

THE IMPACT OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE

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An Overview

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS

The Impact of Women in Public Office

An Overview

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This is one of three reports in CAWP's series on *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, a project conducted under a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation.

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Preface

The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) has spent two decades charting and analyzing women's changing status as leaders in public office.

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

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

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

The Charles H. Revson Foundation has sustained its singular encouragement and critical support for work about women and politics for over a decade. President Eli Evans and Vice President Lisa Goldberg have an unusually strong understanding of the centrality of questions and challenges surrounding women's changing political roles. They know that this is not a topic for a day, but rather a long-term test for the quality of the democracy. They also understand the importance of the relationship between research and

activism. In addition to everything else, we are grateful for their flexibility and tolerance with the pace of scholarly research. Everyone at CAWP is very proud and gratified to have the Charles H. Revson Foundation's continuing interest and support.

Individual members of a distinguished advisory committee of political practitioners and scholars (names of advisory committee members are listed on page 31) offered expert advice and enthusiastic interest throughout the project, especially in evaluating proposals and selecting grant recipients for the studies reported in Volume 2, *Gender and Policymaking*. Our team of colleagues at CAWP was invaluable in carrying out this project. Many and special thanks to Katherine Kleeman, Lucy Baruch, Debbie Walsh and Joan Crowley. We called on their expertise and diverse skills, and we counted on their steady willingness to pitch in at whatever level and for whatever tasks required attention — and we were never disappointed. A number of students helped in a variety of ways; we are grateful for their interest and for the very able assistance provided by Carrie Calvo and graduate students Deirdre Condit, Barbara Crow, Joe Cammarano and Patrick Murray. Karen Gronberg and Ella Taylor deserve special thanks as the graduate assistants who helped with the data analysis for the CAWP study. Our thanks to Eagleton Institute and CAWP staff members Martha Casisa, Pat Michaels and Edith Saks for contributing in many ways, from secretarial support to graphics design and layout to proofreading. Over the course of the project, we called on any number of people for technical assistance and advice; among them Kamala Brush, Bill Cibes, Kelly Griffin, Jeanne Kennedy, Roland King, Amy Melvin, Hannele Rubin, Mark Schulman and Kathy Stanwick were especially generous with their time and expertise. Finally, special thanks for their help and valuable insights at critical moments to Alan Rosenthal, Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and Cliff Zukin, Associate Professor at the Institute.

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Introduction

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

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

The significance of the question addressed by this research is abundantly clear. Proponents of increased representation for women can and do argue for the election or

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

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

appointment of more women public officials as a matter of justice and equity. They assert that democratic principles require that all citizens regardless of gender should have an equal opportunity to participate in politics. Many question the quality of representation in a nation where women are half of the citizens, but a small minority of officeholders. However, their arguments become more compelling if, in fact, women officeholders bring to office important perspectives and priorities that are currently underrepresented in the policymaking process.

Moreover, the simple reality is that the numbers of women who serve in public office have increased and will continue to increase. Although women are still far from parity with men in officeholding, the numbers of women holding office at most levels of government have increased with each subsequent election during the past two decades.³ For example, while women still constitute only 18.3 percent of state legislators nationally, the number of women serving in state legislatures increased from 344 in 1971 to 908 in 1981 to 1365 in 1991.⁴ Barring major changes in our system of electoral politics, there is every reason to expect that this trend of incremental, but steady, increases will continue throughout the 1990s and into the next century. As more and more women move into public office, it is critically important that we understand what the consequences are likely to be both for public policy and the political process.

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

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

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

The Study

To assess whether and how women officeholders are making a difference in public policy and in political institutions more generally, the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) pursued a dual research strategy.

First, CAWP undertook its own research project to provide a systematic, broad overview of whether women make a difference in public office. The CAWP study focused on the impact of women in state legislatures and was based on a telephone survey of nationally representative samples of women and men state legislators.⁵ The results of that survey are reported in full in *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures*.

Second, CAWP awarded grants to scholars from across the nation to study whether women officeholders make a difference. These projects were selected to provide an in-depth look at women's impact in particular environments. The scholars' research reports, which examine elected and appointed women's impact at the local, state and national levels of government and in the legislative, executive and judicial branches, are compiled in a separate volume in this series entitled *Gender and Policymaking: Studies of Women in Office*.

This volume, *The Impact of Women in Public Office: An Overview*, summarizes the results of both CAWP's study of state legislators and the scholars' studies of women officeholders at various levels of government. As a whole, results of the research provide compelling evidence that women are having a distinctive impact on public policy and the political process.

⁵During the summer of 1988, CAWP conducted a nationwide survey of state legislators. Four samples of legislators were drawn: (1) the population of all women state senators (n=228); (2) a systematic sample of one-half of women state representatives (n=474); (3) a systematic sample of male state senators (n=228); and (4) a systematic sample of male state representatives (n=474). The number of men sampled from each state house or senate was proportional to the number of women serving in that state chamber. This was to ensure that we actually compared women and men who served in similar political circumstances, rather than comparing women and men from states with very different political and legislative environments.

A telephone interview of approximately one-half hour was attempted with each of the legislators, resulting in the following response rates: 86 percent for female senators; 87 percent for female representatives; 60 percent for male senators; and 73 percent for male representatives. Respondents and nonrespondents did not differ substantially from one another with regard to party affiliation, the one variable for which we have data for all lawmakers sampled.

Reshaping the Agenda

Women lawmakers are reshaping the agendas of state legislatures across the country. The Center for the American Woman and Politics' (CAWP) new study, based on nationally representative samples of women and men state legislators, demonstrates that women lawmakers' impact on public policy is profound and distinctive. Elected women are working to make the agendas of legislative institutions more responsive to women's demands for equal rights as articulated by the contemporary women's movement and more reflective of women's concerns stemming from their roles as caregivers in the family and in society more generally. The change taking place as more and more women move into legislatures is evident in women legislators' attitudes on public policy issues, in their actions on legislation, and in impressions of their impact as expressed not only by the women themselves but also by their male colleagues.

