. Mulcahy had little executive experience, but Xerox was \$17 billion in debt, caught in a scandal with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and had been reporting losses for the previous consecutive five quarters. Still, her appointment inspired little confidence—the day she was announced as the new CEO, the company's stock tanked an additional 15%. However, after only a year with Mulcahy in the lead, Xerox was once again reporting operating profits. She restructured its debt, cut its operating



costs, and strengthened the competitiveness of its products with those of rivals such as Canon. She resigned as CEO in 2009, though she maintains her seat as chair, and passed the position to Ursula Burns, marking the first woman-to-woman transfer of the CEO in a Fortune 500 company.

Mulcahy is a restructurer because she took a company, which a succession of male CEOs had driven "into a ditch," and by running the company her way rather than how her predecessors had done so, she was able to turn it around. One of the notable directions of her restructuring was focusing on the customer; that "brought a reality check to the leadership of Xerox," said David MacDonald, a former executive at Xerox (Kharif, 2003, n.p.). She met with clients, directly responded to customer feedback, and lowered prices. Mulcahy's restructuring also included implementing such women-friendly initiatives as calling for more reasonable and flexible hours by managers and offering flexible work arrangements to promote work-life balance such as staggered hours, compressed work weeks, telecommuting, and job sharing.

Further, her restructuring is evidenced by her chosen successor as CEO of Xerox: Ursula Burns, the first African American woman to head a Fortune 500 company. Burns received her bachelor of science degree (B.S.) in mechanical engineering from the Polytechnic Institute of New York University and her M.S. from Columbia University. Her background in science and mathematics taught her valuable lessons in discipline, problem solving, turning complexity into simplicity, respecting "time to market" work processes, managing by fact, depending on the contributions of others, and measuring and adapting. In her own words, "All of these are fundamental attributes of successful engineers and, I believe, successful leaders" (Output Links, 2009).

### Carol Bartz

Yahoo! CEO Carol Bartz is another example of a restructurer—someone who comes in and shakes up a corporation. She is a midwestern farm girl who learned early that you cannot sit around hoping the crops will grow, you have to put in hard work if you want a fruitful harvest. Her favorite motto, "Fail Fast-Forward," embodies this spirit of constant movement toward a desired goal. You cannot be afraid to fail, but if you do, recognize it quickly and move forward beyond it in constant pursuit of your goal without losing momentum. In line with this she encourages everyone, especially women, to persevere in the face of adversity and to refuse taking no for an answer when it lies between them and their goals. It is this mentality that kept her from being held back by gender norms in the workplace. Instead of ruminating or analyzing decisions to death in an industry such as technology where time and obsolescence go hand in hand, she learned that impatience can be a virtue and that by doing well and always striving to do better, one can continue to move forward.

Bartz received her B.S. in computer science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1971 and has since

earned honorary degrees from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and William Woods University. In 1992 Bartz joined Autodesk and quickly assessed that what the company needed was someone willing to make tough decisions and stand by them. This is where Bartz found her niche. By promoting cooperation, encouraging communication, and making everyone feel responsible for contributing to the company's success, she was able to force the company of bright engineers to face their fears and move forward in producing projects and optimizing performance.

Bartz took the position of CEO in January 2009 and immediately sought to redefine the organization. Rather than cowering in the shadows of Internet search giant Google.com and a failed deal with Microsoft under the previous CEO, Bartz burst into her new position renegotiating and solidifying a partnership with Microsoft and launching a \$100 million-plus advertising campaign to redefine Yahoo!'s image. She did not let gender or anything else stand in the way of the goals she desired to achieve.

### Lessons Learned: Advice to Young Women as They Choose Their Strategies

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Each of the three strategies, and the successful women who personify them, brings to light important prescriptions for behaviors and tactics to achieve advancement and success. Though the tactics we describe next are grouped by the semantic themes delineated in the previous section, they are not mutually exclusive. We encourage women who seek advancement to pursue multiple strategies and actively monitor and adapt their behavior as necessary to meet the needs of any given situation.

