

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY OF REPRESENTATION IN THE US CONGRESS, 1992-2006

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

NABILA SADIQ



AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM
CENTRE FOR CANADIAN, US AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
NEW DELHI-110067
INDIA
2007



CENTRE FOR CANADIAN, US AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067

Date: 30.7.2007


DECLARATION


I declare the thesis entitled “ **Women Empowerment: A Study of Representation in the US Congress, 1992-2006**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.


NABILA SADIQ

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


Prof. ABDUL NAFEY
Chairperson, CCUS&LAS


Dr. K.P. VIJAYALAKSHMI
Supervisor

*DEDICATED
TO
MY DEAREST MOM*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I wish to take this opportunity to express my greatest gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. K.P. Vijayalakshmi** for her immense guidance and support throughout the course of my study. I also wish to thank her for her useful suggestions and remarks that helped me to complete the research work successfully.*

*I would like to express my gratitude to my parents for their valuable suggestions and moral support provided during the course of study. I also wish to thank my brother, **Kamal** and sister-in-law, **Sana** for their immense support.*

*Further, I like to thank the teachers of my center, **Prof. Christopher Samraj** and **Dr. Chintamani Mahapatra** for their inspiration and encouragement during the course of this study. I also wish to thank **Neelam Ma'am** and **Rajveer Sir** for always giving a helping hand when needed.*

I further thank the staff of the libraries of Jawaharlal Nehru University and American Research information Resource Centre for providing me with the necessary materials needed for my research.

*Lastly, I would like to specially thank my friends **Jyoti** and **Kalpana** for being my moral support all throughout.*

I have tried my best to produce a work of utmost quality. However, I am alone responsible for the errors and shortcomings, if any, in this work.

Nabila Sadiq
NABILA SADIQ

CONTENTS

		Page Nos.
	LIST OF TABLES	i-ii
	LIST OF FIGURES	iii
	ABBREBRIATIONS	iv-vi
	PREFACE	vii-viii
Chapter One	INTRODUCTION: <i>A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. CONGRESS</i>	1- 28
Chapter Two	WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: BEYOND VOTING AND ACTIVISM	29-64
Chapter Three	POLITICAL PARTIES AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS	65-96
Chapter Four	OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN POLICY MAKING	97-121
Chapter Five	CONCLUSION	122-128
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	129-140

<u>List of Tables</u>	<u>Page Nos.</u>
Women in the US Congress, 1917-1971	8
Women in the US Congress, 1971-1991	11
Women in the US Congress, 1991-2009	15
Women who have chaired congressional Committees in the House of Representatives	19
Women who have chaired congressional Committees in the Senate	20
Women elected to party leadership positions in the House of Representatives	22
Women elected to party leadership positions in the Senate	23
Percentages of women in Elective Offices	26
Women currently serving in the Senate	27
Sex Differences in the Voter Turnout	50
Voter Turnout table, 1992-2004	52
Summary of Women Candidates for Selected Offices, 1970-2006 (Major party nominees)	54
The Presidential Voting and the Gender Gap: 1992-2002	60

Gender Gap: Party identification and Presidential Performance Ratings	61
Delegates who are Women (in percentages)	93
Women in Congress: Leadership Roles	113
Gender Gap in Public Policy Issues	117

<u>List of figures</u>	<u>Page Nos.</u>
Percentage of women in the Congress	26
Voting Turnout: US 1964-98	43
Presidential Vote 1948-96	44
US Partisan identification 1952-98	46
Press Coverage of the Gender Gap	47
Gender Gap in Presidential Voting and Party identification 1952 to 2004	59
Congressional elections and the Gender Gap	62
Percentage of Women in Congress, 1983-2004	111

ABBREVIATIONS

ANES	American National Election Studies
AR	Arkansas
AWSA	America Women Suffrage Association
BCRA	The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act
BPW	The National Federation Of Business And Professional Women's Clubs
CA	California
CAWP	Center For American Women And Politics, Eagleton Institute Of Politics, Rutgers University
CO	Colorado
CT	Connecticut
D	Democrat
DC	District of Columbia
DNC	Democratic National Committee
DO	Delegates And Organization
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
EMILY	Early Money Is Like Yeast
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment
FECA	Federal Election Campaign Act

FEC	Federal Election Commission
GOP	Grand Old Party
GFWC	General Federation Of Women's Clubs
HJR	House Joint Resolution
KS	Kansas
LWV	League Of Women's Voters
MA	Massachusetts
MANA	The Mexican American Women's National Association
MD	Maryland
ME	Maine
MI	Michigan
MO	Missouri
NAACP	National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People
NAWSA	National American Women Suffrage Association
NC	North Carolina
NCL	National Consumer League
NCNW	National Council Of Negro Women
NES	National Election Survey
NFRW	National Federation Of Republican Women
NJ	New Jersey

NM	New Mexico
NOW	National Organization For Women
NWDN	National Women's Democratic Network
NWP	National Women's Party
NWPC	National Women Political Caucus
NWSA	National Women Suffrage Association
NY	New York
OH	Ohio
R	Republican
RNC	Republican National Committee
SDS	Students Democratic Society
SD	South Dakota
TX	Texas
WTUL	Women's Trade Union League
US	United States
VI	Virgin Islands
WA	Washington
WISH	Women In The Senate And House
WY	Wyoming

PREFACE

The Women constitute more than half the population of the United States of America. Ironically, however, they occupy merely 16.3 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate. This hardly compares well with the significant role women can play in politics and marginally reflects the decisive, far-reaching change US political system has undergone.

Gender as a way of analysis gives a completely new perspective to the realm of American politics. A study of the American elections and the policy making within process in the Congress from a women's perspective reveals a whole new spectrum of approach to American politics. By virtue of their number, women in the US are capable of playing a major role in politics and the women public officials have the capability to change the policy -making processes. However, there are many problems that have to be solved and many stereotypes to be erased before women can achieve their rightful place in the political arena.

The election of Nancy Pelosi to the post of the speaker of the House of Representative is seen as just one crowning glory that will beget many more powerful positions to change the complexion of American politics. The future seems quite bright but still there is a lot to be achieved before women can attain the same stature and position as that of their male colleagues in politics.

The study proposes to examine the problem of under representation of women in the US Congress and relate it to the idea as to how and to what extent their presence in the Congress, albeit disproportionate to their numerical strength, determines the policy-making in the USA.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an historical survey of women in the US Congress. In order to present a systematic narrative of the historical evolution of women in Congress, the chapter is divided into time periods and analyses the events accordingly. There are three time periods in the chapter: period prior to 1972, 1972-1992 and 1992 to 2006. The chapter also reviews the leadership positions of women.

The second chapter chronicles women's political participation in the US politics, underlining women activism, women voters and women candidates. Women activism is discussed through giving a brief overview of the three waves of feminism

in the United States and its role in empowering women. The gender gap in American elections has been discussed in details and for that the two categories of women voters and women candidates dealt with separately. Statistics and data with regard to women voters and candidates are analysed systematically and conclusions about gender-gap arrived at in the process.

The third chapter is about the political parties and the issue of women's rights. It begins with a brief historical background with regard to female political consciousness and the struggle for women's rights. The chapter discusses the women rights movement dividing it into the reform movement, the suffrage movement and the present women's movement. It further examines the stand of political parties on women's rights and the manner the issue of women rights influenced the political parties in the past and is doing as of now. The stand of the political parties with regard to women recruitment inside the party and their stand on women issues are also elaborated.

The fourth chapter unravels the different obstacles and challenges women face on their to political participation. It also discusses the impact of women officials on the US Congress. A summary of important legislative judgments is also given in order to show the effect and impact of the women activists.

The final chapter is the Conclusion to the study of the subject of the dissertation. A systematic analysis of the subject helps to arrive at certain conclusions which are reviewed in the last chapter.

This study makes use of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are in the form of Government Legislations, CRS reports, data from US bureau Census, American National Election studies and other relevant official texts. The secondary sources are in the form of books, articles, newspapers, opinion polls, CAWP Factsheets, Facts on File and Internet material. The research methodology employed for the study is both descriptive and analytical. While the primary objective of analysis is to understand the impact women in the Congress have made as a result of their increasing numbers, the Study also proposes to link the women's movement to the larger question of participation of women in the political arena

CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction: A historical survey of women in the U.S.
Congress

The dawn of the twenty- first century has seen the rekindling of the greatest debate on equitable political participation by men and by women in democracies as democracies are seen as crucially different from other forms of governance because they are based on the principles of participation, representation, accountability and tolerance. Even as acute scrutiny on the functioning of democracies continues, it is becoming increasingly clear that gender has to be employed as a conceptual tool of analysis to better understand the working of democracies.

As the oldest democracy, the US experience has been one of discrimination against women in politics. Historical evidence provides ample proof to the struggle of American women in getting elected. An overview of the women in politics brings one face to face with the paradox of American politics. Even though women constitute about 53 percent of the population, they have held only a small fraction of the elective offices at all levels of the Government.¹ Women have shown a considerable strength when it comes to voting yet they exhibit a representational weakness particularly at the national level. In 1988, women held only 28 seats out of the total of 535(5.2 percent). Later, partially due to the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas controversy in 1991 and several other factors, more women ran for the Congress in 1992 leading to the inclusion of seven female members to the senate and forty-seven to the House of Representatives (about 11 Percent) in the 103rd Congress. Post -1992 there has been substantive increase in the number of women in the Congress as the number has risen from 54 to 70 in election 2006. ² In August 2005, women made up 15.5 percent of the Congress—an all-time high. . Nevertheless, some women noted that although they had failed to achieve numerical parity in the Congress, they had dramatically altered the political culture within the electorate. So, the women in public office have increased dramatically over a period of time.³

The small percentage of women in the Congress persuades us to evaluate the difficulties which women face in the political participation. Women, who attempt to

¹ Ronald D. Hedlund, Patricia K. Freeman, Keith E. Hamm and Robert M. Stein, “The Electability of women candidates: The effect of Sex Role Stereotypes”, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 41(1-2), 1979,pp.513-524; and Carol Nechemias, “Changes in the Election of Women to State Legislative Seats”, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 12, February 1987,pp.125-142.

² Lois Lovelace Duke, (1996) *Women in Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., pp.127-128

³ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, “Women in Elective Office 2007”[Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/elective.pdf>

enter the circle of political elite, experience an array of difficulties.⁴ One study of women in three midwestern state legislatures found that women polled significantly fewer votes and won fewer elections than men.⁵ Further, women even held fewer seats in professionally developed legislatures and city councils, in part due to stiffer male opposition in states and communities where the compensation is higher, the tenure is longer, and the prestige of office holding is greater.⁶ The weakened positions of women in elective office have also been linked to their weakened economic position in the marketplace. One researcher even went ahead to say that as female participation and success in the labor force increase so will the electoral potency of the women candidates.⁷ The other factors which explain the discrepancy between female voting strength and elected legislative representation include personality differences, situational factors, and sex-role socialization.⁸

Apart from the above-mentioned factors, one most significant barrier stopping women in exercising their political rights has been the existence of negative cultural attitudes towards women exercising their political rights. Historically, these attitudes have led to voter resistance towards women candidates and unwillingness on the part of women to get involved in the political process.

However, the societal attitudes towards women's political participation have undergone a major change. The knowledge about the cultural attitudes towards women's political participation has been scant prior to 1920 and immediately after it. It was only in 1930 that the first national wide opinion poll revealed a negative attitude towards women in politics. Thereafter too, this bias against women in politics continued. In 1946, 88 percent of all men and 87 percent of all women responded that the office of the mayor "should nearly always be held by a man"⁹. Polls conducted in 1950s and 1960s also found a small change in attitudes towards women in politics.

⁴ Susan Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office", *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 31, September 1978, pp. 372-380

⁵ Margery M. Ambrosius and Susan Welch, "Women and Politics at the Grassroots: Women Candidates for Office in Three States", paper presented at the annual meeting of the Western Social Science Association, April 1981, quoted in Lois Lovelace Duke, *Women in Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1996, p.128

⁶ David B. Hill, "Political Culture and Female Political Representation", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 43(1-2), 1981, pp.159-168

⁷ Alice S. Rossi, "Beyond the Gender Gap: Women's bid for Political Power", *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol.64, 1983, pp. 718-733

⁸ Lois Lovelace Duke, (1996) *Women in Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., p.128

⁹ Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p.67

The public support for women in politics increased considerably in the 1960s. For example, among women college graduates, support for female president rose from 51 percent in 1967 to 88 percent in 1975; the figure for college men were actually higher-58 and 91 percent¹⁰. Willingness to elect women to other political offices, such as mayor or governor also increased with 80 percent of the public reporting that they would support a qualified women in these positions in 1975.¹¹ Though, only 28 percent of Americans believed the increasing number of women in elected office would be beneficial and 46 percent thought that women would make a difference in the quality of government in 1984¹², all this changed in the 1990s. A 2000 Gallup poll found that 93 percent of women and 91 percent of men indicated they would vote for a qualified woman for president if the party nominated her. Also the 2000 Gallop found that 57 percent of Americans now think that the country would be better governed by having more women in politics. Thus what has emerged today is a drastic change in cultural attitudes towards women in politics.

When examining the political participation of women, what is critical is to understand the fact that the American Constitution never explicitly excluded anyone from the membership of the Congress on the basis of race, ethnicity, or sex. Still the rules on suffrage have not always reflected the true spirit of the Constitution and varied from time to time. That a person ineligible to vote is rarely considered eligible for public office seems contrary to the spirit of the Constitution. Today, 83.7% of the Congress consists of male and 16.3% of female members. Women hold 87, or 16.3%, of the 535 seats in the 110th US Congress — 16, or 16.0%, of the 100 seats in the Senate and 71, or 16.4%, of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives. In addition, three women serve as Delegates to the House from Guam, the Virgin Islands and Washington, DC.¹³ As of 2007, the United States ranks 70th in the world in the number of women to hold seats in the national legislature.¹⁴ These figures have a

¹⁰ E.M. Schreiber, "Education and change in Opinions on a woman for President", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 42 1978, pp.1871-82

¹¹ Sandra Baxter and Marjorie Lansing, (1980) *Women and Politics: The Invisible Majority*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p.140

¹² "Majority of Americans Say More Women in Political Office would be Positive for the Country", Gallup Poll Release, January 4, 2001, [Web: Online] Accessed 4th July 2007, URL: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr010104.asp>

¹³ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in Elective Office 2007"[Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/elective.pdf>

¹⁴ Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "women in National Parliaments" [Online: web] Accessed on 31 March 2007 URL: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

bearing on the discourse on political representation, as it implicitly reveals the wide disparity that exists between the number of men and women in Congress.

Political representation, on any account, will exhibit the following four components:

1. *some party that is representing* (the representative, an organization, movement, state agency);
 2. *some party that is being represented* (the constituents, the clients);
 3. *something that is being represented* (opinions, perspectives, interest);
- and
4. *a setting within which the activity of representation is taking place* (the political context).¹⁵

The theories of political representation often begin with specifying the terms of each of these four components. For instance, democratic theorists often limit the types of representatives being discussed to formal representatives — that is, to representatives who hold elected offices. One reason that the concept of representation remains elusive is that the theories of representation often apply only to particular kinds of political actors within a particular context. How individuals represent an electoral district is treated as distinct from how social movements or informal organizations represent it. Consequently, it is unclear how different forms of representation relate to each other.

This general agreement about the necessary components exhibited in political representation is somewhat misleading, for what exactly representatives *do* has been a hotly contested issue. In particular, a controversy has raged over whether representatives should act as *delegates* or *trustees*.

The concept of political representation is simple but misleading; everyone seems to know the concept; yet few agree on its particular definition. In fact, there is an extensive literature that offers many different definitions of the elusive concept. Hanna Pitkin (1967)¹⁶ provides, perhaps, one of the most straightforward definitions: to represent is simply to “make present again.” On this definition, political representation is the activity of making citizens' voices, opinions, and perspectives

¹⁵ Suzanne Dovi, “Political Representation”, [Online/Web] Accessed on 1 April 2007 URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/political-representation>

¹⁶ On various views of representation, see Hanna Pitkin, (1967), *The Concept Of Representation*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp.1-13

“present” in the public policy making processes. Political representation occurs when political actors speak, advocate, symbolize, and act on behalf of others in the political arena. In short, political representation turns to be a kind of political assistance. This seemingly straightforward definition, however, is not adequate as it is for it leaves the concept of political representation under-specified. Indeed, it may be that the concept of political representation bears multiple and competing dimensions: the common understanding of political representation contains different, and conflicting, conceptions of the way the political representatives should represent and so holds representatives to standards that are mutually incompatible. In leaving these dimensions under-specified, this definition fails to capture the paradoxical character of the concept. In essence there are two primary variants of representation i.e. “agency representation” and “sociological representation”.¹⁷

In agency representation, an agent is chosen to act on behalf of his constituency that ensures accountability by making the agent stand for elections. The agent might have little in common with his constituency but must somehow be able to divine what is in their best interests. In contrast, the sociological representation, is about electing someone with a similar background, culture and a worldview as one’s own. People trust this agent’s similarity and think that this will give their representative a deep understanding; and, hence, a more reliable representation of their needs. It is this concept of representation which brings us to the idea of representation by women.

The value of the sociological representation lies in the idea that those holding political office will have clearer and deeper understanding of the efficacy of their decisions and policies to the groups they belong. One major difference between the male and female officeholders is that men can never have the experience of bearing a child and this has an effect on how male and female officeholders view different and wide range of policies including issues such as abortion and reproductive health. In this view, Women must have full access to the public sphere as both men and women have different life experiences.

Political scientists often distinguish between descriptive or numerical representation (i.e., the number of members of a particular group who hold office) and substantive representation (i.e. representation of group interests). Most of the research on women in the 1970s and 1980s dealt primarily with women’s numerical

¹⁷ Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, ed. (1998), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 205-206

representation and aimed at understanding as to why so few women held public office.¹⁸ According to Pitkin, advocates of “descriptive representation” argue that legislative bodies should be a microcosm of the society, with all social groups represented proportionally. They assume that legislators represent constituents whose social characteristics they share. Exclusion or under representation of any social group may cause distortion of policy outcomes. If women in general hold policy preferences different from men, then the fact that women hold only 16.3 % of the seats in the Congress is a cause for concern.

Researchers have recently begun to explore the relationship between women’s numerical and substantive representation and to address the question whether their presence in public office is making a difference or not. However, the political arm of the feminist movement in the United States see these forms of representation as inextricably intertwined. Accordingly, many advocacy organisations, women’s political action committees and the Women’s Campaign fund¹⁹ have argued for years that women have distinctive political interests and the election of more women to public office would lead to greater representation of what might define “women’s interests” i.e. that which women public officials might distinctively represent.

In spite of the perceived differences between the male and female officebearers, the question often asked is why should women’s representation in politics be important?. There are several reasons which account for the importance of women’s presence in the political arena.²⁰ Firstly, for a government which is democratically organized it is important to have all its citizens from all classes and races to have an interest in and opportunity to serve their community and it is this feature which makes it totally legitimate. Secondly, if all the citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in decision making as well as have a reasonable trust in and support for it, it will make the polity much more stable. Thirdly, women constitute a very big pool of leaders who are talented and hence their abilities, point of views as well as ideas should be utilized by a society that selects its leaders.

¹⁸ Susan J. Carroll, ed. (2001), *The Impact Of Women in Public Office*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. xi- xvi

¹⁹ Advocacy Organizations include organizations such as the National Women’s Political Caucus, and women’s political action committees include organizations such as the EMILY’s List

²⁰ Sue Thomas and, Clyde Wilcox ed. (1998), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.1-2

The importance of women leaders is also symbolic in a way. If children see both men and women in political sphere during their growing up , each would be exposed to a wide range of options while preparing for its adult life. Thus it seems much more momentous that women have access to and assume elected positions.

The emergence of the so called “gender gap” in public opinion and the voting behaviour over the past two decades has also served as an indication that women increasingly see their political interests as distinct from those of men. Defining ‘women’s interests’ is highly contested, yet one cannot deny that women may bring different perspectives and ideas to bear on public policy proposals. Hence the election of more women to public offices is immensely significant and positively required.

Thus this chapter seeks to understand the shift and changes in history with regard to women in Congress in the history of America and hence ascertain the logics behind the change. Apart from the historical evolution of women in Congress, this chapter also look at the women in leadership positions. This chapter further studies the recent elections of 2006 and give insights as to what can be prophesised with regard to future of women in Congress from these recent elections and how it is going to have an impact on women in politics.

History of Women in the Congress: Prior to 1971

Women in the US Congress, 1917-1971

CONGRESS	DATES	WOMEN IN SENATE	WOMEN IN HOUSE
65th	1917-1919	0 (OD, OR)	1 (OD, 1R)
66th	1919-1921	0 (OD, OR)	0 (OD, OR)
67th	1921-1923	1 (1D, OR)	3 (OD, 3R)
68th	1923-1925	0 (OD, OR)	1 (OD, 1R)
69th	1925-1927	0 (OD, OR)	3 (1D, 2R)
70th	1927-1929	0 (OD, OR)	5 (2D, 3R)
71st	1929-1931	0 (OD, OR)	9 (5D, 4R)
72nd	1931-1933	1 (1D, OR)	7 (5D, 2R)
73rd	1933-1935	1 (1D, OR)	7 (4D, 3R)
74th	1935-1937	2 (2D, OR)	6 (4D, 2R)
75th	1937-1939	2 (1D, 1R) ²	6 (5D, 1R)
76th	1939-1941	1 (1D, OR)	8 (4D, 4R)
77th	1941-1943	1 (1D, OR)	9 (4D, 5R)
78th	1943-1945	1 (1D, OR)	8 (2D, 6R)
79th	1945-1947	0 (OD, OR)	11 (6D, 5R)
80th	1947-1949	1 (OD, 1R)	7 (3D, 4R)
81st	1949-1951	1 (OD, 1R)	9 (5D, 4R)
82nd	1951-1953	1 (OD, 1R)	10 (4D, 6R)
83rd	1953-1955	2 (OD, 2R)	11 (5D, 6R) ³
84th	1955-1957	1 (OD, 1R)	16 (10D, 6R) ³
85th	1957-1959	1 (OD, 1R)	15 (9D, 6R)
86th	1959-1961	2 (1D, 1R)	17 (9D, 8R)
87th	1961-1963	2 (1D, 1R)	18 (11D, 7R)
88th	1963-1965	2 (1D, 1R)	12 (6D, 6R)
89th	1965-1967	2 (1D, 1R)	11 (7D, 4R)
90th	1967-1969	1 (OD, 1R)	11 (6D, 5R)
91st	1969-1971	1 (OD, 1R)	10 (6D, 4R)

21

Throughout most of American history, women have been denied access to conventional forms of politics. Although women achieved the right to vote over 80 years ago, a significant change in women's relationship to the American political system has been evident only since the last generation. In 1789, when the U.S. constitution was ratified, women did not possess the right to vote. The law treated women as property rather than as person with individual liberties. In the early 1800s,

²¹ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in the US Congress 2007", [Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong.pdf#page=2>

women in the United State were not permitted to vote, serve on juries, find profitable employment, attend institutions of higher education, or own land in their own name. Moreover, the common-law notion of *coverture*²² had been adopted in the United States, which meant that upon marriage a woman lost her separate legal identity. During the 1770s, Abigail Adams was practically alone in her feminist views but the new century brought in more activists. The first women's right activists were products of the abolitionist movement. In the mid 1800s the status of women slowly began to change with the passage of laws which granted women more rights.²³ When Elizabeth Candy Stanton and Lucretia Mott decided to take action when they were denied the right to be seated as delegates at the international anti-slavery Convention, they initiated a process, long but steady, of women's rights. As a result of these efforts followed by a long struggle, women got the right to vote in 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Though women were not granted national suffrage until 1920, famous suffragist Elizabeth Candy Stanton made an unsuccessful run for Congress in 1866. Fifty years later, Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to win a congressional seat.

At age 37, Jeanette Rankin, of Missoula, Montana won election to the US House of Representatives from Montana: a notable accomplishment made even more amazing by the fact that Ms. Rankin was the first woman elected to the US Congress, and that the year was 1917 -- three years before women were guaranteed the Constitutional right to vote. Despite the fact that Montana had granted the right to vote to women in 1914, widespread opposition to the women's suffrage movement had remained alive even later. In this political atmosphere, Rankin's election to the US Congress represented a major step in the confounding struggle of American women to win what amounted to full American citizenship. Jeannette Rankin served twice, from 1917 to 1919 and again from 1941 to 1942. Rebecca Latimer Felton of Georgia became the first woman senator in 1922 and served for only one day.²⁴

Many of the earlier women in the Congress were infact tokens and most of them were appointed rather than elected. While many others came to office by means

²² Larry Berman; Bruce Allen Murphy, and Oliver H. Woshinsky, (1996) *Approaching Democracy*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, pp. 533-534

²³ Marcy Kaptur, (1996), *Women Of Congress: A Twentieth -Century Odyssey*, Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, pp.3-4

²⁴ *ibid*, pp.17-18

of “special elections”²⁵ which were designed to fill the remainder of the term of a seat left vacant by the death or retirement of a spouse or any other congressional incumbent. This kind of “special election” was in fact a method of access of a majority of women in the earlier history of women in the Congress. In fact, five of the first eight of the women in the Congress came through this process. Up to the World War II, 19 of the 32 women came through “special elections”. Till World War II, many women continued to enter Congress in such exceptional ways. In fact, up to 1970, women filling out seats through exceptional circumstances still represented the majority of all women who had served in the Congress. Thus prior to World War II, women in the Congress were considered as oddities rather than as serious politicians.

26

Post- world war II , the number of women in the Congress started to increase. In fact, between the end of the World War II and 1960, 27 women were added to the Congress. The postwar reordering of national priorities had led most of them to focus on domestic issues and issue-oriented politics. This led to a lot of focus on Women’s rights as well. Still the war didn’t change the Congress much even though it did change America, quite evident in the fact that from 1949 to 1973 , Margaret Chase Smith was the only elected female member of the Senate.

Before the 1960’s , the bills which affected women were mainly sponsored by male lawmakers. But thereafter , ironically, in the hands of Congresswomen, women issues instantly became political Kryptonite.²⁷ The civil rights movement and the President Kennedy Commission on the Status of Women helped to inspire the rebirth of the feminist movement. The equal pay act became law in 1963. Women also made civil right advances in the debate over Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights act which ultimately led to the passage of the amendment by a vote of 168 to 133. During this middle era , women sounded more outspoken and seemed more active legislatively, becoming more articulate and prominent. The influence of the world war II as well as the advent of the television had more women taking advantages of the higher education which was being imparted to them. The result of all this was that one woman could ultimately run for the presidency of the United States(Margaret Chase

²⁵ Karen Foerstel and Herbert N. Foerstel, (1996), *Climbing the Hill: Gender Conflict in Congress* Westport, CT: Praeger, pp.1-2

²⁶ Clara Bingham, (1997), *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress*, NY: Times Books, p.12

²⁷ *ibid*, pp. 16-18

Smith); another could become the first woman in history to gain election to the Ways and Means Committee(Martha W. Griffiths).²⁸ Women continued their march, glacial but steady, to progress in the era. The turbulent 1960s which had ushered in an era of social change and brought in a new group of women who sought election to the Congress made more possibilities open to women in the 1970s.

The Second Wave in Women's Elective History : 1971-1992

Women in the US Congress, 1971-1992

CONGRESS	DATES	WOMEN IN SENATE	WOMEN IN HOUSE
92nd	1971-1973	2 (1D, 1R)	13 (10D, 3R)
93rd	1973-1975	0 (0D, 0R)	16 (14D, 2R)
94th	1975-1977	0 (0D, 0R)	19 (14D, 5R)
95th	1977-1979	2 (2D, 0R)	18 (13D, 5R)
96th	1979-1981	1 (0D, 1R)	16 (11D, 5R)
97th	1981-1983	2 (0D, 2R)	21 (11D, 10R)
98th	1983-1985	2 (0D, 2R)	22 (13D, 9R)
99th	1985-1987	2 (0D, 2R)	23 (12D, 11R)
100th	1987-1989	2 (1D, 1R)	23 (12D, 11R)
101st	1989-1991	2 (1D, 1R)	29 (16D, 13R)

²⁹

Women entered the political arena quite recently. Before 1920, they never had the right to vote and even between 1920 and 1972 very few women ran for public office. There has been a sea change in the involvement of women in politics since 1972: the number of women in the house as well as the state legislatures increased many fold and their chart has shown an upward course. And it is in this respect that 1972 has been considered a momentous year in the history of women.

After the extremely dry spell for women in the 1960's the fortunes of women in the Congress took a turn for the better in the 1970's which has been maintained till date. From 1970 through 1988, 52 nonincumbent women won election to the Congress, more in number than had joined the Congress in the previous 30 years. Many of these women have since departed from the Congress but have left a legacy that has positively established the agenda of the modern political woman.

²⁸ Marcy Kaptur, (1996), *Women Of Congress: A Twentieth -Century Odyssey*, Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, p. 66

²⁹ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in the US Congress 2007", [Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong.pdf#page=2>

Since the 1970s, more women have been elected to the Congress at an earlier age, with only about 20 percent succeeding their husbands.³⁰ Thus, politics has been chosen as a career by a growing number of women. During the 1960s, there was an average of 15 women members per session of the Congress. That average rose to 16 during the 1970s, to 23 during the 1980s, and more than 40 during the 1990s.

Apart from these facts, 1971 was perceived to be a special year in the history of women's rights as it coincided with the passage of Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the House, in the Senate in 1972. Ever since the ERA was first introduced in the House in 1923, women's rights activists had been deeply divided over the issue.³¹ Nevertheless, in August 1970, Martha Griffiths led a campaign for the ERA which was ultimately passed in 1971 in the House. The second wave of the feminist movement arrived with the passage of the ERA in the House in 1971 and in the Senate in 1972. Thus, for the first time since the Suffrage, politicians in the Congress could not afford to ignore women or women's issues. But even though the ERA was given congressional approval in 1972 it fell three states short of the thirty-eight required for ratification. As a result, many were skeptical about the assertion that women are specifically mentioned as well as protected by the Constitution of the USA.

The 1970's saw an upsurge of powerful women in the Congress. Shirley Chisholm who was the first black woman elected to the Congress in 1968 ran for the post of the President in 1972. At the Democratic convention, 40 percent of the delegates were women (up from 13 percent in 1968). The first women governors were elected in 1974 and 1976 as well as female representation increased in federal, state and local elective offices. It increased from below 5 percent in early seventies to 10 percent in 1980. More and more women ran for office, yet the high re-election rate of incumbents made entry difficult and so the number of women in the Congress from 1973 to 1983 increased by only nine. Though a few, many of the women elected in this period were self confessed feminists. In fact one of the Congressmen described these women in his memoir as bringing "a new kind of female militancy to the House."³²

³⁰ Irvin N. Gertzog, "Changing Patterns of Female Recruitment to the U.S. House of Representatives", *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4, (August 1979), p.431

³¹ Clara Bingham, (1997), *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress*, NY: Times Books, pp.19-23

³² *ibid*, pp. 22-23

Other strong Women who had arrived in the Congress in 1970s were Republicans like Millicent Fenwick and Democrats like Geraldine Ferraro. Ferraro became the first women in history to receive a major party nomination for Vice President. Like Ferraro, most women elected to the Congress in the 70s and 80s were well educated with many more likely to negotiate both a family and a career. Thus post -1971 the number of women in the Congress continued to show an increase in number as well as brought a large number of powerful women to the Congress who made a great impact on the way the Congress worked.

The Year of the Women :The 1992 elections

Prior to the 1992 elections, women formed just about 6 percent of the U.S. Congress and 18 percent of the membership of the State legislatures. Although after the '92 elections, women were still a minority in electoral arena(10 percent of the Congress and 20 percent of the state legislature), yet a watershed had been reached. In the Congressional races, there was a record number of women who had competed for seats and had won. One hundred and six women had won major party nominations for the house and 47 women had won their general election races. In the Senate, there were 11 women who had run and 6 actually won which made the percentage of women representation in the U.S. Congress to be ten percent. Never had there been such a large one-time increase in candidates and in winners. The journalists as well as other observers had dubbed 1992 as the 'Year of the Woman'.³³ The elections of 1992 reflected the reality that henceforth, women also began to break the glass ceiling in leadership positions.

