
WOMEN AND AMERICAN POLITICS

A Research Agenda

for the 21st Century

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
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INTRODUCTION

More than two decades and numerous "Year(s) of the Woman" have passed since the contemporary feminist movement began to direct attention and effort toward increasing the numbers of women involved in politics. Yet, despite the increasing presence of women in elective public office, women remain vastly underrepresented in the political life of our nation. In 1996 just one of the 50 states has a woman governor, and women constitute only about 10 percent of all members of Congress. Although the number of women in state legislatures has more than quadrupled over the past two decades, only 20.7 percent of all state legislators are women.

Two decades have also passed since the publication of the first major book, commissioned by the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), examining women serving in public office, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's *Political Woman* (New York: Basic Books, 1974). During the years since the publication of this landmark work, scholars as well as activists have increasingly turned their attention to the political participation of women. Researchers have conducted a multitude of studies aimed at understanding the contributions that women make to politics as well as the obstacles they face in their attempts to gain and exercise power.

Although a generation of activist effort and scholarly attention has both improved the status of women in politics and augmented our understanding of women's political behavior, many questions remain unanswered and myriad issues have not been addressed adequately. In April 1994, CAWP, with funding provided by the Ford Foundation, convened a group of 79 scholars, researchers, political practitioners, and activists to help identify existing gaps in our knowledge, discuss the reasons for the gaps, and imagine the kinds of research projects needed to address unanswered questions.¹ The research agenda presented here, based in large part on discussions that took place at this conference, provides a guide for research on women's participation in American politics to lead us into the next century. This agenda is intended to stimulate more inquiry by highlighting, for both researchers and funders, major research needs in the study of women and American politics.

A central goal of this project — one that reflects a longstanding interest at CAWP — is to help bridge the gap between research and activism. The research agenda is the result of a rich dialogue among people who share an interest in women's political participation — academics who are recognized experts on women and politics, researchers who are not affiliated with universities, and political practitioners and activists. Those who helped formulate the agenda were challenged to think about future research in terms of questions that are both important to activists and politicians and theoretically interesting to scholars. Conference participants were charged with developing a research agenda which, if carried out, would not only add to our understanding of women's political participation, but also enhance the work of those trying to increase women's representation and influence in politics.

¹ See Appendix A for a list of conference participants.

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A RESEARCH AGENDA

The working conference, from which this research agenda emerged, provided participants with an opportunity to think creatively about what has not been done and to focus on how new, imaginative research and collaboration between scholars and practitioners could facilitate women's increased participation in political life. The conference included a mix of plenary and workshop sessions and was designed to foster intensive and creative communication about research needs and priorities.²

The research agenda itself was developed largely through nine workshops, each focusing on a specific research area:

- Recruitment of Women Candidates
- Campaign Strategy
- Money and Other Campaign Resources
- Gender-Related Influences on Voting Behavior and Public Opinion
- Impact of Women Political Leaders
- Images, Stereotypes, and Media Coverage of Women in Politics
- Political Parties and Women's Organizations
- Political Participation of Women of Color
- Broadening the Study of Women's Participation.

For each workshop, a scholar with recognized expertise was commissioned to write a paper laying out an agenda for future research based on what she saw as the major unanswered research questions related to the topic of the workshop. Two or three discussants, consisting of both scholars/researchers and activists/practitioners, were asked to respond to the ideas expressed in the paper and to make additional suggestions regarding research needs. Other workshop participants, who had read the papers in advance of the conference, then added their suggestions and comments. The research agenda presented here reflects the major ideas and research questions that emerged from each of the workshops as well as from the plenary sessions and general discussions that took place throughout the conference.

Future research on women and American politics must consider and address issues of theoretical concern to scholars, but it should also be developed with the explicit intent of generating knowledge and information that activists can use to enhance women's political representation and influence.

GENERAL THEMES AND CONCERNS

Need for Establishing Ongoing Communications About Research Between Academics and Activists

Although both activists/practitioners and scholars/researchers are interested in promoting women's increased participation in politics, communication between these groups is often limited. Scholars and practitioners confront different career-related demands and operate under different time constraints; these differences often make communication and collaboration between the two groups difficult. Nevertheless, conference participants agreed that the lack of communication between scholars and practitioners concerning research and research needs is due more to insufficient opportunity than to either an inability to transcend differences or a lack of will. The conversation that took place at the conference proved useful to both practitioners and researchers, and a desire for continued communication was one of the most important themes to emerge.

² See Appendix B for a copy of the conference program.

Future research on women and American politics must consider and address issues of theoretical concern to scholars, but it should also be developed with the explicit intent of generating knowledge and information that activists can use to enhance women's political representation and influence. Equally important is the need to find a way for scholars to disseminate their research findings in a manner that is timely and in a form that is accessible to political practitioners.

Scholarly research will likely be more sensitive to the needs of political practitioners only if enduring mechanisms for collaborative development of research questions are created. Similarly, an ongoing mechanism is needed for translating and disseminating scholarly research to practitioners. Recent advances in computer technology and communications, such as e-mail and the Internet, offer interesting possibilities for establishing ongoing forums for communications between scholars and activists.

Need for Research About and By Women of Color

In developing a research agenda to guide work on women and American politics into the 21st century, issues of diversity are a central concern. Questions about the specific needs and barriers faced by women of color should be integrated into all aspects of research on women and politics. Research is needed which takes the information that we have about "women's" political activities (usually based on studies of predominantly white samples or populations of women) and determines the ways in which the experiences of African-American women, Latinas, Asian-American women, Native American women, and other women of color are similar to and different from those of white women and each other. For instance, how do various groups of women of color fare in raising money for campaigns when compared with white women? What distinctive problems do Latinas, African-American women, Asian-American women, and Native American women face in raising money?