### Tactics for Successful Assimilation

Working within male-dominated industries or even just organizational structures developed and maintained by men has often been termed the *glass labyrinth* because there is no simple ascent up a corporate ladder (regardless of whether there is a glass ceiling at the top); rather, it is a complex maze of conforming to societal and organizational expectations. Successfully assimilating into this environment requires an astute awareness of others' expectations and an ability to modify one's behaviors in such a way as to avoid dead ends and maneuver through tight corners. One of the most important lessons to learn about navigating this labyrinth is anticipating what is around the next curve and seizing opportunities.

#### *Knowing What Is Around the Next Curve*

When trying to assimilate, women must know what they are assimilating to. In other words, a comprehensive knowledge of the playing field is necessary to play the game effectively. An important aspect of the environment



that women need to be attuned to when trying to effectively assimilate is the potential to be hit by *the backlash effect*. The backlash effect defines the negative social sanctions women incur when they behave in perceived violation of prescribed gender norms. Despite all our societal progress, traditional gender norms remain relatively stagnant and are especially salient in male-dominated industries. Women are associated with femininity (communal, other-directed, kind, nurturing, etc.) while men are associated with masculinity (assertive, independent, self-confident, etc.). These norms are not only used as descriptors, helping people to make prejudgments about how men and women are, but they are also prescriptive in the sense of defining how men and women *ought to be*. Because of this prescriptive component, women who engage in counter-normative behavior are punished for violating these generally accepted societal expectations. As such, women are partially justified in shying away from assimilating behaviors because there are potential negative costs for asserting oneself in this way.

Awareness of this backlash effect is crucial for women to be able to manage their impression in ways that allow them to avoid negative social sanctions for being perceived as too masculine and unfeminine when trying to successfully assimilate. As noted earlier, researchers argue that the backlash effect is not a reaction to women behaving too masculine but rather is a sanction against women who are not behaving feminine (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). As such, learning to balance and monitor one's self-presentation as both competent (masculine) and likable (feminine) is vital for career success. In the past, women with career aspirations thought the key to success was becoming one of the guys (e.g., by pulling their hair back, wearing pantsuits instead of skirts, and rejecting femininity for masculinity). Yet as Ann Hopkins might attest, this strategy seems destined to lead to criticism that the woman is "unfeminine." We now know that balance is the key to navigating the corporate labyrinth, so maintaining a feminine presence while engaging in the masculine behaviors necessary to succeed will facilitate the ascent up the corporate hierarchy.

### *Seizing Opportunities*

One of the biggest pitfalls women often succumb to when trying to assimilate is not recognizing that opportunities need to be seized. In other words, resources, assignments, promotions, and so forth, are not handed out but rather need to be proactively taken. This means to be successful you need to ask or negotiate the human and economic capital that you need.

Critically, women need to make sure their companies are willing to invest in their human capital. Human capital refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to be productive in the workplace, and women are sometimes unaware that this is an investment that may need to be negotiated. There is some evidence that men receive more

company-sponsored training than women for the same amount of workplace experience and education (Tharenou, Latimer, & Conroy, 1994). Women need to be aware of training as a resource for themselves and ask for it. Companies spend millions of dollars each year on both in-house and outsourced training, because it is generally cheaper to train and develop those employees in place than to search and recruit new ones. Women need to leverage this resource and ask for their fair share. Naturally, requests will not always be granted. If refused, you might ask when it would be possible and certainly try again. Failure is part of negotiating—not all requests will be granted. However, if training is continually denied, it is time to look for another organization.

Another specific human capital investment for women to seek out is experience in line positions. There are two paths into management, staff and line positions, but the latter is a more direct conduit to the top leadership positions. Line positions are operations with direct profit and loss responsibility, where a person generates revenue or manages people who do, and this type of experience is crucial for the advancement of both men and women. However, women often self-select into staff functions that support line positions such as human resources, legal, or communications. Women and CEOs alike acknowledge that the single most important impediment to women's advancement is the lack of line management experience.

Finally, women may find themselves having to negotiate for financial resources (money, personnel) that may be required to do any given assignment. Women are often reluctant to ask for what might be legitimate resources to get anything accomplished, assuming instead that they must just have to work harder. Women tend to accept new tasks (even when their plate is full), whereas men tend to treat new task assignments as an "opening offer"—that is, a request being made of them (not a dictate being given them). Hence, men are more likely to accept with a "yes, but I will need..." (Babcock & Laschever, 2003).