Expectations for a "breakthrough" year for women had been high since the late 1970s; in fact, 1984 had been hopefully, but prematurely, advertised as the "Year of the Woman." Political observers discussed the rise of a "gender gap," predicting that 6 million more women than men would vote in the 1984 elections.³⁴ But female candidates who emerged in 1992 for the Congress did not appear overnight. They came from a pipeline of qualified women. It was obvious that realities had changed

³³ Michael X. Delli Carpini and Ester R. Fuchs, "The Year Of The Woman? Candidates, Voters, and the 1992 Elections" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 108, No. 1, (Spring, 1993), pp. 29-36

³⁴ See, for example, Jane Perlez, "Women, Power, and Politics," 24 June 1984, *New York Times*, New York.

and so had attitudes. As one study put it, women's impressive gains in 1992 were not the product of any one galvanizing event, but rather the confluence of several long-term trends and short-term election year issues. According to this account, Demographics, global politics, scandal, and the ripple effect of the women's liberation movement all played a part in the results of that "historic election". It was argued that while controversy stirred by the Thomas-Hill episode provided good campaign rhetoric and a convenient media explanation for the "Year of the Woman," other contributing factors included the availability of funding, the growing pool of women candidates with elective experience, and the presence of a Democratic presidential candidate, who shared their beliefs on many of the issues (24 of the 27 women elected that fall were Democrats). It was pointed out that the effects of redistricting after the 1990 Census, the large number of retiring Members, and the casualties of the House banking scandal; created 93 open seats in the U.S. House during the 1992 elections, were significant in changing the number for women.³⁵

The essential question sought to be answered was why was 1992 different for women? As pointed by scholars, a multitude of reasons could be responsible for this change. Firstly, the 1992 elections were different in the sense that they presented a array of extraordinary opportunities for newcomers, and for women, who had run for local and state offices and were primed to make a political jump up the ladder by running for office at the national level. This coincided with the large number of open seats available due to retirements and redistricting due to 1990 census. Secondly, the political climate had changed and the high focus and rate of interest on domestic issues during the 1992 presidential elections made the election environment more women friendly; many argued that domestic issues were something on which women were seen to be more skilled as it was the domestic issues that affected women more than men in the society. Another factor that favoured the election of more women in the electoral politics was the "Anita Hill- Clarence Thomas face off"³⁶. This highly charged and visible event focused on the low percentage of women in the U.S. congress and its consequences.

Thus as many concluded in the 1992 elections, women candidates were more advantaged due to their agenda, and hence emerged victorious not only at the national

³⁵ Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, ed. (1998), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 6-7

³⁶ Clara Bingham, (1997), *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress*, NY: Times Books, pp.28-48

level but also at the local and state levels. In essence, voters demonstrated that they wanted a change and women, as collective outsiders represented an aspect of that change.

The New Era- 1992-2007

Women in the US Congress, 1991-2009

CONGRESS	DATES	WOMEN IN SENATE	WOMEN IN HOUSE
101st	1989-1991	2 (1D, 1R)	29 (18D, 13R)
102nd	1991-1993	4 (3D, 1R) ⁴	28 (19D, 9R) ⁵
103rd	1993-1995	7 (5D, 2R) ⁶	47 (35D, 12R) ⁵
104th	1995-1997	9 (5D, 4R) ⁷	48 (31D, 17R) ⁵
105th	1997-1999	9 (6D, 3R)	54 (37D, 17R) ⁸
106th	1999-2001	9 (6D, 3R)	58 (39D, 17R) ⁹
107th	2001-2003	13 (8D, 4R) ¹⁰	59 (41D, 18R) ¹⁰
108th	2003-2005	14 (9D, 5R)	60 (39D, 21R) ¹¹
109th	2005-2007	14 (9D, 5R)	68 (43D, 25R) ¹²
110 th	2007-2009	16 (11D, 5R)	71 (50D, 21R) ¹²

37

In the election of 1992, American voters sent as many new women to the Congress as were elected in any previous *decade*, beginning a decade of unparalleled gains for women in the Congress. In the election of 2007, women achieved another milestone when Nancy Pelosi became the first women speaker to serve in the house.

In 1992, 28 women were elected to the Congress—more than the total number of women who were elected or appointed to the Congress in any previous decade. From 1991 to 2005, nearly 100 women were elected to the Congress—roughly 40 percent of all the women who have served in the history of the institution.³⁸ Also, congressional women became more diverse in the latter part of the 20th century. Patsy Mink, elected in 1964, was the first non-Caucasian woman elected to the Congress and one of just four Asian-American Congresswomen. Only five African-American women had served in the Congress before 1990; New York Representative Shirley Chisholm was the first in 1969. Between 1990 and early 2007, 21 black women were

³⁷ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, “Women in the US Congress 2007”, [Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong.pdf#page=2>

³⁸ Mildred Amer, “Women in the United States Congress, 1917–2004,” Congressional Research Survey (1 July 2004). [Online/web] Accessed 28 April URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/essays/intro/edition.html>

elected to the Congress, including Carol Moseley-Braun, the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Senate. The first Hispanic-American woman elected to the Congress, in 1989, was Florida Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Seven more Hispanic-American women were elected in the next 15 years.

“The Year of the Woman in retrospect was a small gain, but it was the start of what was a big gain,” Senator Barbara Boxer observed a decade later. “I don’t even think it was the year of the woman then, but it started the trend of electing more women.”³⁹ Others felt the label diminished women’s achievement and reinforced perceptions that their impact on the Congress was temporary. As Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland said: “Calling 1992 the Year of the Woman makes it sound like the Year of the Caribou or the Year of the Asparagus. We’re not a fad, a fancy, or a year.”⁴⁰

Ultimately, however, the “Year of the Woman” spawned expectations that women candidates in subsequent elections could not realistically meet. Contrary to widely held beliefs, women were not about to change the political culture overnight—especially not on seniority-based Capitol Hill. Later political battles over issues such as reproductive rights, welfare reform, and the federal deficit dashed hopes that women would unite across party lines, subordinate ideology to pragmatism, and increase their power.

After the 1992 Congressional elections, women Members were still in a distinct minority, although for the first time in congressional history they accounted for more than 10 percent of the total membership. Subsequent growth was slower, though steady. On average since 1992, 10 new women have been elected to the Congress each election cycle, while incumbency rates have remained well above 90 percent. In August 2005, women made up 15.5 percent of Congress—an all-time high. Some women noted that although they had failed to achieve numerical parity in Congress, they had dramatically altered the political culture within the electorate. “In previous years, when I have run for office, I always had to overcome being a woman,”

⁴⁰ Jen Goldstein, “The Year of the Woman”[Online: web] Accessed 4 may 2007 URL: <http://thebeaveronline.co.uk/Features/the-year-of-the-woman>

said Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. “All I’ve ever wanted was an equal chance to make my case, and I think we’re getting to that point—and that’s the victory.”⁴¹

The women who entered office in record numbers in the 1990s soon accrued seniority in committees and catapulted into top leadership posts

Changing Styles and Strategies:

Unlike the third generation of women in Congress, the fourth generation often chose to confront the institution less directly. Whereas Bella Abzug’s generation worked against the congressional establishment to breach gender barriers, many women in the fourth generation worked for change from within the power structure. Women in the 1980s and early 1990s who moved into leadership posts did so largely by working within traditional boundaries—a time-honored approach that extended back to Mary Norton and Edith Nourse Rogers in the first generation of Congresswomen. The careers of Lynn Martin and Barbara Kennelly of Connecticut illustrate this tendency: Martin served as Vice Chair of the GOP Conference; Kennelly served as the Democratic Party’s Chief Deputy Whip (a position created for her) and eventually became Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus.

Nevertheless, until 1992, women had been on the margins of institutional leadership. Fewer than 10 women had chaired full congressional committees, and just eight House and Senate women had held positions in the party leadership.

Three women led committees in the 104th Congress (1995–1997): Jan Meyers chaired the House Small Business Committee, Nancy Johnson chaired the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, and Nancy Landon Kassebaum chaired the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Kassebaum’s post was particularly noteworthy, as she was the first woman in Senate history to head a major standing committee. However, by the end of the 104th Congress, Meyers, Johnson, and Kassebaum had either left their posts or retired from Congress. The only other women to chair congressional committees during this period were Senators Olympia

⁴¹Women in Congress, “Assembling, Amplifying, and Ascending: Recent Trends Among Women in Congress, 1977–2006”, [Online: web] Accessed 3 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/essays/essay4/index.html>

Snowe (Small Business) and Susan Collins (Governmental Affairs) in the 108th and 109th Congresses (2003–2007).

Gradual changes in the 1990s had begun to alter the leadership makeup in ways that portended greater involvement of women. From the 103rd through the 108th Congresses (1993–2005), 12 more women moved into the leadership ranks. Representatives Susan Molinari, Jennifer Dunn of Washington, Tillie Fowler of Florida, and Deborah Pryce of Ohio served as the Vice Chair of the House Republican Conference from the 104th through the 107th Congresses, respectively. In the 108th Congress, Pryce, who first won election to the Congress in the “Year of the Woman,” became the highest-ranking woman in House GOP history when she was elected Chair of the Republican Conference. Only that of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi of California, who had succeeded Representative Sala Burton of California in the House after her death in 1987, exceeded her accomplishment. In 2001, Pelosi won the Democratic Caucus contest for Whip. Little more than a year later, when Representative Dick Gerhard of Missouri left the Democratic Party’s top post, Pelosi overwhelmingly won her colleagues’ support in her bid to become House Democratic Leader. This event garnered national and international attention.

Meanwhile, many of the women elected in the 1990s accrued seniority and, as a result, more important committee assignments. Though not yet apparent in the chairmanships of full committees, this power shift was evident in the chairmanships of subcommittees—a key prerequisite for chairing a full committee. Since the 80th Congress (1947–1949)—the first Congress for which such records are readily accessible—54 women have chaired House or Senate subcommittees. Three women—Margaret Chase Smith, Barbara Mikulski and Barbara Boxer—chaired subcommittees in both the House and the Senate. While just two women—Representatives Smith and Bolton—chaired House subcommittees in the 80th Congress (there were no women chairing Senate subcommittees at the time), by the 109th Congress in 2005, 10 women chaired subcommittees in the House and the Senate. More telling, roughly half the women in congressional history who chaired subcommittees attained these posts after 1992.

Representatives Pelosi and Pryce were on the leading edge of the spike in women elected to Congress. Pryce was elected to Congress at age 41 and attained her

leadership post at 51. Pelosi arrived in the House at age 47 and was elected House Democratic Leader at 62. Behind these two leaders are a host of women who were elected in the latter 1990s. When elected, some of these women were 10 years younger than Pelosi and Pryce upon their arrival in Congress, giving them additional tenure to accrue seniority and power. Today, Nancy Pelosi holds the post of the speaker of the house, the highest post for a woman in house till date and third in line to the President. If present trends continue and more and younger women are elected to the Congress, women will likely become better represented in high committees and the leadership posts

Women in Leadership positions: Historical survey

With relatively few women serving in the Congress until the 1980s, only a handful have held leadership posts, either within their party caucuses or on congressional committees. Today, as they earn seniority and gain experience, more women are serving in key decision-making roles that allow them to shape the political and policy agenda.

Congressional Committees

House of Representatives⁴²

Women who have chaired congressional committees in the House of Representatives

Name	Party/State	Committee	Congress/Year
Mae Ella Nolan	R-CA	Expenditures in the Post Office Department	67th–68th (1923–1925)
Mary T. Norton	D-NJ	District of Columbia	72nd–74th (1931–1933)
Mary T. Norton	D-NJ	Labor	75th–79th (1937–1947)
Caroline O’Day	D-NY	Election of the President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress	75th–77th (1937–1943)
Mary T. Norton	D-NJ	Memorials	77th (1941–1943)
Edith Nourse Rogers	R-MA	Veterans' Affairs	80th, 83rd (1947–1949; 1953–1955)
Mary T. Norton	D-NJ	House Administration	81st (1949–1951)
Martha W. Griffiths	D-MI	House Beauty Shop (Select)	90th–93rd (1967–1973)
Leonor K. Sullivan	D-MO	Merchant Marine and Fisheries	93rd–94th (1973–1977)

⁴²Women in Congress, “Women Who Have Chaired Congressional Committees”[Online: web] Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/data/committee-chairs.html>

Corrine Boggs	"Lindy"	D-LA	Bicentennial Arrangements (Select)	94th (1975-1977)
Yvonne Burke	Brathwaite	D-CA	House Beauty Shop (Select)	94th-95th (1975-1979)
Corrine Boggs	"Lindy"	D-LA	Bicentennial of the U.S. House (Select)	99th-100th (1985-1989)
Patricia Schroeder		D-CO	Children, Youth, and Families (Select)	102nd (1991-1993)
Nancy L. Johnson		R-CT	Standards of Official Conduct	104th (1995-1997)
Jan Meyers		R-KS	Small Business	104th (1995-1997)
Stephanie Jones	Tubbs	D-OH	Standards of Official Conduct	110th (2007-2009)
Juanita McDonald	Millender-	D-CA	House Administration	110th (2007-2009)
Louise Slaughter		D-NY	Rules	110th (2007-2009)
Nydia Velázquez		D-NY	Small Business	110th (2007-2009)

Senate

Women who have chaired congressional committees in the Senate

Congress	Member	Committee	Congress/Year
Hattie Wyatt Caraway	D-AR	Enrolled Bills	73rd-78th (1933-1945)
Nancy L. Kassebaum	R-KS	Labor and Human Resources	104th (1995-1997)
Susan M. Collins	R-ME	Governmental Affairs	108th-109th (2003-2007)
Olympia J. Snowe	R-ME	Small Business	108th-109th (2003-2007)
Barbara Boxer	D-CA	Environment and Public Works Select Committee on Ethics	110th (2007-2009)
Dianne Feinstein	D-CA	Rules and Administration	110th (2007-2009)

The first woman to chair a congressional committee in either chamber was Rep. Mae Ella Nolan (R-CA), who chaired the House Committee on Expenditures in the Post Office Department from 1923-1925. After Nolan, five women chaired eight committees between 1925 and 1997 (some women chaired more than one committee).

In today's GOP-controlled House, no committees are chaired by women, nor have there been any women chairs since 1997; however, three Democratic women serve as ranking members (the top slot for the minority party). Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald (CA) is ranking Democrat on the House Administration Committee; Rep. Louise McIntosh (N.Y.) is ranking Democrat on the House Rules

Committee; and Rep. Nydia Velazquez (N.Y.) is ranking Democrat on the Small Business Committee. These women would be committee chairs in a democratically controlled House.

In the Senate, the first woman to chair a committee was Sen. Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-AR), chair of the Committee on Enrolled Bills from 1933-1945. It would be another 50 years after Caraway retired before a woman would chair a Senate committee: in 1995, Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-KS) was chosen as chair of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Today, women chair two Senate committees: Sen. Olympia Snow (R-ME) chairs the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) chairs the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. These four are the only women who have chaired Senate committees.

Party Leadership

*House of Representatives*⁴³

Women Elected to Party Leadership Positions in the House of Representatives

Congress	Member	Caucus/Conference	Position
81st (1949–1951)	Woodhouse, Chase Going	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
83rd (1953–1955)	Kelly, Edna Flannery	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
84th (1955–1957)	Kelly, Edna Flannery	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
86th (1959–1961)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
87th (1961–1963)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
88th (1963–1965)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
88th (1963–1965)	Kelly, Edna Flannery ¹	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
89th (1965–1967)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
90th (1967–1969)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
91st (1969–1971)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
92nd (1971–1973)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
93rd (1973–1975)	Sullivan, Leonor K.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
94th (1975–1977)	Mink, Patsy T.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
95th (1977–1979)	Chisholm, Shirley Anita	Democratic Caucus	Secretary

⁴³ Women in Congress, "Women Elected to Party Leadership Positions"[Online: web] Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/data/leadership.html>



96th (1979–1981)	Chisholm, Shirley Anita	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
97th (1981–1983)	Ferraro, Geraldine Anne	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
98th (1983–1985)	Ferraro, Geraldine Anne	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
99th (1985–1987)	Martin, Lynn	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
99th (1985–1987)	Oakar, Mary Rose	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
100th (1987–1989)	Oakar, Mary Rose	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
100th (1987–1989)	Martin, Lynn	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
104th (1995–1997)	Kennelly, Barbara B.	Democratic Caucus	Vice Chair
104th (1995–1997)	Vucanovich, Barbara F.	Republican Conference	Secretary
104th (1995–1997)	Molinari, Susan	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
104th (1995–1997)	Dunn, Jennifer	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
104th (1995–1997)	Dunn, Jennifer	Republican Conference	Secretary
105th (1997–1999)	Molinari, Susan	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
105th (1997–1999)	Kennelly, Barbara B.	Democratic Caucus	Vice Chair
106th (1999–2001)	Fowler, Tillie Kidd	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
106th (1999–2001)	Pryce, Deborah	Republican Conference	Secretary
107th (2001–2003)	Pryce, Deborah	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
107th (2001–2003)	Pelosi, Nancy	Democratic Caucus	Whip
107th (2001–2003)	Cubin, Barbara L.	Republican Conference	Secretary
108th (2003–2005)	Pelosi, Nancy	Democratic Caucus	Leader
108th (2003–2005)	Pryce, Deborah	Republican Conference	Chair
109th (2005–2007)	Pelosi, Nancy	Democratic Caucus	Leader
109th (2005–2007)	Pryce, Deborah	Republican Conference	Chair
110th (2007–2009)	Granger, Kay	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
110th (2007–2009)	Pelosi, Nancy	U.S. House of Representatives	Speaker of the House

Party leaders in the Congress are chosen by their colleagues to shape political strategy and message surrounding policy initiatives. Women have had considerably more success breaking into the ranks of party leadership than they have breaking into the ranks of committee leadership: 24 women have served as congressional party leaders (17 Democrats and nine Republicans).

In 1949, Rep. Chase Woodhouse (D-CT) became the first woman party leader when she was chosen to serve as secretary of the House Democratic Caucus. Between 1949 and 1991, six women served as party leaders. Five Democratic women — Reps. Edna Kelly, Shirley Chisholm, and Geraldine Ferraro of New York; Leonor Sullivan

of Missouri; and Mary Rose Oakar of Ohio — were, like Woodhouse, caucus secretary. The first Republican woman leader was Rep. Lynn Martin of Illinois, who in 1985 became vice chair of the GOP conference.

No congresswomen held leadership positions in either party between 1989 and 1991. Since then, 19 women — three times as many as had served between 1945 and 1989 — have held party leadership posts (11 Democrats and eight Republicans). Emily's List began recommending House candidates in 1988.

Currently, there are seven women party leaders in the House, five Democrats and two Republicans. In 2002, Democrats chose Rep. Nancy Pelosi (CA) as their party leader — the top spot in the Democratic caucus and the highest position ever attained by a woman. Other Democratic women leaders are Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT), co-chair of the Democratic Steering Committee; and Reps. Diana DeGette (CO), Jan Schakowsky (IL) and Maxine Waters (CA), all chief deputy whips. Republican Rep. Deborah Pryce (OH) is chair of the House Republican Conference; Rep. Barbara Cubin (WY) is GOP conference secretary.

Senate

Women elected to party leadership positions in the Senate

Congress	Member	Caucus/Conference	Position
90th (1967–1969)	Smith, Margaret Chase	Republican Conference	Chair
91st (1969–1971)	Smith, Margaret Chase	Republican Conference	Chair
92nd (1971–1973)	Smith, Margaret Chase	Republican Conference	Chair
104th (1995–1997)	Mikulski, Barbara Ann	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
105th (1997–1999)	Mikulski, Barbara Ann	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
105th (1997–1999)	Snowe, Olympia Jean	Republican Conference	Secretary
106th (1999–2001)	Snowe, Olympia Jean	Republican Conference	Secretary

106th 2001)	(1999–	Mikulski, Barbara Ann	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
107th 2003)	(2001–	Hutchison, Kathryn Ann Bailey	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
107th 2003)	(2001–	Mikulski, Barbara Ann	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
108th 2005)	(2003–	Mikulski, Barbara Ann	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
108th 2005)	(2003–	Hutchison, Kathryn Ann Bailey	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
109th 2007)	(2005–	Hutchison, Kathryn Ann Bailey	Republican Conference	Vice Chair
109th 2007)	(2005–	Stabenow, Deborah A.	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
110th 2009)	(2007–	Murray, Patty	Democratic Caucus	Secretary
110th 2009)	(2007–	Hutchison, Kathryn Ann Bailey	Republican Conference	Policy Committee Chairwoman

Eleven women senators have held party leadership positions, including the first, Margaret Chase Smith (ME), who chaired the Senate Republican conference between 1967 and 1972. Between 1972 and 1993 there were no women in Senate party leadership slots. Then, in 1993, the term after the “Year of the Woman” in 1992, Barbara Mikulski (MD) was selected to be assistant Democratic floor leader and Barbara Boxer (CA) was selected to be deputy majority whip.

Today seven women senators hold party leadership positions, five Democrats and two Republicans. Sen. Debbie Stabenow (MI), conference secretary, is the third highest-ranking Democrat in the Senate. She is joined in Democratic party leadership by Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (N.Y.), chair of the Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee; Sen. Patty Murray (WA), assistant floor leader; Sen. Blanche Lincoln (AR), chair of rural outreach; and Sen. Barbara Boxer (CA), chief deputy whip. Republican Sen. Elizabeth Dole (N.C.) is chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, and Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX) is conference secretary.

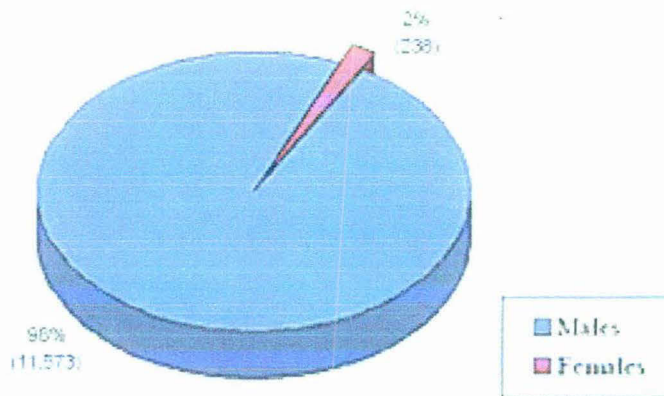
Sen. Barbara Mikulski (MD), the longest-serving woman in the U.S. Senate, held the position of Democratic conference secretary from 1995 until 2005.

On November 16th, 2006, history was made and women all over the nation cheered as Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California was unanimously voted by majority members to be the Speaker of the House for the 110th Congress. Rep. Pelosi is the first woman elected to this prestigious position, making her third in line to the Presidency.

Election 2007: present situation of women in the US Congress

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN THE CONGRESS

Since 1789 only 2% of members of Congress have been women



(as of January 2007)

44

⁴⁴ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, [Online: web] Accessed on 3 May 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts2.html>

PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN IN ELECTIVE OFFICES

<u>Year</u>	<u>U.S. Congress</u>	<u>Statewide Elective</u>	<u>State Legislatures</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>U.S. Congress</u>	<u>Statewide Elective</u>	<u>State Legislatures</u>
1979	3%	11%	10%	1985	10.3%	25.9%	20.6%
1981	4%	11%	12%	1987	11.0%	25.4%	21.6%
1983	4%	11%	13%	1989	12.1%	27.6%	22.4%
1985	5%	14%	15%	2001	13.6%	27.6%	22.4%
1987	5%	14%	16%	2003	13.6%	28.0%	22.4%
1989	5%	14%	17%	2004	13.8%	26.0%	22.5%
1991	6%	18%	18%	2005	15.0%	25.7%	22.7%
1993	10.1%	22.2%	20.5%	2006	15.0%	25.1%	22.8%
				2007	16.3%	24.1%	23.5%

45

Post-election 2007, women hold 87 or 16.3% of the 535 seats in the U.S. Congress. In this number 16 seats or 16.0% of the 100 seats are in the Senate and 71 seats or 16.3% of the 435 seats are there in the House of the representative. For the first time in the history of the women in the Congress, a woman has been elected as the speaker of the house. Hence the election of Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) as the first women speaker in the house is a landmark achievement for the women of the Congress itself. By becoming the speaker of the house, Nancy Pelosi holds the highest position in the house and the second in the presidential line of successions.

To date, a total of 35 women have served in the Senate, including 22 Democrats and 13 Republicans.

⁴⁵ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in Elective Office 2007"[Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/elective.pdf>

Women currently serving in the Senate

The sixteen women currently serving in the Senate are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years elected (e), won special election (se), or appointed (a)</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Years elected (e), won special election (se), or appointed (a)</u>
Barbara Boxer (D-CA)	e 1992, 1998, 2004	Mary Landrieu (D-LA)	e 1996, 2002
Marie Cantwell (D-WA)	e 2000, 2006	Blanche Lincoln (D-AR)	e 1998, 2004
Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY)	e 2000, 2006	Claire McCaskill (D-MO)	e 2006
Susan Collins (R-ME)	e 1996, 2002	Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)	e 1986, 1992, 1998, 2004
Elizabeth Dole (R-NC)	e 2002	Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)	a 2002; e 2004
Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)	se 1992; e 1994, 2000, 2006	Patty Murray (D-WA)	e 1992, 1998, 2004
Key Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)	se 1993; e 2000, 2006	Olympia Snowe (R-ME)	e 1994, 2000, 2006
Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)	e 2006	Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)	e 2000, 2006

46

The 71 women holding seats in the House of Representatives comprise 16.3% of the 435 members. The women represent 29 states; 50 are Democrats and 21 are Republicans. The congresswomen include 21 women of color: 12 African American women, 2 Asian Pacific Islander, and 7 Latinas. In addition, there are three Democratic women delegates representing Guam, the Virgin Islands and Washington, DC. The delegates include an African American and a Caribbean American.

Of these women, 59 first entered by winning regular general elections. Eleven others won special elections; Bono (CA), Capps (CA), Herse (SD), Lee (CA), Matsui (CA), Millender-McDonald (CA), Pelosi (CA), Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Schmidt (OH), Watson (CA), and Wilson (NM) succeeded others who died or resigned. Emerson (MO) won a regular election simultaneously with a special election to fill a vacancy. The DC, GU and VI Delegates won regular general elections.

Conclusion

Thus, in essence, what has emerged post-2007 elections is the fact that slowly and steadily women are emerging powerful in the US politics. Even though they comprise just 16.3% members, yet their number is subsequently increasing with every election. The election of Nancy Pelosi as the speaker of the house and Senator Hillary R. Clinton emerging as a favourite presidential candidate shows the increasing power of women in the U.S. politics and how they are influencing the policy making

⁴⁶ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in Elective Office 2007"[Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/elective.pdf>

and working of the world's most powerful country. Till date there has been no women president in U.S. and if Hillary Clinton becomes the President in the next presidential elections than she will become the most powerful person in the most powerful country and can change the whole perspective on the role of women in the US politics.

What we can hope today is that citizens of the twenty first century will benefit from the array of life experiences from which each of these women made the transition to lawmakers. What we see is the fact that the prospects for women to achieve greater political influence are much greater than was at any time in the past. An increase in female representation also means that a wider range of political issues and positions will become part of the policy process. Thus, what could have emerged over a history of women in the Congress is that the increased presence of women over the years is a positive sign for American public as their presence is fruitful not just for the women but for the overall growth of the whole country. From Jeanette Rankin to Nancy Pelosi, American Congresswomen have indeed come a long way and it's perhaps time they prove to be such women as can influence the politics of America and hence bring about a positive change and influence the forth coming events in American Politics

CHAPTER TWO:

Women's Political Participation: Beyond Voting and Activism

The United States of America counts among the first of nations to have enfranchised women on an equal basis with men on the basis of a determined struggle. In the generations that followed the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the constitution in 1920, the United States has changed in manifold ways many of which touch on the issues of gender. However in spite of all round changes in American society, men have tended to be much more active in politics than women. Although women's participation in polls tends to be in excess¹, they seem left behind in other forms of political activity.

The gender disparity in political activity is not very enormous at the first sight; yet with regard to its effect on a larger population, the disparity seems immense. The gender disparity described as conspicuous by many in political participation presents a kind of puzzle, and raises certain crucial issues: for instance, why so many decades after the suffrage and the revival of women's movement in the 1960's the gap between the participations of the two genders persists? The gender disparity visible in the citizen's participation can be attributed to a number of inequalities originating in a cumulative pattern of gender-differentiated experiences in the social institutions like the family, school, workplace, voluntary associations and the church.²

Even more crucial than the intricacy of gender disparities in the citizen participation is to understand what exactly do we mean by political participation and how one proceeds in defining it. Political participation may be defined as "those activities of citizens that attempt to influence the structure of government, or the policies of government"³ *Political participation* generally, signifies the activities that are going to effect or have intent of influencing government action. This can happen directly (by affecting the making or implementation of public policy) or indirectly (by influencing the selection of people who make those policies). Thus political participation essentially means the *active* engagement of individuals and groups with those governmental processes that affect their lives. This includes involvement in both decision-making and acts of opposition. The acts of active engagement include both *conventional political participation* (such as voting, standing for office and campaigning for a political party) and *unconventional acts*, which may be legitimate

¹ Nancy Burns, (2001) *The Public Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality and Political Participation* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p.1

² *ibid*,2-3

³ M. Margaret Conway, "Women and Political Participation", *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2. (Jun., 2001), p. 231

(such as signing a petition and attending a peaceful demonstration), or illegal (such as violent protest and refusing to pay taxes).⁴ Thus we are more concerned with *Voluntary Political participation* when we speak of a citizen's participation - a kind of participation which is not obligatory i.e. no one is forced to volunteer for it and hence receives only token financial compensation if he receives any pay.⁵ In a liberal culture that values freedom, equality and democracy, citizens are expected to engage in political activities, and this include atleast voting in elections. However, citizens can have further options of being active through political party organization or running for public office. However, in a country where only certain segments of the citizens had effectively sought and won elected offices while in most other states elected offices had been held disproportionately by the white male, the concept of political participation is something of grave concern.⁶

Of late much emphasis has been laid on gender disparity and how women fail to rise to the occasion when it comes to political participation either in the form of voters or office holders. But so much stress on gender disparity still remains a paramount and invariably posed proposition. Politics offers a convincing clue to the question. It is only through participation that citizens can communicate their needs and preferences to their policy makers and pressurize them to consider their preferences and respond to them. Thus, those who are inactive are ignored and their needs not taken into consideration when effective policies are being made. Besides affecting the outcome of policies participation brings along a number of additional benefits like- recognition as full members of the community; education about the social and the political world; and information, skills, and contacts that are useful in other social pursuits. Thus there is so much interest in the group difference political participations-whether it is between men and women, or black and white – because they represent a potential compromise in the democratic norm of equal protection of interest.⁷

⁴ Balihar Sanghera "State and Society: Political Participation" (Online: web), Accessed 4 May 2007
URL: http://uk.geocities.com/balihar_sanghera/saspoliticalparticipation.htm

⁵ Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation", in from H.H. Gerth and C.Wright Mills (1946) (eds.), *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.83. Quoted in Nancy Burns, (2001) *The Public Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality and Political Participation* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 4

⁶ M. Margaret Conway, "Women and Political Participation", *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2. (Jun., 2001), pp. 231-233.

⁷ Nancy Burns, (2001) *The Public Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality and Political Participation*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p.1

There are two more answers to the gender disparity question - one is non-political institutions and the role they place and the other is gender. While on one hand, close analysis has shown that non-political institutions shape political activity and thus create disparities in activity between groups of citizens. On the other hand, it can be seen that in every society gender is among the most important of the principles of social organization⁸ and hence looking at the gender gap in citizen political activity brings us to the point of filling in part of the immense social canvas upon which difference between male and female figure importantly.

In respect of the crucial gender issue and the political participation, one important aspect which instantly draws our attention is the central question as to what inhibits *women's levels of political participation*? To explain these differences in participation a variety of research have been done and these researches have come up with a variety of explanations.