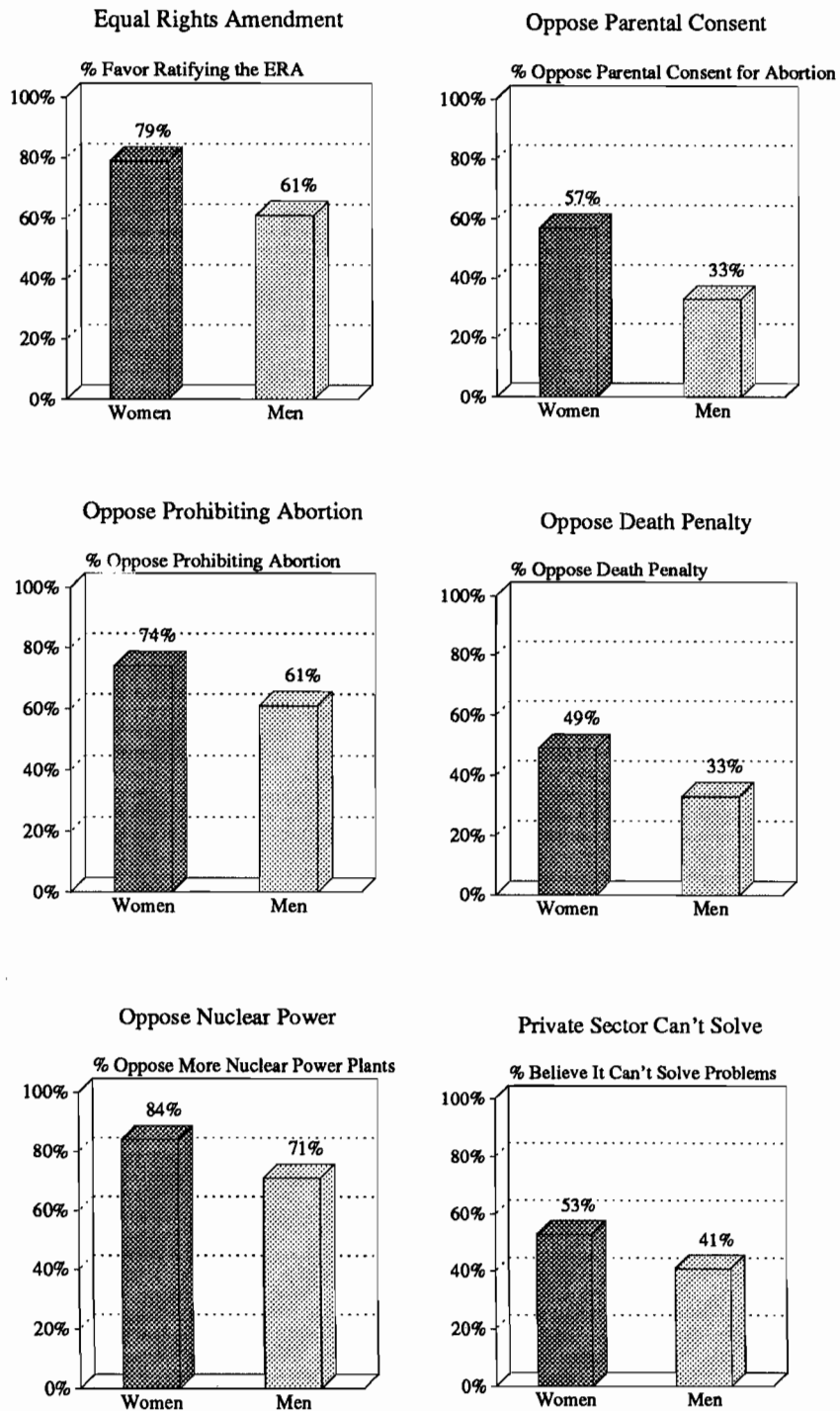
In 1981, CAWP conducted a study of women public officeholders which discovered a gender gap in public policy attitudes among elected officials similar to the gender gap that has been apparent in the general public for more than a decade.¹ CAWP's new study, the results of which are summarized in this report and reported in full in *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures*, provides additional, more recent evidence that a sizable gender gap is evident in the public policy preferences of women and men serving in state legislatures (*Inset 1*). On six of eight issues, women legislators were more likely than their male colleagues to support feminist and liberal policy positions.² Women more often than men supported passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, opposed prohibitions on abortion rights and agreed that minors should be able to obtain a legal abortion without parental consent. Women legislators were less likely than their male counterparts to favor the death penalty, to express faith in the ability of the private sector to solve our economic problems and to view the building of additional nuclear power plants as a desirable method for meeting their state's power needs. When we combined all eight policy attitudes in a summary *General Policy Index*, about one of every three women, but only one of every six men, scored high in support of liberal policy positions. When responses to questions about the ERA, parental consent and prohibiting abortion were combined to form a *Feminist Policy Index*,

¹Kathy A. Stanwick and Katherine E. Kleeman, *Women Make a Difference*, New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1983.

²Legislators were asked to agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or disagree strongly with the following statements: If left alone, except for essential federal regulations, the private sector can find ways to solve our economic problems; the death penalty should be an option as a punishment for those who commit murder; government should provide child care services to all parents who need them, with fees charged according to ability to pay; to meet the future power needs of my state, more nuclear power plants should be built; minors should be able to obtain a legal abortion without parental consent; state and local taxes should be raised to help make up for some of the decrease in federal funding for social services; the Equal Rights Amendment should be passed by Congress and ratified by the states; I personally think abortion should be prohibited in all or most circumstances.

Inset 1: Women officeholders are more feminist and more liberal than men in their policy attitudes

CAWP's National Survey of State Legislators found a gender gap in responses to six of eight policy questions asked of legislators; when there was a gender gap, women were consistently more likely to support a feminist or a liberal view.



one-half of the women, but only one-fourth of the men, scored high in support of feminist policy positions.

The gender gap in public policy attitudes was present among legislators of both parties. Democratic women were more liberal and more feminist in their policy attitudes than were Democratic men; similarly, Republican women were more moderate (i.e., less conservative) and more feminist than Republican men. Republican women were, as expected, less liberal in their policy attitudes than Democratic men; however, Republican women and Democratic men were about equally feminist in their policy views.

While the gender gap in policy attitudes among state lawmakers suggests that women and men bring different perspectives to their work in the legislatures, attitudes alone cannot reshape legislative agendas. Attitudinal differences must be accompanied by gender differences in legislative actions in order for women to be agents of change.

The study summarized in this report goes well beyond our 1981 research in providing the first comprehensive and systematic evidence that women legislators are different from men in their *actions* as well as in their attitudes. Our research reveals two important ways in which women legislators express their different interests and concerns in their work on legislation.

First, women legislators differed from their male colleagues in the focus of their *top priority bill* — the single bill that was of greatest importance to a legislator during the last legislative session (*Inset 2*). Women more often than men (51 percent vs. 37 percent) had legislative priorities that focused on what we called *women's distinctive concerns*.

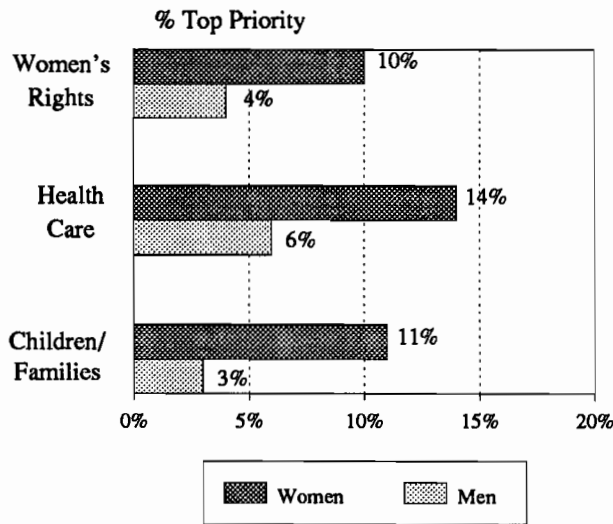
The category "women's distinctive concerns" encompasses bills of two types — *women's rights bills*³ and *bills dealing with women's traditional areas of interest*.⁴