Women should copy the reply of their male colleagues here. When the situation is ambiguous and it is not clear whether a negotiation is appropriate, men tend to assume a negotiation is acceptable more often than do women. Women should not shy away from opportunities to negotiate.

### **Tactics for Separating and Striking Out on One's Own**

Many women may feel stifled when operating within the more traditional corporate environments. They may strive to build their own success by celebrating the unique capabilities of female employees. Indeed two of the top three reasons given by female entrepreneurs for why they chose to launch their own businesses were frustration with their previous work environment and feeling unchallenged by their previous job in terms of lack of flexibility and



feeling their contributions were undervalued (the third top reason is inspiration by an entrepreneurial idea). Tactics for maximizing this type of entrepreneurial success include effective networking and motivating with vision.

### *Entrepreneurial Networking*

As of 2009, 40% of all privately held firms in the United States were owned by women. These businesses generated \$1.9 trillion in sales (as of 2008) and employed more than 13 million people (Center for Women's Business Research, 2009). However, despite the fact that the growth rate of female-owned businesses is twice the national average and that there is an abundance of women seeking entrepreneurial pursuits, women are significantly less likely to receive venture capital funding than are their male counterparts. For example, in 2003 only 4.5% of venture-funded firms were headed by women and only 4.2% of the \$19 billion in venture capital invested that year went to female-owned businesses. Further, female-owned businesses make up just 4% of sales to large, Fortune 1000 companies (National Women's Business Council, 2003). Although a number of factors contribute to this funding discrepancy, at least partial consideration must be given to the power of social networking.

The old adage, "It's not what you know, it's who you know" should be modified to "It is both what you know and who you know" that contributes to success. Often one's social connections can provide opportunities beyond those that can be attained through merit alone. However, despite the fact that the "modern generation" of female entrepreneurs has more professional and managerial experience than the "traditional" female entrepreneurs of the past, they still face unique obstacles when it comes to acquiring venture capital. Developing the appropriate network of social contacts is thus critical for succeeding in entrepreneurial pursuits. Business owners need to maintain many different types of contacts, including business partners, suppliers, customers, venture capitalists, bankers, creditors, distributors, and trade associations. Not only are direct contacts important but so are indirect linkages beyond one's immediate contacts (Aldrich & Reesc, 1994).

Sociologists call these indirect contacts "weak ties" (Granovetter, 1985), and discuss the paradox of how much "weak" ties give someone strength. Weak ties are connections that are one tie removed from you. That is, a friend of a friend, or a colleague of a colleague, or a friend of a colleague. Weak ties are valuable because they have access to novel information and opportunities. In contrast, people with whom you are immediately linked tend to have the same information that you have. Thus women should network outside of those people who are geographically convenient, as these connections are not likely to offer new information or perspectives. Professional organizations offer a good starting point for women seeking to expand their direct and indirect networks.

### *Projecting a Vision*

Another tactic key to becoming a successful entrepreneur is the ability to effectively communicate a vision that inspires motivation in others. This vision should come from true passion—an insight that one has about a new product, an underserved market, or simply a novel way of producing or delivering a good or service. Remember both our prototypes here, Oprah Winfrey and Mary Kay Ash. Both of these remarkable women were able to see that the traditional "business as usual" was missing half the market. Winfrey was able to deliver a new type of television show that started to offer women a community for connecting with each other, through her show, book circles, and periodicals. Ash was able to deliver a traditional product in a new way that was much more female-friendly, both to women as consumers and women as employees. Projecting a vision starts with having something new to direct people's attention and then explaining why this new (product, good, service, or delivery method) is an improvement over the last one.

### **Tactics for Successful Restructuring**

Successful restructuring requires a special balance between assimilating as needed and challenging the status quo when appropriate. As such, it requires an astute understanding of others' expectations and how one's gender might influence these expectations, the ability to circumvent traditional gender norms when situationally appropriate, and the ability to understand when to best negotiate movement in the boundaries of these gender norms. Thus we discuss two types of strategies here: one is understanding why and when gender-based expectations of behavior might be minimal, and the other is how one might negotiate to help change these expectations.