One of the possible explanations that have been delved into is the role of sex socialization, as it is believed that gender differences in participation occur due to it. Through sex socialization, researchers have sought to explain the important fact that women, as children, have learned that "politics is a man's business". Many researches on political socialization of women also suggest that girls generally have a passive orientation towards politics.⁹ However, with many more women being elected as Senators and Representatives, alternative patterns of role models are slowly emerging. Thus the life experiences as adult (observing women in leading political roles) could lead to resocialization and with it women can learn that politics is also women's business¹⁰

Another reason accounted for explanation for such patterns of participation focuses on the resources available to support women in political participation. These resources could be supporting directly or indirectly. The resources involved include educational attainment, income and occupation. Education is required as it is supposed to help to acquire cognitive skills which help to acquire the information necessary for the evaluation of policy options and leadership alternatives required to make informed vote choices. The other resources structuring political participation are

⁸ See Sherry Ortner's discussion of twenty-five years of anthropological thought and evidence on this point in *Making Gender*, New York: Beacon Press, 1996, pp. 1-20

⁹ F. Greenstein, "Sex-related Political Differences in Childhood," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 23 (1961): pp.353-71

¹⁰ S., N. Burns Verba and K.L. Schlozman (1997), "Knowing and Caring About Politics: Gender and Political Engagement". *Journal Of Politics*, Vol. 59(4), pp. 1051-1072

income and participation. While income directly and indirectly facilitates participation, occupation enhances knowledge relevant to politics and government and enhances skills useful for political activity.

A third explanation given for the pattern of political participation that exists emphasizes the social contexts within which individuals live and work. The workplace, the family, the neighborhood, and social and religious organizations influence time demands, communications patterns, and peer pressures.¹¹ Thus, the cumulative effect of experience in everyday life is that women lag behind somewhat in participation because their stockpiles of participatory factors –education, family income, institutionally based civil skills, and recruitment- are smaller than men’s, rather than because these participatory factors are differentially useful to men and women in fostering political activity.

Further, even age difference exists as a factor in political participation. Research has revealed that men are more likely than women to participate in every type of political activity (voting, campaigning, and contributing). There exists gender and generational differences in patterns of support for equal roles for women and for women’s movement. So, men and women also differ in the number of types of campaign activities in which they engage and in the different types of campaign contribution recipients (parties, candidates, and political groups) to which they contribute.

From the time of the Seneca Fall Declaration in 1848 which held that men and women are created equal to nearly a half century later in 1892, when Elizabeth Candy Stanton testified in 1892 before House judiciary committee and explained why women needed opportunities and later in 1966, the National Organization for women adopted its statement of purpose which asked for a full participation for women, visions were created so that women could achieve a high level of political participation. Thus, for a time, visions for the disappearance of gender differences in political sphere have been in the air.

But before understanding the Gender Gap that exists in political participation there is a need to understand the theoretical basis of women participation which shed light on the low level of participation by women whether as voters or as candidates and the gender gap in politics. This provides a contrast and presents a guiding tool to

¹¹ R.L. Lake and R. Huckfeldt (1998), “Social Capital, Social Networks, and Political Participation”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25(3), pp. 494-511

understand the various stages of women movement. In particular, theories of feminism are essential in understanding the increasing political participation by women as compared to the early years of mid 19th century.

Feminism in the United States of America

We are looking at the political participation of women in this chapter and one concept which is integral to understanding it is feminism. It is the feminist movement in America which is at the background of what women have been able to achieve in terms of the political rights. Feminism is a social movement but it is the interaction between movements and the government that had resulted in extending the range of political debates as well as introduced new and innovative policy alternatives. Social movements often raise serious questions outside the realm of normal government channels, often concerning subjects not treated as topics of political significance. And it is the response of government to these subjects and demands which results in the expansion of the government's interests and involvement. So, we see that feminism is at the core of understanding political rights movements of women and for that purpose we understand feminism through its three waves and the events emanating from them.

Feminism is a collection of diverse social theories, political movements, and moral philosophies, motivated by as well as concerned about the experiences of women in terms of their social, political, and economic situation. As a social movement, feminism largely focuses on limiting or eradicating gender inequality and promoting women's rights, interests, and issues in society.¹²

Feminist theory in International Relations would probably be best described as a series of *feminisms* - as there is no singular approach. First-wave feminism sought to involve women at the sub-state level - in the hope that this would lead to women's involvement on the international level of politics. Second-wave (radical) feminism sought to emphasize feminine differences, arguing that patriarchy as the reason for women's subordination while the third-wave (poststructuralist) feminism sought to analyze issues concerning gender and sexuality by deconstructing definitions of *men* and *women*.

¹² "Feminism" (Online: web) Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism>

First-wave feminism

First-wave feminism arose in the context of industrial society and liberal politics but was connected to both the liberal women's rights movement as well as the early socialist feminism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States and Europe. Concerned with access and equal opportunities for women, the first wave continued to influence feminism in both Western and Eastern societies throughout the 20th century.¹³

First-wave feminism primarily focused on gaining the right of women's suffrage. The term was instead coined after the term *second-wave feminism* began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement.

Prominent leaders of the movement in the US included Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, who campaigned for the abolition of slavery prior to championing women's right to vote. Anthony and other activists (such as Victoria Woodhull and Matilda Joslyn Gage) made attempts to cast votes prior to their legal entitlement to do so, for which many of them faced charges. First-wave feminism involved a wide range of women, including some conservative Christian groups (such as Frances Willard and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union), and others such as the National Woman Suffrage Association.

Both Stanton and Anthony believed that abortion was an imposition of the patriarchy upon women, that it robbed the unborn child of its life, and that if decisions about abortion were placed into the hands of women, it would happen far less often (or cease entirely). Anthony believed abortion to be "child-murder", but did not believe that outlawing the practice would help women.¹⁴

One major event in the first wave feminism was the Seneca Fall Declaration outlined by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), which claimed the natural equity of women and outlined the political strategy of equal access and opportunity. This declaration gave rise to the suffrage movement. Suffragists confronted the stereotypes of women and claims of proper female behavior and talk.

¹³ Charlotte Korolokke and Anne Scott Sorensen, (2005), *Gender Communication Theories and Analysis*, University of Southern Denmark: Sage Publication, Inc, p. 1

¹⁴ The Revolution, Vol. 4(1), 4, July 8, 1869 [Online: Web} Accessed on 4 July 2007, URL: <http://honors.syr.edu/Courses/03-04/wsp200/quotations.html>

The declaration of sentiments held certain truths to be self evident as could be seen in the statements below:

“We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is right of those who suffer to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, ...But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government...”¹⁵

Further, a list of grievances was drawn and resolutions were discussed by the likes of Lucretia Mott, Amy Post, Catharine A.F. Stebbins, and others. After repeated discussions and arguments, most of the grievances were resolved. The only resolution that was not adopted unanimously was the ninth which had urged the women of the country to secure to themselves the elective franchise. Those women who took part in the debates feared that demand of right to vote would defeat other demands and make the whole movement ridiculous. Yet, Mrs. Stanton and Frederick Douglass kept advocating the resolution, and at last carried it by a small majority.¹⁶

The passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was a culmination of the feminist movement which granted women the right to vote may have regarded this as the end of the first-wave feminism.

Second-wave feminism

Second-wave feminism refers to a period of feminist thought that originated around the 1960s and was mainly concerned with independence of greater political action to improve women's rights. It emerged in the 1960s to 1970s in postwar Western welfare societies, when “oppressed” groups such as Blacks and homosexuals were being defined and the New Left was on the rise.¹⁷ The passage of the ERA in

¹⁵ Elizabeth Candy Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, “Declaration of Sentiments” in Nick Treanor, “The Feminist Movement”, (2002) San Diego, CA : The Greenhaven Press., pp.39-40

¹⁶ *ibid*, pp.37-47

¹⁷ These movements criticized “capitalism” and “imperialism” and focused on the notion and interests of “oppressed” groups: the working classes, Blacks, and in principle, also women and homosexuals. In the New Left, however, women found themselves reduced to servicing the revolution, cut off from real influence and thus, once again, exposed to sexism. This was now understood as a separate oppression experienced by women in addition to racism, “classicism,” and was later renamed “heterosexism”. For further understanding refer to Charlotte Krolokke, “Three Waves of Feminism: From Suffragettes to Grrls” in Charlotte Krolokke and Anne Scott Sorensen,

the House in 1971 and the Senate in 1972, is seen as the arrival of the second wave feminist movement in the US. ¹⁸But in actual the second wave of feminism had arrived in US much before that.

The second-wave feminist movement was most concerned with items such as economic equality between the genders and addressing the rights of female minorities rather than absolute rights such as suffrage, as first wave feminism had. One phenomenon included the recognition of lesbian women within the movement. Lesbians had an ambiguous relationship with other, generally heterosexual-oriented feminist groups. Many feminists did not want to be associated with lesbians because of the stereotypes of "mannish" lesbians that predominated at the time. As a result many feminist groups felt betrayed and rejected by straight women, claiming that heterosexual relationships automatically subordinated women, and that the only true independence could come in lesbian relationships.¹⁹

The second wave is most commonly linked with the radical feminist theory.

One interesting and underdocumented aspect of the second-wave was the rise of women's cooperative living communities. An example of one such intentional community was the Chatanika River Women's Colony.²⁰

The major events which categorized the second wave of feminism in the US could be briefly summarized into certain important events. ²¹Firstly, The Commission on the Status of Women was created in the USA by the Kennedy administration, with Eleanor Roosevelt as its chair in 1963 and it documented discrimination against women in America That same year, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* appeared

Gender Communication Theories and Analyses: From Silence to Performance, United States: Sage publications, 1995, pp. 8-9

¹⁸Clara Bingham (1997), *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress*, NY: Times Books, p.21

¹⁹ Marilyn Frye, "Some Reflections on Separatism and Power." In Diana Tietjens Meyers (eds.) (1997), *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, New York: Routledge, pp. 406-414.

²⁰ The colony was conceived and initiated in the 1970s by a group of women who migrated to the Alaska Interior with the specific intention of creating a cooperative women's community in the wilderness. Upon arrival in Fairbanks, they established the First Avenue Collective, a domestic cooperative. Once settled, they located and homesteaded a parcel of United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land on the Chatanika River. The loosely affiliated ecofeminist group canoed and backpacked supplies and building materials from Fairbanks into the remote site. Together they built a log cabin by hand without the benefit of power tools, put in gardens and adapted to the living conditions in the wilderness. The colony brought women from around the world together in the wilderness to contemplate the spirit of the land and to appreciate the abilities of women working together.

Accessed on 7 July 2007 URL: http://www.tvwiki.tv/wiki/Chatanika_River_Women%27s_Colony

²¹ "Second-Wave Feminisms"(Online: web), Accessed 4 May 2007, URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second-wave_feminism

on bookshelves. This book contains interviews of women who had buttressed the Commission report. Then in 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of the USA was passed. Title VII illegalized employment discrimination on the basis of sex ,race, religion, and national origin. The year of 1966 was marked by the formation of The National Organization for Women (NOW). Its mission was to function as a legal "watchdog" for women of all races, along the lines of the NAACP for Black Americans. This was soon followed by other organizations addressing the needs of specific groups of women. Eight years after Title VII, Title IX in the Education Amendments of 1972 (United States) was passed, which forbade discrimination in the field of education. Inspired in part by the legal victories of the 1960s and 1970s, many feminists supported and worked to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment into the United States Constitution.

The Amendment, proposed in 1972, said:

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”

Opponents, such as Phyllis Schlafly charged that passage of the ERA of the USA would lead to men abandoning their families, unisex toilets, gay marriages, and women being drafted.²² . Despite polls consistently showing a large majority of the population supporting an Equal Rights Amendment, when the deadline for ratification came in 1982, the ERA was still three states short of the 38 needed to write it into the U.S. constitution.²³ Finally, the Feminist Sex Wars of the late 1970s and 1980s between anti-pornography feminism and sex-positive feminism often termed as the "Sex Wars" led to deep divisions within the feminist movement and also laid the groundwork for many issues that were important in third-wave feminism.²⁴

Second-wave feminism is closely linked to the radical voices of women’s empowerment and differential rights and, during the 1980s to 1990s, to a crucial differentiation of second-wave feminism itself, initiated by women of color and the third-world women.

²² Roberta W. Francis, “The History Behind the Equal Rights Amendment”, Accessed on 9 July 2007 URL: <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>

²³ Walter Dean Burnham,(1983)*Democracy in the Making: American Government and Politics*, United States:Prentice Hall, p.236

²⁴ Amber Kinser, (2004). "Negotiating space for/through Third-Wave Feminism". *NWSA Journal* 16 (3),pp. 124-153.

So, the women's voices were not uniform or monolithic. But comprised of both conservative progressive views on the role of women and brought to the fore the goal of women's rights and ideals that defined women's rights

Third-wave feminism

Third-wave feminism is a feminist movement that arguably began in the early 1990s. This wave sprang from the emergence of a new postcolonial and post socialist world order, in the context of information society and neo liberal, global politics. Third-wave feminism manifested itself in "grrl" rhetoric, which sought to overcome the theoretical question of equity or difference and the political question of evolution or revolution, while it challenged the notion of "universal womanhood" and embraced ambiguity, diversity, and multiplicity.

Unlike second-wave feminism, which largely focused on the inclusion of women in traditionally male-dominated areas, third-wave feminism seeks to challenge and expand common definitions of gender and sexuality.

In the fall of 1991, Judge Clarence Thomas was nominated to the Supreme Court of the United States. During the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, Law Professor Anita Hill, from Oklahoma, came forward and claimed that Thomas had sexually harassed her almost a decade earlier, while she had worked with him.²⁵ In response to the Thomas hearings, Rebecca Walker published an article titled "Becoming the Third Wave" in a 1992 issue of Ms. in which she declared, "I am not a post feminism feminist. I am the Third Wave." This event is often marked as the beginning of the usage of the term third wave applied to feminism (the "wave" concept of social progress was floated by futurist Alvin Toffler in his 1980 book titled *The Third Wave*). As Amber Kinser has argued, Walker's was a notable expansion of feminist space for women not descended from Europeans, East Asians, Arabs or Jews.

The roots of the Third Wave began, however, in the mid 1980's. Feminist leaders rooted in the second wave like Gloria Anzaldua, Bell Hooks, Chela Sandoval, Cherrie Moraga, Audre Lorde, Maxine Hong Kingston, and many other feminists of

²⁵ Michael L LaBlanc, (1994), *Contemporary Black Biography: Profiles from the International Black Community*, University of Michigan: Gale Research, p.236

color, called for a new subjectivity in feminist voice.²⁶ They sought to negotiate prominent space within feminist thought for consideration of race related subjectivities. This focus on the intersection between race and gender remained prominent through the Hill-Thomas hearings, but began to shift with the Freedom Ride in 1992. This was a drive to register voters in poor colored communities, which was surrounded with rhetoric that focused on rallying young feminists. For many, the rallying of the young is the emphasis that has stuck within third wave feminism.

Traits of third-wave feminism include queer theory, women-of-color consciousness, post-colonialism, critical theory, transnationalism, and new feminist theory. In particular, a post-structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality is often, though not always, central to third-wave feminism. Other consequences include a lesser emphasis on addressing and overthrowing a perceived oppression by patriarchy and instead focuses on equality between the sexes. Overall, third-wave feminism may be seen as growing out of a belief that second-wave feminism ignored the idea of intersectionality and falsely attempted to treat the experience of white, middle class, heterosexual women in Western countries (particularly the United States) as representative of a universal women's experience.

Briefly third-wave feminist activism extends past feminist beliefs from a new point of view:

Equality with men as targeted by second wavers has not been achieved and that feminism is not "dead" until it has been.

But, at the same time, equality does not mean limiting gender or sexual expression. Being female is just as valuable as being male, and equality includes reclaiming all female choices in all areas. In fact, it is the definitions of such things as gender, sexuality, and feminism that are a major part of the problem. Defining anything, including third-wave feminism, limits it.

A comprehensive example of third-wave feminism is *Colonize This!*, an anthology of writings by young women discussing issues like gender, racism, nationalism, and queer identity.²⁷ *Colonize This!* Illustrates the impact that the feminist work by the women of color had on the consciousness formation of the

²⁶ "Third Wave Feminism", Accessed on 8 July 2007, URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third-wave_feminism

²⁷ Maythee Rojas, (Reviewer), "Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism by Daisy Hernandez, Bushra Rehman", MELUS, Vol. 28, No. 4, Speech and Silence: Ethnic Women Writers (Winter, 2003), pp. 246-249

younger female generation. It addresses various topics affecting women of today like the issues of ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality through a number of personal and critical perspectives. Among these varied nuances, it is pertinent to point out that the multiple identities of a woman has been at the root of search for female space.

In the political sphere, it deepened the awareness of the significance of participatory politics for women. It also raised the question of different attitudes between men and women towards issues, elections and candidates. For instance, many analysts have pointed to the gap between the voting choices of men and women in 1980 presidential elections. While the term Gender gap was coined later, it is believed that it originated at this election as it showed women taking a different view of politics than men and voting accordingly.

The Gender Gap in the U.S. Elections

The 'Gender Gap' refers to the differences between women and men in political attitudes and voting choices. Although the gender gap has historical roots, the political differences between women and men have increased in scope and shown greater persistence in recent years. A gender gap has been apparent in voting behavior, party identification, and evaluations of performances of recent presidents, and attitude towards some public policy issues. Also, A gender gap is apparent in the way women and men respond to a variety of contemporary issues.²⁸

A gender gap has existed long before the term was formed. Since the votes have not been reported by sex, survey data are the only way to determine gender gap and they had not been so readily available until the early 1950's. Infact, survey data from 1952 depict a definite gender gap. Research has also suggested presence of gender gap ever since women started voting in 1920, although the data to validate this point is quite scarce.²⁹

The term "gender gap" was first coined in the early 1980's and the feminists and the women organizations skillfully promoted this phenomenon. This happened

²⁸ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "The Gender Gap: Attitudes on Public Policy Issues"[Online;web], Accessed on 5 April 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/ggapissues.pdf>

²⁹Carol M. Mueller, (1988), "The Empowerment of Women: Polling and the Women's Polling Bloc" in Carol M. Mueller, ed., *The Politics of the Gender Gap: The Social Construction of Political Influence*, Newsbury Park, California:Sage Publications, pp.16-36

after the women started voting more democratic than the men in the 1980s, which was a reversal of the earlier gap where women used to vote more Republican than the men. Since then this term has been widely used, though poorly understood.

The first use of the term '*gender-gap*' is credited to the then-President of the National Organization of Women, Eleanor Smeal, in 1981.³⁰ The phrase rapidly popularized as convenient shorthand for American journalists, scholars, and pollsters, referring to gender differences in support for the Democrat and Republican parties. According to scholars, the concept has subsequently been employed loosely to cover a diverse range of political phenomenon, such as gender differences in levels of electoral participation, political attitudes, issue priorities, and so on, at mass and elite levels, not to speak of the extension of the term even more broadly within the social sciences to describe other differences between women and men, such as in educational achievement and labor force participation.³¹

In essence, the gender gap in voting is nothing but a *difference* between the way men and a woman vote and is quite different from "winning among women". As, a candidate can have more support from women than from men (the Gender Gap) and yet not win a majority of women's vote. A candidate might have a large gender gap, win among women and yet lose the election. Thus winning an election depends on the level of support a candidate receives and not on the gender gap. Infact, the gender gap does not and can never elect anyone, it is simply a difference between the way women and men vote.³²

Thus the term 'gender gap' merely describes the difference in the way men and a woman vote and describes nothing about the causes of the difference. It is infact neutral as it is not necessarily good or bad for a candidate. This gap basically occurs because women moved from one candidate to another or the men moved towards the other or a combination of the two. Thus, gender gap varies from one election to another as men and women move from one candidate or party to another.

³⁰ Kathy Bonk (1988) "The Selling of the Gender Gap": The Role of Organized Feminism ", in Carol M. Mueller, eds., *The Politics of the Gender Gap: The Social Construction of Political Influence*, Newbury Park, Calif. :Sage Publications, pp.82-101

³¹ Pippa Norris "The Gender Gap: Old Challenges, New Approaches", in Susan J. Carroll , (2003) , *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.1

³² Richard A. Seltzer, Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton, (1997) *Sex As a Political Variable: Women As Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p.32

Thus the Political analysis of the 'gender gap' in the United States and elsewhere has focused mainly on explaining differences between men and women in their party identification and voting choice. The American gender gap in votes is conventionally measured as the percentage difference between the two-party lead among women and men, as follows:

(% Women Dem vote -% Women GOP vote) - (% Men Dem vote -% Men GOP vote)/2
E.g. 1996 Women (60.0% Clinton -34% Bush=26%) - Men (46.5% Clinton -44.6%
Bush = 1.9%)

26% - 1.9% =24.1/2=12.0³³

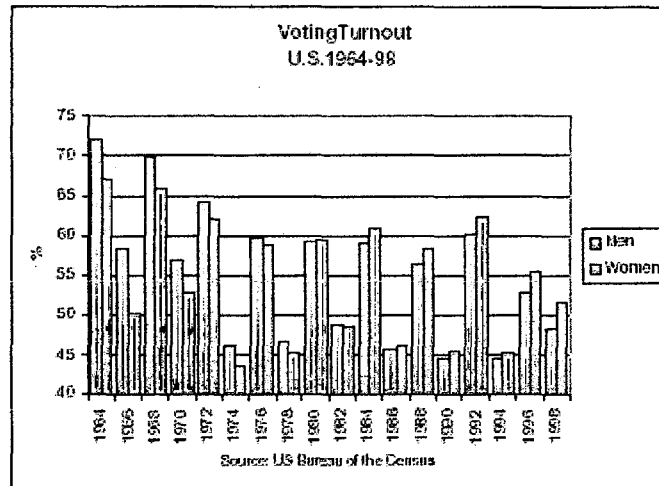
Key developments in the early 1980s that fuelled interest in the gender gap in American elections were that for the first time, proportionately more women than men voted, a significant gender cleavage emerged in Democratic and Republican Party support, and the women's movement seized on these developments to advance their agenda. During the 1980 and 1984 elections the gender gap could be dismissed as a short-term reaction to President Reagan's leadership and the mobilization of the New Right around issues like abortion rights and welfare cutbacks. But an enduring electoral cleavage ever since the early-1980, with American women consistently leaning more Democrat while men favored the Republicans, convinced even the most skeptical observer that this was not merely a temporary blip.

In the United States the gender gap in most presidential and statewide elections has not been but it has been politically significant. This point could be explained by the developments that took place in the elections showing a reversal in the gender gap with regard to voting patterns and party identifications.

The first significant development that could be seen was the mobilization of the women voters, who now constitute the majority of the electorate.

³³Pippa Norris, "The Gender Gap:Old Challenges, New Approaches", in Susan J. Carroll, , (2003), *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press,p.2-3

Figure 1: Voting Turnout, US 1964-98



Source: www.census.gov

For successive decades since 1920, when the franchise was first granted, women had slightly lower levels of turnout than men.³⁴ According to U.S. census data, gender differences in voting participation gradually diminished in the 1980s in America. The 1980 election was the first when there was a parity in turnout. In successive elections since then, women have voted at slightly higher rates than men.

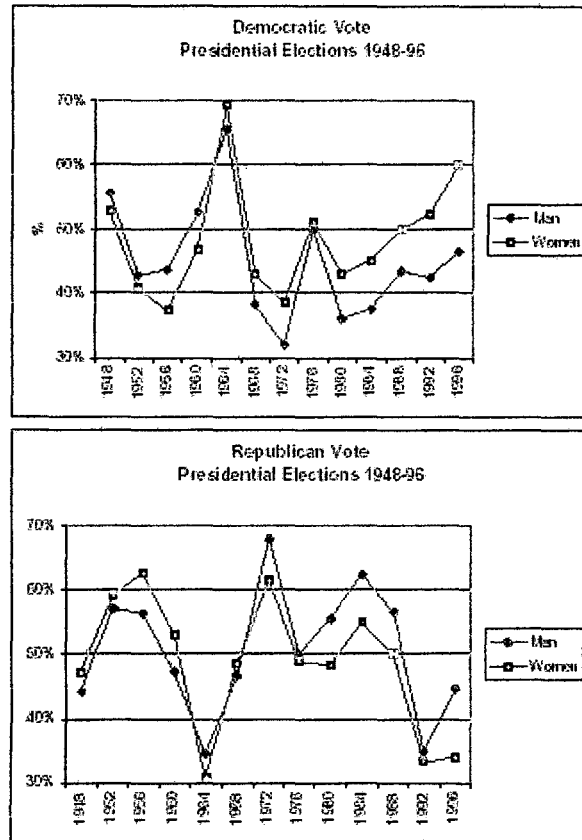
According to some researchers, the participation gap in voting turnout remains modest in size but American women did cast more votes at the ballot box.³⁵ For example, in the 1996 presidential election, 101 million women voted compared with 92.6 million men, producing a participation gap of 8.4 million votes. One point to be noted is that this pattern is not just a product of women's greater longevity, since turnout was also higher for women in the younger (18-44 year old) age group.

The second significant development was the male and female *reversal* in voting choice and party identification. The central puzzle is why women, who were more rightwing than men in the 1950s, became more leftwing in the 1980s. 'The gender gap (typically understood as the partisan difference in voting behavior between men and women) was not a feature of political commentary prior to Ronald Reagan's election in 1980.' 'In fact, not until the 1980 presidential election, when 8% fewer women than men voted for Ronald Reagan, did anyone take much notice of the male/female split.'

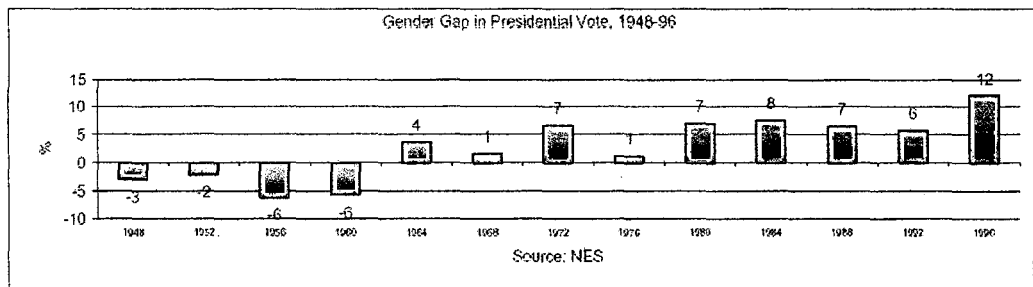
³⁴ *ibid*, p. 3

³⁵ Margaret Conway, Gertrude A. Steuernagel, and David Ahern. (1997) *Women and Political Participation*. Washington, DC: CQ Press, pp.77-94

Figure 2: Presidential Vote 1948-96



Source: NES 1948-98



The gender gap was studied in 1937 by Herbert Tingsten, in 1949 by Henry Durant, in 1955 by James Ross, and above all by Maurice Duverger' in his classic work, *The Political Role of Women*, published for UNESCO in 1955. Duverger established the conventional wisdom that prevailed in political behavior textbooks for many decades, namely early polls revealed that women voters were slightly more *rightwing* than men in many countries. This pattern can be termed the *traditional gender gap*. Although the early studies were essentially descriptive, based on simple

cross-tabulations of face-sheet variables, theories commonly explained women's conservatism by their greater longevity and religiosity.

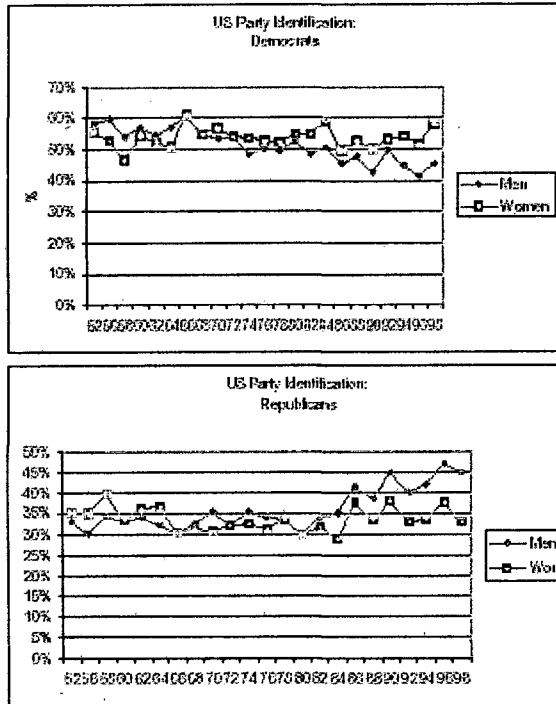
*The American Voter*³⁶ found that in presidential elections from 1952 to 1960 women were slightly more Republican than men, with a gender gap in the region of 3-5 percent. In the 1956 mid-term elections, for example, men voted decisively (58%) in favor of the Democrats while women gave the edge to the Republicans (52%). The pattern in NES data was confirmed by Gallup polls, which registered stronger female support for the Republican Presidential candidate in every election during the 1950s. During the 1960s and 1970s, the traditional gap closed and became insignificant in successive American Presidential and Congressional election. The *modern* gender gap in voting first became evident in the Reagan v. Carter contest in 1980. Since then American women have consistently given stronger support to Democratic candidates in successive Presidential and Congressional elections. As a result, in the 1996 Presidential race women favored Clinton over Bush by a margin of 60 to 34 per cent, while men split by a far narrower margin of 46 to 45 per cent, the remainder supporting Perot, producing the substantial gender gap already noted of 12 percentage points. Carroll noted, for the first time in history, feminist activists could claim that the votes of women determined the president of the United States

The size of the gender gap has fluctuated substantially. The gender gap is usually evident at many other levels of elected office, although in statewide races women have occasionally given stronger support to Republican candidates.

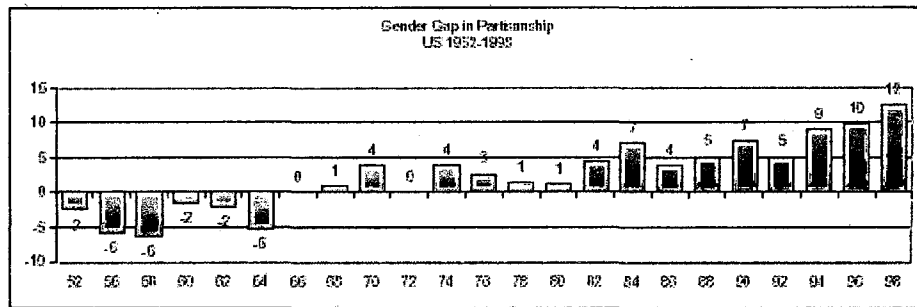
Evidence for gender realignment in the United States, signifying a long-term shift in the loyalties of male and female voters, displays a slightly different pattern in terms of partisan identification.

³⁶ Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: Wiley. Quoted in Pippa Norris, "The Gender Gap: Old Challenges, New Approaches", in Susan J. Carroll, (2003), *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.4

Figure 4: US Partisan Identification 1952-98



Source: NES 1952-98

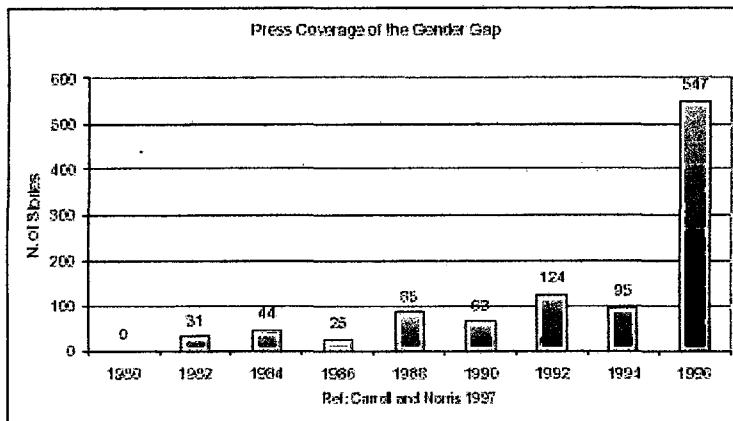


As demonstrated in the above figure, from 1952-1970 there were only modest differences in the party loyalties of women and men, and the pattern is one of trendless fluctuations over the time. In contrast, male support for the Democrats started to erode after 1972, producing a gender gap that expanded in the 1980s. In 1998, according to NES data, men split 54% self-identified Republicans to 46% Democrats, whereas women were evenly divided between the parties. The primary change in partisanship has been the growing Republicanism of men, not a substantial

change in female party loyalties. Yet this observation in itself does not provide many novel insights since the gender gap is, after all, a relative phenomenon. The puzzle is *why* there is a difference between women and men, and why the gender-related electoral cleavage should have *reversed* over time, more than whether one or the other sex ‘caused’ this development.