³These bills dealt specifically with issues of direct concern to women generally (e.g., legislation concerning rape, teen pregnancy or women's health) or focused on their specific concerns as wage earners (e.g., pay equity), working mothers (e.g., maternity leave, day care) or marital partners (e.g., domestic violence, spousal retirement benefits, division of property in divorce). We chose to call these bills "women's rights bills" because they appeared to be consistent with the major policy goals of the contemporary women's movement as set forth in the statements of purpose of organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW), the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), and the former Women's Equity Action League (WEAL). They also appeared to be consistent with the agenda for the future established by delegates elected to the government-sponsored National Women's Conference held in Houston, Texas in November 1977 (see *The Spirit of Houston: The First National Women's Conference, An Official Report to the President, the Congress and the People of the United States*, Washington, D.C.: National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, March 1978). However, it is important to emphasize that not all legislators who worked on the legislation we call "women's rights bills" did so with the intent of advancing the cause of feminism. Some legislators undoubtedly worked on these bills because they viewed them as beneficial to women in general or to their women constituents in particular, not because they saw them as part of a larger feminist agenda. While bills that seemed consistent with feminist goals were included in the category "women's rights bills" even if the legislator who worked on a particular bill may not have viewed it as feminist in intent, bills that seemed anti-feminist in intent were excluded. However, only 1.2 percent of women and 1.4 percent of men reported that they worked on anti-feminist legislation.

⁴We consider "women's traditional areas of interest" to include those concerns — e.g., health care, the welfare of children, the family and the elderly, housing, the environment and education — that stem from women's roles as caregivers in the family and in society more generally.

Inset 2: Women and men public officials have different policy priorities

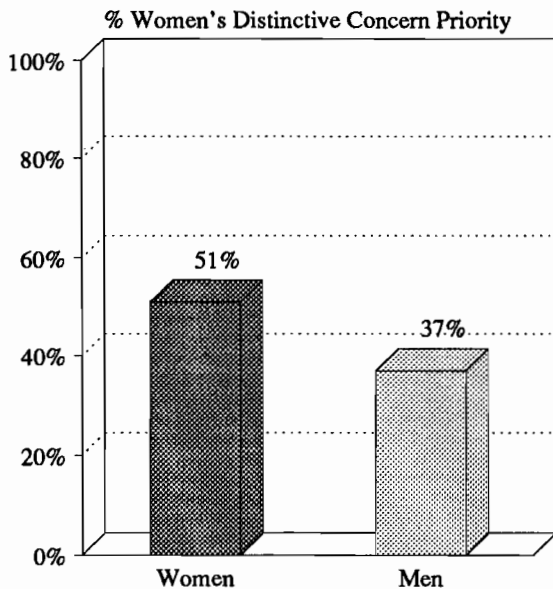
Issues Where Gender Differences in Priorities Were Greatest



CAWP's National Survey of State Legislators asked officeholders about their top legislative priority in the most recent session.

- Women were more likely to give top priority to women's rights policies.
- Women were more likely to give priority to public policies related to their traditional roles as caregivers in the family and society — e.g., policies dealing with children and families and health care.

Women's Distinctive Concern as Lawmaker's Top Legislative Priority



We defined *women's distinctive concerns* as a combination of both women's rights bills *and* bills dealing with women's traditional areas of interest such as health care, children and the family, education, environment, housing and the elderly. Women were notably more likely than men to have a bill focusing on *women's distinctive concerns* as their top priority.

Over the years, with the increasing number of women [in public office]...we've seen a change...in women's issues, children's issues, health issues, aging issues, those kinds of things the male legislators really have passed over. They [men] have never had an interest. (female legislator from the midwest)

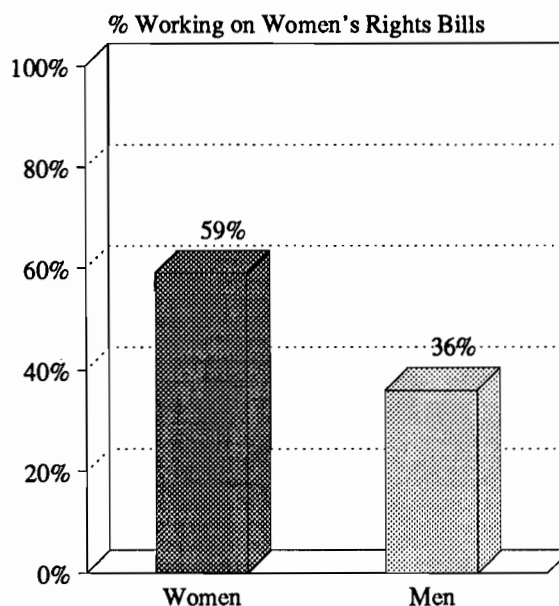
Inset 3: Women public officials are more active than men on women's rights legislation, whether or not it is their top priority

CAWP's National Survey of State Legislators found that more women than men lawmakers had worked on some type of women's rights bill during the most recent session.

They [men] were not tuned in to child care, spousal abuse, rape and all of that stuff. Here we [women] came along and said, "You know, these are your children, these are your mothers, your wives. If you are not going to take care of them, we are going to take care of them." (from discussion group of women legislators)

A week after I got in [office], I realized they were about to reverse a rape shield law.... We got it held up for ten days [and ultimately defeated the rape shield reversal]. Every woman in the state, including the secretaries and the wives, was screaming at the legislators.... If there is not a woman there to pay attention, it passes. (female legislator from a southern state)

Female and Male Lawmakers' Work on Women's Rights Bills



Women legislators were more likely than their male counterparts to have top priority bills of both types. One of every ten women state legislators, but fewer than one of every twenty men, had a women's rights bill as their top priority. Similarly, two-fifths of women, compared with one-third of men, had a top priority bill that focused on women's traditional areas of interest; in particular, women were more likely than men to have priority bills focusing on children and families and health care.

Second, regardless of whether it was or was not their top priority, women legislators in our study were more likely than their male colleagues to report that they had *worked on* one or more women's rights bills aimed specifically at helping women⁵ (*Inset 3*). Fifty-nine percent of women legislators, compared with 36 percent of men, had worked on at least one women's rights bill during the current legislative session.

Women of both parties are active in reshaping legislative agendas through their work on women's rights legislation and through their legislative priorities (*Inset 4*). Democratic women in our study more often than Republican women worked on women's rights bills and had a women's distinctive concern as their top legislative priority. Nevertheless, Republican women were more likely than men of either party to work on women's rights legislation and to have top priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns.

Women legislators not only give priority to and work on legislation that reflects the concerns they bring to the legislature as women, but also are successful in using the legislative process to get this legislation enacted. Women legislators in our study were about equally as effective as men in getting their bills passed. About two of every three legislators reported that their priority bills had passed their house of the legislature in satisfactory form, and priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns were as likely to have passed as other types of legislation.

Legislators' impressions of the effects of increased numbers of women lawmakers on public policy provide additional evidence that women are having a distinctive impact and influencing the agendas of state legislatures. Majorities of men as well as women lawmakers agreed that the increased presence of women in the legislatures has made a difference in: expenditure priorities for the state, the extent to which legislators consider how legislation will affect women as a group and the number of bills passed dealing specifically with the problems faced by women.