While integrating issues faced by diverse communities into existing research on women and politics is important, future research projects must be devised in such a way that white women's experiences are not always used as the sole basis for formulating research questions. We therefore need research that takes the experiences of women of color as the starting point. In many cases new and different questions, for example about the roles of churches and indigenous community groups, must be asked in order to understand fully the political participation of women of color and their contributions to politics.

Finally, we must enhance opportunities for women of color to do research focusing on women and politics. In the mid-1990s the vast majority of scholars conducting research on women and American politics are white. While current scholars of women and politics need to be more sensitive to the distinctive experiences of women of color, that alone is not enough. In addition, we must find ways to encourage, facilitate, and finance the participation and research of women of color who have an interest in studying women and American politics.

Need for More Diverse and Alternative Methodologies

To date most research on women and politics has been done by political scientists using disciplinary frameworks and has been based on quantitative analysis of survey data. Conference participants agreed that future research should be more interdisciplinary and employ more diverse methodologies if it is to address gaps in our knowledge. Research design and methods of data

Questions about the specific needs and barriers faced by women of color should be integrated into all aspects of research on women and politics.

collection should be guided by the nature of the substantive questions requiring attention, and those substantive questions may often demand less frequently employed methods such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus groups, case studies, or content analysis.

As an example, women of color usually are not analyzed separately in large surveys of women officeholders because the number of cases is too small to permit statistical analysis. Given the small numbers of women of color among public officials, alternative methods (such as case studies, in-depth interviews, ethnographic research, or surveys based exclusively on women of color) can provide more adequate information about the problems faced and contributions made by women of color serving as public officials.

Whenever possible, multiple methods (for example, a combination of surveys, in-depth interviewing, and participant observation) should be used. Relying on any one particular method, no matter what the approach, constrains both the questions that can be asked and the findings that are generated. Quantitative and qualitative methods should be seen as complementary research tools.

Need to Expand the Scope of Research

Except for the nationwide studies conducted by the Center for the American Woman and Politics, most studies of women in American politics are small in scale, geographically limited, and focused on a single level of government. This pattern reflects the fact that funding for more ambitious, large-scale research projects on women and politics has seldom been available.

However, many unanswered questions require analyzing and comparing women's participation at different levels—local, state, and federal. It is not clear whether research findings derived from the state level, for example, are generalizable to the federal or local levels. Moreover, answers to research questions may vary across jurisdictions within the same level of government—for example, from state to state or from one locality to another. For these reasons more multi-site, large-scale, and cross-jurisdictional research is desirable. For instance, we could learn more about the dynamics and underlying causes of the "gender gap" if we had studies examining voting behavior and perceptions of candidates and issues in congressional, state legislative, and local races in addition to presidential and major statewide races, where the existence of data from publicly released exit polls has made research possible.

Large-scale research projects combining qualitative and quantitative methods would aid in developing more complex and nuanced models for understanding the nature of women's political activities and the ways in which those activities are affected by different political environments and contexts. A large-scale, cross-jurisdictional study of the participation of women of color and politics is a particularly important need.

Need for More Research Comparing Women in the U.S. and Other Countries

Since the position of women in politics differs dramatically in different parts of the world, there are significant portions of the research agenda which would benefit from comparing the political situation of women in the U.S. to that of women in other countries. Comparative research can facilitate our understanding of the effects of structural and institutional factors on women's opportunities in American politics. In addition, such research can help to inform the development of institutional, legal, and party rule changes that could further level the playing

field of American politics. Finally, research comparing the political situation of women in the U.S. to that of women in other countries can facilitate the development of new research questions. In short, comparative approaches to the study of women in politics can help us move beyond our own frame of reference and see both old and new questions in a different light.

Need to Expand the Definition of the "Political"

Most research on political participation, including that conducted by researchers who study women and politics, has focused on electoral politics and formal governmental structures and institutions. Non-electoral and nongovernmental forms of political participation—for example, grassroots activism, community-based organizing, and social movements—have received far less attention, and relationships between non-electoral and electoral forms of political activity have seldom been studied.

Much of women's participation in political activities, both historically and in a contemporary context, is rendered invisible or unimportant when the focus of research is almost exclusively on electoral politics and formal governmental institutions. Just because women, and especially women of color, have historically had limited access to formal channels of political power does not necessarily mean that they have not been politically active. Although women have been and continue to be involved in their communities and at the grassroots level, that activity has seldom been studied because it does not fit the traditional conception of what counts as "political" participation. Similarly, the relationship between women active in social movements and grassroots politics ("outsiders") and women who occupy formal positions of power within institutions ("insiders") has received little research attention. Future research on women and politics should broaden traditional conceptions of the "political" by examining the political participation of women wherever it occurs, regardless of whether that participation is electoral or non-electoral or happens inside or outside formal governmental institutions.

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Need for Additional Funding for Women and Politics Research

In the course of developing this research agenda, the issue of lack of adequate funding for women and politics research was a recurrent theme. Most of the gaps in knowledge identified in this research agenda exist not because of lack of interest among scholars and practitioners, but because few resources have been available for scholars wishing to pursue research on women and politics. Often researchers with ambitious and imaginative ideas have scaled back projects in order to undertake them with minimal resources. Some researchers have abandoned projects on women and politics because of lack of funding; instead, they have pursued other research projects where prospects for funding were better.