The third related development was the way that the organized feminist movement and women political activists seized the emergence of the gender gap to advance their agenda, and the news media rapidly adopted this frame³⁷. As a result, press coverage of the gender gap expanded dramatically as a popular framing device or ‘peg’ for a wide variety of electoral stories in the mainstream media from the early 1980s onwards

Figure 5: Press Coverage of the Gender Gap



Note: Nexis-Lexis keyword search of "Major Papers" database using term "gender gap and election" from September 1 through November 30 per election year. Table entries reflect number of stories using these terms.

Source: Carroll and Norris 1997.

Therefore in the United States the gender gap in most presidential and statewide elections has not been great - in the region of 4 to 10 percentage points - but it has been politically significant. The women's movement mobilized around this development, it affects millions of votes, these votes are dispersed across every electoral district, press coverage has been extensive, the gender gap cannot be

³⁷ Susan J. Carroll, (2003), *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.5

explained (and therefore modified) by a single issue, and it is a relatively recent phenomenon.

One question that bothers us is as to how to explain the gender realignment in American elections? Studies have generally worked on electoral studies based on theories of issue voting, structural change, political mobilization, and generational value-change. What these theories suggest is that: (i) the process of societal modernization is reshaping the political values and attitudes of women and men, just as it has altered other basic values. (ii) In particular, women are now moving to the left of men, even controlling for structural differences in men and women's lives, such as religiosity, education and work force participation. (iii) Because this transition is still taking place, we would expect to find substantial variations in this pattern by age cohort in postindustrial societies, with older women remaining more conservative than men, while the younger generation of women have moved to the left of men.³⁸ 'Issue-based' explanations commonly point to gender differences in policy priorities and attitudes. Structural explanations are based on the classic 'Michigan' model of group voting, which suggests that objective socioeconomic differences in the lifestyle of women and men determine their voting behavior.³⁹ Political mobilization theories suggest the gender gap emerged largely among self-identified feminists as a result of the second-wave women's movement. Lastly, generational accounts emphasize the glacial process of value-evolution, in the United States and elsewhere, associated with societal modernization.

Women as Voters in the U.S. Politics

Women have had the right to vote in the United States since 1920. The passage of the nineteenth amendment was a result of a seventy-year struggle to which thousands of women had devoted their lives, but it was also accompanied with a lot of anxiety and fear on part of men.

³⁸ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.1

³⁹ Pippa Norris, "The Gender Gap: Old Challenges, New Approaches", in Susan J. Carroll, (2003), *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.6

Thereafter, there was great expectation that an organized women's organization or a powerful women political bloc will be formed. However, this never happened and even women did not take the advantage of this hard gained right to vote with the same level as men used to until the 1970s.⁴⁰

The first time when the U.S. Census bureau asked people about whether they used their voting right in 1964 had resulted in women making up for the majority of reported voters and ever since the trend has been the same. The impact which women have made as voters can be quantified through two ways: percentage of voters and turnout rates.

As the elections are never reported by sex, the two methods used to ascertain the voter turnout by sex are exit polls and those polls which ask men and women about whether they had voted or not. But weaknesses exist in both these methods. People generally preferably like giving socially accepted answer and because of this problem the supposed difference between men and women could be seen as theoretically due to different levels of misreporting.

Voter Turnout among men and women

Before 1920, women could not vote at all. Today, they vote more often than men. Women are out-voting and out-registering men in both presidential and congressional elections. Men historically outvoted women until the early 1980s, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The first major study to measure the electoral turnout of women was done in the 1923 Chicago mayoral elections. This study had found that nearly two-thirds of all men but only one-third of all eligible women voted. Other researchers have also found similar disparities.⁴¹ Women's rates surpassed those of men for the first time in the presidential election of 1984.⁴²

Since then, women have been showing up at the polls in greater percentages each year. The voting gap between the sexes has increased from a slight 0.3 percent in 1980 to almost 4 percent in the recent 2004 presidential election.

⁴⁰ Nancy F. Cott, (1995), "Across the Great Divide: Women in Politics before and after 1920" in Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, ed., *One Women, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, Troutdale, Ore.: New Sage Press, pp.353-372

⁴¹ Nancy E McGlen ... et al. (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p.78

⁴² Alexandra Steigrad, "Voter turnout shows gender gap: Women vote more", November 2006, Accessed 7 July 2007, URL: http://mesh.medill.northwestern.edu/mnschicago/elections06/2006/11/voter_turnout_s.html

Sex differences in Voter Turnout

Presidential Election Year	% of Voting Age Population Who Reported Voting		Number Who Reported Voting	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
	2004	60.1	56.3	67.3 million
2000	56.2	53.1	59.3 million	51.5 million
1996	55.5	52.8	56.1 million	48.9 million
1992	62.3	60.2	60.6 million	53.3 million
1988	58.3	56.4	54.5 million	47.7 million
1984	60.8	59.0	54.5 million	47.4 million
1980	59.4	59.1	49.9 million	49.8 million
1976	58.8	59.6	45.6 million	41.1 million
1972	62.0	64.1	44.9 million	40.9 million
1968	66.0	69.8	41.0 million	38.0 million
1964	67.0	71.9	39.2 million	37.6 million

Among younger citizens (18-44), a higher proportion of women than men voted in 2004, 2000 and 1996; the pattern is reversed among older voters (65 and up).

	% of Voting Age Population Who Reported Voting		Number Who Reported Voting (in millions)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
2004				
18-24 yrs.	44.9	38.8	6.2 million	5.4 million
25-44 yrs.	55.0	46.8	22.9 million	19.9 million
45-64 yrs.	68.3	65.9	24.9 million	22.8 million
65-74 yrs.	69.4	72.5	6.9 million	8.1 million
75 yrs. up	68.9	71.0	6.4 million	4.5 million
2000				
18-24 yrs.	34.6	30.0	4.8 million	4.0 million
25-44 yrs.	52.3	47.3	21.8 million	19.0 million
45-64 yrs.	65.3	62.7	20.7 million	18.8 million
65-74 yrs.	68.7	71.2	6.7 million	6.9 million
75 yrs. up	60.6	71.7	5.5 million	4.2 million
1996				
18-24 yrs.	35.0	28.8	4.3 million	3.7 million
25-44 yrs.	51.5	46.9	21.8 million	19.2 million
45-64 yrs.	65.1	63.7	18.1 million	16.5 million
65-74 yrs.	68.1	72.8	6.8 million	5.9 million
75 yrs. up	59.4	68.3	5.0 million	3.8 million

43

In Illinois, 60.1 percent of voting-age women cast ballots in the 2004 election, compared to 56.3 percent of voting-age men. According to the U.S. Voter Turnout Up in 2004, Census Bureau Reports among citizens, turnout was higher for women (65 percent) than for men (62 percent).⁴⁴

Although 1984 was the first national election that saw a woman on a major party ticket (Geraldine Ferraro was Democrat Walter Mondale's vice presidential running mate), political scientists believe Ferraro's impact in pulling more women into the voting booth is not at all certain. A more important change, they say, is

⁴³ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Sex differences in voter turnout", [Online:web] Accessed 7 July 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/sexdiff.pdf>

⁴⁴ "Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2004", US Census Bureau, march 2006, [Online:web] Accessed 8 July 2007, URL: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2006pubs/p20-556.pdf>

education." Since the '80's, what we have in the younger generation is that women are more likely to go to college than men," said John Fren dreis, professor of political science and provost at Loyola University. "That translates into a slightly higher level of education for the newest cohort of the electorate. People with higher education tend to vote more." Others suggested that education levels might not be the only factor in this trend. According to this view, other factors that may explain women's increased political involvement are the recent policies and ideologies of the candidates. As some remarked

"The higher percentages of women voting is probably connected to a slightly greater interest in the political process and slightly more intense feelings on the issues,"

In addition to the social and political factors contributing to an increased female turnout, certain organizations were perceived as attempting to accelerate the trend by mobilizing women to become more involved. For instance, in Illinois elections, organizations such as the League of Women Voters of Illinois and Women's Voices, Women Vote, also contributed to a growing number of women-focused political events throughout the state.

Although women only have a 4 percent advantage over men for voter turnout, according to the Center for American Women and Politics, women are "late deciders" -- they make up a higher number of swing voters than men. As Illinois is home to several close races, the female vote may prove to be an important demographic factor for many of 2007 election's candidates.

Although the barriers to women's voting have diminished since 1920, the one factor that still negatively affect the voting participation of some women is the presence of small children, making it difficult for women to go to polls. So, when we combine the disparity in the voter turnout with the large number of women in the electorate, we can ascertain that powerful voting bloc women could be formed if they want to.

Women as a percentage of Voters

Even though women are said to be reporting at lower rates in the years before 1984, yet they are reported to be a majority of voters ever since the voting behaviour was first noted by the Bureau of the Census in 1964. This occurred as there have been more number of women in the voting population than men.

In the 2000 elections, 56.2% of women reported voting, compared with 53.1% of men.

Women turned out to vote in the 2004 elections at a notably higher rate than men, according to official figures released in early June by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The rate of voter turnout was 60.1 % for women, compared with 56.3% for men.

Voter turnout table,1992-2004

Voter Turnout Tables, 1972 - 2004

**Table 1a - Voter Turnout Among U.S. Citizens, 1972-2004
Selected Series**

Year	Young Women 18-24	Young Men 18-24	Women 25+	Men 25+	White Young Women 18-24	White Young Men 18-24
1972	53%	51%	67%	70%	54%	54%
1974	25%	26%	50%	54%	27%	28%
1976	46%	43%	65%	66%	48%	46%
1978	25%	25%	53%	55%	26%	26%
1980	45%	42%	68%	69%	46%	45%
1982	26%	27%	57%	58%	27%	28%
1984	46%	42%	70%	68%	46%	44%
1986	24%	23%	54%	54%	24%	24%
1988	42%	38%	66%	65%	41%	40%
1990	23%	22%	54%	53%	24%	23%
1992	51%	46%	71%	70%	52%	50%
1994	24%	21%	52%	52%	24%	23%
1996	48%	33%	63%	61%	38%	36%
1998	19%	18%	49%	49%	20%	20%
2000	38%	34%	64%	62%	38%	36%
2002	21%	18%	50%	50%	20%	20%
2004	50%	44%	68%	65%	60%	47%

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the CPS Nov. Voting and Registration Supplements, 1972-2004

45

The 2004 turnout gap between women and men was greater than in any previous election. Women have voted at higher rates than men in every presidential

⁴⁵ Mark Hugo Lopez, , Emily Kirby and Sagoff,"Voter Turnout Among Young Women and Men"[Online: web], Accessed 3 May 2007, URL: http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS_04_gender_vote.pdf

The 2004 turnout gap between women and men was greater than in any previous election. Women have voted at higher rates than men in every presidential election since 1980, with the gap between women and men growing slightly larger with each successive election.

In terms of numbers, 67.3 million women reported voting in 2004, compared with 58.5 million men, for a difference of 8.8 million. This figure is up from 2000, when 7.8 million more women than men voted. Recent exit polls indicate the same trend. Finally, gender gap was also apparent in the voting of the U.S. House Candidates in 2006 with 55 percent of women and 50 percent of men reporting in the national exit polls. It was also noted that women voted for the Democratic candidate for the US House in their district.

Thus, both in terms of voters and turnouts, women's participation in the electoral politics of the U.S. has been steadily increasing. While several factors have contributed to this phenomenon, such as social, economic and political, the real significance of this pattern is that it has become an enduring feature. Secondly, it has raised the question of how much it has influenced women to move from being voters to candidates

Women as Candidates in the U.S. Politics

**SUMMARY OF WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR SELECTED OFFICES
1970 - 2006 (MAJOR PARTY NOMINEES)***

Year	U. S. Congress	
	Senate	House
1970	1 (0D, 1R)	25 (15D, 10R)
1972	2 (0D, 2R)	32 (24D, 8R)
1974	3 (2D, 1R)	44 (30D, 14R)
1976	1 (1D, 0R)	54 (34D, 20R)
1978	2 (1D, 1R)	46 (27D, 19R)
1980	5 (2D, 3R)	52 (27D, 25R)
1982	3 (1D, 2R)	55 (27D, 28R)
1984	10 (6D, 4R)	65 (30D, 35R)
1986	6 (3D, 3R)	64 (30D, 34R)
1988	2 (0D, 2R)	59 (33D, 26R)
1990	8 (2D, 6R)	69 (39D, 30R) Plus 1D for Delegate.**
1992	11 (10D, 1R)	106 (70D, 36R) Plus 2(1D, 1R) for Delegate.**
1994	9 (4D, 5R)	112 (72D, 40R) Plus 2D for Delegate.**
1996	9 (5D, 4R)	120 (77D, 42R, 1Ind) Plus 3D for Delegate.**
1998	10 (7D, 3R)	121 (75D, 46R) Plus 2D for Delegate.**
2000	6 (4D, 2R)	122 (80D, 42R) Plus 2D for Delegate.**
2002	11 (8D, 3R)	124 (78D, 46R) Plus 3D for Delegate.**
2004	10 (9D, 1R)	141 (88D, 53R) Plus 4 (3D, 1R) for Delegate**
2006	12 (8D, 4R)	136 (94D, 42R) Plus 4 (3D, 1R) for Delegate**

⁴⁶ On main, studies have suggested that in U.S. politics women have a tougher time in winning elections than men do. For instance, the CAWP study held that in 2007, women hold 86, or 16.1%, of the 535 seats in the 109th US Congress - 16, or 16.0%, of the 100 seats in the Senate and 70, or 16.1%, of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives In 2007, 77 women hold statewide elective executive offices across the country; women hold 24.4% of the 315 available positions. These facts exist in spite of the fact that 55 percent of the voters are women. Thus at face value what is seen is that women have a tougher time in winning elections. Also many believe that when women run they face biases and discrimination against them. Accounts by many female candidates about blatant sexism and gender based questioning seem to validate the general view about different treatment meted to them due to their sex.

In reality these assumptions belie real facts. Experts argue that it's the incumbent advantage that the males experience which is a primary cause for the scarcity of women in public offices. Thus, women find it tough to win elections not because of them being women but due to the fact that they are not incumbents.

⁴⁶ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Summary of women candidates for selected offices 1970 - 2006 (major party nominees)", [Online:web] Accessed 1 May 2007, URL: http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/CanHistory/can_histsum.pdf

However, it must be noted that since 1972, the number of women in state legislatures and Congress has charted an upward course⁴⁷ due in part to the changes in societal attitude about women and their changing educational levels and professions. That means that by 1990s the trend of increased number of women candidates was visible in various elections. Nevertheless, it was the 1992 elections that saw women contested and won giving rise to the slogan “Year of the Woman”.

But before moving ahead with the performance of women candidate, one question to be dealt here is whether the sex of the candidate affected the gender gap or not. That is how does being a women candidate affect female voters? Gender Gap has existed for long and has been there for all the senate as well gubernatorial races where surveys to determine gender races were run. Also, every year and type of race, the gender gap grew by several points when the democratic candidate was a woman and shrank when republican candidate was a woman. Yet in several cases when republican candidate was a woman, women voters voted more republican than men voters did (creating a negative or reverse gender gap). Thus we can say sex of the candidate did make a difference in the gender gap, but there is no reliable way to test this difference because women moved towards women candidates, men moved away from women candidates and a combination of the two.⁴⁸

Electoral Performance of Women candidates

Most of the studies done on candidates winning races have mostly compared men and women in aggregate. They generally ask as to how many men and how many women have won and which results in an answer showing that women win at lower rates than men. However, a look at the data of these studies show that women do not have a tougher time winning elections but rather men are advantaged due to their incumbency advantage. Thus, in order to properly estimate women’s chances of winning elections, men and women should be contrasted in comparable circumstances-incumbents with incumbents, challengers with challengers and open-seats with open-seats.

Such a study was done by National Women’s Political Caucus to determine the success rates of women candidates and the result was startling. The study showed

⁴⁷ Richard A. Seltzer, Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton, (1997) *Sex As a Political Variable: Women As Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers,p.77

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p.104

that “when women run, women win as often as men.”⁴⁹ It found the success rates to be almost identical in all comparisons. In the U.S. House, female incumbents had won 96 percents of their races compared to the 95 percent for men. Open seats had success rates of 48 percent for women and 51 percent for men. As challengers too, women succeeded in 4 percent of races in contrast to 6 percent for men.

The number of women who ran for U.S. Senate and governor are too small to have provided meaningful comparison. Yet there has been no evidence to suggest they are less likely to win than men. In that sense, this study’s conclusion stands at one’s face “ the reason there aren’t more women in public office is not that women don’t win, but that not enough women have been candidates in general elections”

Two more findings were also sobering. One was that women constitute a minority of candidates for all levels of office. The second was that, regardless of a candidate’s sex, candidates for open-seats where no incumbent was running were two to nine times more likely to win than challengers. Thus, open seats are the single most important key to winning higher office, and NWPC’s finding show that few women have run for open seats.

The chance to run in open –seats can be seen as a rare opportunity as open seats can be so easily won. So the difficulty that women experience in winning party nomination for open seats is an important bottleneck which slows their flow into higher offices. Women who seek election for the first time must either be a challenger to an incumbent or run in an open seat contest. Challengers win less than 10 percent of the time, while an open-seat candidate win slightly more than half the time, so it is clearly more preferable to run as an open seat candidate. However very few women run for office and a meager few on open –seats.

Thus the single most intractable obstacle for women’s political parity is the unwillingness on their part to become candidates. If women don’t run then how can they win elections?

Women Recruitment as Candidates for Elections

Efforts have been made since the revival of women’s movement in the 1960’s to recruit women to become candidates. Party organizations as well both political parties have made efforts to encourage women to run.

⁴⁹ Jody Newman, (1994), *Perceptions and Reality: A Study Comparing the Success of Men and Women Candidates*, Washington D.C.: National Women’s Political Caucus, p.2

Even during the 1990 and 1991 elections, national efforts were not prominent though prior efforts had been percolated in some states. However, the Hill/Thomas Senate hearings created the much-needed momentum as many women responded to the image of all-male Senate Judiciary Committee⁵⁰ and the media paid special attention to the increased number of women candidates. So the feminists played on the momentum that had been created.

During 1993 and 1994, the National Women Political Caucus made a combined effort to recruit from its national office by working closely with state and local caucuses. Later on, NWPC shifted its focus to states. Beginning at its National Steering Committee it was declared that women cannot win unless they run and that they were not seizing their best opportunities i.e. the open-seats. This Caucus identified several models for candidate recruitment.

Accordingly, the recruitment strategies focused on three components; identifying open seats, finding credible candidates and having something to offer individuals in their campaign.

For a credible candidate it was seen that she must have a background suitable to the particular office that is a result of her substantive experience or personal resources. Substantive background includes education or training or civic activity.

In essence as an inducement to potential candidates, those doing the recruitment need to offer desirable resources.

Obstacle to women running for office

Even if efforts to recruit women succeed, one question that needs to be delved into is as to the logistics behind few women running. Celinda lake explored this question in detail in a national survey in 1994 and her findings can explain the logistics behind women's reluctance to run⁵¹

Firstly, women are less likely than men to have considered running for office. Within the recruitment pool, only about 36 percent had considered running for office.

⁵⁰ The Museum of Broadcast communications, "Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings", Accessed on 7 July 2007, URL: <http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/H/htmlH/hill-thomash/hill-thomas.htm>

⁵¹ Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, ed. *Women and Elective Office* (1998), New York: Oxford University Press, pp.23-24

Secondly, both men as well as women are concerned about the impact of running on their families. The amount of time necessary for a successful campaign and the public scrutiny involved are the chief concerns of the candidates. Apart from these two concerns adequate financial backing is a third concern. Among the recruitment populations, female executives and the lawyers are more concerned about each factor than are men or women activists. Time is the most important reason for not running for these women (30 percent). While for men (23 percent) and women activists (17 percent), exposure to public scrutiny is the most important reason.

Also women are less confident than men about winning. Apart from these points, training and support are the key factors that distinguish women and men in their recruitment pool. Two-thirds of the women compared to the one-third of the men cited training as a factor in deciding to run. Women also stress on three types of supports in the form of mentor help in raising money, and support of community organizations. Thus, training and support are critically important for women to run.

Methods to unclog the bottleneck against women candidates

The gender disparity in willingness to run among executives and attorneys suggest that special efforts should be made to reach out to female executives and attorneys.

The major bottlenecks for women in politics identified by research has shown the following:

Firstly, very few women consider running for elections as a viable profession.

Secondly, women are more concerned about the repercussions of running for office on their family than their male counterparts.

Thirdly, the lack of confidence among women acts as a major bottleneck against women becoming candidates in elections.

Increased research has focused on the methods to unclog these bottlenecks. Some of these have suggested broadly the following:

The first step for that should be to involve professional women in some forms of activism

Another way is by asking women to run. Thus recruitment involves getting on the phone to ask women to run for office and this means someone must make recruitment of women a priority and take the initiative. Although women do face

occasional sex discrimination in campaigns but that doesn't prevent them from winning as much men do. So women should know this fact. Also open-seats are a key to winning elections so efforts should be directed towards identifying potential open seats and matching a credible candidate for them.

Also, training is another way of removing the obstacle to their recruitment and they should be told where they could find appropriate training.

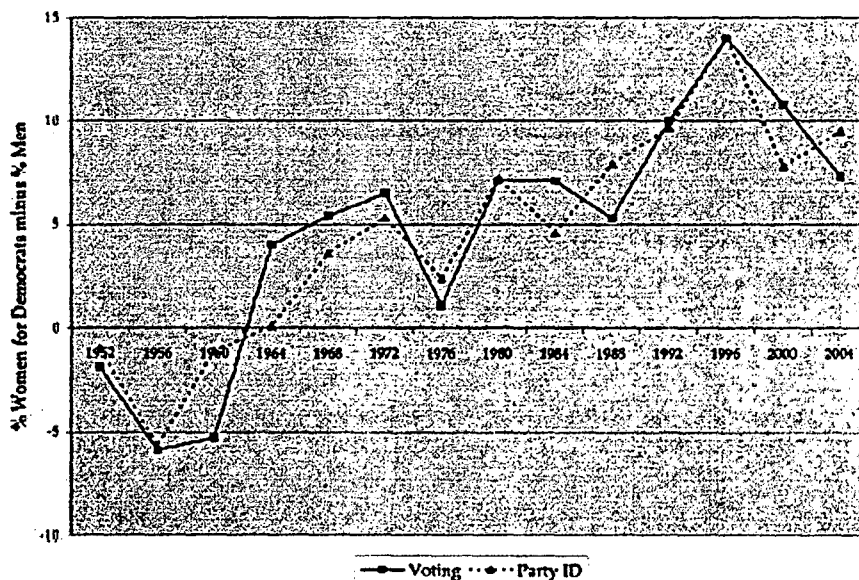
Finally, it is important that women should work for their success, as rapid progresses are possible.

Thus, "Societal, historical and political forces are bigger than anything an individual or organization can do to encourage women to run for office. But those who care can create the climate for that change by our work."⁵²

Changes in women's voting

Presidential voting and the Gender Gap

**Gender Gap in Presidential Voting and Party Identification
1952 to 2004**



Source: American National Election Studies in Presidential Election Years

⁵² Richard A. Seltzer; Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton, (1997) *Sex As a Political Variable: Women As Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p.104

From the time period of 1952 to 1960, women have been more likely than vote Republican. However, with the exception of 1976 elections women have been more prone to vote for a democratic candidate than men ever since 1964.⁵³

In every presidential election ever since 1980, the US elections have seen a gender gap. Lately, the 2004 presidential election also saw an evident gender gap, with women 7 points less likely than men to vote for George W. Bush. A majority of female voters had supported John Kerry while males had gone for George W. Bush. The trend was similar even back in the 2000 elections

The Presidential Voting and the Gender Gap: 1992-2004

<u>Year</u>	<u>Presidential Candidates</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>(Source)</u>
2004	George W. Bush (R)	48%	55%	Edison Media Research
	John Kerry (D)	51%	41%	
2000	George W. Bush (R)	43%	53%	Voter News Service ²
	Al Gore (D)	54%	42%	
	Ralph Nader (Green)	2%	3%	
1996	Bill Clinton (D)	54%	43%	Voter News Service
	Bob Dole (R)	38%	44%	
	Ross Perot (Reform)	7%	10%	
1992	Bill Clinton (D)	45%	41%	Voter News Service
	George Bush (R)	37%	38%	
	Ross Perot (Reform)	17%	21%	

54

Thus, in essence what we could see is that there is a strong gender gap in the presidential elections with women supporting the democratic candidate more as opposed to the men who prefer a Republican candidate

Party identification and the Gender Gap

Women and men have been different when it comes to their preference regarding the political party to be supported. Women have generally been more likely than men to express a preference to one of the two major political parties.

⁵³ Angus Campell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes (1960), *The American Voter*, New York :John Wiley, pp.39-116

⁵⁴ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "The gender gap: Voting Choices In Presidential Elections", Accessed 2 May 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Elections/GGPresVote.pdf>

Gender Gap: Party Identification and Presidential Performance Ratings

	Democrats		Republicans	
	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
June 2004	39%	31%	28%	30%
May 2003	33%	27%	32%	34%
June 2002	39%	29%	30%	29%
June 2001	41%	30%	26%	27%
May 2000	37%	30%	29%	35%
June 1999	46%	27%	22%	30%
June 1998	35%	28%	27%	30%
June 1997	35%	34%	27%	26%
June 1996	44%	33%	26%	29%
June 1995	31%	25%	29%	36%
June 1994	38%	34%	25%	29%
June 1993	38%	30%	28%	30%
June 1992	36%	29%	32%	34%

55

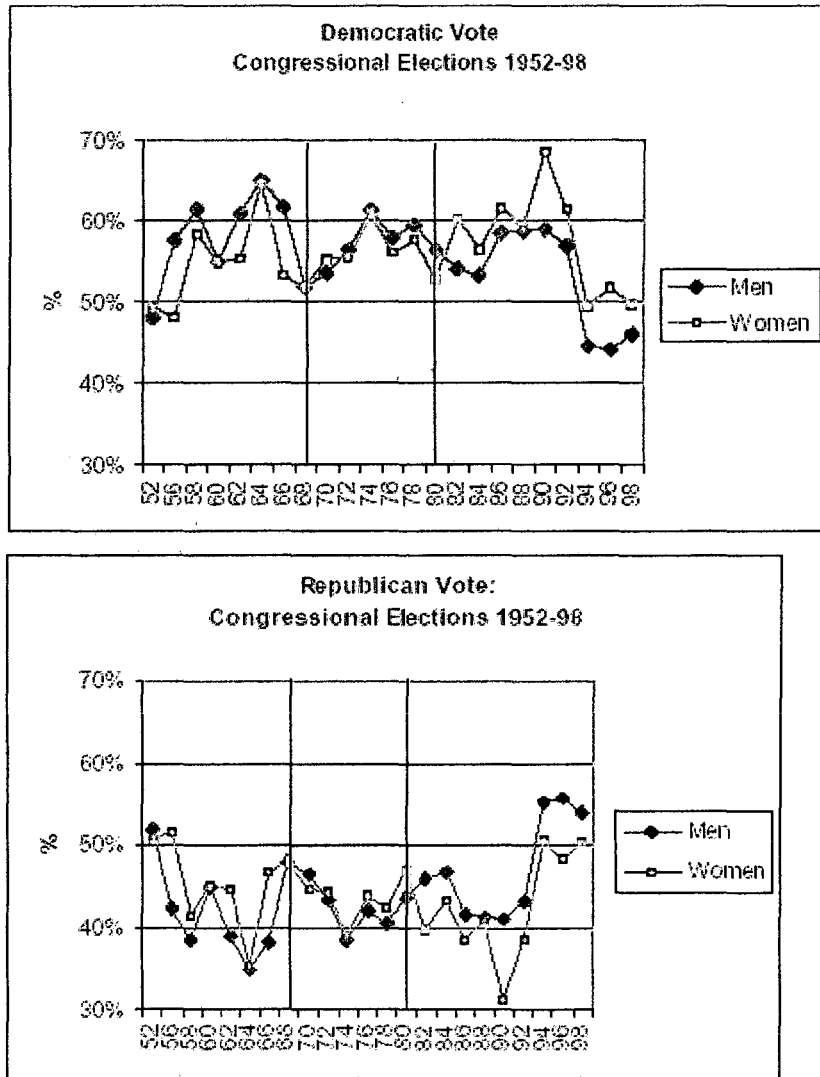
We see that in the 1992-2004 time frame, more women than men have been likely to identify with the Democratic Party. The gap in party identification has been steadily increasing over the period of time.

⁵⁵ CAWP, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Gender Gap: Party Identification and Presidential Performance Ratings" [Online: web] Accessed 2 May 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Elections/GGPrtyID.pdf>

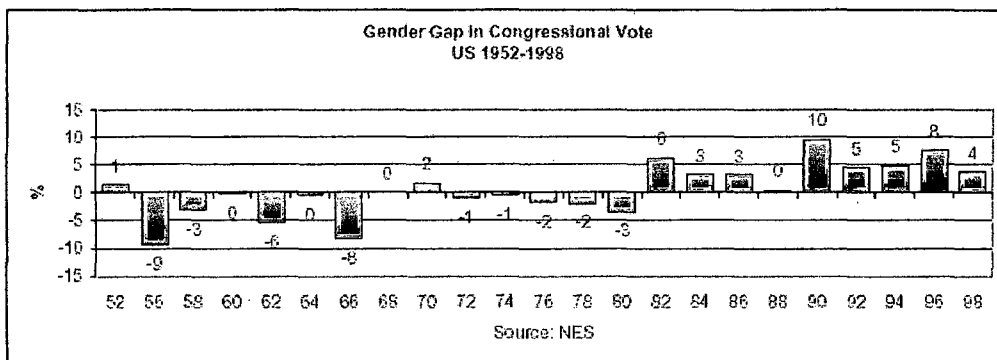
We see that in the 1992-2004 time frame, more women than men have been likely to identify with the Democratic Party. The gap in party identification has been steadily increasing over the period of time.

Congressional elections and the Gender Gap

Figure 3: Congressional Vote by Gender, 1952 -98



⁵⁵ CAWP, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Gender Gap: Party Identification and Presidential Performance Ratings" [Online: web] Accessed 2 May 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Elections/GGPrtyID.pdf>



Source: National Election Studies, 1952-98.

Beginning in 1982, women have generally been more likely than men to vote for a democratic congressional candidate. Even in the 2006 elections, women voters provided that critical margin of victory that was needed in three must-win races that ultimately led the democrats to regain control of the U.S. Senate.⁵⁶ A gender gap was also seen in the two-targeted races where democrats won which were previously held by a Republican. Finally, gender gap was also apparent in the voting of the U.S. House Candidates with 55 percent of women and 50 percent of men reporting in the national exit polls they voted for the Democratic candidate for the US house in their district

Conclusion

In this chapter, there have been analyses of the political participation of women in the form of voters, candidates and activists. Hence, an understanding of the three waves of feminism was delved with in order to understand the activism of various women for the purpose of their empowerment.

Furthermore, women as voters and candidates were also analysed. This was done by going through the Congressional and presidential elections and this led to clear understanding about the influence of women in politics. After a thorough analyses of women as voters and candidates, we come at certain important points:

Firstly, women as voters and women as candidates are two separate categories and should be analyzed separately

⁵⁶ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in the US Congress 2007", [Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong.pdf#page=2>

Secondly, women comprise of a majority of voters and are not a monolithic voting bloc so they are crucial in winning elections. Infact, the gender gap in the elections is a cumulative result of a set of overlapping concerns shown by the group of women with wide range of similar issue positions.

Thirdly, democrats as well women candidates should not take women votes for granted nor republicans or men candidates write them off

Although sex of the candidate did make a difference in the gender gap, there is no sure shot reliable way to determine if there was a difference because women move towards women candidates, or men move towards women candidates or a combination of both.