Legislators' impressions regarding the effects of increased numbers of women lawmakers, combined with our findings of gender differences in legislative priorities and women's greater involvement with women's rights legislation, provide compelling evidence that women are pursuing a set of policy objectives distinguishable from those of their male colleagues. Women lawmakers clearly are having a distinctive impact on public policy. As the numbers of women legislators increase, the attention that legislators give to women's rights issues and issues pertaining to health care, the welfare of children and families and other concerns related to women's traditional roles is likely to increase.

⁵This legislation did not have to be a top priority for the legislator (although it could have been), nor did the legislator have to sponsor it. We simply asked each legislator if she or he had *worked on* legislation during the last session where the bill itself, or specific provisions of the bill, were intended to help women in particular. We also asked legislators to describe what the bill or its relevant provisions did for women.

Inset 4: Democratic women are particularly active in reshaping the policy agenda, but Republican women are more active than men of either party

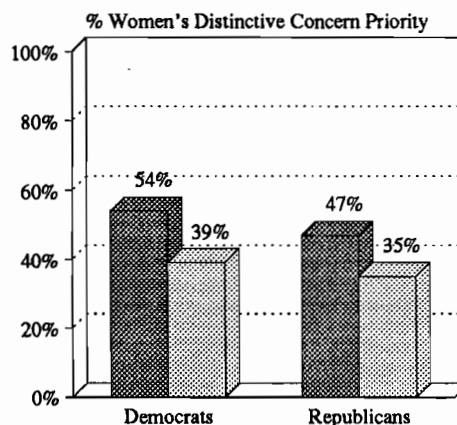
Women legislators were more likely than men of the same party to have as their top legislative priority a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns (either a women's rights bill or a bill dealing with women's traditional areas of interest).

- Democratic women were most likely to have a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns as their top legislative priority.
- However, Republican women were more likely than Democratic men to have a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns as their top legislative priority.

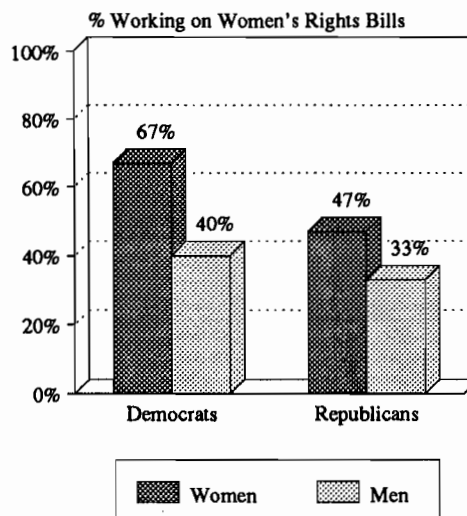
Democratic and Republican women were more likely than men of the same party to work on at least one women's rights bill, whether or not the bill was a top priority.

- Democratic women were more likely than Republican women to work on a women's rights bill.
- Republican women were somewhat more likely than Democratic men to work on a women's rights bill.

Women's Distinctive Concern
as Top Legislative Priority
Given Political Party



Work on Women's Rights Bills
Given Lawmakers' Political Party



Because growth in the number of women legislators has followed an incremental pattern during the past two decades,⁶ the change brought about as more women have entered the legislatures has been neither revolutionary nor dramatic and, consequently, has attracted little attention. However, as our research findings demonstrate, significant change is taking place — change that has important long-term implications. As more women are elected to legislatures, the policy agenda is being reshaped to better reflect the concerns brought into the legislature by women. The end result is likely to be an agenda that is more responsive not only to the specific needs of women, but also to the needs of a broader cross-section of our society (including, for example, the economically disadvantaged, children and those who lack access to adequate health care).

Maximizing Impact: The Importance of Connections to Women's Organizations

One of the most important indicators of whether or not a woman legislator is likely to be an active agent in reshaping the legislative agenda is her connection to women's organizations and the organized women's community (*Inset 5*). The more memberships women legislators had in women's organizations,⁷ the more likely they were to support liberal and feminist policy positions on issues, to work on women's rights legislation and to have a women's distinctive concern as a top priority. Women who held no memberships in women's organizations were more likely than men to have top priority bills that focused on women's distinctive concerns, but they were only slightly more likely than men to have worked on a women's rights bill. Moreover, they were no more likely than men to have liberal or feminist policy attitudes. It is not clear whether this close connection between women's organizations and the legislators most likely to be working to reshape legislative agendas occurs because women who care about women's issues join women's groups or because women's organizations reinforce within women legislators a sense of responsibility for representing women's shared interests. Regardless, the connection is a strong one.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the more endorsements a woman legislator had from women's groups in her last election, the more likely she was to have an impact on public

⁶Women constituted 4.5 percent of legislators in 1971, 8.0 percent in 1975, 10.3 percent in 1979, 13.3 percent in 1983, 15.7 percent in 1987, 17.0 percent in 1989, and 18.3 percent in 1991. See Center for the American Woman and Politics, "Women in State Legislatures 1991," New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1991.

⁷We asked specifically about memberships in the League of Women Voters [LWV], the American Association of University Women [AAUW], the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs [BPW], the National Organization for Women [NOW], the Women's Political Caucus [WPC] and feminist groups other than NOW or WPC.

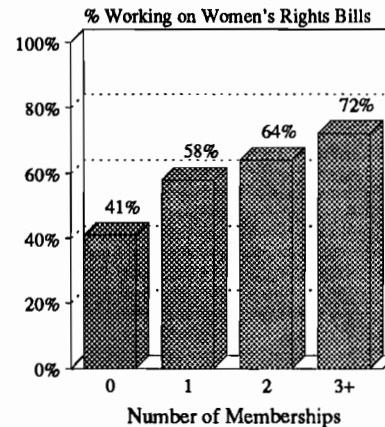
Inset 5: Women officeholders who have close ties to women's organizations are more likely than other women officeholders to be reshaping the public policy agenda

Women legislators who belonged to women's groups were more likely than other women legislators to have as their top priority a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns (either a women's rights bill or a bill dealing with women's traditional areas of interest).

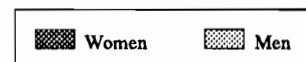
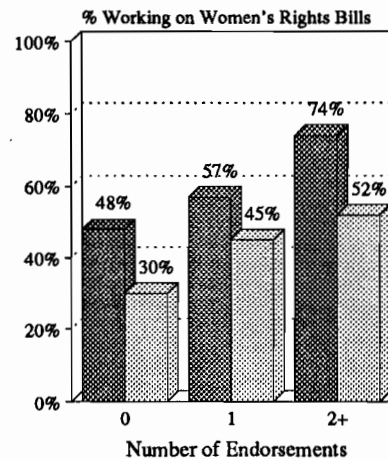
Women legislators who were connected to women's organizations were more likely than other women to work on women's rights bills, even when these bills were not necessarily a legislator's top priority.

- Women who were members of women's groups were more likely than other women to work on women's rights legislation.
- Women were more likely to work on women's rights bills than were men who received the same number of campaign endorsements from women's groups.