Academic sources and foundations, such as the National Science Foundation, have rarely given money to projects focusing on women and politics. There are a number of reasons for this. Many of those who have the greatest influence within the academic community have viewed the study of women and politics as marginal — as outside the mainstream and peripheral to the most important work being done. Moreover, scholars who do research on women and politics often are perceived as advocates for a particular political agenda and thus are considered insufficiently "objective" in their work. Several academic sources and

foundations have a strong bias toward work that is highly scientific and quantitative in nature and seeks to explain variations in human behavior with parsimonious models consisting of a small number of variables. As this research agenda makes clear, many women and politics researchers believe that more diverse and alternative approaches to research are necessary if we are to answer some of the most compelling questions about women's participation in American politics.

This research agenda outlines a number of general needs in the area of women and politics research: the need for forums that bring scholars and activists together so that they can work cooperatively in the development of research questions; the need for a mechanism for disseminating research findings in a timely manner to practitioners who can use women and politics research to facilitate the increased participation of women in American politics; the need for more research by and about the political participation of women of color; the need for research that uses more diverse, alternative, and preferably multiple methods; the need for research that is broader in scale and compares women's participation in different states and localities and at different levels of government (federal, state, local); the need for research that compares the political situation of women in the U.S. to women in other countries. None of the needs outlined in this research agenda can be met without adequate funding to transform these needs into reality.

THE RESEARCH AGENDA

For the purpose of developing an agenda to guide research on women's participation in American politics, workshops were held on nine general topics. An in-depth discussion of research suggestions on each topic follows.

RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN CANDIDATES

As Jody Newman, Executive Director of the National Women's Political Caucus, commented, "There is nothing more important than all of us involved in getting women elected...should be doing than recruiting more women to run for office, but the problem is how." While the number of women running for public office has increased over the past two decades, the proportion of all candidates who are women, especially women of color, remains relatively small. Although women are active in politics in sizable numbers as party activists, as staff members for politicians, and as community activists, few women seek election to public office. Existing research provides some clues as to why women who are active in politics might not run for office. However, most of this research is based on women candidates and officeholders — those who overcame obstacles to candidacy and decided to seek office. Future research should examine individuals who were dissuaded from running or who never considered running for office despite having the qualifications and experiences to do so.

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Questions for Future Research

- How do women fare in the pre-primary candidate selection process? What roles do party leaders, community-based groups, and potential financial contributors play in encouraging or discouraging women candidates?
- Why are so many women unsuccessful in winning primary elections? To what extent do the political parties share responsibility for the disproportionate concentration of women in "hopeless" races, the lack of women candidates in races for open seats, and the lack of greater success on the part of women who enter open primaries?
- How important are women's organizations in recruiting women candidates to office? To what extent do women's organizations attempt to promote greater inclusiveness in American politics by encouraging women from diverse ethnic, racial, and class backgrounds to run for office? Do women's organizations become less important in political recruitment as traditional channels of recruitment (for example, parties and political action committees) become more open to women? Has this been true in other countries?
- To what extent do identity groups (for example, groups organized around gender, race, or ethnicity) encourage women's involvement in social movements, community based politics, or electoral politics? Are some identity groups more important than others in facilitating the

participation of women? Are groups representing a double identity (for example, ethnicity or race as well as gender) more likely to contribute to women's recruitment as candidates or to their participation in grassroots politics?

- What can we learn about the development and implementation of quota systems for party and elected officials in other countries that might have important implications for efforts to increase women's recruitment and representation in the United States? With the implementation of term limits in various states, will women take advantage of the increased number of opportunities to run for open seats and increase their representation in office? Are there other rule changes, in addition to quotas and term limits, which, if instituted, might result in increased numbers of women candidates and officeholders?
- Do women and men differ in the extent to which they see the political arena as being open to them? Do political gatekeepers or members of the public perceive an "ideal" quota for women in certain categories of public office? Is it permissible for some political bodies (for example, school boards) to have larger proportions of women than other political bodies (for example, county commissions or state legislatures)?
- Are women more likely to be involved in grassroots politics than in electoral politics because they perceive a lack of opportunity in the traditional political arena? How often and under what circumstances does grassroots political involvement lead women to run for office?
- What are the implications for women's candidacies of the increasing influence of the radical right? To what extent are the types of women who run for office and the issue agendas advocated by women candidates influenced by ideological shifts in American politics?
- What has been the impact of programs that provide young women with female political role models (for example, internships with women leaders)? Are young women who participate in these programs more likely to get involved in politics?

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

As women experience greater and greater success in the electoral arena, the issue of campaign strategy becomes more complex. Although the proportion of candidates who are women remains small, with each successive election women are running in larger numbers for higher levels of office, both statewide and federal, and are more frequently facing other women in primary and general elections. If women are to be successful as candidates, the campaign strategies they employ must reflect these changes. More information is needed about women's campaigns in order to identify the most successful techniques and strategies. Research needs to look more closely at how decisions are made and who has the power to make them. In addition, research needs to compare and contrast the campaign strategies of incumbents and nonincumbents to see whether, and how, incumbency does or should change a candidate's campaign strategy.