Finally, we also came to a conclusion that women running for office should analyze as well as target voters according to a number of factors like race, income level, religion, education, marital status, etc.

CHAPTER THREE :

Political Parties and Women's Rights

The past decade has witnessed a sea change in the roles of men and women in society. Lately, women have entered the labour force in large number and that has shaken the organization of the family, the workplace and the society at large. As a result, the traditional family structure has undergone change in a manner that more and more women are heading households than ever before. Women have translated the dramatic changes that have come about in the society in the wake of more women enlisting in the workforce into the demands for political rights. Both women advocating further change as well as women resisting any change have sought political rights. So, the gender issues have been brought forth on the national agenda by both the feminist organizations that seek gender equality as well as by the antifeminist organizations that seek the preservation of the traditional gender roles. Consequently the gender issues have triggered debates on diverse subjects in America, ranging from childcare to abortion. ¹

The debates about gender issues has further led to questions as to the response of political parties and how far these issues have been incorporated into the party system of America. The response of the political parties and the realignment of the electorate due to the gender issues are also central to the study of political parties and the women's rights in the United States.

Though it sounds commonplace as regards women's involvement in party politics, the mobilization of the contemporary women's movement in the 1960s and 1970s gave the political participation of women in the party politics a new context. And The Radical ideas about women's place in politics and society which traveled from the consciousness raising groups to the formal political arena gave women the power to call on political parties to accept them as equal participants and obliged the political parties to adopt new policies regarding women's equality, reproductive freedom and child care. ²

Some have called political parties 'the missing variable'³ in the research on women and politics, giving credence to the point that research on political parties and women's rights has been meager.

¹ Kira Sanbonmatsu, (2002), *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's' Place*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.1

² Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.1

³ Denise L. Baer, " Political Parties: The Missing Variable in Women and Politics Research", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No.3, (Sep., 1993), pp. 547-576

In order to understand how these issues developed and gained salience in American politics, it is important to have a historical overview of the women's rights issues in the US.

Feminist Philosophy and consciousness of Women's Rights

Women's rights as a concept has often been defined as a relationship of equality between men and women in the realm of social, political and economic stature. It further seeks to guarantee freedom from discrimination on the basis of their sex. Women were denied the legal as well as political rights enjoyed by men in most of the societies till the second half of the 20th century. Though over a period of time, women have gained significant levels of legal rights, it is still believed by many that women are denied complete political, economic and social equality with men

In order to understand the background of the struggle for women rights, its important to have an idea of the women's status in the civilizations surrounding it. The history of the Western civilization proves that deep-seated cultural beliefs have allowed only limited roles to women in society. It was believed that women's natural roles were just as mothers and wives and they were better suited for childbearing and homemaking rather than involvement in other realms like business and politics. Widespread belief in the intellectual inferiority of the women also led most of the societies to limiting women's education and focusing on their acquiring domestic skills.⁴ Well educated, upper class men rather than women controlled most of the powerful ranks as well as the positions of employment.

Until the nineteenth century, the denial of equal rights to women was met with only occasional protest and drew little attention from most people. Women, due to lack of education and economic resources which could have enabled them to challenge the existing state of social order, generally accepted the state of inferiority as the only option available to them. Therefore, women shared the disadvantages with the majority of working class men, as most of the social, political and economic rights were limited to the wealthy elite.

⁴Arleen Tuchman, "Once in a Republic Can It Be Proved That Science Has No Sex": Marie Elizabeth Zakrzewska (1829-1902) and the Multiple Meanings of Science in the Nineteenth-Century United States", *Journal of Women's History*, Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 1999, pp. 121-142

In the late 18th century, in an attempt to remedy these inequalities among men, political theorists and philosophers asserted that all men were created equal and therefore were entitled to equal treatment under the law. Thus, the concept of 'individual liberty' was being debated hotly in the end of the 18th century. Liberty is generally considered a concept of political philosophy and identifies the condition in which an individual has the ability to act according to his or her own will.⁵ Political philosophies rooted in individualism and socialism often conceive of liberty differently; individualist and liberal conceptions of liberty relate to the freedom of the individual from outside compulsion.

In the 18th Century onwards, there were many philosophers and activists whose views about liberty and rights of women helped in raising the consciousness and awareness among the female population which acted as an impetus in later years for the Women Rights Movement to gain momentum in various countries.

In 1789, during the French Revolution, Olympe de Gouges published a 'Declaration of the Rights of Woman'⁶ to protest the failure on part of the revolutionists to mention women in their 'Declaration of the Rights of Man'. In her 'Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Citizen' (1791), she challenged the practice of male authority and the notion of male-female inequality. Furthermore, In 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women' (1792) Mary Wollstonecraft called for enlightenment of the female mind. It is a political tract published to argue for the system for co-education for the children as well as for the extension of civil rights to English women. Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) is one of the earliest works of feminist literature or philosophy. In it, Wollstonecraft responded to the educational and political theorists of the eighteenth century who wanted to deny women the right to education. She argued that women ought to have an education which is equivalent to their position in society and then proceeded to redefine that position, claiming that women were essential to the nation because they educated its children and because they could be "companions" to their husbands, rather than mere wives. Instead of viewing women as ornaments to society or property to be traded in marriage, Wollstonecraft maintained that they are human beings deserving of the same fundamental rights as men.

⁵ "Liberty"[Online: web] Accessed on 7 May 2007, URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty>

⁶ "Women's History in America" Presented by Women's International Center, [Online: web] Accessed 7 May 2007 URL: <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>

Later on, Margaret Fuller, one of the earliest female reporters in America who use to write in the Herald Tribune wrote 'Woman in the Nineteenth Century in 1845 that examined women's place within the society. She argued that individuals had unlimited capacities and that defining of people's roles according to their sex severely limited human development. Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* [1845]⁷ is one of the first books in US to have looked at the whole sweep of world history from a woman's point of view. It was based on her article that she'd written for the Dial magazine [which she'd edited along with Emerson] called the "Great Lawsuit". This book is one of the basic works that formed and influenced the Women's Rights Movement in the US. The famous US women's rights meeting held in Seneca Falls, N.Y. came just a few years after this book. Fuller's view of women throughout the ages also provides an historical perspective to the political and philosophical views of Mary Wollstonecraft's: *The Vindication of the Rights of Women* [1792]. The work is also interesting because of its international and cross-cultural perspective. In 'Woman in the Nineteenth Century', Fuller urged young women to seek greater independence from the home and family and to obtain such independence through education. She spurned the notion that women should be satisfied with domesticity, suggesting instead that women should go ahead to fulfill their personal potential by doing whatever work appeals to them. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* further advocates the reform of property laws unfair to women—a controversial and unpopular idea in many quarters. The book's unprecedented and frank discussions of marriage and relations between men and women also scandalized many.

Another leading theoretician of the women's rights movement was Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Her 'Woman's Bible', published in parts in 1895 and 1898, attacked what she called the male bias of the Bible. Contrary to most of her religious female colleagues, she believed further that organized religion would have to be abolished before true emancipation of women could be achieved. This establishes the concept of female emancipation requiring conditioning and de-conditioning of the female mind against the bias existing for years. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and a committee of other women published 'The Woman's Bible'. Prior to its publication, the Church of England published its Revised Version of the Bible, the first major revision in English

⁷ Margaret Fuller." Encyclopedia Britannica. 2007[Online: web], Accessed 18 May 2007,URL: <http://concise.britannica.com/ebc/article-9035633/Margaret-Fuller>

since the Authorized Version of 1611, better known as the King James Bible in 1888. Dissatisfied with the translation and with the failure of the committee to consult with or include Biblical scholar Julia Smith, the "reviewing committee" published their comments on the Bible. Their intent was to highlight the small part of the Bible that focused on women, as well as to correct Biblical interpretation that they believed was biased unfairly against women. The Woman's Bible is one of the first attempts by women to evaluate the Judeo-Christian legacy and its impact on women through history. Stanton concluded that 'the Bible in its teachings degrades Women from Genesis to Revelation'.⁸ While many of her views are still controversial, time and advances in women's rights have lessened the shock value of the book, but there are several contributions that discuss the gender of the 'Elohim' and the female aspects of the Kabbalah. Book-by-book examination of the Bible by pioneer in women's rights movement places events in their historical context, interprets passages as both allegory and fact, and compares them with myths of other cultures. In the tradition of radical individualism, Stanton's attack on religious orthodoxy represents a political treatise rather than a scholarly work. The Woman's Bible is a collection of essays and commentaries on the Bible compiled in 1895 by a committee chaired by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), one of the organizers of the Seneca Falls Convention (the first Woman's Rights Convention held in 1848) and a founder of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Stanton's purpose was to initiate a critical study of biblical texts that are used to degrade and subject women in order to demonstrate that it is not divine will but human desire for domination that humiliates women.

Another leading female philosopher of the time, Charlotte Perkins Gilman characterized home to be inefficient when compared with the mass-production techniques of the modern factory. She contended, in books like 'Women and Economics' (1898), that women should share the tasks of homemaking, with the women best suited to cook, to clean, and to care for young children doing each respective task. Perkins published 'Women and Economics' in order to advocate equal work for women. In the book she criticized men for desiring weak and feeble wives and urged the economic independence of women. In the book she makes clear that until women learn to be economically independent, true autonomy and equality could not be found. It is Gilman's best-known theoretical treatise in which she

⁸ Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, "The Woman's Bible", [Online: web] Accessed 19 May 2007, URL: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/index.htm>

attacked the old division of social roles. According to Gilman, male aggressiveness and maternal roles of women are artificial and not necessary for survival any more. "There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. As well speaks of a female liver."⁹ According to her, only economic independence could bring true freedom for women and make them equal partners to their husbands.

Thus what emerged out of such issues and ideas was legitimacy to a framework required for the women's rights movement. Politically many feminists also believed that a cooperative society based on socialist economic principles would respect the rights of women. The Socialist Labor party, in 1892, was infact one of the first national political parties in the United States to include woman suffrage as a plank in its platform.

The early 20th century saw the term 'new woman' being used in the popular press. More young women than ever were going to school, working both in blue- and white-collar jobs, and living by themselves in city apartments. Some social critics even feared feminism to be triumphing and hence interpreted it as a symbolic indication of the end of the home and family. Actually, the customary habits of American women were changing little, as most young women still married and became the traditional housewives and mothers.¹⁰

Women's rights movement: An overview

The efforts on the part of women to gain political, economic as well as social equality in America are as old as the United States itself. The appeal on the part of Abigail Adams in March 1776 to her husband and his fellow lawmakers to "remember the ladies" in their new legal code was just a beginning of the women's rights movement. But this rebellion as predicted by her did not begin actually for half a century.

In 1848, the women's right convention was held at the Seneca Falls, New York. It was at this convention that saw the presence of many women who later on went about becoming the leaders of the first women's movement and included the likes of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. These women are best known for

⁹ "Charlotte (Anna) Perkins Gilman"[Online: web], Accessed 19 May 2007 URL: <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/gilman.htm>

¹⁰ Footnote no. 6

the Suffrage movement; however at the Seneca Falls convention their goals were much broader.

At the Seneca Falls Convention, a Declaration of Sentiments was modeled after the U.S. Declaration of Independence by the attendees.¹¹ There were also a series of resolutions for the abolition of legal, economic, and social discrimination against women that were passed at the same meeting. Later on another meeting was held which drafted a revolutionary set of resolutions. Thus the overall agenda of the rights of women was set forth in these conventions which has been expanded over the years. Yet, women still continue working towards many of the goals put forth at Seneca Falls.

However, the pursuit of women's rights has been intermittent since 1848 and marked by periods of high activity or years of little visibility. In essence, women's movement can be divided into three definitive phases when high points of activity was visible¹²:

- The Reform Movement (1848-1875)
- The Suffrage Movement (1890-1925)
- The women's rights movement (1966-present)

The Reform Movements (1848-1875)

Much of the early nineteenth century was marked with discussions about women's role in society. Yet, no organized activity on the part of women for their rights was seen. It was only in 1840 with the outgrowth of religious revivalism, that we see the encouragement given to both men and women to work for those less fortunate than them. Thus, the temperance and abolition movements attracted a large number of supporters. Though initially, women were assigned minor roles but eventually they took an active and vocal role in the liberal branch of the antislavery movement headed by William Lloyd Garrison. He theorized the rights of blacks and women to vote from the position that all men and women are created equal and hence possessed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. In this way,

¹¹ Quoted in Eleanor Flexner, (1974), *Century of Struggle*, New York: Atheneum, p. 76

¹² Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 2-19

Women in the United States during the 19th century organized and participated in a great variety of reform movements to improve education, to initiate prison reform, to ban alcoholic drinks, and, during the pre-Civil War period, to free the slaves.

At a time when it was not considered respectable for women to speak in front of mixed audiences of men and women, the abolitionist sisters Sarah and Ann Grimke of South Carolina boldly spoke out against slavery at public meetings. They were supported by male abolitionists including William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Frederick Douglass supported the right of women to speak and participate equally with men in anti-slavery activities. Thus the abolitionist movement captured the energy and imagination of women who saw the injustice and inequality meted out to the treatment of slaves.¹³

Some women saw parallels between the position of women and that of slaves. In their view, both were expected to be passive, cooperative, and obedient to their master-husbands. Women such as Stanton, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Sojourner Truth were feminists and abolitionists, believing in the rights of women and the rights of blacks. Participation in the antislavery movement also helped women to recognize that they as a class were also subject to discrimination. More specifically, when in 1840, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Stanton accompanied their husbands to the meeting of the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London and they were denied the right to participate in the meeting, the realization about women's position in society came starkly on their face. They realized their positions were no better than the slaves for whose freedom they were fighting and this led them to convene the Seneca Falls Convention believing that it was right to press for additional rights. It was the friendship among women in the abolitionist cause that produced a set of linkages and led to a communication for the women's movement.

The first women's rights convention took place in Seneca Falls, N.Y. in 1848. The declaration that emerged was modeled after the Declaration of Independence. Written by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and it claimed, "all women are created equal" and that "the history of mankind is a history of

¹³ Claudine L. Ferrell, (2006), *The Abolitionist Movement*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p 170

injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman."¹⁴ Following the long list of grievances were resolutions for equitable laws, equal educational and job opportunities, and the right to vote.

With the Union victory in the Civil War, women abolitionists hoped their hard work would result in suffrage for women as well as for blacks. But the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, adopted in 1868 and 1870 respectively, granted citizenship and suffrage to blacks but not to women.

In 1869, when the disagreement over the endorsement of the fifteenth amendment occurred, two rival organizations, National Women Suffrage Association (NWSA) and America Women Suffrage Association (AWSA) were founded. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) in New York and Lucy Stone organized the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) in Boston. The NWSA agitated for a woman-suffrage amendment to the Federal Constitution, while the AWSA worked for suffrage amendments to each state constitution. Henceforth, women groups lobbied for a series of reforms advocated at Seneca Falls. .

Thus women's work for their additional rights, including suffrage, was grounded in their belief that " the gender hierarchy of male dominance and female submission was not natural but arbitrary."¹⁵

The Suffrage Movement (1890-1925)

The year 1890 saw the merger of NWSA and AWSA after years of limited activity into the National American Women Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Lucy Stone became chairman of the executive committee and Elizabeth Cady Stanton served as the first president. Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Dr. Anna Howard Shaw served as presidents later.

Though the suffrage movement was dated to 1890, there were many other social trends that also helped in fostering this second push for equality. The temperance movements as well as progressive movements were also very

¹⁴ "Women's History in America" Presented by Women's International Center, [Online: web] Accessed 7 May 2007 URL: <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>

¹⁵ Nancy F. Cott, (1987), *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, p.18

instrumental in the development of the suffrage movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In 1872 the Prohibition Party became the first national political party to recognize the right of suffrage for women in its platform. Frances Willard helped found the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1874. Though its primary focus was abolition of liquor but it started promoting women suffrage as early as 1879. The progressive era in the north and the west led to the birth of the settlement house movements, the national consumer league (NCL) and the women's trade union league (WTUL). Eventually, many women active in these organizations came to see the ballot as a prerequisite for their success as they felt vote would help them to reform society. The presence of these organizations helped in spreading the idea of women's rights as well as provided training for suffrage leaders.

During the mid-1800s Dorothea Dix was a leader in the movements for prison reform and for providing mental-hospital care for the needy. The settlement-house movement was inspired by Jane Addams, who founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889, and by Lillian Wald, who founded the Henry Street Settlement House in New York City in 1895. Both women helped immigrants adjust to city life.

Women were also active in movements for agrarian and labor reforms and for birth control. Mary Elizabeth Lease, a leading Populist spokeswoman in the 1880s and 1890s in Kansas, immortalized the cry, "What the farmers need to do is raise less corn and more hell." Margaret Robins led the National Women's Trade Union League in the early 1900s. In the 1910s Margaret Sanger crusaded to have birth-control information available for all women.

But just these progressive and temperance movements alone would have been insufficient for a effective women's movement to emerge without the presence of women's club which showed an immense growth in 1880's and 1890's. It was the involvement of women in these clubs for social causes that made them realize their own inferior political position. Thus, in 1914, even the General Federation of women's Clubs (GFWC) also supported the suffrage movement. Thereafter, many other organizations came together and the result was a powerful movement that came along to form what Carrie Chapman Catt called a Winning Plan for thousands of women to lobby for the vote.

Though, the struggle to win the vote was slow and frustrating. Wyoming Territory in 1869, Utah Territory in 1870, and the states of Colorado in 1893 and

Idaho in 1896 granted women the vote but the Eastern states resisted. A woman-suffrage amendment to the Federal Constitution, presented to every Congress since 1878, repeatedly failed to pass.

By 1920, the alliance of all these organizations were able to get the Nineteenth Amendment passed which gave the women the right to vote. But this coalition soon disintegrated after suffrage, as its diverse groups couldn't agree on a post suffrage agenda.

The Women's Rights Movement (1966-present)

The demise of the suffrage movement was marked by the presence of little organized activity on the part of women until the 1960's. This movement had two different branches that reflected their difference in the form of different origins, leadership and goals. The first branch often called the *younger* branch of the movement was far more radical than the other branch, the *older* branch. Older branch of the women rights movement was originally founded by the National Organization for Women (NOW) and it was symbolized by its traditional, rights-oriented strategies and demands.¹⁶ As of now, many of the goals of the younger branch have been incorporated into the older branch or become small special interest movements too or have been subsumed into the broader women's rights movement.

The Younger Branch

Initially most women from the younger branch were also involved in other protest movements. Hence being in these movements made them realize that men in these organization will never value their worth. Also around the same time, many of the organizations entered the "Black Power" phase driving most white activists into other movements. There too women continued to experience Sexism. At one of the meeting of the Students Democratic Society (SDS) when the women's rights plank was introduced, its sponsors were pelted out with tomatoes and thrown out of the

¹⁶Various authors use different terms to describe not only the overarching movement that we call the women right's movement but also the initial strains of the movement.

convention.¹⁷ Similar experience was pelted out to them even in the National Conference for a New Politics. This led to many women forming radical women's groups in US and began holding meetings in US too. The existing infrastructure and communication network of the student movement helped in spreading ideas of women liberation. Also, the development of conscious raising groups helped in spreading the notion that the problems they experienced were not the result of individual failures but infact had roots in dominant culture and hence were common to all women.¹⁸

Since the early to the mid 1970's these groups have helped in establishing feminist women's health centers, rape crisis centers, shelters for battered women and even feminist women's bookstores.¹⁹ They have also worked with traditional groups within the system and after periods of quietness many groups reemerged to play key roles in pro-choice arena. Infact in January 2001 some of the pro-choice groups and civil rights organizations even held a joint press conference to oppose president Bush's nomination of John Ashcroft for Attorney General of United States.

The Older Branch

Since the 1890's many national organizations consisted mostly of women but after 1920 only a few organizations were politically active for the women's rights. Still, some groups remained which had been pursuing the struggle for the improvement of women's status in the legislative arena like the national league of women's voters (LWV), the national federation of business and professional women's clubs (BPW) and the national council of Negro women (NCNW). It was these groups that provided the potential leadership base for a social movement.

The motivation for these groups came about through several events that occurred in the course of time like the civil rights movement, the awareness of rights following the movement and the publication of Friedman's *The Feminine*

¹⁷ Quoted in Judith Hole and Ellen Levine, (1971), *Rebirth of Feminism*, New York: Quadrangle Books, p.112

¹⁸ Nancy E McGlen, ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, pp. 11-12

¹⁹ Myra Bevacqua, (1997) "Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminist Consciousness and the Politics of Sexual Assault (Ph.D. Diss., Emory University), quoted in Nancy E McGlen, ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 12

Mystique in 1963 and all this helped in the dissemination of the idea of group oppression to women across United States. The John F. Kennedy's Commission's report on the status of women, *American Woman* also served as an important event in that era.

The final event that mobilized the women's movement was the equal employment opportunity commission (EEOC)'s failure to implement the provisions laid down in the 1964 civil rights Act that prohibited sex discrimination in employment. Also the third national conference of commissions on the status of women in 1966 made the attendees realize that conference bylaws prohibited them from passing a resolution. Thus several women present at the conference decided to form an independent pressure group- the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Unlike the members of the younger branch, these women were much trained as leaders yet lacked organizers among them. Thus, the initial growth of NOW was quite slow. Also, further women rights' organizations were formed thereafter due to disagreements with NOW over tactics. Thus in essence very little ground was broken in terms of going beyond forming organizations until 1970.

Infact, the movement would have failed had it not for the widespread free publicity it got in 1970 when national media began focusing on the women's rights movement with the national television networks devoting time and space to women's issues.²⁰

Furthermore, NOW's push for the Equal rights amendment (ERA) as well as the support it got from other women's groups, provided the much needed cohesion and brought focus to the new movement. NOW's push for the ERA was a result of the belief that this amendment will provide the much needed guarantee for equality. Thus the final passage of ERA in both the Houses of the Congress in 1972 provided the much-needed hype to the activists who then started focusing on ERA's ratification in the states.

However, the media hype that aided the development of the older branch also led to the development of a counter-movement. The passage of ERA and the legalization of abortion in 1973 were seen as an ominous change by this movement.

²⁰ See the History of NOW at <http://www.now.org/history/history.html> and Toni Carabillo's, *The Feminist Chronicles 1953-1993* at <http://www.feminist.org/research/chronicles/chronicl.html> Accessed 20 May 2007

²¹Thus there was countermovement created by conservative leaders like Republic Phyllis Schlafly to stop ERA.

Socially conservative women who formed the anti-feminist movement mobilized together to oppose the changes in the traditional gender roles, the ERA, and abortion. Opposing the ERA was the formative experience of this New Christian Right-the movement of Conservative Christians into politics. They further even activated a base constituency for an emerging pro-family movement.

On one hand, the feminists saw the policies of family leave and child care as issues of gender equality; antifeminists viewed these policies as disruption to traditional family.

In addition to ERA and changes in traditional gender role, abortion has been an central mobilizing issue for both feminists and antifeminist activists. The Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision overturned all state laws on abortion, legalizing abortion in the first trimester. Roe v. Wade reshaped national politics, dividing much of the nation into pro-Roe (mostly pro-choice) and anti-Roe (mostly pro-life) camps, and inspiring grassroots activism on both sides. . Pro-choice describes the political and ethical view that a woman should have complete control over her fertility and pregnancy. This entails the guarantee of *reproductive rights*, which includes access to sexual education; access to safe and legal abortion, contraception, and fertility treatments; and legal protection from forced abortion. Individuals and organizations who support these positions make up the pro-choice movement. Pro-life individuals generally believe that human life should be valued either from fertilisation or implantation until natural death. The contemporary pro-life movement is typically, but not exclusively, associated with Christian morality (especially in the United States), and has influenced certain strains of bioethical utilitarianism. From that viewpoint, any action which destroys an embryo or fetus kills a human being. Any deliberate destruction of human life is considered ethically or morally wrong. Some pro-life supporters argue that life begins upon conception, and thus the unborn should be

²¹ Roe v. Wade (1973) was a United States Supreme Court case that resulted in a landmark decision about abortion. According to the Roe decision, most laws against abortion violated a constitutional right to privacy under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The decision overturned all state and federal laws outlawing or restricting abortion. The central holding of Roe v. Wade was that abortions are permissible for any reason a woman chooses, up until the "point at which the fetus becomes 'viable,' that is, potentially able to live outside the mother's womb, albeit with artificial aid. Viability is usually placed at about seven months (28 weeks) but may occur earlier, even at 24 weeks." For further analyses see Karen O' Connor,(1996), *No Neutral Ground :Abortion Politics in an Age of Absolutes*, Boulder, Colo. : Westview Press,pp. 17-70

entitled to legal protection. Other pro-life supporters argue that, in the absence of definite knowledge of when life begins, it is best not to risk killing an innocent victim by allowing abortion.

These two rival movements have since continued to go head to head mostly over reproductive freedom rights. The current women's movement have appeared to be in a situation of disarray prior to 1989 due to the lack of a single unifying factor of an equal rights amendment.

In the 1990's, on Judge Clarence Thomas accused by Law professor Anita Hill of Sexual harassment also provided a stimulus for the liberal women rights supporters provided the much needed impetus bringing a large number of women to Congress in 1992 and making the year to be termed as the year of the women by many. Yet, 1994 saw the Republicans taking over the Congress which was perceived as a setback to the earlier momentum gained in Congressional elections. Although Bill-Clinton was reelected as President in 1996, women's gains still perceived to be under attack. According to this view, while many advances towards the goals set in Seneca Falls have been reached, many are still unmet.²²

As is evident from the above discussion, the movement for the establishment of Rights of women combined goals in the political, social and economic field as the leaders perceived the inter linkages between them. They realized that progress in one without the other would not lead to the realization of the important goal of liberty equality and justice. Indeed, the continuing struggle in contemporary times over equal pay, electing women to executive positions and on abortion rights bear testimony to the relevance of gender in understanding American Politics and society.

The Long struggle and subsequent developments in the history of women's movement Rights has been decisively impacted by the role of Political parties in the US. As women increasingly mounted Political public campaigns on various issues, the parties had to recognize these challenges and evolve strategies to support or oppose them. In particular, the right to vote became, for many feminists, a litmus test on the progress made by parties. While issues such as abortion are divisive, the ideological impact made by the movement on the parties was considerable. Any attempt to understand the trajectory of the movement thus needs to contextualize it in the developments that took place in the political parties as well.

²² Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 19

Women's Rights and the American Political parties

Historical Analysis

Women won the right to vote in 1920 that marked the culmination of a 70-year-old struggle for suffrage through several state as well as national level campaigns. This suffrage movement is often referred to as the first wave of the women's movement. At the time of the suffrage, the Republican National Committee endorsed women's suffrage, whereas the southern wing of the Democratic Party staunchly opposed it.²³ The attainment of the suffrage goal led to an impressive degree of responsiveness on the part of both the parties and they made efforts in order to mobilize women voters. To solidify the support of women's voters, the Republicans also went ahead in establishing a women's division of the RNC in 1919 and then in 1924 adopted the rule that RNC be composed of one committeeman and one committeewoman from each state and territory. The Democrats had also taken similar steps and established the women division of DNC in 1916. Furthermore, the 1920 National Convention even passed the resolution about mandating election of congresswomen from every state through same method as that of national committeewomen from the state.²⁴ Though, the fifty-fifty rules that aimed at equal representation for men and women in party committees were disseminated throughout the national and state levels of both parties it was very weakly enforced. Women's representation as delegates in the party conventions increased yet they remained a small minority and actual power to women was quite minimal. So in reality, loyalty to the party was the prerequisite for party services and not women's interests.²⁵ Later, the 1920 and 1924 elections showed that women groups lost their influence in politics when the most convincing reason for elite responsiveness on their part failed to occur i.e. a cohesive women's voting bloc failed to materialize. Though the DNC retained the fifty/fifty representational structure put forth in 1920 but it went no further as it was weakly enforced at the state level only. The Republican Party formally mandated

²³Kira Sanbonmatsu ,(2002), *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's Place* (Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p. 22

²⁴ National Women Political Caucus, (1980) *Democratic Women are Wonderful: A History of Women at Democratic National Conventions*. Washington D.C.: NWPC, p. 3

²⁵ See Anna L. Harvey (1998). *Votes without Leverage: Women in American Electoral Politics, 1920-1970*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp.104-237

that women and men be equally represented on their party's national and executive committees in the year 1940. Democrats did not require such a representation of women on their committees until the McGovern-Fraser Commission Reforms in 1972. So, in a way Republicans recognized as well as encouraged women's activism within the Republican Party.

Later on in 1932, the New Deal Administration helped in drawing women to Democrats as voters and administrators. This was done by Democrat's espousal of the activist government and identification with disadvantaged groups during the New Deal era as well as by the role women played in New Deal Administration as well as building Democratic Party into a new organization. Furthermore, even the women division of DNC was strengthened in this era. These factors prompted the formation of the National Federation Of Republican Women (NFRW) too.

However, after the Second World War traditional gender roles were much more strictly enforced and women were required to conform to societal norms. By 1953 the women's division of DNC was dissolved in the name of integrating women in the party. Yet it did not mean that the women were not involved in party activities in the postwar era. Infact, women unemployed outside home played a substantial role in running the day-to-day affairs of the local party organizations. As a result, Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the addition of 'sex' to Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 were substantive gains for women. However, the large issues of women's rights was largely absent from the national agenda

In the 1970's, with the revitalization of the women's movement as well as the politicization of the women electorate the situation changed. The attention of the women's movements turned to partisan politics in the years leading to party conventions in 1972. The newly formed National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) turned its attention to women's representation in the national conventions. Though its efforts did not affect the issue of women's representation in the Republican Party Convention, its effect on Democratic Party resolution was profound.²⁶

The parties have fundamentally been transformed over the issue of women's rights by the reforms that began in late 1960's. The most significant change was the change in primaries. But another change in the presidential selection process was

²⁶ Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.88

brought about by the increase in representation of women at both the parties' conventions.

The McGovern-Fraser Commission appointed after the 1968 Democratic Party Convention recommended a system of state quotas for ensuring women, African American and youth to be properly represented in proportion of their electorate²⁷. The NWPC was most instrumental in ensuring that these rules were interpreted as mandated. Hence, these efforts led the party rules committee in adopting and interpreting the reasonable representation rule that guaranteed women close to 50 percent representation at the 1972 convention.²⁸ The most immediate and direct result of these organizational guarantees was an increase in number of women in the DNC, from only 13 percent in the 1968 to about 40 percent in the 1972 convention. But, NWPC was more influential in the Democratic Party than in the Republican Party due to the fact there were more democratic party member as the Democratic Party was more responsive to their demands. Later on, the Mikulski Commission omitted these mandatory quotas for women but it was again reinstated in DNC in the year 1980. While these Democratic Party reforms appear largely symbolic to some, when it comes to women representation, yet they are deemed significant when it comes to alienating some Democratic Party regulars, in the view of others.

Efforts for the Reforms also took place in the Republican Party. The Republican Party wanted to broaden its base as well as gain some publicity. However, it was not ready to make substantive as well as structural changes. As such, while the Republican Delegates and Organizations (DO) Committee made its recommendations to the states, there was very little in mandating equal representation for women in its conventions.²⁹ But later in 1972, a small group of Republican women with affiliation to NWPC were able to get the Rule 32 approved which established that state parties should endeavor to have equal representation for men and women in their delegations to future conventions.

²⁷ William Crotty (1983), *Party Reform*, New York: Longman quoted in Kira Sanbonmatsu ,(2002), *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's' Place* ,Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p. 42

²⁸ Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.89

²⁹Jo Freeman (1987), "Whom You Know versus Whom You Represent: Feminist Influence in the Democratic and Republican Parties" In Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Carol McClurg Mueller (eds.)*The Women's Movements of the United States and Western Europe: Consciousness, Political opportunity, and Public Policy*, ed. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 215-44

Hence the number of women attending conventions increased in both the conventions in 1972 and ever since there has been a greater percentage of women at the Democratic Conventions than the Republican conventions which is consistent with Democratic party rules.

