

BRINGING MORE WOMEN INTO PUBLIC OFFICE

WOMEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS

*Women Make
a Difference*

Women Make a Difference

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This report is part of CAWP's series entitled "Bringing More Women Into Public Office," a project conducted under a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation.

A Prefatory Note

It is a special pleasure to write a prefatory note for this report of selected highlights from a publications series entitled, *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*. On the face of it, the very existence of such a series demonstrates that change is afoot. A combination of people and institutions are concerned enough to focus seriously on (and commit resources to) a topic which only a few short years ago was hardly recognizable as worthy of even slight attention. Today the topic may even be said to have become "sexy." And it is attracting attention from many quarters—not only researchers and students of women's political participation, but also the national media, the political parties, indeed the entire political establishment, and most important of all a vast and diverse network of women's groups and organizations. "Bring more women into public office"—now more than an item of mild curiosity or passing interest, this call is attracting support from all parts of the political spectrum across the country.

Of course there is still a gap between a good idea and a plan of action or a set of measurable results. Now many people do believe that it makes sense to bring more women into public office—as a matter of equity, in order to draw from a broad pool of talents, for the contributions women's perspectives can make to shaping and implementing public policies and leading public institutions, and because it is a good idea to promote women into public leadership at a moment when it looks as if there may be a "women's vote" to contend with on future election days. But despite the "good idea" or the recognition from many quarters that it would be valuable to have more women in public office, the task has not yet been accomplished. We have only to look at the figures to know that between a good idea and a successful plan of action lies an untraversed universe of challenge. In the early 1980s, women are a majority of the population, a majority of the voting electorate, a vast and growing minority of the labor force—and still only 10% of elected officials serving in legislative and executive positions. At the highest levels, the figures still come under half of that 10%: in mid-1983, women are 2% of the U.S. Senate and 5% of the U.S. House of Representatives; no woman is governor of a state; four women serve as lieutenant governors; and thirty-four other women serve in statewide elective positions. Of course no woman has ever held or been nominated by a major party to run for the two highest offices in the land.

At mid- and lower levels of office, women are doing slightly better. They hold 13% of state legislative seats in 1983; in 1981 they held 6% of county legislative seats and 10% of local positions (councilmembers and mayors combined). These figures represent vast increases over a short period of time. Women have more than doubled their numbers and

percentages in elective office since 1975. Nonetheless, the job remains to be done. For those who are interested and those who care, there is plenty left to excite the intellect and exercise the political muscles in the years ahead.

How have women been coming into political office, and by extension, how can we bring more women into elective and appointive positions? By looking at the backgrounds and routes taken into office by those already there, can we suggest to others not yet in office how they might consider preparing themselves for and entering public leadership? These are the issues which we at the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) have been privileged to examine from our perspective and in a variety of ways over the past two years. Basically, we have discovered and, to be honest, confirmed our belief that we will only bring in more women if women themselves care enough, kick enough, organize more, pay for each other, and push each other in. But that is the tale which is told in much more detail and in much more sophisticated and statistical terms in the reports CAWP is publishing in this series. The series deals with both elective and appointive officeholding; with federal, state, and local levels of office; with women's efforts to organize networks and political action committees for boosting each other toward public leadership.

For over twelve years, the Center for the American Woman and Politics has been counting women in office, describing their trials in getting there, analyzing their backgrounds and experiences once they become officeholders, and monitoring their progress in politics and government. In the early days, and with very limited resources, we put almost all our efforts into gathering the first sets of numbers and drawing the first maps to describe the status of women in public life. Those early descriptive data provided a basic foundation of information. Now, with the present study of routes into office, we begin asking some more specific questions—comparing women's and men's political experiences, comparing majority and minority women's political backgrounds and experiences, examining patterns of political entry into appointive as well as elective offices. As with all research, the issues raised and examined in our present work give rise to new areas of inquiry for the future. Certainly, we expect to continue and follow up our interest in the issue of how women get into public office by asking new questions, identifying and tracking fresh developments, and issuing further reports as warranted.

This important initial effort to chart women's routes into both elective and appointive public offices has been made possible by a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation. Eli Evans, Revson's president, deserves profound thanks and respect for his vision and commitment. His concern with the need for more women in public leadership is well known; his grappling with the questions of how to get them there is an inspiration to those of us who work in the field. Eli Evans's support has been vital to our undertaking, as has been the support of Lisa Goldberg and Carol

Weiland, the Revson Foundation's program officers who worked with us patiently and always encouragingly for over two years.

Bringing more women into political office, or into other areas at all levels of the public community where women's talents and energies are underutilized and their perspectives are underrepresented, is a vital issue for our society today and in the years ahead. The necessary groundwork (data gathering, research, information sharing, education, and training) cannot be begun and certainly cannot be accomplished without the type of enlightened leadership and substantial resources reflected in the Revson Foundation's support of this and related projects about women's political participation.