Questions for Future Research

- How do women candidates structure and organize their campaigns? What decision-making processes do they use? Are there gender-related patterns? Do the patterns differ depending on the level of the race, geographic locality, or nature of the constituency?
- When women public officials attempt to run for higher office or for executive rather than legislative office, do they adjust their campaign organizations and strategies appropriately? Or do they tend to stick with what is familiar?
- How do the dynamics of a campaign change when a woman runs against another woman? Are there differences if one or both of the candidates is a woman of color? Are the dynamics different when two women run against each other in a primary as opposed to a general election?
- What are the effects of losing on women's political aspirations and future attempts to run for office? How often do women run in races where they may have little chance of winning in order to establish the visibility and contacts to run for the same or another office at some point in the future?
- How do women's campaigns determine which voters to target? How often do they explicitly target women voters, and what appeals do they use? What strategies have allowed women candidates to appeal directly to female voters without losing the support of male voters? How do strategies for targeting voters vary for women candidates of different races and ethnicities and for women of different parties? To what extent does the political environment in which an election occurs affect the ways in which women candidates attempt to appeal to voters?

More information is needed about women's campaigns in order to identify the most successful techniques and strategies.

MONEY AND OTHER CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

One of the first questions a potential candidate asks herself when deciding whether to run for a particular office is, "How much money can I raise?" Given the importance of money in political campaigns, it is surprising how little research exists. Traditionally, women candidates have had difficulty raising money, but some recent research has demonstrated that this situation may be changing. Consequently, a good deal of this working group session explored ways to ascertain whether, and to what extent, women are disadvantaged as fund-raisers. In addition, a considerable amount of debate emerged during the session regarding strategies for research and reform: should we focus on strategies that help individual women candidates raise money, should we promote systemic efforts like campaign finance reform that reduce the amount of money needed to run for office, or should we do both? Because existing research is almost exclusively limited to congressional races, future research on money and women's campaigns should focus on races for other offices as well.

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Questions for Future Research

- Since recent studies of congressional candidates have shown that women and men of the same party running in comparable races raise roughly equal amounts of money, why do women candidates for Congress and other offices continue to believe that they have more trouble raising money than men do? Do women candidates have outdated perceptions? Or have researchers overlooked important differences in fund-raising between women and men?
- Is the finding that female and male candidates for Congress raise roughly equal amounts of money in general elections true for races for other offices? Do women have more difficulty than men in raising funds for primaries in both congressional races and races for other levels of office?
- What effect does fear of raising money have in deterring women from running for office in the first place? Do women find it more difficult psychologically to ask for money than men do?
- Do women raise money from different sources than men do? Do female and male candidates use different fund-raising techniques? Do women candidates have to work harder and spend more of their own and their campaign staffs' time to raise the same amount of money as male candidates?
- Is the timing of contributions different for women's and men's campaigns? Does money come in later in women's campaigns, and do women have more difficulty raising the initial money they need to become viable candidates, especially during the early stages of their primary races?
- Is there a tradeoff between money and other campaign resources such as time and people? To what extent can women candidates compensate for a lack of sufficient funds by getting an early start on their campaigns or by having a large group of enthusiastic, hard-working volunteers?

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- What are the decision-making rules that women's political action committees (PACs) employ, and do they differ from the rules used by other types of PACs? What impact does the assistance of women's PACs have on the success rate of women candidates? Do the contributions of individual women and women's PACs compensate for difficulty women may have in raising money from traditional sources, or does women's giving supplement the traditional sources thereby providing women candidates with an added advantage in fund-raising?
 - How does the fund-raising of women of color differ from that of white women? Do women of color face unique advantages or disadvantages in raising campaign funds? Are women's PACs any more or less important to the success of women of color than they are to the success of white women?
 - What is the effect of campaign spending on electoral success, and does it differ for men and women? Do women get more votes, fewer votes, or the same number of votes as men per dollar spent in primary and general elections? What is the most efficient model for spending the money that candidates raise, and does the model differ depending on the gender of the candidate?
 - To what extent would proposals for campaign finance reform differentially affect the candidacies of white women, women of color, white men, and men of color? Do potential differences in impact result in differences in levels of support for campaign finance reform among public officials of different races/ethnicities and genders?

GENDER-RELATED INFLUENCES ON VOTING BEHAVIOR AND PUBLIC OPINION

Since the early 1980s, references to the "gender gap" in public opinion and voting behavior have become commonplace. However, despite popular attention to the gender gap, research has told us little about the underlying dynamics that have produced gender-related differences in political attitudes and voting behavior. As a result, this working session focused on the need for new and better research exploring the causes, consequences, and unexplained trends associated with the gender gap. Participants explored ideas about research designs, theoretical frameworks, and empirical evidence that might provide a better understanding of gender differences in voting and attitudes. In particular, they emphasized the need to use other research methods in addition to survey research and other data sets in addition to the National Election Study data.

Despite popular attention to the gender gap, research has told us little about the underlying dynamics that have produced gender-related differences in political attitudes and voting behavior.

Questions for Future Research

- What are the factors that have led women to equal and then to surpass men's rates of voter turnout in recent elections? Do the factors that affect women's turnout relative to men's vary across racial and ethnic groups?
- Are there important generational differences in the voting behavior and opinions of women?
- How do differences in the way men and women view public policy issues affect the gender gap in voting behavior? Do the issues that are most important in explaining the gender gap in voting differ from election to election? Do they differ for different subgroups of women?
- Do we get a different understanding of the dynamics underlying the gender gap if we examine races other than presidential contests?
- When women and men vote for the same candidate or express similar ideological or policy positions, do they do so for the same or different reasons? Does the salience of issue preferences differ for women and men even when their aggregate preferences are similar?
- How do the campaign strategies of candidates and their issue positions affect the magnitude of the gender gap? What strategies have candidates used to appeal to women voters, and how successful have these strategies been?
- What are the dynamics of the relationship between women voters and women candidates? Are women more likely to turn out to vote if a woman candidate is in the race? Why do women voters give disproportionate support to some women candidates and not to others? Since women voters tend to be more Democratic than men, how is it that some Republican women candidates are able to attract disproportionate support from women voters?