The adoption of formal party positions over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been the main cause of polarization of American parties. Women's groups have been divided within themselves after the suffrage particularly with regard to the ERA, which was first proposed by the National women's Party (NWP) in 1923. While groups like the NWP and BPW supported the ERA, other groups like the Women's bureau and the League of women's voters opposed it as they felt that ERA threatened the protective labour legislations for Women.³⁰

Throughout the century, the Republican Party championed the ERA before the Democratic Party did. It was also more supportive of the role of women in politics, yet neither party took gender equality seriously. Since the ERA threatened to overturn the protective labor legislations for women, many Republican Southerners and business groups supported it and Democratic Party opposed it. However the division over ERA was more about occupation than party as labor unions opposed it and the professional women supported it. Though the ERA passed in the Senate in 1953 with greater support from Republicans than from Democrats, it was blocked from floor consideration in the House by Democratic Judiciary Committee chair and ERA for consideration by Emanuel Celler. However the 1970s saw both parties as active participants in an alliance organized to seek the passage of ERA. This was achieved by a bipartisan voting coalition in 1972 but this became a partisan debate as the battle for ratification dragged on through the states for the decade. Towards the end of the 70s, the parties became further polarized over the issue of ERA and women's rights.

The polarization in the US party system around feminism can be traced to 1980 election campaign. At the 1980 convention, the Republican Party removed the ERA from its platform and adopted strong pro-life rhetoric, pronouncing an anti-feminist stance, whereas the Democratic Party strengthened its support for it and entered into close alliance with the feminist groups in advance of the 1984 election. . The parties' positions on other issues such as abortion too widely diverged so much so that by the early 80's both the parties completely diverged on the issue of women's

³⁰ Ethel Klein (1985), "*The Gender Gap : Different Issues, Different Answers.*" *The Brookings Review*, Vol. 3(winter), pp. 33-37

rights. Since the 1980's the lines between the parties have been drawn clearly. While the Democratic Party stands as the party of women's rights aligned with female organizations, the Republican Party takes a position, distancing itself from feminism and taking sides with those who prefer more traditional roles and responsibilities for women.

The year 1980 was also marked by the reinforcement by the election results of a 'gender gap'³¹ in the political preferences. The reported difference in the estimated percentage of number of men and women voting for Ronald Reagan varied between four and nine percent in 1980. This was not the first time when a gender gap appeared; women had been consistently supporting Republicans in the 1950's but this changed with them favoring the democrats following the pro-democratic gap in 1964.³² However, the leadership of NOW jumped on this statistics as evidence of emergence of a feminist-voting bloc suggesting dissatisfaction with Reagan's policies *vis-à-vis* women's rights. The term "Gender Gap" was also coined by NOW for the first time in a document containing polling data created for the presentation to delegates in the DNC general meeting in September 1981.

The Gender Gap strategy was possible because of the emergence of a widening gap in the party identification as well as voting patterns of US men and women. Since 1972, American women have been pro-democratic and men pro-Republican. However, another important element with regards to Gender Gap emerging today is the political divide between college-educated men and women, which has been growing for a decade. And the trend has become more important as the number of women getting undergraduate and postgraduate degrees has surged.

So, the stereotypes of the two political parties - Democrats as the party of the working class and Republicans as the party of those with money in the bank are no longer fit. Each party has become a more complicated coalition in which social issues and "values" are as much a unifying force as traditional bread-and-butter concerns.

However, Gender gap is not merely about party identification, as gender differences were found in voting behaviour in presidential and congressional elections

³¹ While definitions differ, the gender gap generally refer to gender differences in support for winning candidate (usually for the presidency, but also other offices), although it has also been used to refer to gender differences in public opinion and partisanship, among others

³² Carole Kennedy Chaney, R. Michael Alvarez and Jonathan Nagler, "Explaining the Gender Gap in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1980-1992", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 2, (1998) Pp.311-339

as well. Leaders of the feminist movement became aware of this gender gap and used it in their dealings with the Democratic Party. Gender Gap in party identification is formed either by aggregate shifts among men, women or combination of both. So the gender gap that emerged in 1980 can be interpreted not so much of a Republican “women problem” as a Democrats “man problem”. Also the perceptions regarding gender gap to constitute a potential resource for electoral resource led to DNC’s decision to pursue a gender gap strategy in 1984.³³

With the start of the 1984 primary season, NOW made it clear that nomination of a woman vice-president was its top priority. Women movement organizations had gained considerable influence in the presidential wing of the party and were ready to use its clout. During the primaries, the women’s movement leaders and women in the party started pressing the candidates for the presidential nominations to select women as their running mate. Within party circles prominent activists started publicizing the strength of the women vote and idea of a women on the ticket. Thus all this pressure led Walter Mondale to select Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate. The widely held belief that Ferraro’s nomination will yield electoral benefits for the party, met with hardly any resistance in the party circles. It was also evident that more women widely believed that a woman vice president would improve party’s electoral fortunes. The calculation was that it would translate into votes for the party.

The democratic gender gap strategy did not yield the anticipated electoral benefits as expected. Mondale and Ferraro lost to Reagan by an 18 percent margin, the party ‘s worst showing in a presidential election in 1972. Beyond the Ferraro vice-presidential nomination, women also played a visible role at the party conventions and this made almost half the delegates at the 1984 D.N.C to be compromised of women.

Moreover the use of the gender gap strategy also made Republicans to promote women. But, the Feminist Republicans were shut of the 1984 convention entirely.

So, in essence 1984 emerged as a year highly polarized around feminism. The Republicans were clearly allied with anti-feminist forces and the Democrats with organized feminism. Although this polarization continued after 1984, both the parties moderated their stance in the subsequent years.

³³ Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, pp. 100-105

Women Rights in the political parties in the Present Era (1992-2007)

The debates over the women's rights like the ERA and abortion continued to be a salient and polarization feature among the parties in the 80's and the 90's. The Republican Party has been pro-life since the 80's and this controversy heated up more within the party circles leading to five state Republican parties adopting a pro-choice plank in the 1992 National Republican Convention.

Furthermore, the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill hearings drew attention to the severe under representation of women in the country provoking many women to seek election to elective offices in 1992. Thereafter, all the feminist organizations shifted their efforts and resources towards this goal. Most successful among these organizations were EMILY 's list that supported pro-choice, democratic candidates with campaign, training and other means. This led to the formation of the WISH list by the pro-life Republicans in 1992. So, in 1992, both the parties devoted their resources to the recruitment and election of women.

Family debates were at the forefront and center of American politics in 1992. So the party divergence in women rights in 1992 was sharp, public and omnipresent. Further, the women caucus held the meetings and everyone present there proclaimed support for pro-life stance. Yet, six pro-life Republican women appeared before the convention to endorse Clinton. Clinton himself mentioned abortion four times in his acceptance speech and touched on topics like women's health, child support enforcement, women's role in and outside the house and childcare.

Thus Bill Clinton 's espousing of the women agenda helped him in ensuring the women's votes. This led to his election to the presidency in 1992 after twelve years of Republican rule in the White House. The Democratic Party had fully embraced the stances of women's movement.

The Clinton Era (1992-2000)

With the election of the Democratic Bill Clinton to the white house in 1992- the so called year of the women in US politics- there was much optimism in the air arousing hopes for the dawn of a new era of political responsiveness to organized feminism. Though, Clinton's campaign organization avoided strong programmatic commitment to women's rights, yet Clinton himself was an occasional ally of

organized feminism. With the election of a sodified Republican Congress in 1994, the Clinton White house distanced itself further from women's movement and infuriated the feminist by signing the Welfare Reform Bill. Clinton's record in office disappointed the feminist. Though he did veto GOP legislation banning late-term abortion, and passed legislation establishing family leave and addressing violence against women as well as appointed women to high posts, still, his compromise "don't ask, don't tell" policy on lesbians and gays in the military, his failure to reform health care, his compromises on access to abortion for federal employees and women in military as well as his decision not to veto the GOP's far-reaching welfare reform bill lost Clinton a great deal of support among the feminist.³⁴ The presence of strong Christian rights within the Republicans however, left the feminists with no choice but to ally with Clinton even in 1996 elections. Hence the period of polarization continued in American politics during the 1990's.

Impact of Feminism on the Democratic Party

The ties between the organized feminism and Presidential wing weakened in the 1990's and women groups within the party were unable to assume leadership positions. Despite the fact that several ad hoc women organizations sprang up in part during the 1990's none were able to take the leadership role on feminist's issues. For instance, The National Women's Democratic Network (NWDN) grew out of the Campaign Organization Women for Clinton/Gore. Another addition was the DNC's Women Leadership Forum. The emergence of all these ad hoc organizations demonstrated the on-going female consciousness in Democratic women.

Another domain where there were great advances in women's rights was the area of representation. The most important were the gains in the number of democratic women elected to Congress in 1992. This was a result of coincidence of several factors which led to the election of an unprecedented number of women, who made up 14 percent of the Democratic Caucus in the house of representative and 25 percent of the senators in 1992.

Also, following the election of 1992, women were able to break the glass ceiling of leadership. Twenty-three women in congressional history were elected by

³⁴ Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.51

their peers to the Democratic and Republican Party leadership—17 in the House and six in the Senate.³⁵ The first was Connecticut Representative Chase Going Woodhouse, who served a single term as Secretary of the Democratic Caucus in the 81st Congress (1949–1951). Until 1994, no Democratic women ever held a leadership position. Barbara Mikulski alone was elected congress secretary in the Senate in 1994. Barbara Kennelly was elected caucus vice-chair. California Representative Nancy Pelosi was the highest-ranking woman in congressional history—having served as House Democratic Whip and House Democratic Leader, prior to being elected Speaker of the House in 2007.

Despite all these gains, the democratic women were less successful when it came to policy responsiveness. As evidenced in the 1992 democratic convention, women candidacies rather than women issues formed the focus of attention. Though the party retained its pro-ERA stance, the tone of the rhetoric in the platform appeared to distance the party from its past associations. This trend further continued further during the 1996 elections. The party platform was no different with the feminist influence on the party dissipating.³⁶

An analysis of more than 40,000 interviews for the USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll from January through November this year shows the trend that an increase of education results in the widening of the gender gap.³⁷ Among those with a high school diploma or less, men were inclined by a single percentage point, 45% to 44%, to vote Democratic. Women leaned toward the Democrats by 11 percentage points, 50% to 39%. That's a partisan gap between the sexes of 10 percentage points. For those who had taken some college courses but not graduated, that gender gap grew to 15 percentage points. Among those with a college degree, it rose to 20. And for voters who had taken postgraduate courses, it reached 28 percentage points — almost triple the gender difference among the least-educated voters.

Also, Men tend to become much more Republican as education and income rise; women move slightly toward the GOP. But there is a twist at the top, among those who have taken postgraduate courses: The number who lean toward the

³⁵ Women in Congress, “Women Elected to Party Leadership Positions”[Online: web] Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/data/leadership.html>

³⁶ Lisa Young, (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p.128

³⁷ Susan Page, “Til politics do us part: Gender gap widens” Accessed on 25 June 2007, URL:http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2003-12-17-gendergap-cover_x.htm?POE=click-refer

Democrats increases significantly within both groups, although men are still predominantly Republican.

John Hibbing, a political scientist at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, co-authored a study that concluded the votes of men and women were driven by the state of the economy. But they assessed the economy by different standards

In the past two campaigns, it has been proved that men and women would have elected different presidents. In 1996, surveys of voters as they left polling places showed that most women voted for Bill Clinton; men more narrowly supported Bob Dole. In 2000, women by a yawning 11 percentage points voted for Al Gore; men by an equal margin supported George W. Bush.

However, some analysts' say the Sept. 11 terror attacks has narrowed the gender gap. Women who have been leery of Republicans for being too quick to use military force may now see it as essential to protecting their families. The "soccer moms" seen as swing voters in 2000 have been dubbed "security moms" in 2004.

The gap between college-educated men and women has grown even more. In 1996, college-educated women voted for Clinton by 12 percentage points; men for Dole by 2 percentage points — a gap of 14 points. By the 2000 election, that divide had more than doubled. College-educated women voted for Gore by 17 points, men for Bush by 18 — a gap of 35 percentage points.

The differences between men and women in their political views grow as they become more informed and interested in politics, Hibbing says, something that typically happens with more education. Knowing more makes both sides hold their views more strongly. "Liberals become more liberal, and conservatives become more conservative," he says.

In a closely divided electorate, a swing in the preferences of even a small number of voters can make a big difference. Democrats have appealed to many highly educated women with a commitment to addressing workplace discrimination. The Bush administration has tried to woo some of them with programs designed to help female small-business owners. So, the gender gap is becoming a very important issue when it comes to both the political parties and elections

Impact on The Republicans

Throughout the 1990's the republican's stand on feminism remained oppositional. The year of the [democratic] women prompted representational responsiveness from within the party leading to formation of WISH list³⁸ in 1991 that contributed to the republican pro-choice women.

After the republican landslide in both congressional and senatorial mid-term elections in 1994, women were elected to leadership posts in both the house and senate conferences.

Illinois Representative Lynn Martin became the first Republican woman elected to a House leadership position when she won the vice chair post in the Republican Conference in the 99th–100th Congresses (1985–1989). The first woman elected to a Senate leadership position was Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, who chaired the Senate Republican Conference in the 90th—92nd Congresses (1967–1973).

Connie Mack was elected conference secretary in the senate and Susan Molinari was elected the conference vice-chair along with Barbara Vucanovich as the Congress secretary in the House. The women in the Congress belonged to different groups in comparison with their predecessors. While, six of the seven newly elected Republican women were anti-choice, most of them had their origins in pro-life or Christian rights groups.

Thus, the Republican Party's stance basically remained anti feminist in 1994 as well as in 1996 party platforms

The Bush Era (2000-present)

An important event in terms of women's rights was seen when Elizabeth Dole ran for the Republican nomination in the US presidential election of 2000.³⁹ Though she pulled out of the race in October 1999 before any of the primaries, largely due to inadequate fundraising. Dole was placed third — behind George W. Bush and Steve Forbes — in a large field in the Iowa Straw Poll (the first, non-binding, test of electability for the Republican Party nomination).

³⁸ WISH List is an acronym for Women in the Senate and House

³⁹ "Elizabeth Dole"[Online: web] Accessed 21 May 2007, URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Dole

In July 2000, shortly before the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, Bush campaign sources said Mrs. Dole was on the short list to be named the vice-presidential nominee, along with Michigan Governor John Engler, New York Governor George Pataki, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, and former Missouri Senator John Danforth. Dole was widely believed by most pundits to be the frontrunner for the nomination. Bush then surprised most pundits by selecting former U.S. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, who was actually in charge of leading Bush's search for a vice presidential nominee.

Many perceived that Bush portrayed himself as a moderate when he initially ran for president, proclaiming his support for diversity, the environment, and women's rights -- and dodging questions on abortion, saying only that he supported a "culture of life," a phrase that on its face was unobjectionable to most moderates and liberals.⁴⁰

While President Bush may have been less aggressive than President Clinton in identifying with Feminist projects, he has at least supported limitations on abortion options. He has been almost as aggressive as Clinton in appointing women to executive positions. To critics however, whether these appointments were honest attempts to find the most qualified person, willing to serve, or reflected a form of "Affirmative Action," was an open question. Supporters argue that perhaps some insight may be obtained from the President's frequent references to Feminist issues, when discussing his projects for the Islamic world. According to this view, it was believed that he must feel very strongly, indeed, to risk the long-term hatred, which such remarks about other peoples' culture invite. Now, like Clinton, Bush has appointed a woman to be his second term Secretary of State. As feminists pointed out, Bush's conservative agenda remained at the core of his presidency.

As his first presidential act in 2001, Bush launched a global assault on abortion rights by re imposing the Reagan-era "gag" rule--overturned by Bill Clinton--that bars U.S. funds to any family planning agency that even mentions abortion during counseling, even if it uses its own money to do so.⁴¹ Critics charged that, since then, using every means available to him, Bush has formulated a strategy to stifle reproductive rights and access to reproductive health care services. They include: instituting gag rules that censor free speech; supporting legislation that limits access

⁴⁰ CNN in-depth Special, "Florida Ballots Project", [Online:web]Accessed on 15 July 2007, URL:<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/florida.ballots/stories/main.html>

⁴¹ Sharon Smith, "New Phase in the War on Women's Rights: Which Side are You On?"[Online: web] Accessed 22 May 2007, URL: <http://www.counterpunch.org/smith02102003.html>

to family planning and abortion services; providing large sums of money into medically unproven abstinence-only sexuality education; nominating religious ideologues to important scientific posts and decrying the use of condoms.⁴²

The negative impact that women's rights issues had was further visible in the second term of Bush presidency. For instance, the issue of ERA once again demonstrated the lack of support it had from the core republicans. After a weekend meeting in Washington of key figures in the women's rights movement, federal lawmakers reintroduced the long-dormant Equal Rights Amendment. In 2007, supporters of the ERA felt its time had finally come.

During 2007, ERA ratification resolutions were introduced in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, and Mississippi. The Arkansas and Louisiana resolutions came to votes at the committee level, where both were voted down. The Arkansas resolution (HJR 1002) failed in a committee of the state House, after 20 legislators (including two members of the committee) withdrew their co-sponsorships of the resolution, a development attributed in part to intervention by pro-life groups⁴³ On May 15, 2007, the Committee on Civil Law and Procedure of the Louisiana House defeated a similar ERA ratification resolution (HCR 4), on a vote of 5 to 4.

The E.R.A. was and is one amendment that has been strongly opposed by the Republican Party over the years. It is one amendment that definitely "offends" the Bush Administration and the ultra-Conservative Republicans as this would guarantee a woman's right to control their reproduction, have access to contraceptives and safe and legal abortions, and the right to privacy. By giving women the right to control their bodies without suffering any discrimination or criminal charge made by the government, it will be acknowledged that American women are "more than just our uteruses and ovaries, and should not be forced into labor (childbirth) against their will, and that they are human beings with the right to determine their reproductive destinies".⁴⁴ It would also mean that, Lesbian couples would be protected from systematic discrimination within the workplace and the public sphere.

⁴² "Bush's secret war", *IPPF*, 22 January, 2003 [Online: web] Accessed 22 May 2007, URL: http://bopuc.levendis.com/weblog/archives/-2003/03/16/george_w_bushs_war_on_women.php

⁴³ "Equal Rights Amendment" [Online: web] Accessed 20 May 2007, URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equal_Rights_Amendment

⁴⁴ "Bringing Back the Equal Rights Amendment!" [Online: web], Accessed 20 May 2007, URL: <http://liberalfeministbias.blogspot.com/2005/03/bringing-back-equal-rights-amendment.html>

Thus, women's issues particularly on reproductive rights have divided the mainstream parties and continue to be significant in the current political climate as well.

Changing women's participation in political parties⁴⁵

Democratic and Republican women elites

Delegates who are Women (in percentages)⁴⁶

Year	Democratic Delegates	Republican Delegates
1992	48	43
1996	53	36
2000	48	35
2004	57	43

Women participation within the parties has also increased at the elite level. The election of women to political office depends on many factors in addition to parties, including voter attitudes, the pool of eligible women candidates and the type of electoral contest. Parties in the United States do not have strong role in candidate selection but they do help recruit candidates and provide resources to them.

Traditionally, politics has been a male domain so the women's presence in elective office has challenged the idea that women's place is in the private sphere. Since the suffrage, both parties have incorporated women in their national committees. So over a course of time, women in office have increased substantially with liberalization in voters attitude towards women, women's educational attainment, increase in occupational status and women organizations worked to recruit and train women candidates.

⁴⁵ The changing patterns in the participation of women in political parties and the response to political parties with regard to different issues has been dealt in details in the earlier part of the chapter from pp. 76-96. The forthcoming pages talk about the women delegates and the record of political parties with regard to recruitment and support towards women.

⁴⁶ Compiled from Kira Sanbonmatsu, (2002) *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's Place*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, p. 43, [Online: web] URL: www.jofreeman.com/conventions/Dem2004.html and URL: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/08/28/opinion/polls/main639203.shtml>

Party recruitment and women

The Republican Party's refusal to endorse the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in its platform at the 1980 party Convention was seen as the reversal of the pattern of nearly forty years of official party support. At the convention held the same year, the Democratic Party retained a pro-ERA plank as well as pledged to provide financial support to only those candidates who backed the amendment. Whereas, the Republicans move was seen as a historical break, The Democratic party's action was seen as the culmination of an important shift as the Democratic have been traditionally been ambivalent of the ERA, if not hostile. By 1984, feminist wielded enough power within the Democratic Party and so their central demand –a woman on the party's presidential ticket- was met. Moreover, the parties diverged so much by 1984 that the National Organization for women (NOW) abandoned its traditional nonpartisanship and endorsed the Democratic ticket.

Thus the lines between the parties on women rights had been drawn with outside clarity. The Republican Party adopted a position of anti-feminism and siding with those who prefer traditional women roles. Whereas, the Democratic party placed itself on the other hand of the spectrum by supporting public policies that assist in the expansion of social, political and economic roles for women. So, in short American parties had become polarized over the issue of women rights.

Next, what is important is the fact that how do you explain this party realignment. It is common knowledge that the main aim of any party is winning elections so it is this aim that can explain the change in the parties stand over the years. The position on any issue at any time is determined by three factors: the party elites, the party platform and the issue itself. So, if we look at the women rights issue through this perspective we can explain the change in party positions over the years.

The women rights issues could be defined, framed and understood across this period. The period of 1950's and 1960's saw the women right's issue as a choice between protection, the status quo and equality. Hence, for various reasons as were consistent with their basic ideological predispositions and the preferences of their consistencies, Republicans favoured equality and Democrats favoured Protections. Later on in the late 1960's and 70's, the equality versus protection debate dissipated

following a series of legal, political and social developments. As the women rights issues become more salient, the debate became defined in very different terms and was seen from the lens of the counterculture politics of 1960's. It was also linked in policy and approach to social movement politics, particularly the struggle for civil rights. So the women rights debated changed into a tradition versus liberation debate and was associated with the controversy over the relationship with the political sphere and the family, sexuality, religion, and morality.

So the changes in meanings of the women rights as well as compounded by shifts in the compositions of the coalitions, democrats emerged as the party supportive of women rights while Republicans staked out positions in oppositions.

If we look at the record of both the parties in recruitment and support of women, we find the record to be mixed. While some studies have found that most women state legislators were Republican for most of the century and that there was a negative relationship between democratic party dominance and women's representation, it has been found that both parties have tended to recruit women to run in hopeless races, although the Republican party seems more likely to do so than Democrats. Still, many perceive that the Republican Party has been more supportive to women candidates but recent studies have found that both parties have funded women and men U.S. house candidates equally in the general elections.

Furthermore, it is also found that Democratic women outnumbered Republicans in state legislatures, particularly since 1992 and later in Congress too. It is also important to note that in neither party do women exercise equal power with men and gender gaps in office holding tend to be greatest with highest political offices and women are under represented in leadership roles within parties. It is pointed out that the power that women have achieved within Republican Party moderates the party image, yet the fact that there are many moderate republicans who do not hold office, points to the presence of "political glass ceiling"

Conclusion

In brief, roles of men and women have significantly changed in politics over the time. The politics surrounding women's rights and the stance of the American

parties have also changed. While feminist movements and anti-feminist movements have polarized gender issues, it can be seen that gender issues have never been absent in politics and amongst women groups even after the achievement of suffrage. But the 1960's brought a new prominence to women issues on the national political agenda. The changes in women's roles including role of women within parties have had implications for the parties' strategies too. The number of women in office has its implication for substantive representation too as women in office tend to be more liberal than their male counterparts.

Nevertheless, while parties have been reluctant allies in the fight for women rights they have been important players in this struggle as it is they who provide opportunities for women's political involvement. Women have most to gain and to lose in this fight for equality. Yet, women in the electorate perceive that electing more women to office as more important, leading to significant mobilization of women. Thus the greatest opportunities for gender debates to move to the forefront of the political agenda continues to lie both with efforts of organized women and with the advancement of women within both the parties.

CHAPTER FOUR:
**Obstacles and Challenges for Women in
Policy Making**

Many scholars who study the influence of women on politics claim that the election of more women to the U.S. Congress is not merely an issue of equity; it also makes a substantive policy difference. Predictions of the exact nature of women's influence on the policy-making process span a wide range. Some feminist scholars believe that the presence of more women in legislatures will change the political process itself and the nature of bargaining.¹ Congressional scholars who emphasize the primacy of the electoral connection maintain that representatives will respond to the same constituency interests regardless of gender.² Yet, the primacy of electoral concerns does not negate the assertion that the election of women will make a substantive policy impact. Research suggests that the same geographical constituency can support many different reelection constituencies³. Thus, a female candidate may be more likely to attract supporters concerned with women's issues. Female legislators will also come together across party lines to support bills that deal specifically with women's issues, such as health, abortion, and children's and family issues. Additionally, within each party, women will be more likely than their male counterparts to support bills that take a liberal position on women's issues.⁴

Despite the gains made by women in the course of history, women still continue to be vastly underrepresented in elective offices for their proportion of the population. Scholars have tried to explain this problem by focusing on the obstacles faced by women in respect of their political participation. Some of these obstacles or barriers have been largely overcome, but others make it more difficult for women to win elective office as well as to take decisions when it comes to policy matters.

¹ Lyn Kathlene, (1994) "Power and Influence of State Legislative Policymaking: The Interaction of Gender and Position in Committee Hearing Debates." *American Political Science Review* 88, pp.560-76.

² Douglas Arnold, (1990), *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp.3-148 and David R. Mayhew, (1974). *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 11-180

³ Richard F. Fenno, (1978). *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Glenview, IL: Foresman Scott; Morris Fiorina, (1974). *Representatives, Roll Calls, and Constituencies*. Lexington, MA: Heath; and Beth Reingold, (1992). "Concepts of Representation Among Female and Male State Legislators." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* Vol. 17, p.509-37.

⁴ Michele L. Swers, "Are Women More Likely to Vote for Women's Issue Bills than Their Male Colleagues?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3. (Aug., 1998), pp. 435-36

The Path of the women's rights movement

The progress of women's rights has created opportunities for women to engage deeply with the political process. Visible evidence of this can be seen in the various legal developments that took place on several issues since 1960. It seems evident that women's participation had a dual impact in furthering the women's rights agenda in the political field generally, and, in creating spaces for women to contest in the political sphere.

Summary of important Legislations related to women's right since 1960⁵

The following list throws some light on the important events related to women's rights in the field of legislations. This list provides both a timeline and maps the various initiatives that have changed women's status in politics, society and economy.

1960 The Food and Drug Administration approves birth control pills.

1961 President John Kennedy establishes the President's Commission on the Status of Women and appoints Eleanor Roosevelt as chairwoman. The report issued by the Commission in 1963 documents substantial discrimination against women in the workplace and makes specific recommendations for improvement, including fair hiring practices, paid maternity leave, and affordable child care.

1963 The Equal Pay Act, proposed twenty years earlier, establishes equal pay for men and women performing the same job duties. It does not cover domestics, agricultural workers, executives, administrators or professionals.

1963 Betty Friedan's bestseller, *The Feminine Mystique*, detailed the "problem that has no name." Five million copies are sold by 1970, laying the groundwork for the modern feminist movement.

1963 Congress passes the Equal Pay Act, making it illegal for employers to pay a woman less than what a man would receive for the same job.

1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act bars employment discrimination by private employers, employment agencies, and unions based on race, sex, and other grounds. To investigate complaints and enforce penalties, it establishes the Equal Employment

⁵Ann-Marie Imbornoni, "Women's Rights Movement in the U.S. :Timeline of Key Events in the American Women's Rights Movement" Accessed on 18 July 2007,
URL: <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/womenstimeline1.html>.
Also check URL: <http://www.ibiblio.org/prism/mar98/path.html>

Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which receives 50,000 complaints of gender discrimination in its first five years.

1966 In response to EEOC inaction on employment discrimination complaints, twenty-eight women found the National Organization for Women to function as a civil rights organization for women.

1967 Executive Order 11375 expands President Lyndon Johnson's affirmative action policy of 1965 to cover discrimination based on gender. As a result, federal agencies and contractors must take active measures to ensure that women as well as minorities enjoy the same educational and employment opportunities as white males

1968 The EEOC rules that sex-segregated help wanted ads in newspapers are illegal. This ruling is upheld in 1973 by the Supreme Court opening the way for women to apply for higher-paying jobs hitherto open only to men.

1968 The National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) is founded.

1968 Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) is first Black woman elected to the US Congress. .

1970 The Equal Rights Amendment is reintroduced into Congress.

1970 In *Schultz v. Wheaton Glass Co.*, a U.S. Court of Appeals rules that jobs held by men and women need to be "substantially equal" but not "identical" to fall under the protection of the Equal Pay Act. An employer cannot, for example, change the job titles of women workers in order to pay them less than men.

1971 Ms. Magazine is first published as a sample insert in New York magazine; 300,000 copies are sold out in 8 days. The first regular issue is published in July 1972. The magazine becomes the major forum for feminist voices, and cofounder and editor Gloria Steinem is launched as an icon of the modern feminist movement.

1972 The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is passed by Congress and sent to the states for ratification. Originally drafted by Alice Paul in 1923, the amendment reads: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." The amendment died in 1982 when it failed to achieve ratification by a minimum of 38 states.

1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments bans sex discrimination in schools. It states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." As a result of Title IX, the enrollment of women in athletics programs and professional schools increases dramatically.

1973 In *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court establishes a woman's right to abortion, effectively canceling the anti-abortion laws of 46 states.

1974 MANA, the Mexican-American Women's National Association, organizes as feminist activist organization. By 1990, MANA chapters operate in 16 states; members in 36.

1974 The Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits discrimination in consumer credit practices on the basis of sex, race, marital status, religion, national origin, age, or receipt of public assistance.

1974 In *Corning Glass Works v. Brennan*, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that employers cannot justify paying women lower wages because that is what they traditionally received under the "going market rate." A wage differential occurring "simply because men would not work at the low rates paid women" is unacceptable.

1975 The first women's bank opens, in New York City.

1981 At the request of women's organizations, President Carter proclaims the first "National Women's History Week," incorporating March 8, International Women's Day.

1981 Sandra Day O'Connor is the first woman ever appointed to the US Supreme Court. In 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsberg joins her.

1984 EMILY's List (Early Money Is Like Yeast) is established as a financial network for pro-choice Democratic women running for national political office. The organization makes a significant impact on the increasing numbers of women elected to Congress.

1984 Geraldine Ferraro is the first woman vice-presidential candidate of a major political party (Democratic Party).

1990 The number of Black women in elective office has increased from 131 in 1970 to 1,950 in 1990.

1992 Women are now paid 71 cents for every dollar paid to men. The range is from 64 cents for working-class women to 77 cents for professional women with doctorates. Black women earned 65 cents, Latinas 54 cents.

2005 In *Jackson v. Birmingham Board of Education*, the Supreme Court rules that Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex, also inherently prohibits disciplining someone for complaining about sex-based discrimination. It further holds that this is the case even when the person complaining is not among those being discriminated against.

2007 Nancy Pelosi is elected as the first women speaker of the House of Representatives.

Obstacles to women in elected and appointed positions

Historically, the obstacles faced by women in political office fall into five specific categories⁶:

- Stereotypes
- Career choice and preparation
- Family demands
- Sex discrimination, and
- The political system.

Although, these barriers have been weakened or eliminated in other areas, they continue to be powerful in political office. Apart from these, there are also system specific problems that limit the likelihood of record gains in every election.

These barriers also act in two ways in keeping the women in public office low in numbers. Firstly, they deter many women from running for office, and secondly, they keep those running from succeeding. Studies have shown that that for women the first set of hurdles i.e. decision to seek elective office is the most formidable.⁷ But when women run against non-incumbent men, the rate of success of both men and women is actually even. Since the 1970s, researchers have found very little or no difference in the percentage of votes received by men and women candidates for the Congress when party and incumbency of opponent candidate were controlled. Similar outcomes were also seen in men and women running for other political offices. So, it is infact the failure of women to actually run that contributes most to the absence of women in political arena.

Stereotypes

The stereotype about the inappropriateness of women running for political office has been seen as the most likely explanation for women not running for office. Infact, evidence of the influence of this stereotype is seen in places where women are still very underrepresented in state legislatures

⁶ Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, pp 92-107

⁷ Barbara Burrell (1994), *A Women's Place is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p.90

This kind of cultural stereotype could also be observed in the portrayal of ambition levels of women participants in party politics. Research focusing on party activists from 1964 to 1984 found women to be less likely than men to be interested in seeking elective and electoral office at any time interval. But over a period of time with paralleling of decline in the stereotype, women are seen to be fast closing the disparity with men in ambition. This has been particularly true of young women as well as women who are active in feminist and community organizations. Thus with the high levels of feminism, even the African American women turn as politically ambitious as white women.