Women Lawmakers' Work on Women's Rights Bills Given Memberships in Major Women's Groups



Lawmakers' Work on Women's Rights Bills Given Endorsements by Women's Groups



policy different from that of men. The men who received endorsements from women's groups were less likely than women who received endorsements to support liberal and feminist policy stands. More important, they were considerably less likely than endorsed women to work on women's rights legislation once in the legislature (*Inset 5*) or to give top priority to legislation focused on women's distinctive concerns. The question of whether women's groups should endorse only women or whether they should endorse men as well has provoked considerable discussion and controversy within many of the organizations that endorse candidates. While our findings certainly cannot resolve this issue, they do suggest that women's groups receive more direct benefits from their endorsements of women candidates than from their endorsements of male candidates.

Maximizing Impact: The Role of Individual Characteristics

A profile of the types of women whose attitudes and actions differ most from those of their male colleagues has emerged from this research. These women legislators are the ones most likely to have a distinctive, gender-related impact on public policy and to be active in reshaping the agendas of legislative institutions.

The women legislators most likely to reshape the legislative agenda are: feminist, liberal, younger and African-American (*Inset 6*). Women lawmakers who called themselves feminists (45 percent of all women legislators) and those who identified themselves as liberals (27 percent of all women legislators) were more likely than legislators of other ideological perspectives, both women and men, to support feminist and liberal policy positions, to work on women's rights bills and to have top priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns (especially in the area of women's rights). Younger women legislators (i.e., less than 50 years old) were also more likely than older women legislators and male legislators of all ages to express liberal and feminist policy positions and to work on some women's rights legislation. However, no comparable age differences in top priority bills occurred. While African-American women were equally likely as white women to have priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns, they were more likely than both men and white women to support liberal and feminist policies and to have worked on at least one women's rights bill during the last legislative session.

Liberal, feminist, younger and/or African-American women legislators are the most active in reshaping legislative agendas; but many other women legislators are also having a distinctive, gender-related impact on public policy. A gender gap exists in both attitudes and action among non-feminists as well as feminists and among moderates and conservatives as well as liberals. Women legislators who did not call themselves feminists and women who identified as moderates or conservatives were more likely than the men who shared their ideological labels to take liberal and feminist stands on issues, to work on women's rights legislation and to have a women's distinctive concern as their

top legislative priority. A similar gender gap in both attitudes and action was evident among older legislators and among white legislators.

The importance of this pattern cannot be stressed too strongly, for it suggests that *on the average* female and male legislators who are of the same generation, ideology and/or race have different attitudes and will be active on different types of legislation. Although women and men legislators may share many of the same characteristics, they nevertheless are not the same in thought or action. Gender does seem to make a difference over and above the effects of other characteristics.

In most legislative races involving women candidates, the choice is not between a young, liberal, feminist, African-American woman and an older, conservative, non-feminist, white male. Rather, the choice often is between a woman and a man (or men) who are of the same race, who come from the same generation and who are very similar in their political ideology and other characteristics. Particularly in primary elections where party is not a factor, but even in many cases in general elections where candidates are from different parties, our findings suggest that the candidates may offer more of a choice to voters than is immediately apparent: a woman candidate and her male opponent who seem similar in many respects nevertheless are likely to exhibit gender-based differences in attitudes and behaviors if elected to office. While certainly not true in every case, the woman candidate is more likely to be liberal and feminist in her policy positions, to work on women's rights legislation and to have legislative priorities focusing on her distinctive concerns as a woman and a caregiver.

Men Who Are Helping to Reshape the Agenda

Some male lawmakers are helping women to reshape the legislative agenda. The subgroups of male legislators most like women in their attitudes and actions are: men who call themselves liberals, men who self-identify as feminists and men who are under the age of 50 (*Inset 7*).

Men who called themselves liberals (14 percent of all male legislators) or who self-identified as feminists (20 percent of all male legislators) were much more likely than other men and more likely than moderate, conservative and non-feminist women to express feminist and liberal attitudes on policy issues. Liberal and feminist men were also much more active than other men in support of women's rights legislation and legislation related to caregiving.

Nevertheless, liberal and feminist men were somewhat less likely than women to translate their attitudes into action. Liberal men were only slightly more likely than moderate women to work on any women's rights legislation, and they were no more likely than moderate women to have a women's distinctive concern as their top legislative priority. Similarly, feminist men were no more likely than non-feminist women to work

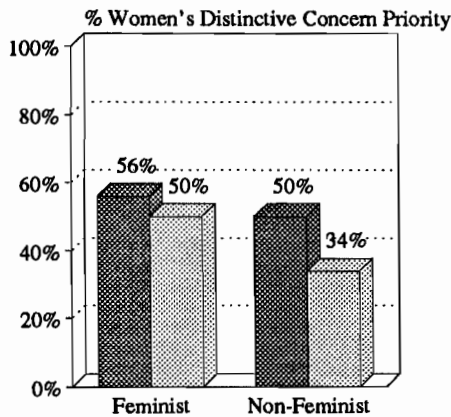
Inset 6: The officeholders most active in reshaping the policy agenda are feminist, liberal, younger and African-American women; however, non-feminist, conservative, older and white women officeholders are also actively reshaping the policy agenda

Legislative Priorities

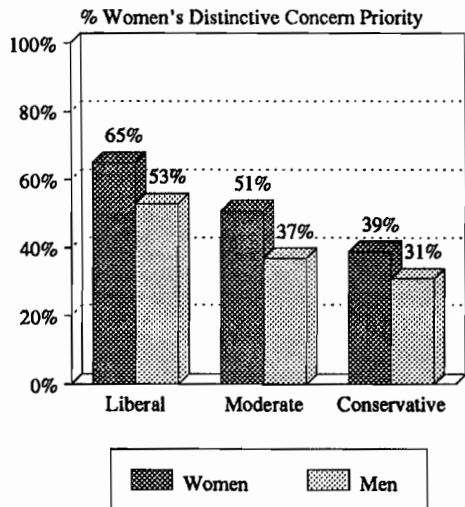
Feminism and legislative priorities:

- Feminist women legislators were the most likely to have as their top legislative priority a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns (either a women's rights bill or a bill dealing with women's traditional areas of interest).
- Non-feminist women and feminist men were about equally likely to have a top priority bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns.

Women's Distinctive Concern as Top Legislative Priority among Feminists and Non-Feminists



Women's Distinctive Concern as Top Legislative Priority Given Political Ideology



Ideology and legislative priorities:

- Liberal women legislators were the most likely to have a priority bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns.
- However, a gender gap in legislative priorities is apparent among liberals, among moderates and among conservatives.

Work on women's rights bills, even when these bills are not necessarily the legislator's top priority

Feminism and women's rights bills:

- Feminist women legislators were the most likely to work on women's rights bills.
- Feminist men and non-feminist women were about equally likely to work on women's rights bills.

Ideology and women's rights bills:

- Liberal women were the most likely to work on women's rights bills.
- However, there was a gender gap in work on women's rights bills among legislators who shared the same ideology.

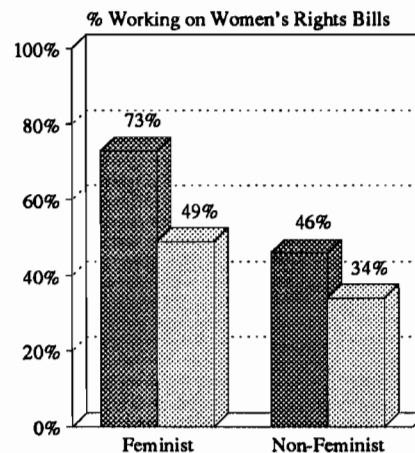
Age and women's rights bills:

- Younger women were the most likely to work on women's rights bills (see graph on page 18).
- However, women of all ages were more likely than men to work on women's rights bills.