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- Which voters, among both women and men, are most likely to support and oppose both women candidates generally and candidates who are women of color more specifically? What are their characteristics?
 - How do feminist identification and consciousness affect the voting behavior and political attitudes of women and men? What role, if any, do feminist identification and consciousness play in explaining recent increases in women's voter turnout, the gender gap, and voter support for women candidates? Do feminist identification and consciousness function differently in affecting the political attitudes and voting behavior of white women and women of color?

IMPACT OF WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS

Developing a research agenda on the impact of women political leaders requires that we redefine the traditional concept of political leadership to include more than elected and appointed officials. In addition, wide-ranging thinking about the ways that women may have a distinctive impact on public policy and the political process is needed. Future research should investigate whether, and in what arenas, women in leadership use power differently than do their male counterparts. It should examine policy areas that are not explicitly gender-related (for instance, economic, military, and transportation policy) in order to assess more fully the policy-related impact of women political leaders. More research on women of color who serve as officeholders and public leaders is necessary if we are to understand the distinctive impact they may have on public policy, the political process, and institutional change. Working group participants argued that a full assessment of the impact of women political leaders will require that researchers employ a variety of methodological approaches (e.g., case studies, participant observation, and in-depth interviews).

Wide-ranging thinking about the ways that women may have a distinctive impact on public policy and the political process is needed.

Questions for Future Research

- What is the relationship between the substantive representation of women (i.e., the representation of women's interests) and the descriptive representation of women (i.e., the numbers of women in positions of political leadership)? How often do these two forms of representation come into conflict? Under what circumstances are women (and feminists) better served by having women present at the decision-making table even if they do not see themselves as representing the interests of either women or feminists, and under what circumstances are women (and feminists) better served through representation by men who are sympathetic to feminist goals?
- Should women incumbents with poor records on feminist issues be targeted for defeat by feminists even if it means the election of men as their replacements? What are the political implications of this? What do feminists lose, and what do they gain?
- Do women and men define and exercise leadership differently? Does the definition and exercise of leadership vary by race and class?
- Do women and men in leadership positions view and use power differently? Do women of color view and exercise power differently than white women or men of color do?
- Do women public officials and other political leaders bring about change in the institutions in which they serve? Do they seek to reform rules and procedures? Do they conduct business differently? Do they insist that institutions be more inclusive and operate more openly?

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- What effect does women's presence in political leadership have on the behavior of their male colleagues? For example, are men in positions of political leadership more likely to become supporters and advocates of women's issues as women's presence increases?
 - What impact do women of color among officeholders and political leaders have on public policy, the political process, and institutional change? How does their impact differ from that of white women and men of color?
 - Do women in general have a distinctive impact on policy areas that are not explicitly gender-related (for example, defense, transportation, and economic policy) or only on policy areas that are specifically gender-related (for example, abortion, women's health, children's issues)? Is the same true for women of color?
 - How does critical mass affect women's impact on the political process and on public policy? What is women's relative impact when they constitute 5, 10, 20 or 30 percent of a particular governing body? What other institutional and political factors (for example, strength of partisanship, presence of a women's caucus, committee assignments, linkages to women's organizations) affect women's impact? What can internationally comparative research tell us about the impact of women in public office and the factors that influence their impact?
 - To what extent are differences in impact between female and male public officials due to differences in the districts and constituencies they represent? How might gender differences in impact be affected if more women from conservative districts were elected to office?

IMAGES, STEREOTYPES, AND MEDIA COVERAGE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

The fact that the media play a pervasive and important role in American politics is nearly self-evident. Yet, the relationship between the media and women in politics has received only limited scholarly attention. An examination of the ways women in politics are covered by the media will improve our understanding of the obstacles women face in seeking election and serving as public officials. In addition, research about the ways in which the media portray, or do not portray, women is needed to back up demands for policy and editorial reform by news organizations. This working session proposed a host of research questions, calling particular attention to the need for more multi-method and multi-site studies investigating the media's impact on women in politics.

Research about the ways in which the media portray, or do not portray, women is needed to back up demands for policy and editorial reform by news organizations.

Questions for Future Research

- Do male and female politicians receive different treatment from the press? If there is a gender bias in the amount or nature of press coverage politicians receive, does it vary depending on the level of position which a woman politician holds, the medium, or the characteristics of the individual reporter?
- Do women of color receive the same treatment from the press that white women and men of color receive?
- To what extent do considerations about dealing with the media and fears about media-led scrutiny of their private lives affect women's decisions to run for office? Are women more reluctant than men to run for office because they fear that the media will treat them unfairly?
- Do male and female candidates use similar or different media strategies? Do they deal with the press differently? Do they employ different patterns of media buying? Do male and female candidates spend comparable amounts of money on media advertising? Do they hire the same number of media specialists and media consultants?
- What role do gender and racial stereotypes play in media coverage of elections? Does the language of political reporting create a situation in which equal coverage does not constitute comparable reporting? If so, how? Does the news media's use of sports and military analogies in election coverage disproportionately disadvantage female candidates?
- What impact do media-conveyed images of women political leaders have on public attitudes regarding women's participation in politics and government more generally? To what extent do media-conveyed images of women in positions of power affect children's and adolescents' views regarding women's roles in society? To what extent do these images influence the personal political aspirations of young girls?