Furthermore, the women who actually decide to run for office are still faced with stereotypes about their abilities. Kim Fridken Kahn finds the evidence for this in press coverage's where women senatorial candidates are often portrayed as less viable than male candidates. Further, women candidates were also seen to receive less coverage. Infact, no such bias was seen in the case of women candidates for the post of governor. So, Kahn concluded that this difference was due to the voters finding male candidates more competent in matters of military issues and women candidates to be less viable in these but more honest, and better to deal with health issues. Kahn concluded that combination of stereotypes and voter reaction could explain women's lower success rates in Senate race, which has been traditionally seen to be more focused on defense rather than health issues. Furthermore, the press does not underrate the women gubernatorial candidates because women issues are in the forefront of these races and this helps to explain their greater success in them.

Women have also to be mindful of public perceptions when it comes to their campaign commercials. It is often seen that women have often dressed formally and used male announcers in an effort to overcome the stereotypes about their competence and strength. They also stressed their compassionate side and empathy for voters more than men. But it has been often witnessed that when the focus shifts to domestic issues, it has helped female candidates.

Career Choice and Preparation

One of the most intractable barriers to potential number of female office seekers has been the socialization of women to pursue those occupations that are either incompatible with political careers or are perceived as such by officials (or voters) supervising candidate selection processes. Thus, the social eligibility has been seen as one of the obstacles to women's representational equality till date. The social eligibility pool concerns expectations of citizens about the background of those who are quality candidates. Often certain occupational backgrounds, military service, occupational accomplishment, type and number of previous electoral experience, etc have been included in the social eligibility pool. Many of the traditional female occupation such as teaching and nursing are generally seen to be less compatible with politics than are more male-dominated professions. Historically, it has been observed that quite often women were barred from or had difficulty in entering the legal profession that has often been considered a springboard to public office and so they often entered politics from community volunteerism and women groups, a reason for them being dubbed as less viable candidates. According to some researchers, the relative paucity of women in the 'eligibility pool' of potential political candidates until recently, constitutes an important reason for women's relative absence from state legislatures, especially from the 'upper' and prestigious houses.⁸

However, research also suggests that careers of men and women running for the Congress are increasingly converging and though women are still less likely to be lawyers, the gap with men is closing. Of the women elected in the Congress in 2000, 14 percent have law degrees, whereas 38 percent of the males were lawyers.⁹ The examination of the careers of women officeholders has also shown that many successful women candidates have also pursued 'women's careers'.¹⁰

⁸ R. Darcy, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark, (1987) *Women Elections, and Representation*, New York: Longman, pp. 93-108

⁹ Congressional Quarterly, *Who's Who In Congress 2001(2001)*, Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, quoted in Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 95

¹⁰ Susan J. Carroll and Wendy S. Strimling, (1983), *Women's Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison with Men's*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for the American Women and Politics, pp.17-23

However there seems to be wider array of perspectives as there are more women in the Congress. For instance, in the 107th congress, career represented by women were diverse which included one school guidance counselor, two nurses, and two homemakers. 74 percent of freshman women in the 107th congress had prior experience in elective office.

Family Demands

Another obstacle that has affected women candidates in the public office is the general perception that women with children (especially young children) are less suited for public office. Infact, research in the 1970's found that many women state legislators ran for offices only when their children were older. Interviews by CAWP almost a decade later also found that women officeholders were less likely to have young children. These reservations did not affect the male officeholders however.

Infact, until recently, conflict between parenthood and politics has channeled many a woman away not just from elective office but even from partisan or campaign activities till the time they had young children. This was one major reason for a late start for women in partisan politics and hence had important ramifications for their success in getting into offices.

Furthermore, many studies pointed out that even if a woman could reject or overcome the alleged incompatibility in her roles as a mother and a politician, she often does not run for office for fear of public's or her own family's negative reactions. This was evident in the fact that many mothers of young offsprings had stories about hostile and snide questions asked by voters and reporters about who was taking care of their children. However, a 1992 study has shown that these issues no longer affect women candidates negatively and women candidates are more often than men candidates to be having young children today. But the update of this research has also shown that young children may produce another kind of barrier or problem for some women seeking elective or appointive office. There have been cases of employed undocumented aliens as well as illegal immigrants hired for taking care of young children.

Historically, another aspect of this role conflict that has kept women out of public office has been the spousal preference. Surveys in the 1970's have found that acceptance and encouragement of political activities by one's spouse and the family were important for a woman than a man.¹¹ But, with the rise of women's rights movement and increase in the number of women in public office, the idea of shared marriages where both partners pursue their careers has fairly grown. Also, recent research has shown that women candidates may be less concerned about the spousal support than their male counterparts. The main reason for this could be the fact that more women officeholders than male office holders are today unmarried.

Thus, it seems that women are often confronted with a conflict between their roles as mothers and as politicians. When faced with this conflict, most women politicians deal with it as with other high-powered careers; by having fewer children, delaying the political career until their children have grown, remaining single or marrying a supportive spouse.

Sex Discrimination

In the not so distant past, it was not uncommon for women candidates to face discrimination by party elites. Women were often reported in previous research surveys that they often had to contact party leaders to seek support, as they never came to them to ask to run. Often, party leaders did not recruit women to run for office, and as for women who wanted to run, they directed them to seats in which they were 'sacrificial lambs' in races they could not be expected to win, and they failed to support women candidacies. As a consequence, women had difficulties in fund raising and in being perceived as credible candidates by the media and by the voters.¹²

However, recent studies have suggested that such discrimination has abated. Infact, women and men are equally and as likely to be recruited by party leaders, although there is evidence that women are still disproportionately encouraged to run in un- winnable races or where the seat is a "woman's seat". But, whereas women may have

¹¹ Susan J. Carroll, (1985) *Women as Candidates in American Politics*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p.30

¹² Irwin N. Gertzog (1995), *Congressional Women*, 2d ed. Westport, Conn: Praeger, pp.17-36

lost their elections more often than their male counterparts earlier, this is not the case today. Hence, when the factors such as party and incumbency status are taken into account, evidence has often proved that women win races as often as men.

However, African American women and other women of color still face special or double burden in running for political office for both their race and gender limit their chances of success. It is often argued that minority women are often hampered by their perceived lack of credibility as serious candidates. But research has also found that African American women have often been able to perform better in seeking elective office. In substance, the electoral system is the problem that magnifies the disadvantages for women of both races running for office.

The Political System

There are several key components of the political system that affect the ability of women to run and wage successful campaigns for public office. These key components of the political system are:

- Money
- Campaign Finance Laws
- Party organizations
- Electoral systems, and
- Incumbency

Money

A crucial factor in having a successful campaign is the availability of adequate funding. Most women candidates have often believed that it is more difficult for them to collect the funds needed to run than for their male counterpart. When Elizabeth Dole abandoned her candidacy for the presidency only six month after forming her exploratory committee, it was due to the fact that she was unable to match the resources and fund-raising abilities of George W. Bush. Research on women candidates in the house has

also shown that the campaign fund deficits in the 1970's (except 1972) had declined in the 1980s. In the years 1988 and 1992, women actually out raised men once the status of the candidate (incumbency) and party was controlled.¹³

Infact, the number of women who ran in 1992 made the ability of women to raise comparable amount of money all the more impressive. Perhaps, spurred by the Clarence Thomas's hearings and the picture they presented of a all male Senate, women donated millions of dollars to women candidates in unprecedented numbers. Part of the reason accounting for women candidates becoming competitive with their male counterparts has to do with the rise of the individual entrepreneurial candidate and of alternative fund-raising sources such as EMILY's List and WISH List, the two political action committees (PACs) that provide funding for women candidates.¹⁴

EMILY's List ("Early Money Is Like Yeast-it Makes the Dough Rise" , which was founded in 1985 to support viable pro-choice Democratic women running in congressional and gubernatorial races is the largest of the women PACs. Its goal is to raise money early in the election cycle so as to put more and more women in elective office. It tries to do this by putting them on its "list" and encouraging its members to support the endorsed women. The members of the EMILY's List agree to contribute atleast \$100 to any two of the recommended members in the list in each election cycles. Further, EMILY's list members write checks to the candidates of their choice and these checks are accumulated together and sent directly to the candidate by EMILY's list. Since 1988, EMILY's List has been the largest financial resource for women candidates and has also been supporting House candidates since then.

The success of the liberal women's PAC led to the creation of WISH List(Women in Senate and House) in late 1991. Like the EMILY's List, viable candidates for the Senate, House, and governorships are recommended to the members who send their checks directly to the group, from where they are bundled. WISH list supports Republican Pro-choice women. Since its inception, contributors had provided over \$2 million to pro-choice Republican candidates

¹³ Barbara Burrell (1994), *A Women's Place is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p.105

¹⁴ EMILY's List, URL: <http://www.emilyslist.org> and WISH List URL: <http://www.thewishlist.org>

Still, even in 1992 the picture was not as rosy as it seemed. Infact, women candidates had difficulty in securing large contributions and donations from men and PACs even in 1992. Relatively, women were not as well funded as their male opponents. This was also due to the fact that women are generally challengers, who have to spend more time raising money then the incumbents. So, if women want to achieve political equality, they will need to raise more money than the male incumbent they want to unseat. Though, this may seem a difficult and daunting task, still it's not impossible.

Although, women overall display an improved ability to raise funds today, African American and other women of color continue to have difficult times due to fewer contacts with monied individuals and the low economic status of the people living in their districts. ¹⁵

Campaign Finance laws

For a long, many women candidates had to sell their properties and take personal loans for their campaigns. But the growth of political action committees (PACs), made legal by the 1974 campaign finance reforms, has changed the situation in their favour. Furthermore, the efforts by women's PACs including EMILY's List, NOW PAC, the Women's Campaign Fund, and WISH have been critical in alleviating the financial obstacles faced by women candidates.

The Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) of 1971 required candidates to disclose sources of campaign contributions and campaign expenditure. It was amended in 1974 with the introduction of legal limits on contributions, and creation of the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) of 2002, also known as "McCain-Feingold," after its sponsors, is the most recent major federal law on campaign finance, which revised some of the legal limits of expenditure set in 1974, and prohibited unregulated contributions (called "soft money") to national political parties.

¹⁵ Irene Natividad, (1992), "Women of Color and the Campaign Trail", in Paula Ries and Anne J.Stone, Eds. , *The American Woman: 1992-1993*, New York: Norton, pp.133-134

But there are many Republican-proposed campaign finance reforms floating which, if adopted, could jeopardize many highly successful fundraising tactics used by women candidates.

Party Organization

Historically, women candidates have also faced the problem of limited organizational help in parts that has often been offered to candidates in form of campaign workers because of marginal party support. However, this has changed, with both parties now supporting the notion of electing more women. An analysis of party contributions to candidates has even found that women actually get more money than men from the party. But republican women still have a more difficult time when it comes to securing party nominations than the democratic women. Although, the Republican women made major gains in 1994, their troubles in Republican Party is more of the result of the party's strength in the South which is a region less hospitable to women candidates. The concentration of women in the Democratic Party may also be a result of women's greater dominance in the Democratic Party structure as well as the party's support of issues benefiting women.¹⁶

Interviews with elected officials today also indicate that groups, other than parties, especially women's groups now play a key role in funding women's races as well as in encouraging and championing them more generally.

Electoral Systems

The traditional obstacles faced by women running for elective office might be diminishing with time, but still there remain some problems unique to the US political system making it hard for women to be elected in large numbers as in other democracies. The problem hindering women in the U.S. electoral system is it being a single member "winner-take-all" structure, which means that only one candidate, wins in every district.

¹⁶ Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University "Women in State Legislatures 2001", URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/StLegHistory/stleg01.pdf>

Infact, studies have shown that women have advantages in obtaining political appointments in a multiparty, multiple-member district.¹⁷ This is due to the fact that when a system has multiple winners (multimember districts) who are selected from a list of candidates prepared by the party, women are more likely to be included in these lists.

More women candidates also mean more women win a seat in the legislature. This is not only true in other countries but in the United States as well as in the few states and localities with multimember districts, women have a much better chance of election. But in recent decades, the number of states using multimember districts has declined and this trend is seen to be a disadvantage for women and more for the African American women.

Incumbency

The political system of the United States is such that it favors incumbents and thus making hard for newcomers (which most women are) to break into politics. For instance, during the 1980s, it was common for 90 percent or more of the members of the Congress to seek re-election and more than 90 percent of the incumbent actually won too. Infact, between 1976 and 1996, only one out of forty –four women who challenged incumbent senator won. In the 2000 elections, two women challengers ran and won. In the House, twenty -one of the 496 challengers (4 percent) have won between 1976 and 2000.¹⁸ Relatively, one- third of the women elected to the House between 1979 and 1992 obtained their seats in special elections, races where the incumbent had left office between elections.¹⁹ Infact, in 2000, the percentage of new women entering Congress was nearly the same as the percentage of women already in Congress; and in 2002, for the first time since before Ronald Reagan’s presidency, the percentage of new women was actually smaller than the percentage of women already in the House.

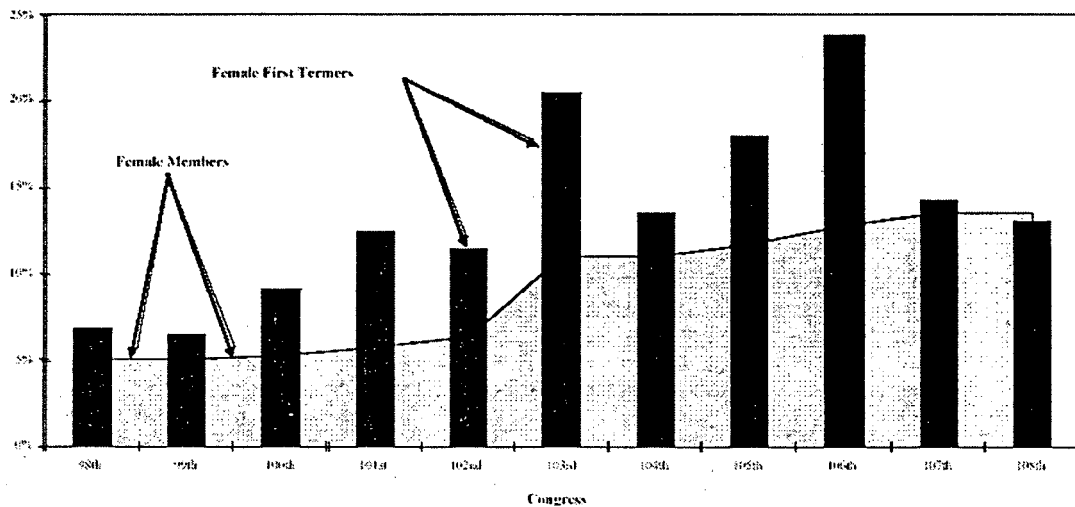
¹⁷ Rebecca Howard Davis, (1997), *Women and Power in Parliamentary Democracies: Cabinet Appointments in Western Europe, 1968-1992*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, pp. 11-28

¹⁸ CAWP, “Women Candidates for Congress 1974-2000”, CAWP Fact Sheet, November 2000

¹⁹ David L. Nixon and R. Darcy, “Special Elections and the Growth of Women’s Representation in the House of Representatives,” *Women & Politics*, 16, (1996), p.102

Percentage of women in Congress, 1983-2004

Figure 1: Percentage of Women in Congress, 1983 - 2004



Notes: Gray shaded area indicates the percentage of women in Congress. The black bars represent the percentage of female newcomers in each Congress.

20 Studies have also suggested that when women run in races which have an incumbent candidate, they even get less media coverage than what men get in similar races and hence hurt women's electoral chances in an already difficult race. Some commentators have even argued that "women's nature" makes it more difficult for them to run against an incumbent. Jane Danowitz, former director of the Women's Campaign Fund, noted,

"To get anyone out of office, you have to explain to voters why [that person] shouldn't be in office and that means negative campaigning"²¹

She further stated that it is harder for women to do so as this goes against their image of what women should do.

Indeed 1992 emerged as the 'Year of the Women' largely due to the fact that there were an unprecedented number of open seats during that time. Further, even a large number of incumbents (fifty-four) didn't even seek reelection or were defeated in the primaries (nineteen) itself. These important events allowed more women than ever (one-third of all candidates) to run in races where there were no incumbents,

²⁰ Jennifer L. Lawless and Sean M. Theriault, "Women in the U.S. Congress: From Entry to Exit"[Online: web] Accessed 3 January 2007, URL: <http://www.la.utexas.edu/~seant/womenincongress.pdf>

²¹ Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.) (2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p.103

thereby increasing their chances of winning. The media coverage of the year of the women also made women as viable candidates. A 1999 study of the effect of term limits at the state level even found that women in state Senates decreased as term – limited women incumbents forced to vacate their seats were not replaced by women. However, the Congressional incumbents have so far avoided term limits. The U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the term limits efforts at the national level, but still several legislators are pursuing a term limit amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However whether women will ultimately benefit from the term limit movement will depend not just on the proportion of open-seats, but also on the type of women candidates who present themselves to the electorate.²²

Obstacles to women in Elective Office

The election of women to public office does not guarantee an end to problems faced by women. Infact, it is seen that many barriers may also act to keep women in secondary place when once in office.²³ Studies taken by CAWP and others, point out that

Positions of power in legislatures are often gained according to the length of time served in public office. More often women have come to public office later in life due to family demands like the child rearing and hence are placed at a disadvantage in terms of seniority. As a, 1991 CAWP report found, almost half of the women in state legislators believed that men try to keep them out of leadership positions.²⁴ However, this problem was not just restricted to state legislators. This was validated by the defeat of Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.) in her effort to become the ranking member of the Budget Committee even after she had the most seniority in the committee in 1996.

²² Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, ed. (1998), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 6

²³ See, Karen Foerstel, and Herbert N. Foerstel, (1996), *Climbing the Hill: Gender Conflict in Congress Westport, CT: Praeger, pp.47-144* and Clara Bingham (1997) *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress*, NY: Times Books, pp.3-27 for a detailed explanation of how these barriers affect women.

²⁴ Debra L. Dodson and Susan J. Carroll, *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in the State Legislatures* (1991), New Brunswick, N.J., CAWP, p. 87

Women in Congress: Leadership Roles²⁵

		Senate		House		Total
107 th Congress	2001-2003	3 D	2 R	3 D	2 R	10
106 th Congress	1999-2001	2 D	2 R	6 D	4 R	14
105 th Congress	1997-1999	1 D	2 R	4 D	5 R	12
104 th Congress	1995-1997	1 D	1 R	4 D	4 R	10
103 rd Congress	1993-1995	2 D	0 R	1 D	1 R	4
102 nd Congress	1991-1993	0 D	0 R	1 D	0 R	1

However, with time and some measures, women are slowly moving towards the leadership position. In 2001, three women served as the presidents of their state senates and one served as the speaker of a state house. Further, in the 107th Congress, women held ten leadership positions representing a significant increase from just one position in the 102nd Congress. And today in the 110th Congress, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is the Speaker of the house, the first women to hold the top House post.

Another indicator of the difficulties faced by women in the elective office can be seen by their committee assignments. Most of the works in the legislatures are done in committees and the appointment of women to committees that control important legislations is critically important for their abilities to influence legislations. However, interviews in the late 1980's have suggested that women were not appointed to two prestige committees i.e. finance and revenue and were instead appointed disproportionately to committees concerned with traditional women issues such as health

²⁵Source: "Women in Congress: Leadership Roles and Committee Chairs", CAWP Fact Sheet, February 2001

or education. Women were also unhappier with the committee assignments than the men due to being placed disproportionately on unpopular committees or as token on committees with fewer or no women. Furthermore, due to lack of seniority, women were also less likely to be considered for all powerful positions such as the committee chairs. But all this seems to be changing now with more women serving long tenures than they did in the previous decades.

Although, women are today getting prestigious committee assignments in the Congress, yet their prospects for these slots are often worse than that of men in the same race as most prestigious assignments have token positions for women. Tokenism or not, the fact remains that the real power in the committees goes to its chair and there is a need to have more women in these chairs for women to influence legislations in the elective office.

Impact of women in Elected positions

Whether one subscribes to the somewhat optimistic prospects for gender parity or the less promising prognosis, it is important to address the implications of women's presence in the Congress. After all, the push to increase women's numeric representation in the House and Senate was and is predicated on the notion that women will bring a "different voice" to the legislature. Perhaps no "voices" are as important as those of the congressional leadership.

Attitudes of men appear to be changing towards the new breed of women legislators. Attitudinal studies about men in state legislatures have found that they are not likely to downgrade the electability of their women colleagues, although they are more likely to portray women as concerned with women's issues and to negate the need for women legislators.²⁶ Interviews with women at both the state as well as national levels indicate that women are having some influence in breaking down the "old-boy" network of back-room and late-night deals that kept women and the public on the outside of the legislative process.

²⁶ Patricia K. Freeman and William Lyons, "Legislators' Perceptions of Women in State Legislatures," *Women & Politics*, Vol. 10(1990), p.128

A study of the women legislators has often led to a general agreement that women are better public officials than their male counterparts in some ways. For instance, look at the presence of women in the public office, finds that majority of women at all levels of public office generally agree that women officials tend to devote more time to the job than men do and that women are better at the “human relations” aspect of the job. On contrast, according to some, a woman official still has to constantly prove herself which the male official does not. However, research on the interaction of men and women in the state legislators and the Congress suggests that men still persist to treat women unfairly in personal dealings. Analysis of the Senate hearings find that men interrupt women, challenge their expertise and in many other ways make it problematic for women to testify before committees.²⁷

In spite of such discriminatory treatments, elected women continue to influence public policy. Women in the Congress have been lacking in large number representation but women legislators have gained visibility with the Congresswomen’s Caucus (now called the Congressional Caucus for Women’s issues).²⁸From a policy perspective, men and women legislators’ priorities differ. Women are more likely than their male counterparts to promote legislation geared to ameliorate women’s economic and social status, especially concerning issues of health care, poverty, and education. Accordingly, most pieces of national legislations affecting women have been introduced or sponsored by women legislators, for example, 62 percent of the *Congresswomen* were sponsors of the Freedom of Choice Act in 1992, as compared to only 27 percent of the *Congressmen*. Further, the Women’s Health Initiative was enacted because women in the Congress appealed to the General Accounting Office to fund the research. Prior to this enactment, even though women were twice as likely as men to suffer from heart disease, the majority of the research was conducted on male subjects.

²⁷ Laura R. Winsky Mattei, “Language, Power and the Participation of Women in the American Legislative Process”(paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association), pp.7-15, quoted in Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.)(2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 106

²⁸ Joan Hulse Thompson, “The Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues: A Study in Organizational Change”(paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 1993), quoted in Nancy E McGlen ... (et al.)(2002), *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman, p. 106

A recent review of the voting behaviour of the women in the Congress also offers evidence to show that Congresswomen are more liberal and supportive of the legislation benefiting women. For example, The Freedom of Access to (abortion) clinic Entrances Act was voted by 97 percent of all Democratic women and 75 percent of all Republican Women but the figures for their Democratic and Republican colleagues were 80 percent and 19 percent only. This produced a gender gap of 17 percent for the Democrats and 56 percent for the Republicans. Even after controlling a number of factors, Republican women are found to be more liberal and supportive of women issues than are their male party colleagues. The differences among the Democrats are much smaller, however.²⁹

Further, studies explain that the presence of women legislators allows issues such as marital rape, domestic violence, and child custody – all of which have traditionally been deemed private matters – to receive public attention and debate. Others confirm this claim with the analysis of House members' support for women's rights. Even after controlling for party, region, and constituency characteristics, one study found that women are more supportive than men of issues related to gender equity and women's issues, including day care, flex time, abortion, minimum wage increases, and the extension of the food stamp program.

A Gender gap is generally apparent in the ways women and men respond to a variety of contemporary issues. Among many issues where gender gaps have been observed, recent polls have found that, compared with men, women are:

- More likely to favor a more activist role for government
- More opposed to U.S. military intervention in other countries
- More supportive of programs to guarantee quality health care and meet basic human needs
- More supportive of restrictions on firearms
- More supportive of affirmative action and efforts to achieve racial equality

²⁹ Michael Swers, "Are Congresswomen More Likely to Vote for Women's Issues Bills than their Male Colleagues?", *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 1998, pp. 435-448

Gender Gap in Public Policy Issues

ISSUES WHERE GENDER GAP IS FOUND

	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Source</u>
Role of Government			
Do you believe the government is doing too much?			
Yes	50%	66%	Gallup for CNN/USA Today, 6/96
If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing fewer services, or a bigger government providing more services?			
Smaller government	55%	67%	CBS/New York Times, 2/96
Which of these statements comes closer to your own views -- even if neither is exactly right?			
"The government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt." OR "The government today can't afford to do much more to help the needy."			
Do more	53%	43%	Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, 10/94
Use of Military Force			
Do you approve or disapprove of the presence of U.S. troops in Bosnia?			
Approve	37%	52%	Yankelovich for Time/CNN, 6/96
Would you favor or oppose the use of U.S. troops...if North Korea invades South Korea?			
Favor	30%	49%	Gallup for the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 10/94
	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Source</u>
Which of these statements comes closer to your own views -- even if neither is exactly right?			
"The best way to ensure peace is through military strength." OR "Good diplomacy is the best way to ensure peace."			
Military strength	27%	45%	Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, 10/94
Which of these statements comes closer to your own views -- even if neither is exactly right?			
"We should all be willing to fight for our country, whether it is right or wrong." OR "It's acceptable to refuse to fight in a war you believe is morally wrong."			
All should fight	46%	59%	Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, 10/94
Health Care and Human Needs			
Do you favor cutting government spending on social programs?			
Favor	47%	60%	ABC News 8/96
In your view, should more be done to expand the availability of good, affordable child care, or is this something better left to families and individuals?			
Do more	63%	41%	Lake Research for Center for Policy Alternatives, 8/96
Do you think the government in Washington should guarantee medical care for all people who don't have health insurance, or isn't that the responsibility of the government in Washington?			
Should guarantee	69%	58%	CBS/New York Times, 2/96
Do you agree or disagree that the federal government should see to it that every person who wants to work has a job?			
Agree	69%	57%	CBS/New York Times, 2/96
How important a problem for the country is ...poverty and homelessness?			
One of the most important	63%	44%	Princeton Survey Research Associates for Knight-Ridder, 1/96
Do you favor or oppose [President Clinton's proposal to raise the minimum wage]?			
Favor	83%	72%	Gallup for CNN/USA Today, 2-5/95

Restrictions on Firearms

In general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

More strict	67%	57%	Gallup for CNN/USA Today, 4/95
-------------	-----	-----	--------------------------------

Would you favor or oppose a ban on the manufacture, sale, and possession of certain semiautomatic guns known as assault rifles?

Favor	74%	61%	Gallup for CNN/USA Today, 4/95
-------	-----	-----	--------------------------------

Affirmative Action and Racial Equality

Should affirmative action programs be continued or abolished?

Abolished	36%	52%	The New York Times/CBS, 9/96
-----------	-----	-----	------------------------------

Do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs for blacks and other minority groups?

Favor	53%	41%	NBC/Wall Street Journal, 9/95
-------	-----	-----	-------------------------------

Do you think that women in this country have equal job opportunities with men, or not?

No	69%	59%	Gallup, 9/95
----	-----	-----	--------------

30

In addition to the content, even the tone of voice differs between men and women. Studies suggest that female legislators are more likely than their male counterparts to conduct business in a manner that is egalitarian, cooperative, communicative, and contextual. Analysis of the gender differences in how state assembly members debate and discuss crime provides compelling evidence that women are more concerned with context and environmental factors when determining the reasons for crime and the best way to punish criminals. It is pointed out that significant gender differences are apparent in the manner in which male and female state legislature committee chairs conduct themselves at hearings; women are more likely to act as “facilitators,” but men tend to use their power to control the direction of the hearings. One study of male and female mayors, also found that women tend to adopt an approach to governing that emphasizes congeniality and cooperation, whereas men tend to emphasize hierarchy.

We can extrapolate from these state and local-level studies to the women’s in the Congress presence in high-level elective office not only decreases the possibility that gender-salient issues will be overlooked, but it also brings a different voice to the legislative process.³¹ Thus, women’s numeric under-representation is exacerbated by the

³⁰ “Gender Gap: Attitudes on Public Policies issue”, CAWP Fact Sheets, 1997

³¹ Jennifer L. Lawless and Sean M. Theriault, “Women in the U.S. Congress: From Entry to Exit”[Online: web] Accessed 3 January 2007, URL: <http://www.la.utexas.edu/~seant/womenincongress.pdf>

fact that women are less likely than men to climb the career ladder within the Congress and wield the kind of policy influence that could considerably affect women constituents.

Another important fact that emerges from the interviews of women members of the Congress is that women play a different representational role from men. According to one view, women are more likely to be “surrogate representatives” which is defined as a willingness to represent women outside their districts. Further, this view holds, “a few exceptional male members of the Congress may feel a special responsibility to represent women outside their districts, but for women this responsibility seems to be the norm, rather than the exception.”³²

Furthermore, evidence also shows that most effective legislators for women issues are those who are members of women’s groups and are supported by those groups when they run for office.

While, women in public offices face many hurdles in being effective legislators, considerable evidence exists accounting for the fact that they do have an impact on elective office. Echoing this optimism, Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) had proclaimed with regard to the 1992 class of women in the Congress, “You are going to see a coalition of women that will get to work from day one to get this country back on track.” Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) had commented that, “I don’t think it is a coincidence that federal funding for women’s health care research went up once more women were elected to the House and Senate. We ensure that concerns that affect women disproportionately are brought to the table like child care”.³³ With the election of Nancy Pelosi as the speaker of the House of Representatives in 2007, there are rising expectations that slowly and steadily women will continue to have impact on the policymaking in the Congress.

Gender differences continue to persist in terms of entry into, power within, and departure from the Congress. However, many of the barriers to women’s advancement in formerly male fields are drastically changing, and women’s presence in the fields of

³² Susan J. Carroll, “Representing Women: Congresswomen’s Perceptions of their Representational Roles”, (prepared for delivery at “Women Transforming Congress: Gender Analyses of Institutional Life”, Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center, University of Oklahoma, April 13-15, 2000), p. 11

³³ Lizette Alvarez, “Feminine Mystique Grows in Senate,” *The New York Times*, New York, December 7, 2000.

business and law has increased dramatically over the last thirty years. But female potential candidates remain less likely than similarly situated men to receive encouragement to run for office and to deem themselves qualified to hold elected positions, both of which decrease their likelihood of throwing their hats into the electoral arena. Moreover, even when women make it to the House, they face more obstacles than do their male counterparts in terms of achieving leadership positions. This inability to affect the policy agenda as thoroughly as they might like lead women to serve significantly shorter terms than men. If female seats in the Congress turn over more rapidly, a higher proportion of women will have to run and win just to keep pace with the status quo percentage of women in the Congress.

In conclusion, it is important to mention briefly an additional implication of women's under-representation: symbolic representation, or the role model effects that women's presence in positions of political power confers to women citizens. Symbolic effects are difficult to quantify, but the logic underlying symbolic representation is compelling. As one commentator noted:

"Women in public office stand as symbols for other women, both enhancing their identification with the system and their ability to have influence within it. This subjective sense of being involved and heard for women, in general, alone makes the election of women to public office important because, for so many years, they were excluded from power".³⁴

In other words, there is a potentially powerful and positive relationship between women's presence in elective office and their female constituents' political attitudes and behavior. The inclusion of more women in positions of political power would change the nature of political representation in the United States. At the very least, the government would gain a greater sense of political legitimacy, simply by virtue of the fact that it would be more reflective of the gender breakdown of the national population.