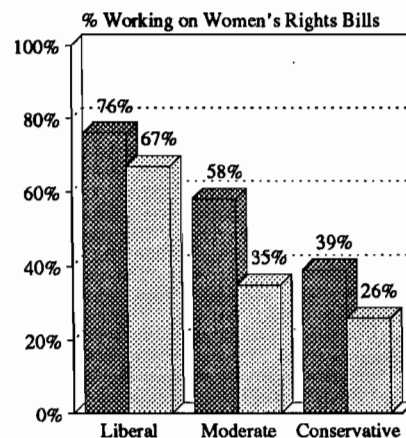
Race and women's rights bills:

- African-American women legislators were much more likely than white women legislators to work on women's rights bills.
- However, both African-American and white women were more likely than men to work on women's rights bills.

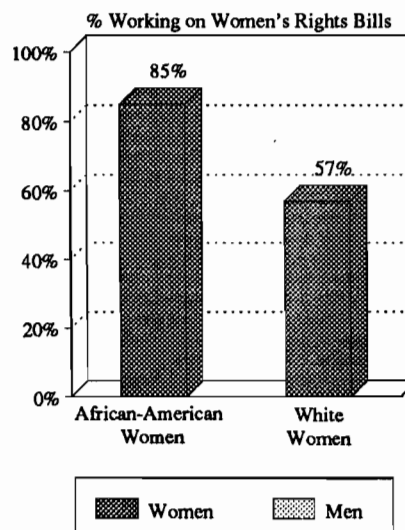
Work on Women's Rights Bills among Feminist and Non-Feminist Lawmakers



Work on Women's Rights Bills Given Lawmakers' Political Ideology

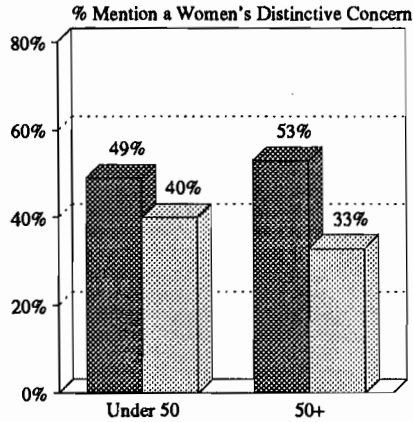


African-American and White Women Lawmakers' Work on Women's Rights Bills

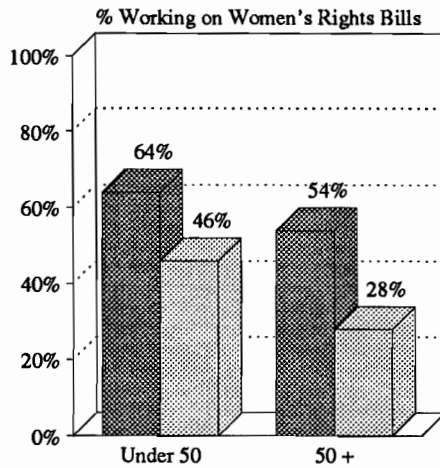


Inset 7: Younger men, liberal men and men who call themselves feminists are joining women legislators in reshaping the policy agenda

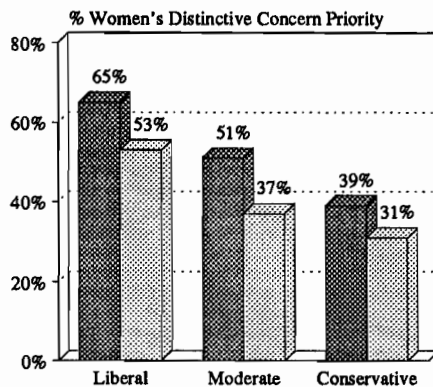
Women's Distinctive Concern as Top Legislative Priority Given Legislators' Age



Lawmakers' Work on Women's Rights Bills Given Age



Women's Distinctive Concern as Top Legislative Priority Given Political Ideology

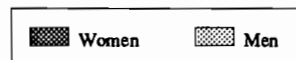


The generation gap among male legislators:

- Younger men (under 50 years old) were more likely than older men legislators to have a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns (either a women's rights bill or a bill focusing on women's traditional areas of interest) as their top priority.
- Younger men were much more likely than older men to work on women's rights bills even when these bills were not necessarily their top priority.

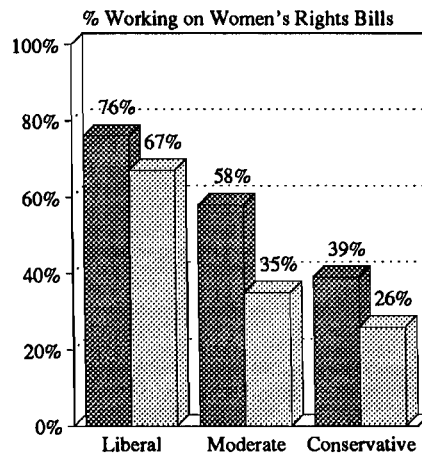
Ideological differences among men:

- Liberal men (who were only 14 percent of the male legislators compared to 27 percent of the women legislators) were more likely than other male legislators to have a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns as their top priority.



- Liberal men were much more likely than other men to work on women's rights bills even when these bills were not necessarily their top priority.

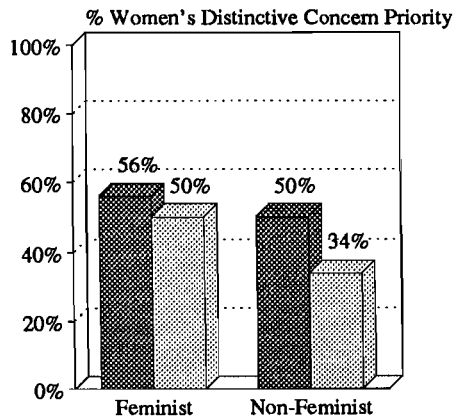
Work on Women's Rights Bills Given Lawmakers' Political Ideology



Feminism and differences among men:

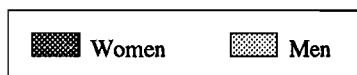
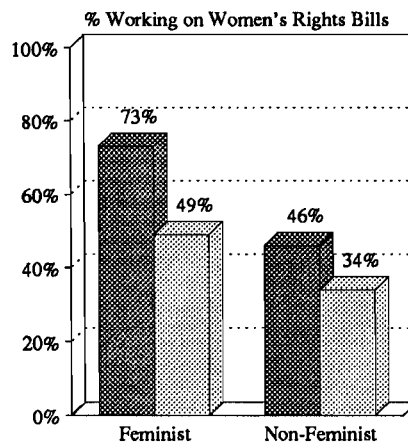
- Feminist men (who were only 20 percent of male legislators compared to 45 percent of women legislators) were more likely than non-feminist men to have a bill focusing on women's distinctive concerns as their top priority.