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- How do news media make decisions about which stories to run, and does this process inhibit a woman candidate's ability to raise legitimate issues?
 - How do recent developments such as the growing influence of talk radio and the increasing use of TV talk shows as a campaign forum affect the campaigns of women candidates?

POLITICAL PARTIES AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

As women achieve greater success in electoral politics, their relationship to political parties becomes increasingly complicated. The question of whether women would fare better in American politics by pursuing a partisan or a bipartisan strategy was a central concern in this working group session. Insights into the answer to this question could be provided through historical and internationally comparative research examining how women have fared when they have linked their interests with only one party versus how they have fared when they have worked across political parties. Research examining women's roles and status in state and local parties is needed to enable us to examine women's access points to political power and to analyze the ways in which that access varies across states and localities. Finally, research on political parties comparing the position of women in the United States to that of women in other countries might suggest possible rule changes and strategies that could be used to enhance women's status and power within the Democratic and Republican parties in the United States.

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Questions for Future Research

- Is a partisan or a bipartisan strategy more effective in maximizing women's influence within political parties and American politics? Since women in other countries have more often employed partisan strategies, what can be learned from those experiences? Given that civil rights groups work largely with the Democratic party while many U.S. feminist political organizations work with both parties, what can be learned about the relative effectiveness of partisan and bipartisan strategies from a comparison of the relative successes of civil rights and feminist groups?
- What types of rules and regulations best facilitate women's influence in political parties and women's access to major party nominations? Do women fare better under quota systems, both in other countries where they have been implemented in elections and in the United States where party rules now mandate equal division between women and men in the selection of delegates to Democratic national party conventions? What kinds of women have become party convention delegates since equal division was implemented in the Democratic party, and how have women delegates been recruited? Do women of color fare better under quota systems?
- Which party leaders are involved in recruiting candidates to run for office, and do they show a gender bias in their recruitment practices? Do party leaders disproportionately recruit women to run in hopeless races where they have little or no chance of beating the other party's candidate? How do the recruitment practices of party leaders vis-a-vis women candidates vary across states and localities?
- To what extent are parties involved in supporting or opposing women candidates during primaries? Do they more often wait until a woman has proven herself by winning a primary before they offer her any assistance? Do party leaders treat women candidates the same way they treat male

contenders? Do party leaders treat women of color differently than they treat white women or men of color?

- What role do party leaders play in encouraging or discouraging women officeholders who run for election to higher office relative to the role that they play with regard to similarly situated men?
- Has the presence of women's organizations within the parties led to greater assistance for women candidates? How and why have women's groups within the parties developed, what have they accomplished, and why have they disappeared?
- What is the relationship between women within the party structure and feminist activists in women's organizations outside the party structure? How have changes in the parties altered the role of the women's movement in the political arena?
- What roles have traditional women's organizations and feminist groups played both historically and in a contemporary context in advancing women's political participation more generally and the participation of women of color more specifically? How have organizations of women of color influenced the political participation of women of color?

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN OF COLOR

Despite more than twenty years of scholarship on women and American politics, we know relatively little about the political activity and political attitudes of women of color. At the most basic level, more research on the political participation of African-American, Asian-American, Latina, and Native American women is urgently needed to identify the specific impediments to political participation each group of women confronts so that policies and strategies can be developed to enhance their participation and increase their representation. The development of a more comprehensive understanding of the political participation of women of color requires that we move away from defining "politics" exclusively in terms of electoral politics and formal governmental institutions and examine participation more broadly. In addition, the development of a more comprehensive understanding requires that the category "women of color" be disentangled both empirically and theoretically. Because the histories of marginalization and exclusion that influence political participation of various groups of women are specific, the umbrella term "women of color" obfuscates diversity within the category.

More research on the political participation of African-American, Asian-American, Latina, and Native American women is urgently needed to identify the specific impediments to political participation each group of women confronts so that policies and strategies can be developed to enhance their participation and increase their representation.

Questions for Future Research

- How and why do women of color become politically involved? Are their paths to political activism similar to those of men of the same race or ethnicity? Are they similar to those for white women? To what extent do African-American, Latina, Native American, and Asian-American women believe that they can have an impact on the political system? How do the factors that influence women's political interest and involvement differ across different racial and ethnic communities?
- What is the relationship between racial or ethnic and gender identity in the construction of women's political consciousness? What roles do racism and sexism play in the political attitudes of women of color?
- What barriers do women of color face in gaining elective office and in building political careers? In what ways are the barriers they face different from those faced by white women or men of color?
- Do Asian-American, Latina, Native American, and African-American women who run for elective office have stronger credentials, more experience, and greater organizational support than white women running for comparable offices? Do they think that this is necessary in order for their candidacies to be viable?
- What are the connections between grassroots and electoral activism for women of color?
- What are the issues Latina, African-American, Native American, and Asian-American women face in raising money for political activities? How do women of color fare in raising money for campaigns when compared with white women?

BROADENING THE STUDY OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

This working session focused on expanding the definition of political participation to recognize and validate the alternative ways in which women have had an impact on the political system. While women, and women of color in particular, have traditionally been excluded from access to formal political institutions and practices, their exclusion should not be equated with their absence from politics. Recognizing and researching women's social and political organizing in their communities is especially important for understanding the participation of working class women and women of color. We cannot adequately understand politics, political institutions, or political change unless we broaden the study of women's participation beyond the electoral arena.