"A government that is democratically organized cannot be truly legitimate if all its citizens from . . . both sexes do not have a potential interest in and opportunity for serving their community and nation."³⁵

³⁴ Barbara Burrell, (1996) "Campaign Finance: Women's Experience in the Modern Era", In S. Thomas and C. Wilcox (eds.), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.151

³⁵ Sue Thomas, (1998) Introduction: Women and Elective Office: Past, Present, and Future, In S. Thomas and C. Wilcox (eds.), *Women and Elective Office*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.1

It also seems clear that the election of more women would substantially reduce the possibility “that gender-salient issues [will be] overlooked.” Some political scientists, however, would offer even bolder conclusions. Many would predict that a fuller inclusion of women in our governing bodies would dramatically change the style by which policy is made. Some would also argue that a greater presence of women in elective office would send a signal to other women that the political system is fair, open, democratic, and worthy of engagement.

However, the present scenario, to all appearances, seems conducive to achieving gender parity in the Congress, notwithstanding the apprehensions and fears inherent in the situation .

CHAPTER FIVE:
Conclusion

Women around the world encounter countless barriers in their way to participation in politics. Prevailing social and economic regimes and existing political structures feed these barriers. An analysis of the number of women in the US Congress shows that they are an under-represented class even though they comprise more than half the population of the country. From winning the right to vote in 1920 to becoming the majority of the electorate, women have indeed come a long way. Yet, to earn a fair and equitable place in politics, women have to cross many obstacles.

Increasing the level of female representation and participation in decision-making bodies requires well-developed strategies and information about measures which have worked successfully in different countries with different political systems. A brief look at the history of the women in the US Congress illustrates a great change in their number. The rise of the number of women in the Congress from a lone member in 1917 to 84 members in 2007 reflects their progress both in numerical as well as substantive strength. Currently, women form 16.3% of the members of the Congress and many observers believe they can make a decisive impact on policy making through their progress in leadership positions as, for instance, crowning their drive with the enviable office of the speaker of the House of Representatives. As several studies have shown, women bring new perspectives to policy making as reflected in the passage of several women-oriented bills that influence many and contribute positively to the development of the country. In this context, the elections of 1992 and 2007 constitute significant landmarks in the history of the Congress. The 1992 election year has been termed as the 'Year of the Woman' as it witnessed a drastic change in American politics with as many as 28 women entering the Congress that was more than the total number of women elected or appointed to the Congress in any previous decade. Likewise, the 2007 election is seen as crucial in the history of American politics as it brought as many as 84 women to the Congress, leading to the election of the first female speaker of the House of Representatives. Thus, the future of women in the Congress seems bright if more and more dynamic and intelligent women with a will to fight continue their struggle to enter the Congress.

The issue of numerical representation of women in the Congress is just one aspect of the struggle of women for their rights. Women have to participate in all the realms of politics to increase their numbers. Political participation in the form of voters, candidates and activists is as important as the impact of women public officials in public offices. Infact, women 's political participation evidences a certain kind of gender disparity in American politics. The decisive potential of gender disparity is immense as it is only through political participation that citizens can communicate their aspirations to the policy makers; if women remain insensitive to the dynamics of power, their needs and preferences would be neglected. Thus, it is very important to know the factors that inhibit the political participation of women. As chapter two reveals, the major factors responsible for the low political participation are sex-role socialization, lack of resources, social context within which individuals live and work and the age difference (as there exists gender and generational differences in the patterns of support for equal roles for women and for women's movement).

Chapter two also argues that for a full analysis of the political participation of women, it is important to have a clear understanding of the three waves of Feminism. The study has found that the feminist movement helped in raising the female consciousness with regard to their political and social rights in America and so inspired younger women to enter and participate in all the forms of politics as voters, activists and candidates. It is also contended that the three waves were visible in the equally major victories in American politics. For instance, Seneca fall Declaration marked the culmination of the first wave, the passage of Equal Rights Amendment in the House and the Senate marked the major event in the Second wave, whereas the election of large number of women to the Congress in the 1992 Elections marked the beginning of the Third wave.

Another important phenomenon that appeared due to the growing consciousness of women with regard to politics was the emergence of 'Gender Gap' in American Politics. The 'Gender Gap' refers to the differences between women and men in political attitudes and voting choices. Although the roots of the phenomenon can be traced back to history, its relevance seems to have augmented only in recent times. As a consequence, political parties as well as candidates contesting elections can no longer neglect women. The study has found that political parties have realized that women make up the majority

of the electorate today and so can decide the fate of a candidate to a large extent. As women turnout rates have been greater since the 1980's, the focus of parties and candidates has shifted to getting the support of women voters. Experts have argued that the voting gap emerged in 1984 for the first time and since then has increased from a mere 0.3% to 4% in 2006. Also, the voting patterns have shown a reversal of women's voting patterns with women becoming more left wing in the 1980's departing from their right wing position of the 1950's. In contrast, male support for the Democrats started to erode after 1972, producing a gender gap that expanded in the 1980s. This was evident in the 2004 presidential election with about 55% men supporting George W. Bush and only 48% women supporting him. Analysis of evidence in the Presidential and Congressional elections has shown that women have different preferences with regard to voting and policy options and provide a margin to candidates to win as well.

An analysis of women as candidates brings to light many factors which act as barriers to election of women to the Congress. Chapter two has focused on *the incumbency disadvantage* as one of the barriers. It was evident that though women had no less chance to win but the one factor that stopped them from winning was that fewer of them were *incumbents*. Studies to determine the success rates of women candidates have had startling results. One was that women constitute a minority of candidates for all levels of office. The second was that, regardless of a candidate's gender, candidates for open -seats where no incumbent was running-were two to nine times more likely to win than the challengers. Thus, open seats are the single most important key to winning higher office, and the findings by the National Women Political Caucus's show that few women have run for open seats. Apart from these factors, there are many barriers which prevent women from contesting elections like the lack of confidence, consequences of contesting, lack of education as well disinterest on the part of women. The study finds several works arguing that once all these barriers are removed there is nothing that can stop women from gaining parity with men in the Congress. Many works have pointed out that these barriers can be removed by making resources accessible to women, starting training programme and by employing professional women as activists in the political process.

Thus, it may be concluded that women voters and women candidates are two different categories and should be analysed keeping in mind this difference. It can also be concluded that in recent times women in politics have started to make their presence felt and the time for parity could be reached in public offices and powerful positions in the near future.

The study has also focused on the role of political parties and their stand on women's issues and participation. 'Political parties' have been called as the missing variable in the women and politics research and it is one area which has immense potential to be researched. In understanding the political parties' stand on women's rights, it is also important to understand the women rights movement which has been analysed in chapter three. Dividing it into stages of reform movement, suffrage movement and the present women's movement, the women's movement of America has been examined in order to determine the crucial role they have played in fostering awareness as well as in helping women attain important legislative rights. While analyzing the element of political parties and women rights, it has been found that one important aspect has also been the role of feminists in influencing political parties and the parties' response to various pressures.

The parties have fundamentally been transformed over the issue of women's rights by the reforms that began in the late 1960's. The most significant change was the change in primaries. But another change in the presidential selection process was brought about by the increase in representation of women at both the parties' conventions.

Another important development that took place has been the deep polarization of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party over the issue of women's rights. The adoption of formal party positions over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been the main cause of polarization of American parties. This division has continued to have an impact on the overall support and voting by women in elections. In fact, many studies argue that definite linkages exist between party realignment and women's rights. Evidence from the fifties and sixties reflect the fact that women's rights issue was a point of debate between choice and protection. Later on, particularly in the seventies, the women rights debate changed into a tradition versus liberation debate and was associated

with the controversy over the relationship with the political sphere and the family, sexuality, religion, and morality. So the changes in the meanings of the women's rights were compounded by shifts in the compositions of the coalitions. Significantly, the Democrats emerged as the party supportive of women rights while the Republicans staked out positions in opposition. Hence, women in leadership positions may well come first in the Democratic Party .At the 1980 National convention, the Republican Party removed the E.R.A. from its platform and adopted strong pro-life rhetoric, pronouncing an anti-feminist stance, whereas the Democratic Party strengthened its support for it and entered into close alliance with the feminist groups in advance of the 1984 election.

The election results from the year 1980 also mark the reinforcement of 'gender gap' in political preferences. The gender gap generally refers to gender differences in support of the winning candidate. However, some analysts say the September 11 terrorist attacks narrowed the gender gap. Women who have been leery of Republicans for being too quick to use military force may now see it as essential to protecting their families. The "soccer moms" seen as swing voters in 2000 may be better dubbed "security moms" in 2004. Still, the Gender Gap has increased tremendously from what it was in 1984, giving rise to the expectation that women may prevail as a voting bloc in future elections.

The study also focuses attention on the record of both the parties in recruitment and support of women as this provides the clue to the party's commitment to women's participation. It was found that the record was mixed. While some studies have found that most women state legislators were Republicans for most of the century and that there was a negative relationship between the Democratic Party dominance and women's representation, it seems that both parties have tended to recruit women to run in hopeless races, although the Republican party appears more likely to have done so than the Democrats. Still, many observers perceive that the Republican Party has been more supportive to women candidates but recent studies show that both parties have funded women and men equally as U.S. house candidates in the general elections.

Another domain where there were great advances in women's rights was the area of representation. A look at the causes reveals that the most important were the gains in the number of Democratic women elected to Congress in 1992. Further, it was found that following the election of 1992 women were able to break the glass ceiling of leadership.

Women's participation within the parties also increased at the elite level. It was also found that the election of women to political office depended on many factors in addition to parties, including voter attitudes, the pool of eligible women candidates and the type of electoral contest. However, it is contended that the role of political parties is by far the most crucial factor in the advancement of women issue.

The obstacles and challenges to women's election to the Congress are analysed in chapter four. It is these obstacles that explain the problem of under-representation of women as well as lack of enough powerful women in the Congress. These obstacles are briefly presented under the broad themes of the prevailing Stereotypes, career choice and preparation, family demands, sex discrimination and the political system. The political system presents us with obstacles in the form of money, Campaign finance law reforms, party organizations, electoral systems and the incumbency factor. Another important barrier to women's success has been the age factor. To attain leadership positions in the Congress one needs to serve for a long period of time, but the earlier women had entered late and were thus disadvantaged. However, post 1990's, women have attained important leadership positions and are now playing important decision-making roles in the Congress.

Another important aspect to be seen is the impact which women public officials make. Women's voice has been seen as the "different voice". A study of the women legislators has often led to a general agreement that women are better public officials than their male counterparts in some ways. In contrast, according to some, a woman official still has to constantly prove herself which the male official does not have to do. From a policy perspective, men and women legislators' priorities differ. Women are more likely than their male counterparts to promote legislation geared to ameliorate women's economic and social status, especially concerning issues of health care, poverty, and education. A recent review of the voting behaviour of the women in the Congress also offers evidence to show that Congresswomen are more liberal and supportive of the legislation benefiting women. A Gender gap is generally apparent in the ways women and men respond to a variety of contemporary issues.

In addition to the content, even the tone of voice differs between men and women. Studies suggest that female legislators are more likely than their male counterparts to conduct business in a manner that is egalitarian, cooperative, communicative, and contextual. While, women in public offices face many hurdles in being effective legislators, considerable evidence exists accounting for the fact that they do have an impact on elective office. Many predict that a fuller inclusion of women in governing bodies would dramatically change the style of policy making. Whether this will be proven true or not, the focus on the obstacles and challenges faced by women in political offices has provided evidence for the continued impact these have on female candidates. It has also shown that conscious examination of obstacles and challenges has maintained the 'gender gap' on several issues.

The study of women's representation in the Congress is not merely a study of the number of women members in the Congress but also a study of women in politics as a whole. It is a study about women voters, women leaders, women candidates, women activists and movement and the critical links they have in American politics. In particular, the study has attempted to link the representation of women in the Congress to the dynamics of women's movement. The Study had started by noting the fact that representation of women is 16.3 percent in the present Congress. So, what has been interesting and significant was that this growth in number took this long. Further, it has also exposed the lack of female executives in American politics. The candidacy of Senator Hillary Clinton in the current context must have been seen as part of the painfully slow process of attaining parity with the men in politics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

*American National Election Studies (ANES), "The NES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior" [Online:web] Accessed 7 June 2007, URL: <http://www.electionstudies.org/nesguide/gd-index.htm>.

*Amer, Mildred, "Women in the United States Congress, 1917–2004," Congressional Research Survey (1 July 2004) [Online/web] Accessed 28 April 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/essays/intro/edition.html>.

*Gladstone, Leslie W., "The proposed equal rights amendment" Congressional Research Survey (21 March 1982) [Online:web] Accessed 8 June 2007, URL : <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-8499:1>

*Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda J. Gage, (eds.) (1881) , "Declaration of Sentiments," in *History of Woman Suffrage* ,Rochester, N.Y.: Charles Mann, pp. 67-94.

*Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), "Women in National Parliaments" .[Online: web] Accessed on 31 March 2007 URL: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

*Pitkin, Hanna (1967), *The Concept Of Representation*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press

*Roe v. Wade, 410 U. S. 113 (1973), Vol. 410, United States Reports, 113.

*The Library of Congress,"Votes for Women: Selections from Woman Suffrage Association Collection, 1848-1921" Accessed 2 March 2007, URL: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/naw/nawshome.html>

*The National Archives, " 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Women's Right to Vote", Accessed 6 April 2007,
URL:<http://www.archives.gov/historicaldocs/document.html?doc=13&title.raw=19th%20Amendment%20to%20the%20U.S.%20Constitution%3A%20Women%26apos%3Bs%20Right%20to%20Vote>

*The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964", Accessed 8 April 2007, URL: <http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/vii.html>

*The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "The Equal Pay Act of 1963", Accessed 8 April 2007, URL: <http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/epa.html>

*US Census Bureau, "Voting and Registration".[Online:web] Accessed 2 June 2007 URL: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/voting.html>.

*U.S. Department of Justice "The Equal Credit Opportunity Act", Accessed 5 June 2007 URL: http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/housing/housing_ecoa.htm

*U.S. Department of Labor, "Executive Order 11246 - Equal Employment Opportunity", Accessed 15 April 2007, URL : <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/statutes/ofccp/eo11246.htm>

*U.S. Department of Labor , "Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972", Accessed 18 April 2007, URL : <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/titleix.htm>

*Women in Congress , "Women Who Have Chaired Congressional Committees".[Online:web] Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/data/committee-chairs.html>.

*Women in Congress, "Women Elected to Party Leadership Positions".[Online:web] Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/data/leadership.html>.

Secondary Sources

Books

Arnold, Douglas (1990), *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press

Baxter, Sandra and Marjorie Lansing (1980), *Women and Politics: The Invisible Majority*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Berman, Larry, Bruce Allen Murphy and Oliver H. Woshinsky (1996), *Approaching Democracy*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Bingham, Clara (1997), *Women on the Hill: Challenging The Culture Of Congress* ,New York: Times Books.

Boxer, Sen. Barbara and Nicole Boxer (1994), *Strangers in the Senate: Politics and the New Revolution Of Women in America*, Washington D.C.: National Press Books.

Burnham ,Walter Dean(1983),*Democracy in the Making: American Government and Politics*, United States: Prentice Hall

- Burns, Nancy (2001), *The Public Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality and Political Participation*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
- Burrell, Barbara (1994), *A Women's Place is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press
- Carroll, Susan J. (2003), *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carroll, Susan J. (1985), *Women as Candidates in American Politics*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Carroll, Susan J. (eds.) (2001), *The Impact Of Women in Public Office*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Carroll, Susan J and Wency S. Strimling, (1983), *Women's Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison with Men's*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for the American Women and Politics
- Cantor, Dorothy W. Toni Bernay and Jean Stoess (1992), *Women in Power: The Secrets of Leadership*, Boston; Houghton Mifflin.
- Chamberlin, Tope (1973), *A Minority Of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress*, New York: Praeger.
- Cleft, Eleanor and Tom Brazaults (2003), *Madam President: Women Blazing the Leadership Trail*, New York, Routledge
- Cohen, Cathy J. Kathleen B. Jones and Joan C. Tronto (eds.) (1997), *Women Transforming Politics: An Alternative Reader*, New York: New York University Press
- Congressional Quarterly (2001), *Who's Who In Congress 2001* Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press
- Connor, Karen O' (1996), *No Neutral Ground :Abortion Politics in an Age of Absolutes*, Boulder, Colo. : Westview Press
- Conway, Margaret Gertrude A. Steuernagel, and David Ahern. (1997) *Women and Political Participation*. Washington, DC: CQ Press
- Connor, Karen O'(1996), *No Neutral Ground :Abortion Politics in an Age of Absolutes*, Boulder, Colo. : Westview Press
- Cott, Nancy F. (1987), *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press

- Cohen, Cathy J. Kathleen B. Jones, and Joan C. Tronto (1997)(eds.) *Women Transforming Politics: An Alternative Reader*, New York: New York University Press
- Dodson ,Debra L. and Susan J. Carroll (1991), *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in the State Legislatures* ,New Brunswick, N.J.: CAWP
- Dolan, Julie and Rosenbloom (2003), *Representative Bureaucracy: Classic Readings and Continuing Controversies*, Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe
- Duke, Lois Lovelace (1996), *Women in Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Ferrell, Claudine L. (2006), *The Abolitionist Movement*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press
- Flexner, Eleanor (1975), *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights movement in the U.S.*, Cambridge Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Foerstel, Karen and Herbert N. Foerstel(1996), *Climbing the Hill: Gender Conflict in Congress* , Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Gertzog, Irvin N. (1984),*Congressional Women; Their Recruitment, Treatment and Behavior* ,New York: Praeger.
- Handlin, Amy H.(1998),*Whatever Happened To The Year Of The Women? Why Women Still Aren't making to the top in Politics* ,Denver, CO: Arden Press
- Hartman, Susan M. (1989)*From Margin To Mainstream: American Women and Politics since 1960* ,NY: Knopf
- Harvey ,Anna L. (1998). *Votes without Leverage: Women in American Electoral Politics, 1920-1970*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf
- Hoeveler, Diane Long and Boles, Janet R. (2001), *Women Of Color: Defining the issues, hearing the voices*, Westport Comm.: Greenwood Press
- Hole ,Judith and Ellen Levine(1971), *Rebirth of Feminism*, New York: Quadrangle Books
- Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri. *Changing Differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy (1917-1994)* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995)
- Kann, Mark E. (1999), *The Gendering of American Politics: Founding Mothers, Founding Fathers and Political Patriarchy* Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers
- Kaptur, Marcy (1996), *Women Of Congress: A Twentieth -Century Odyssey* ,Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly

- Katzenstein, Mary Fainsod and Carol McClurg Mueller (eds.) (1987), *The Women's Movements of the United States and Western Europe: Consciousness, Political opportunity, and Public Policy*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press
- Lee, Frances E. and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (1999), *Sizing up the Senate: The unequal consequences of Equal representation*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
- Margolies-Mezvinsky, Majorie (1994), *A Woman's Place: The Freshman Women Who Changed the Face Of Congress*, NY: Crown Publishers
- Martin, Mart (2001), *The Almanac of women & minorities in American politics 2002*, Colorado: Westview Press.
- McGlen, Nancy E. et al. (2002) *Women, Politics and American Society*, New York: Longman
- Meyers, Diana Tietjens (eds.) (1997), *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, New York: Routledge
- Mueller, Carol M. (1988) (eds.), *The Politics of the Gender Gap: The Social Construction of Political Influence*, Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications
- National Women Political Caucus (1980), *Democratic Women are Wonderful: A History of Women at Democratic National Conventions*. Washington D.C.: NWPC
- Newman, Jody (1994), *Perceptions and Reality: A Study Comparing the Success of Men and Women Candidates*, Washington D.C.: National Women's Political Caucus
- Roberson, Susan L. (1998) (eds.), *Women, America and Movement: Narratives of Relocation*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press
- Rosenthal, Cindy Semon (eds.) (2002), *Women Transforming Congress* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira (2002), *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's' Place*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press
- Schwarzenbach, Sibyl A. and Smith, Patricia, (eds.) (2003), *Women and the United States Constitution: History, Interpretation, and Practice*, New York: Columbia university Press
- Seltzer, Richard A., Jody Newman and Melissa Voorhees Leighton (1997), *Sex As a Political Variable: Women As Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers
- Strom, Sharon Hartman (2003), *Women's Rights*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press

Tinker, Irene (1983)(eds.), *Women in Washington: Advocates For Public Policy* ,Beverly Hills: Sage Publication

Thomas, Sue and Clyde Wilcox, (eds.) (1998), *Women and Elective Office* (New York: Oxford University Press

Tolleson-Rinehart, Sue and Jye J. Josephson, (eds.) (2000), *Gender and American Politics; Women, Men and the Political Process*, Armonk, NY: M.E.Sharpe

Treanor, Nick, (2002) (eds.), "The Feminist Movement", San Diego, CA : The Greenhaven Press

Weathesford, Doris (1997)*Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's history* ,Facts on File, Inc.: New York

Wheeler ,Marjorie Spruill,(1995)(eds.), *One Women, One Vote:Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, Troutdale, Ore,:New Sage Press

Winston, Kenneth and Mary Jo Bane Boulder (1993) (eds.) ,*Gender and Public Policy: Cases and Comments* ,CO: Westview Press

Witl, Linda (1994),*Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* ,NY; Toronto: NY: Frec Press: Maxwell Macmillan Canada: Maxwell Macmillan Intl.

Wolbrecht, Christina (2000), *The Politics Of Women's' Rights: Parties, Positions and Change* ,Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Zichy, Shoya (2001), *Women and the Leadership Q: The Breakthrough System For Achieving Power and Influence* ,NY: McGraw Hill

Young, Lisa (2000), *Feminists and Party Politics*, Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press

Articles

Baer, Denise L., (Sep., 1993)" Political Parties: The Missing Variable in Women and Politics Research", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No.3, pp. 547-576

Carpini, Michael X. Delli and Ester R. Fuchs (Spring, 1993), " The Year Of The Woman? Candidates, Voters, and the 1992 Elections" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 108, No. 1, pp. 29-36

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) Factsheet, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in Elective Office 2007". [Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/elective.pdf>.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) Factsheet, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in the US Congress 2007".[Online: web] Accessed 3 March 2007 URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong.pdf#page=2>.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "The Gender Gap: Attitudes on Public Policy Issues".[Online:web] Accessed on 5 April 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/ggapissues.pdf>.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "The gender gap: Voting Choices In Presidential Elections".[Online:web]Accessed 2 May 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Elections/GGPresVote.pdf>.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Summary of women candidates for selected offices1970 - 2006 (major party nominees)". [Online:web] Accessed 1 May 2007, URL: http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/CanHistory/can_histsum.pdf.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Gender Gap: Party Identification and Presidential Performance Ratings"[Online: web] Accessed 2 May 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Elections/GGPrtyID.pdf>.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, "Women in Congress: Leadership Roles and Committee Chairs".[Online:web], Accessed 10 June 2007, URL: <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/conglead.pdf>.

Chaney, Carole Kennedy ,R. Michael Alvarez and Jonathan Nagler (1998),"Explaining the Gender Gap in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1980-1992", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 2,pp.311-339

Clark, Janet (May, 1991), " Getting There: Women in Political Office", *Annals Of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 515,American Feminism: New Issues For a Mature Movementpp.63-76

Conway, M. Margaret(Jun., 2001), " Women and Political Participation", *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 231-233

Dolan, Julie, (Jun., 2001), " Political Appointees in the United States: Does Gender Make a Difference? *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2,pp. 213-216

Frye,Marilyn (1997), "Some Reflections on Separatism and Power." in Diana Tietjens Meyers (eds.) *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, New York: Routledge, pp. 406-414.

Gallup Poll Release, "Majority of Americans Say More Women in Political Office would be Positive for the Country", Gallup Poll Release, January 4, 2001. [Web: Online] Accessed 4th July 2007 URL: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr010104.asp>.

Greenstein, F. (1961), "Sex-related Political Differences in Childhood," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 23, pp.353-71

Hedlund, Ronald D. Patricia K. Freeman, Keith E. Hamm and Robert M. Stein(1979), "The Electability of women candidates: The effect of Sex Role Stereotypes", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 41(1-2), pp.513-524

Hill, David B. (1981), "Political Culture and Female Political Representation", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 43(1-2), pp.159-168

Jamiesan, Kathleen Hall(Nov., 1997), " Beyond The Double Bind: Women and Leadership" *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 6, No.3, pp.324-326

Kathlene, Lyn (1994) "Power and Influence of State Legislative Policymaking: The Interaction of Gender and Position in Committee Hearing Debates." *American Political Science Review* 88, pp.560-76.

Kelly, Rita Mae; Michelle A. Saint-Germain, Jody D. Horn (May, 1991), "Female Public Officials: A Different Voice?" *Annals Of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 515, American Feminism: New Issues For a Mature Movement, pp.77-87

Kinser, Amber (2004), "Negotiating space for/through Third-Wave Feminism". *NWSA Journal* 16 (3), pp. 124-153.

Klein ,Ethel (1985), "*The Gender Gap : Different Issues, Different Answers.*" *The Brookings Review*, Vol. 3(winter), pp. 33-37

Kunovich, Sheri and Pamila Paxton (Sep., 2005), " Pathways to Power: The role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation" *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 111, No. 2 pp. 505-552

Lake, R.L and R. Huckfeldt (1998), "Social Capital, Social Networks, and Political Participation", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25(3), pp. 494-511

Lawless, Jennifer L., (Sep., 2004), "Women, War, and Winning Elections: Gender Stereotyping in the Post-September 11th Era", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 3, pp. 479-490.

Lawless, Jennifer L., (Mar., 2004), " Politics Of Presence? Congresswomen and Symbolic Representation", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No.1, pp.81-99

Nechemias, Carol (February 1987), "Changes in the Election of Women to State Legislative Seats", *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 12, pp.125-142.

Niven, David (1998), "Party elites and women candidates: The shape of bias", *Women and Politics*, Vol.19, No. 2, pp. 57-80

Palley, Marian Lief (Jun., 2001), "Women's Policy Leadership in The United States" *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 247-250

Rojas, Maythee (Winter, 2003), "Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism by Daisy Hernandez, Bushra Rehman", MELUS, Vol. 28, No. 4, Speech and Silence: Ethnic Women Writers ,pp. 246-249

Rossi, Alice S. (1983), "Beyond the Gender Gap: Women's bid for Political Power", *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol.64,pp. 718-733

Sapiro, Virginia and Pamela Johnston Conover (Oct., 1997), "The variable gender basis of electoral politics: Gender and Context in the 1992 US elections" *British Journal Of Political Science* Part 4, Vol. 27, pp.497-523

Sawer, Marian (Oct., 2000), "Parliamentary Representation of Women: From Discourses of Justice to Strategies of Accountability" *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 21, No. 4, Women, Citizenship, and Representation, pp. 361-380

Schreiber, E.M. (1978), "Education and change in Opinions on a woman for President", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 42, pp.1871-82

Swers, Michele, (Jun., 2001), "Understanding The Policy Impact Of Electing Women: Evidence From Research on Congress and State Legislatures", *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp.217-220

Swers ,Michele L. (Aug., 1998), "Are Women More Likely to Vote for Women's Issue Bills than Their Male Colleagues? *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 435-448

Tuchman, Arleen (Spring 1999), " " Once in a Republic Can It Be Proved That Science Has No Sex": Marie Elizabeth Zakrzewska (1829-1902) and the Multiple Meanings of Science in the Nineteenth-Century United States", *Journal of Women's History*, Volume 11, Number 1, pp. 121-142

Verba S. N. Burns and K.L. Schlozman (1997), "Knowing and Caring About Politics: Gender and Political Engagement". *Journal Of Politics*, Vol. 59(4), pp. 1051-1072

Welch, Susan (September 1978), "Recruitment of Women to Public Office", *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 31, pp. 372-380

Internet Sources

Bird , Karen , "The Political Representation of Women and Ethnic Minorities in Established Democracies: A Framework for Comparative Research" Accessed 2 March 2007, URL : <http://ipsa-rc19.anu.edu.au/papers/bird.htm>

"Bush's secret war", *IPPF*, 22 January, 2003[Online: web] Accessed 22 May 2007, URL: http://bopuc.levendis.com/weblog/archives/-2003/03/16/george_w_bushs_war_on_women.php CNN in-depth Special, "Florida Ballots Project", Accessed on 15 July 2007, URL:<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/florida.ballots/stories/main.html>

"Bringing Back the Equal Rights Amendment"[Online: web], Accessed 20 May 2007, URL: <http://liberalfeministbias.blogspot.com/2005/03/bringing-back-equal-rights-amendment.html>

Dovi ,Suzanne(2006) " Political Representation", [Online/Web] Accessed on 1 April 2007 URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/political-representation>

EMILY's List, Accessed 5 July 2007URL: [http:// www.emilyslist.org](http://www.emilyslist.org)

"Feminism" (Online: web) Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism>

Francis, Roberta W. "The History Behind the Equal Rights Amendment", Accessed on 9 July 2007URL: <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>

Francis, Roberta W. "The History Behind the Equal Rights Amendment", Accessed on 9 July 2007URL: <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>

Freeman, Jo (1997), "Change and continuity for women at the Republican and Democratic conventions", Accessed 5 July 2007, URL : http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3693/is_199701/ai_n8735847/pg_1

Gill, Kathy, "Milestones In Politics For American Women", Accessed 7 July 2007, URL: http://uspolitics.about.com/od/usgovernment/a/women_milestone.htm

Goldstein, Jen "The Year of the Woman"[Online:web] Accessed 4 may 2007 URL: <http://thebeaveronline.co.uk/Features/the-year-of-the-woman>

Imbornoni, Ann-Marie "Women's Rights Movement in the U.S. :Timeline of Key Events in the American Women's Rights Movement" [Online"web]Accessed on 18 July 2007 URL: <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/womenstimeline1.html>.

Jennifer L. Lawless and Sean M. Theriault, "Women in the U.S. Congress: From Entry to Exit"[Online: web] Accessed 3 January 2007, URL: <http://www.la.utexas.edu/~seant/womenincongress.pdf>

Kaufmann ,Karen M. 2006, "The Gender Gap", In *PS: Political and Politics*, Issue: July 2006[Online: web] Accessed on 3 May 2007, URL: www.apsanet.org/imgtest/PSJuly06Kaufmann.pdf, p.448

"Liberty"[Online: web] Accessed on 7 May 2007, URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty>

Lopez, Mark Hugo, Emily Kirby and Sagoff,"Voter Turnout Among Young Women and Men"(Online: web), Accessed 3 May 2007, URL: http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS_04_gender_vote.pdf

Page, Susan "Til politics do us part: Gender gap widens" Accessed on 25 June 2007, URL:http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2003-12-17-gendergap-cover_x.htm?POE=click-refer

Sanghera ,Baliyar "State and Society: Political Participation" (Online: web), Accessed 4 May 2007 URL: http://uk.geocities.com/baliyar_sanghera/saspoliticalparticipation.htm

Smith, Sharon "New Phase in the War on Women's Rights: Which Side are You On?"[Online: web] Accessed 22 May 2007, URL: <http://www.counterpunch.org/smith02102003.html>

Stanton ,Elizabeth Cady and the Revising Committee, "The Woman's Bible", [Online: web] Accessed 19 May 2007, URL: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/index.htm>

Steigrad, Alexandra "Voter turnout shows gender gap: Women vote more", November 2006, Accessed 7 July 2007, URL: http://mesh.medill.northwestern.edu/mnschicago/elections06/2006/11/voter_turnout_s.html

The 2004 Republican Delegates CBS News/NYT Poll: Views Polar Opposite Of Dem Counterparts[Online:web] Accessed 24 June 2007 URL: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/08/28/opinion/polls/main639203.shtml>

The Museum of Broadcast communications, "Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings".[Online:web] Accessed on 7 July 2007,URL: <http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/H/htmlH/hill-thomash/hill-thomas.htm>.

Women's History in America" Presented by Women's International Center, [Online: web] Accessed 7 May 2007 URL: <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>

Women in Congress, "Assembling, Amplifying, and Ascending: Recent Trends Among Women in Congress, 1977–2006", [Online:web] Accessed 3 May 2007 URL: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/essays/essay4/index.html>

WISH List, Accessed 4 July 2007 URL: <http://www.thewishlist.org>

Newspaper Sources

Alvarez, Lizette "Feminine Mystique Grows in Senate," *The New York Times*, New York, December 7, 2000.

Perlez, Jane "Women, Power, and Politics," 24 June 1984, *New York Times*