### *Understanding When Gender-Based Expectations Are Low*

When gender stereotypes are not activated, women are not held to the rather impossible standard of being both independent and assertive (normative demands of the workplace) as well as being communal and nurturing (normative demands for being female). So when are gender stereotypes more dormant so that gender-based expectations are minimal? Two contexts have been demonstrated so far—when threat level is low and when an actor's status is high.

A high level of threat (such as low financial resources or a tight time constraint) tends to heighten any kind of stereotype against both individuals (Fein & Spencer, 1997) and groups of people (Gonsalkorale, Carlisle, & von Hippel, 2007). Accordingly, Emily Amanatullah and Catherine Tinsley (2008) found that when financial resources were tight (thus threat level was high), female



negotiators suffered more social and financial backlash than male negotiators who engaged in the same behavior. On the other hand, when resources were plentiful (thus threat level was low), female negotiators faced no backlash and indeed were actually slightly *more* likely to get what they asked for relative to their male peers. Although people do not always have the luxury of operating in a low-threat or threat-free environment, one way that women might be able to try to minimize the threat of any request is to try to emphasize the common goal that the request fulfills (e.g., it helps her do her work better or helps her negotiate better for the company).

Another factor that attenuates stereotype activation is when women have high status. High-status actors (whether male or female) are allowed to behave assertively (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), such as ask for resources without fearing backlash. For example, research has found that when a woman asking for resources was described as being of high status—a senior human relations manager with a track record of success—backlash against her was diminished relative to a low-status woman asking for the same resources. A woman's status may protect her from backlash because her assertive behavior is attributed to her position rather than her gender and because successful executives are expected to assert themselves. Younger women might capitalize on this finding by emphasizing their already accumulated status; by this we mean “dressing the part,” looking and acting professionally, and comporting oneself with assurance.

## Summary and Future Directions

The aforementioned strategy of “restructuring” may be one of the more difficult strategies for women as they navigate their success, as it is difficult to change entrenched social expectations. The good news, however, is that workplace norms are evolving as new demographics and new technologies are introduced into the workplace. There are, for example, new norms about meetings (with teleconferencing), what a work week looks like (flextime), and in some companies even what constitutes the office (with virtual officing). Thus women working in new, rapidly

changing environments may have better luck with this strategy than women working in well-established companies and industries.

The crux of this strategy is confronting and renegotiating women's identity and roles within the organizations' context. The primary task is to move beyond a dichotomous set of roles for men versus women. The good news is that smart people *can* be moved beyond binary, dichotomous thinking to consider complexities. Everyone engages in multiple roles (positions)—mother and wife, son and brother, supervisor and friend, board chair and business owner.

One strategy might be to understand the gendered expectations of her evaluator and that her assertive behavior may appear “out of the norm” but offer social accounts for why in this instance her behavior is valid (and even beneficial for the organization). Because the backlash effect is a mechanism for forcing conformity to social norms, claiming that this instance of behavioral nonconformity is not a challenge to that gendered norm will mitigate the potential for backlash. For example, women might explain, “I don't mean to be too demanding, and I normally wouldn't care about this, but in this context, I think we need to argue for a refund because of the precedent it might set for the company if we do not.”

Another strategy to help destabilize the gender dichotomy (that men must behave like men and women behave like women) is by highlighting the complexity and multidimensionality of all employees (male and female). For example, a woman could highlight her role as an employee of the firm, manager of the team, community member, devoted wife, loving mother, or golf enthusiast. She might create a multifaceted and complex self-identity whereby she can no longer be evaluated simply as a woman against traditional gender norms.

Finally, women should cultivate powerful allies that will support their complex identities. Through intentional and vigorous networking, women can utilize the social capital of others to help them change the dichotomous, gendered context. The more people there are who enforce this individual complexity over gendered dichotomy, the more normative it will become to evaluate individuals based on their individuality rather than gendered heuristics.

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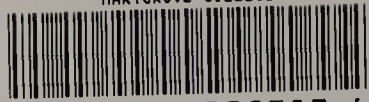
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