Questions for Future Research

- How can we broaden the way we study political participation so that it will fully capture women's contributions to American politics? In what ways have traditional methods of inquiry, like survey research, limited our understanding of women's political participation? How can using other methods (for example, participant observation, in-depth interviewing, case studies) broaden our understanding of women's participation?
- What are the various ways in which women become politicized, and when does that politicization lead to political mobilization? What roles, issues, and experiences move women to political activism? How do gender, race, and class affect women's feelings of political efficacy?
- What types of grassroots activism do women undertake that are aimed at making social and political change? Under what circumstances does grassroots activism lead to participation in more formal political channels?
- How and why do women become involved in grassroots or community-based political organizing? Under what circumstances do individual acts of resistance lead to collective political action?
- How can we evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies and approaches to activism? What are the relative benefits and disadvantages of working inside or outside formal political institutions? How do insiders and outsiders work together, and how do the efforts of insiders and outsiders facilitate and/or inhibit each others' efforts to bring about political change?

Recognizing and researching women's social and political organizing in their communities is especially important for understanding the participation of working class women and women of color.

Appendix A: Conference Participants

Martha A. Ackelsberg, Smith College
Sandy L. Aguilar, National Hispanic Democratic Women's Network
Deborah L. Alexander, Onondaga County (New York) Board of Elections
Kristi J. Andersen, Syracuse University
Polly B. Baca, United States Office of Consumer Affairs
Denise Baer, American University
Sylvia B. Bashevkin, University of Toronto
Kathy L. Bonk, Communications Consortium
Linda B. Bowker, New Jersey Division on Women
Nancy J. Brown, State Representative, Kansas
Nancy Burns, University of Michigan
Barbara C. Burrell, University of Wisconsin
Barabara J. Callaway, Rutgers University
Mary Ellen S. Capek, National Council for Research on Women
Susan J. Carroll, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Cal Clark, Auburn University
Janet E. Clark, West Georgia College
Cathy J. Cohen, Yale University
Betsy Crone, Fund-raising Consultant
Barbara A. Crow, University of Calgary
Cynthia R. Daniels, Rutgers University
R. Darcy, Oklahoma State University
Debra L. Dodson, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Betty Dooley, Women's Research and Education Initiative
Georgia Duerst-Lahti, Beloit College
Janet A. Flammang, Santa Clara University
Jo Freeman, Attorney
Martha Gershun, ProChoice Resource Center
Terry Gilmour, Texas Tech University
Marianne Githens, Goucher College
Lisa Goldberg, Charles H. Revson Foundation
Gunnel Gustafsson, University of Umea
Elizabeth S. Hager, State Representative, New Hampshire
Carol Hardy-Fanta, Boston University School of Public Health
Rose Harris, Rutgers University
Leonie Huddy, SUNY at Stony Brook
Jennifer Jackman, Feminist Majority Foundation
Kathleen Hall Jamieson, University of Pennsylvania
Jane Y. Junn, Rutgers University
Kim Fridkin Kahn, Arizona State University
Kate Karpilow, California Elected Women's Association for Education
and Research
Lyn Kathlene, Purdue University
Rita Mae Kelly, Arizona State University
Montague Kern, Rutgers University

Bobbie Kilberg, Former Candidate for Lieutenant Governor, Virginia
Celinda Lake, Mellman • Lazarus • Lake
Debra J. Liebowitz, Rutgers University
Ruth B. Mandel, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Joan E. McLean, Ohio Wesleyan University
Tanya M. Melich, Political Issues Management
Jody Newman, National Women's Political Caucus
Pippa Norris, Harvard University
Karen M. Paget, University of California - Berkeley
Anita Perez-Ferguson, Democratic National Committee
Beth Reingold, Emory University
Virginia Sapiro, University of Wisconsin - Madison
Ida Schmertz, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Ronnee Schreiber, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Christine M. Sierra, University of New Mexico
Roberta Sigel, Rutgers University
Marian J. Simms, Australian National University
Eleanor Smeal, Feminist Majority Foundation
Marcia A. Smith, Ford Foundation
Adaljiza Sosa-Riddell, University of California - Davis
Jeanie R. Stanley, Director of Policy Management, Office of Texas
Attorney General
Candice Straight, WISH List
Carol Swain, Princeton University
Paule Cruz Takash, University of California - San Diego
Gayle T. Tate, Rutgers University
Katherine Tate, Ohio State University
Sue Thomas, Georgetown University
Sue Tolleson-Rinehart, Texas Tech University
Toni-Michelle C. Travis, George Mason University
Debbie Walsh, Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers
University
Marcia L. Whicker, Rutgers University - Newark
Linda Williams, University of Maryland
Susan N. Wilson, Rutgers University
Betsey Wright, The Wexler Group
Linda Zerilli, Rutgers University

Appendix B: Conference Program

Research on Women and American Politics: Agenda Setting for the 21st Century

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1994

1:00-3:00 Plenary: Bridging the Gap Between Research and Activism

Moderator: Susan J. Carroll, CAWP, Rutgers University
Panelists: Betty Dooley, Women's Research and
Education Institute
Kate Karpilow, California Elected Women's
Association for Education and Research
Jeanie R. Stanley, Office of the Texas
Attorney General
Linda Williams, University of Maryland