Ruth B. Mandel
Director, CAWP

Introduction

Since 1975, more than 12,000 women have joined the ranks of elected officials in positions as city councillors, mayors, county commissioners, state legislators, statewide elected officials, and members of congress. In eight years, the proportion of women holding elective office has more than doubled, from about 4% in 1975 to about 10% today.

Women have also made inroads into appointive offices. At the federal level, women held 14% of top policy posts after President Jimmy Carter's first year in office, up from 5% at the end of President Gerald R. Ford's first year. At the end of President Ronald Reagan's first year in office, women occupied 11% of high-level appointive positions. At the state level, women held nearly 13% of appointed cabinet offices in 1981; today they hold 15%.

Watching this growth prompted the Center for the American Woman and Politics to ask what could be learned about the experiences of women officeholders that might help increase the numbers further. What are women's routes of entry to public office, and do their routes differ from those taken by men? The obstacles related to women's entry into political office have been much discussed. What about the positive influences—the factors that can help propel talented and concerned women into public life? If more women enter political life, will it change public policy? These were some of the questions that guided CAWP's two-year project entitled, *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*.

In this project, supported by a grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation, CAWP surveyed and talked with public leaders around the country in order to identify effective channels and strategies for increasing women's numbers in public life. Based on this research, CAWP has issued seven reports in a series entitled, *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*. The first three reports listed below use data collected through the surveys, while the second three are based on information gathered at the consultations.

“Women Appointed to the Carter Administration: A Comparison With Men” provides a first national profile of women who have held high-level appointive offices at the federal level. Data about all women compared with a sample of men who had been appointed to cabinet and subcabinet positions by President Carter are analyzed in the report. Women who served in selected positions on the president's and vice-president's staffs were also included in our study.

“Women Appointed to State Government: A Comparison with All State Appointees” examines appointed state cabinet-level officials. The report compares the first national profile of women in state cabinets to a profile of a sample of all appointees.

“Women’s Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison With Men’s” focuses on the factors which influence women’s entry into elective offices. The study examines women and men elected to state legislatures, county governing boards and municipal offices. A major section focuses on black women’s routes to elective office, comparing the paths of black women to the paths taken by women generally.

“Political Women Tell What It Takes” presents information gathered at all six of CAWP’s consultations with public leaders, but draws most heavily on two sessions in California and one in Minnesota. Discussion at these sessions focused on the roles played by political parties, women’s organizations, and individual women in recruiting and supporting women candidates. Recommendations for bringing more women into public office made by the participants at our sessions are outlined.

“Women’s PACs” is based on information gathered in a meeting with representatives of fourteen political action committees that solely or primarily support women candidates. It describes some of the key questions faced by such groups, and illustrates the varied ways in which they have answered those questions.

“Getting Women Appointed: New Jersey’s Bipartisan Coalition” documents the formation and activities of the New Jersey Bipartisan Coalition for Women’s Appointments. The Coalition was formed after CAWP’s first consultation with the goal of ensuring that women would be appointed to key posts in 1982 by the state’s newly-elected governor.

This report, *“Women Make A Difference,”* uses facts and figures from those six reports. It also draws on other observations and information about women’s political status from CAWP’s studies and work with political women over the past decade. It presents *selected findings* from all of the other reports in the series but does not review all the major findings from the other reports. Since it is based on all the data gathered for this project and on our accumulated knowledge, the interpretations presented here are broader and more speculative than those presented in the other reports.

The report’s purpose is to highlight some findings from our studies which might be useful and relevant for women who are interested in seeking public offices and for people who are interested in designing programs and activities aimed at increasing women’s numbers in public life.

Bringing More Women into Public Office

In the past decade, we have for the first time seen substantial effort applied to bringing more women into public office. Organizations have been mobilized, workshops have been presented, funds have been raised, books have been written, and studies have been conducted. Until now, however, there has been little evidence to back the assumptions on which these efforts were based. Why should we care about increasing the numbers of women in elective and appointive offices? What will be the impact of bringing more women into public office?

Even if there were not documentation that women in public office make a difference, there would be two good reasons for caring about increasing women's presence in government. First, there is a basic issue of equity. Women are more than half of our country's population; and in the 1980 and 1982 elections, women were more than half of the voters. It seems logical and sensible to assume that such a large group would have more than token representation in public leadership; 10% is not an adequate share of leadership roles for a majority group. Second is the issue of full utilization of resources. We cannot afford to draw our leadership from only one tiny segment of the American people. Women's talents and ideas must be tapped if we are to have the best possible government.