Women's Distinctive Concern as Top Legislative Priority among Feminists and Non-Feminists



- Feminist men were much more likely than non-feminist men to work on women's rights bills, even when these bills were not necessarily their top priority.

Work on Women's Rights Bills among Feminist and Non-Feminist Lawmakers



on women's rights legislation or to have top priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns.

While liberal and feminist men are greatly outnumbered by moderates, conservatives and non-feminists among their male colleagues, these findings suggest that they are important allies in altering the legislative agenda to make it more responsive to women's demands for equal rights and more reflective of women's concerns as caregivers in the family and society. However, women are still more likely to take the lead in reshaping the agenda; feminist and liberal women are particularly active in doing so.

Men under the age of 50 were much more likely than their older male colleagues to take liberal and feminist stands on issues, to work on women's rights legislation and to have a women's distinctive concern as their top legislative priority. However, younger men were also notably less likely than women of any age to do all these things. These findings suggest that generational change is taking place among men — change that is leading men to become more sensitive to the concerns and issues of greatest interest to women. Over time, this change among men may lead to greater convergence between the sexes. However, at present and for the foreseeable future, women are still likely to lead the way in reshaping the legislative agenda to make it more responsive to women's concerns.

The Effect of the Political Environment on Women's Impact

For the most part, our research did not reveal important effects of the political environment on women legislators' attitudes or actions in reshaping the legislative agenda. Although the ideology of the district a woman legislator represented did seem to have some effect on how active she was on behalf of women's interests, somewhat surprisingly, women's level of activity did not seem to be much affected by either the professionalism of the legislature or the proportion of women in the legislature.⁸

Nevertheless, our examination did lead to two important conclusions regarding the effects of the political environment on women's impact. First, as women gain more seniority in the legislature and become legislative leaders, they do not abandon their commitment to women and to reshaping the legislative agenda. Second, just as connections to women's organizations outside the legislature seem to lead women lawmakers to be more active agents in representing women's interests, so too do connections to women's caucuses and other policy-oriented gatherings of women inside the legislature.

⁸Legislators in legislative chambers with 15 percent or more women were more successful in securing passage of top priority bills focusing on women's distinctive concerns than were legislators in chambers with fewer women, suggesting that the proportion of women in the legislature does affect the fate of legislation focusing on women's rights and women's traditional areas of interest.

Women with five or more years of experience in the legislature expressed policy attitudes that were similar to those of their less senior female colleagues, and like women legislators who had more recently entered the legislature, were more likely than their male colleagues of similar seniority to have a women's distinctive concern as a top priority. Perhaps more important, women in positions of leadership within the legislature were virtually identical to other women legislators in their policy views and in their levels of activity on women's rights legislation. Women in positions of legislative leadership also were more likely than male legislative leaders to give top priority to legislation focused on women's distinctive concerns. In short, our findings suggest that women's commitment to representing the interests of women does not diminish as they achieve greater longevity or as they move into leadership positions within state legislatures.

The commitment of women legislators to representing the interests of women does, however, seem to be enhanced when they are involved with formal women's caucuses or when they attend formal or informal policy-oriented meetings of women within their legislatures. While the top priority bills of women who attended meetings of women legislators did not differ significantly in focus from the top priority bills of women who did not attend such meetings, women who met with other women in their legislatures were considerably more likely than those who did not to have worked on women's rights legislation during the last legislative session. Just as a connection to the women's community outside the legislature seems to support women legislators in their efforts to reshape the legislative agenda, so too does a connection to a women's community inside the legislature.

Questions Remain

In demonstrating that women are reshaping the agendas of legislatures across the country, this research represents an important first step toward understanding the impact of women in public office. However, if we are to appreciate fully the changes in public policy, political processes and governing institutions that may accompany the movement of increasing numbers of women into public office, much more work is required. The research in this report suggests at least three important areas that deserve further exploration in future research on the consequences of women's increasing presence in public office.

First, there is still much work to be done in exploring the extent and nature of women officeholders' influence on public policy. The analysis of the impact of women legislators on public policy presented in this volume is based on *self-reports* of behavior during a single legislative session. More in-depth information about women's impact might be gathered through actual *observation* of officeholders' behavior and/or by focusing on a longer time frame. We asked legislators to describe the content and focus of the legislation on which they were working, but we were not able to assess how

important or innovative the legislation was, the roles that women and men played as the legislation was considered by the legislature or the actual amount of time and effort that women and men devoted to the legislation.

Neither were we able to examine whether the life experiences of women lead them not only to work on more women's rights legislation and to have different priorities than men, but also to bring different perspectives and considerations to bear on all the various types of legislation on which they must act. For example, because of their caregiving roles and responsibilities, women legislators might be more likely than men to think about the possible impact of legislation on children or the elderly regardless of whether the bill under consideration focuses on transportation, banking, economic development or health care.

Future research might provide more in-depth information about these and other possible policy-related differences in women's and men's legislative efforts. Legislative case histories might provide considerable insight into the impact of women on public policy; key pieces of legislation could be tracked through a legislature, with attention focused on the relative roles played by women and men in influencing the content and fate of the legislation. The research presented in this report provides clear evidence for women's impact on public policy based on a large and representative sample of officeholders; future research should perhaps be aimed at providing a more in-depth understanding of women's policy-related impact in a more limited and focused setting.

Much work remains to be done on the question of whether and how the increased presence of women in public office is affecting political processes and institutions. This report indicates some ways in which women may be having an impact beyond their influence on public policy. Women lawmakers in our study were more likely than men to say that input from citizens was helpful to them in working on their priority legislation, and majorities of both women and men agreed that women are helping to give the economically disadvantaged greater access to the legislature (*Inset 8*). Both of these findings suggest that women may be more accessible to their constituents and may differ from men in the way they view and relate to their constituencies. In an era of declining public confidence in political institutions, women's increasing presence among public officials might enhance government's responsiveness to its citizens.

Majorities of women and sizable minorities of men believed that the presence of women in the legislature has increased the extent to which legislative business is conducted in public view rather than behind closed doors (*Inset 8*), that men socialize more with lobbyists and that the increased presence of women has changed the way legislators conduct themselves on the floor of the legislature. These findings suggest that women legislators may have legislative styles that differ from those of their male colleagues and that accepted ways of doing business may change as the numbers of women increase.

While these findings indicate that women officeholders may be having some impact in changing political processes and institutions, our finding that women are about as likely as men to have their top priority legislation passed by their house of the legislature suggests that women have become effective actors within legislative institutions and consequently may *not* be working to change institutional processes. Rather, women may

Inset 8: Women officeholders are changing the way government works

Women public officials were more likely than men to bring citizens into the political process.

- More women legislators reported that citizens were very helpful in working on their top priority bills.

Women have more of a tie with our constituent base than men do because we work harder at... educating people in order to try to pull people into the process. (from a discussion group of female legislators)

Women are more likely to opt for government in public view rather than government behind closed doors.

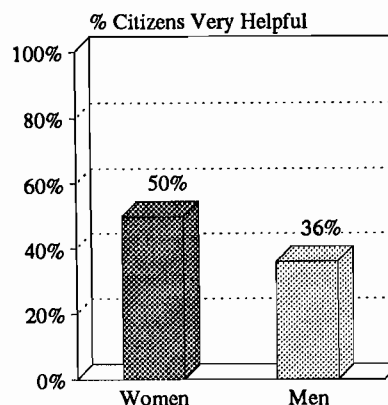
- A majority of women and a sizeable minority of men said women had made a difference in the extent to which legislative business was conducted in public view rather than behind closed doors.