3:15-5:15 Working Groups: Round One

Recruitment of Women Candidates

Writer: Marianne Githens, Goucher College
Moderator: Gunnel Gustafsson, University of Umea
Discussants: Janet E. Clark, West Georgia College
Jody Newman, National Women's
Political Caucus
Rapporteur: Marian J. Simms, Australian National
University

Political Participation of Women of Color

Writer: Cathy J. Cohen, Yale University
Moderator: Gayle T. Tate, Rutgers University
Discussants: Paule Cruz Takash, University of California -
San Diego
Toni-Michelle C. Travis, George Mason
University
Rapporteur: Jane Y. Junn, Rutgers University

Images, Stereotypes, and Media Coverage of Women in Politics

Writer: Kim Fridkin Kahn, Arizona State University
Ronnee Schreiber, CAWP, Rutgers University
Moderator: Leonie Huddy, SUNY at Stony Brook
Discussants: Kathy L. Bonk, Communications Consortium
Kathleen Hall Jamieson, The Annenberg
School for Communication, University
of Pennsylvania
Bobbie Kilberg, Attorney, 1993 Republican
primary candidate for Virginia Lieutenant
Governor
Rapporteur: Deborah L. Alexander, Syracuse University

5:30-7:30 Reception and Dinner

7:45-9:30 Open Discussion: Political Women and the Religious Right

Speaker: Bobbie Kilberg, Attorney, 1993 Republican
primary candidate for Virginia Lieutenant
Governor

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1994

9:00-11:00 Working Groups: Round Two

**Gender-Related Influences on Voting Behavior and Public
Opinion**

Writer: Pippa Norris, Harvard University
Moderator: Virginia Sapiro, University of Wisconsin-
Madison
Discussants: Kristi J. Andersen, Syracuse University
Celinda Lake, Mellman • Lazarus • Lake
Katherine Tate, Ohio State University
Rapporteur: Sue Tolleson-Rinehart, Texas Tech University

Broadening the Study of Women's Participation

Writer: Martha A. Ackelsberg, Smith College
Moderator: Rita Mae Kelly, Arizona State University
Discussants: Nancy Burns, University of Michigan
Janet A. Flammang, Santa Clara University
Carol Hardy-Fanta, Boston University
Rapporteur: Terry Gilmour, Texas Tech University

Campaign Strategies

Writer: Joan McLean, Ohio Wesleyan University
Moderator: Betsey Wright, The Wexler Group
Discussants: Tanya Melich, Political Issues Development
Anita Perez-Ferguson, Democratic National
Committee
Karen Paget, University of California-Berkeley
Rapporteur: Terry Gilmour, Texas Tech University

11:15-12:45 Plenary: Political Practitioners Discuss Research Needs

Moderator: Ruth B. Mandel, CAWP, Rutgers University
Panelists: Polly B. Baca, U.S. Office of Consumer
Affairs
Elizabeth S. Hager, New Hampshire
House of Representatives
Eleanor Smeal, Feminist Majority Foundation

1:00-2:00 Lunch

2:15-4:15 Working Groups: Round Three

Political Parties and Women's Organizations

Writer: Denise Baer, American University
Moderator: Tanya M. Melich, Political Issues Development
Discussants: Sandy L. Aguilar, National Hispanic
Democratic Women's Network
Sylvia B. Bashevkin, University of Toronto
Jo Freeman, Attorney
Rapporteur: Adaljiza Sosa-Riddell, University of
California-Davis

Impact of Women Political Leaders

Writer: Sue Thomas, Georgetown University
Moderator: Carol Swain, Princeton University
Discussant: Nancy J. Brown, Kansas House of
Representatives
Lyn Kathlene, Purdue University
Rapporteur: Beth Reingold, Emory University

Money and Other Campaign Resources

Writer: Barbara C. Burrell, University of Wisconsin
Moderator: Christine M. Sierra, University of New Mexico
Discussants: Betsy Crone, Fundraising Consultant
R. Darcy, Oklahoma State University
Candace Straight, WISH List
Rapporteur: Barbara Crow, University of Calgary

4:30-5:30 Reception

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1994

9:00-10:30 Plenary: Workshop Reports

10:30-Noon Plenary: How to Make Research Happen: Dollars & Sense

Moderator: Debra L. Dodson, CAWP, Rutgers University
Panelists: Mary Ellen Capek, National Council for
Research on Women
Martha Gershun, ProChoice Resource Center
Karen M. Paget, University of California-
Berkeley

Noon-12:30 Plenary: Closing Session

The Center for the American Woman and Politics is a university-based research, education, and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater understanding and knowledge about women's relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. A unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

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

CAWP's major programs and activities include: a clearinghouse about women in politics and government; a data bank on women in public office; research about women in leadership; national surveys of elected and appointed women; an ongoing Program for Women Public Officials; a Subscriber Information Service and newsletter; a Young Women's Leadership Initiative to educate young women about politics and public leadership; conferences and seminars; consulting services; a specialized library collection about women in public life; and production of books, monographs, reports, fact sheets, and a documentary film.

The Eagleton Institute of Politics was established in 1956 as the result of a bequest from Florence Peshine Eagleton, a suffragist activist and founder of the New Jersey League of Women Voters. The Institute has built a national reputation for its education, research, and public service activities in the field of American politics. Eagleton offers a Master's level fellowship program in politics and public policy as well as an undergraduate associates program for Rutgers students. It houses two major centers (the Center for the American Woman and Politics and the Center for Public Interest Polling) and sponsors programs about American politics and the political process.

CAWP

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS (CAWP)

Eagleton Institute of Politics

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