Now, to strengthen the case for more women officeholders, CAWP's research has begun to uncover the evidence to back up the belief that women *do* make a difference. Though much remains to be done to document that assertion fully, it is already becoming clear that women bring into public leadership both new and different perspectives on public policy *and* a commitment to paving the way for still more women leaders. These are significant findings because they validate the efforts already in progress and because they provide motivation for us to expand even further the drive to bring more women into public office.

This report begins with a summary of the evidence that women do, indeed, make a difference. We look at both the issues on which there are differences between female and male officeholders and the ways in which women have taken responsibility for supporting other women entering the world of politics. We then present and discuss some of the key findings from our surveys. Finally, armed with the knowledge of who women officeholders are, how they got there, and what differences they make, we conclude with recommendations for bringing more women into public office.

We can envision many roads to leadership and many travelers on those roads. This report is part guidebook and part map. It draws the broad outlines of the terrain. Our hope is that the territory can become familiar

enough and the journey enticing enough so that, despite the roadblocks, many more women will join the trek.

Making A Difference?

*I*n order to think like a woman, you've got to be a woman. And I'd rather put my money on a woman. Because when the chips are down, her thought processes are different. She approaches problem solving differently. She IS different.

Sandra Smoley
Supervisor, Sacramento County,
California

Public Leaders and the Gender Gap

Analyses of public opinion surveys since 1980 have noted the existence of a "gender gap"—a noticeable difference between women and men in political attitudes and voting behavior. Surveyors of public opinion are finding differences between females and males in response to questions about economics, war and peace, the death penalty, and nuclear energy.

Is there a similar gender gap between women and men in public office? Though the term had not yet been coined, a gender gap among public leaders was first documented in 1977 by the Center for the American Woman and Politics. In its first national profile of women and men holding elective office, CAWP concluded that male and female officeholders differed in many ways, but most significantly in their attitudes about issues and their perceptions about women in politics.* The 1977 survey was one of the first studies to show that women elected officials had a distinctly different orientation from their male counterparts on a number of issues, particularly on those commonly labeled "women's issues."

The survey found that women, regardless of whether they described themselves as liberal, moderate, or conservative, were more likely than men to take "feminist" positions on women's issues.** For example, conservative women were more likely than conservative men to agree that ERA should be ratified. On the other end of the political spectrum, liberal women were also more likely than liberal men to support ERA. The same pattern was found on issues such as abortion, government support for child care, and social security for homemakers.

*Marilyn Johnson and Susan Carroll. *Profile of Women Holding Office, II* (New Brunswick, N.J. Center for the American Woman and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1978).

**For purposes of this report, we have labeled as "feminist" those positions on issues endorsed by the major national feminist organizations, such as the National Organization for Women and the National Women's Political Caucus.

Now, CAWP's 1981-1983 project, *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*, confirms that a gender gap continues between women and men in office. Among both elected and appointed officials, we found that women have different opinions from men on a wide range of public issues. Our surveys asked women and men in public office to indicate their agreement or disagreement with these eight statements concerning contemporary issues:

- 1) If left alone, except for essential federal regulations, the private sector can find ways to solve economic problems.
- 2) The military strength of the United States should be superior to that of the Soviet Union.
- 3) Persons convicted of murder should receive the death penalty under most circumstances.
- 4) In the future, no additional nuclear power plants should be built.
- 5) There should be a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion under all or almost all circumstances.
- 6) The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified.
- 7) Government should provide child care services to all parents who desire them, with fees charged according to ability to pay.
- 8) The women's movement has gone too far in pushing for equality between the sexes.

In graphs 1-8 we present four issues selected from among the eight included in our surveys to illustrate the patterns of difference between women's and men's attitudes. While we have presented only half of the issues here, the patterns remain consistent for all eight issues.

Elected Officials on the Issues

Three major patterns emerged from our analysis of elected officeholders' opinions on current issues in 1981.

First, across all levels of office, women have different attitudes from men on current issues. Moreover, this gap becomes even more pronounced in attitudes toward women's issues.

Second, differences between women's and men's positions on issues are greater among those elected to higher levels of office. In other words, the gap between women and men is smallest at the municipal level, somewhat larger at the county level, and widest among state legislators. Furthermore, women at higher levels of office are more "liberal" or feminist than their female counterparts at lower levels.*

Third, black women holding elective office at all levels are the most liberal when compared with the majority of women or men serving at the same levels. Indeed, the trend for women to be more liberal at higher levels of office is consistent among black women; but black women