Women are more responsive to groups previously denied full access to the policymaking process.

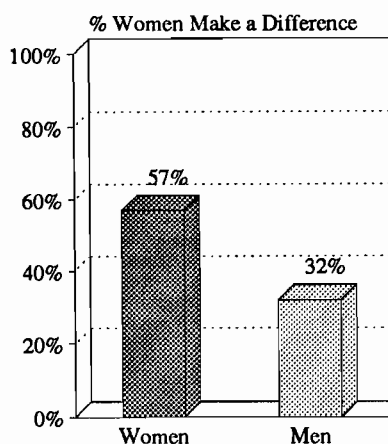
- Majorities of women and men agreed that women had made a difference in the access of the economically disadvantaged to the legislature.

A female legislator...[has] a better ear and higher sensitivity for the needs of women, children and poor people. (female legislator from the midwest)

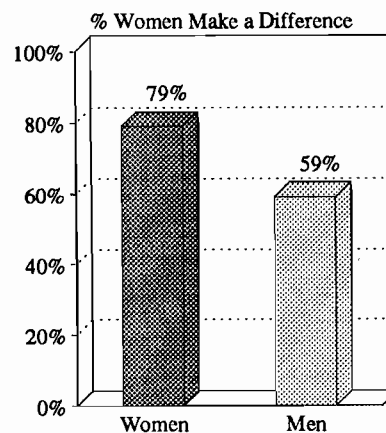
Legislators Citing Citizens as Very Helpful Sources of Support



Business Conducted in Public View



Access of Economically Disadvantaged



be mastering and using those processes to achieve their policy goals — goals which do differ in important ways from those of men. Although the research in this report provides some tantalizing clues about the impact women officeholders may have on political processes and the institutions in which they serve, much more work is required in this area.

Finally, in demonstrating that women pursue somewhat different policy objectives than men within legislatures, the findings of this report raise an important and disturbing question that should be examined through further research: do women's different policy interests have negative consequences for their political careers? Are women paying a price in their political careers as a result of the fact that they may be more interested in women's rights, health care and the welfare of children than in tax law, economic development or infrastructure? Do male officeholders advance more quickly in political institutions because they are more interested in the issues that male-dominated institutions have deemed important, the so-called "power issues," while women are marginalized when they express interest in issues that have been viewed by these same institutions as more peripheral? As a related question, are there any examples of institutions where the "power issues" are being redefined as more women enter and have greater influence? Are there cases where public policies to help women, children, families, the sick and the needy are viewed as equally important as public policies affecting the banking industry, highway construction and intergovernmental relations? The possible consequences of gender differences among public officeholders must be more fully considered, analyzed and understood — whether those consequences be to impede the political careers of individual women or to transform the focus of public policymaking to make it more inclusive and more responsive to the concerns of all citizens in our society.

Gender and Policymaking

The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) awarded a series of small grants to scholars who wished to examine women's impact in public office. The scholars studied various elected and appointed women at the local, state and national levels of government and in the legislative, executive and judicial branches. Their reports are collected and published in *Gender and Policymaking: Studies of Women in Office*, Volume 2 in the series *The Impact of Women in Public Office*.

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

Women's impact is also influenced by the nature of the institution. First, the task of getting policies dealing with women, children and families passed is more difficult where there are only small numbers of women. Second, the selection process can limit the potential for women to make a difference. If a selection process is centralized and employs a litmus test which promotes homogeneity of views among the women and men selected, the chances that women will have a distinctive impact on policy are reduced. Third, the norms of the institution — the kinds of issues it typically addresses, the issues considered "important," the pressure exerted by constituents or colleagues and the extent to which precedent is firmly set (for example, in the case of judges) — may affect both the ability of women to have a distinctive, gender-related impact and the willingness/ability of their colleagues to recognize such impact.

Most of the scholars' reports focus on the difference women make in public policy. However, evidence regarding women's impact on the political process makes a strong case for increasing women's presence in public office in an era of low trust in government and low citizen participation in politics. Some scholars find evidence that women attempt to bring citizens into the policymaking process, some report that many constituents feel more comfortable talking to women officeholders than to male officials, and others find that women exercise a leadership style more open to input from

constituents and staff. Furthermore, personal experiences with sex discrimination have sensitized and enhanced women's commitment to gender equality in the workplace.

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

Chapter Summaries from *Gender and Policymaking*

Do Women in Public Office Make a Difference? by Susan Welch and Sue Thomas

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

Cabinet-Level Appointees in Connecticut: Women Making a Difference by Catherine M. Havens and Lynne M. Healy

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

appeared to exercise leadership in a manner that was less hierarchical, more consensual, more open and more responsive to the concerns and suggestions of their subordinates.

Ways Women Politicians are Making a Difference

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

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

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

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

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

by Janet K. Boles

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

Judicial Gender and Judicial Choices**by Elaine Martin**

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

Margaret Chase Smith and the Impact of Gender Affinity**by Janann Sherman**

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

Black Women Mayors: Reflections on Race and Gender**by Jeanette Jennings**

Black women officials experience the "double whammy" of race and sex discrimination in our society. Based on anecdotal evidence from conversations with black women mayors, this study finds that gender and race affect what mayors do in office.

Although black women are often mayors of smaller, poorer towns, they believe they have a greater commitment than their white predecessors did to problems of the economically disadvantaged. This is an outgrowth of their ties to the black community and their own experiences. But many of these black women also see themselves as using different leadership styles and having different ways of solving problems than their towns' previous male mayors. Sorting out the effects of race and gender is difficult given that these women often are the first woman and/or the first black to hold office. These preliminary reflections clearly point to the importance of recognizing racial diversity among women officeholders.

The Unseen Influence of Women in the State and Defense Departments by Nancy E. McGlen and Meredith Reid Sarkees

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

Do Women Leaders Make a Difference? Substance, Style and Perceptions by Sue Tolleson Rinehart

To explore the impact of women in public office, interviews were conducted with current or former female mayors of five large cities and their male predecessors or successors. Overall, there were few differences between the male and female mayors' views about the nature of their communities and the policy problems that should be addressed. This similarity may be due in part to the increased acceptance of humanistic concerns as public issues that should be addressed by government and to the mandate of local government to pay attention to human problems. However, women and men mayors exercised different leadership styles, with women employing a more hands-on style that

emphasized collegiality and teamwork. Women and men of the mayoral pairs also saw the implications of gender for officeholders differently. Men tended to attribute differences between men and women mayors to personality while women more often attributed them to gender.

Rethinking Municipal Governance: Gender Distinctions on Local Councils by Susan Abrams Beck

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

Gender Differences in Legislative Effectiveness: The Impact of the Legislative Environment by Jeanie R. Stanley and Diane D. Blair

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

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

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

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 State Legislators; a Subscriber Information Service and newsletter; conferences and seminars; consulting services; programs for college and high school students; a specialized library collection about women in public life; production of books, monographs, reports, fact sheets, and a documentary film.

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