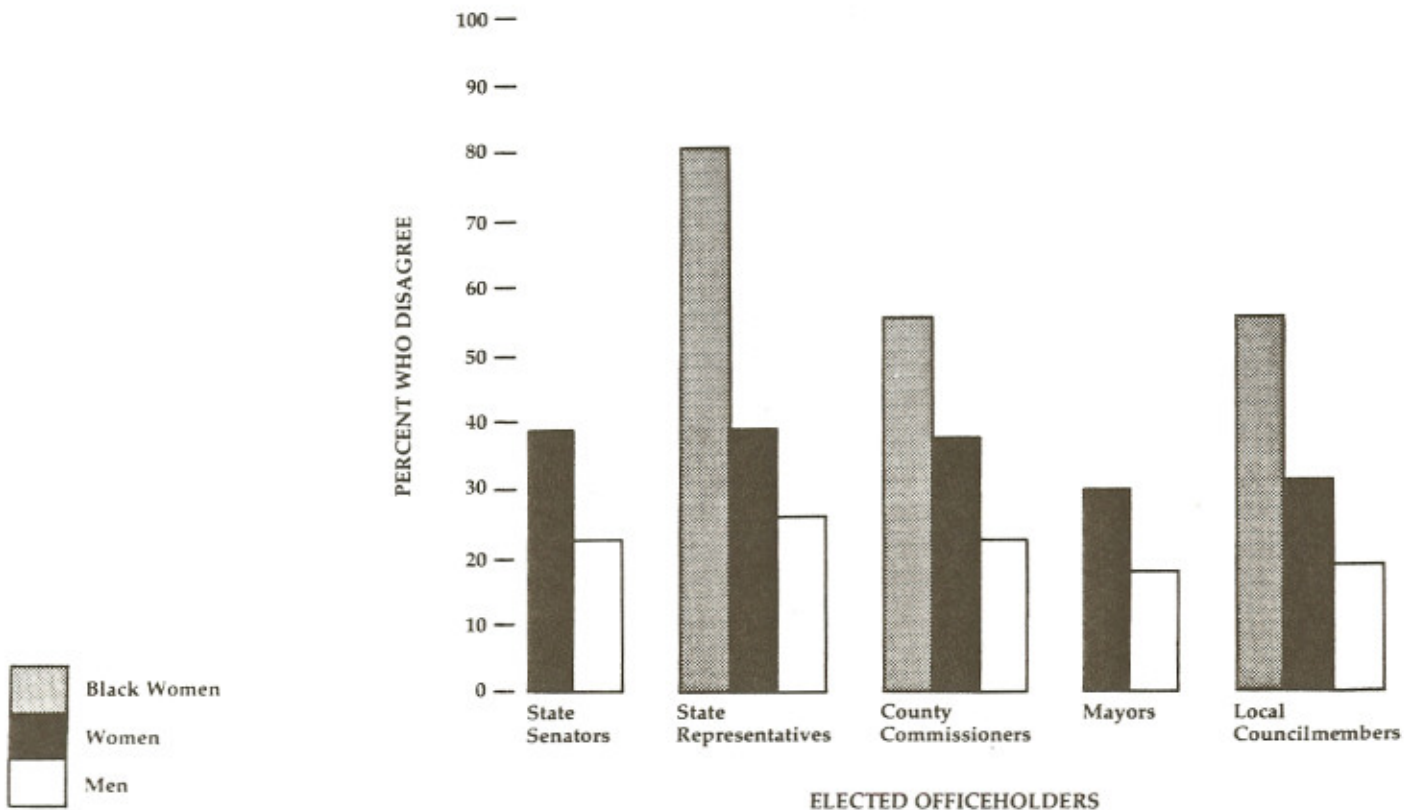
*For purposes of this report, we have used "liberal" to denote disagreement with statements 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and agreement with statements 4, 6, 7 on the above list of issues.

holding municipal offices are more liberal on three of the four issues presented than the majority of women at any level of office, including the state legislative level, the highest level of office we studied. The fact that most black elected women are Democrats does not by itself account for this difference; black elected women are still more liberal when compared with only Democratic elected women.

At the time of our survey in early 1981, President Reagan was formulating and presenting economic policies aimed at getting the government "off the backs" of business and the people. Given this context, the roles the private sector could assume in strengthening the nation's economy were a popular subject of debate. In our survey, we asked elected officials whether they agreed or disagreed that, except for essential federal regulations, the private sector could find ways to solve the nation's economic problems. As graph 1 indicates, at all levels of office women were significantly more likely than men to disagree with the statement, and black women were even more likely than women in general to disagree. The greatest differences are found among state representatives and the smallest differences are found among municipal officials.

GRAPH 1

If left alone, except for essential federal regulations, the private sector can find ways to solve our economic problems.



In response to the statement about the death penalty, the same pattern emerged, with women generally less likely than men to favor capital punishment. Additionally, women in higher offices were more opposed to capital punishment than women in lower offices, and black women were the most likely to oppose the death penalty (graph 2).

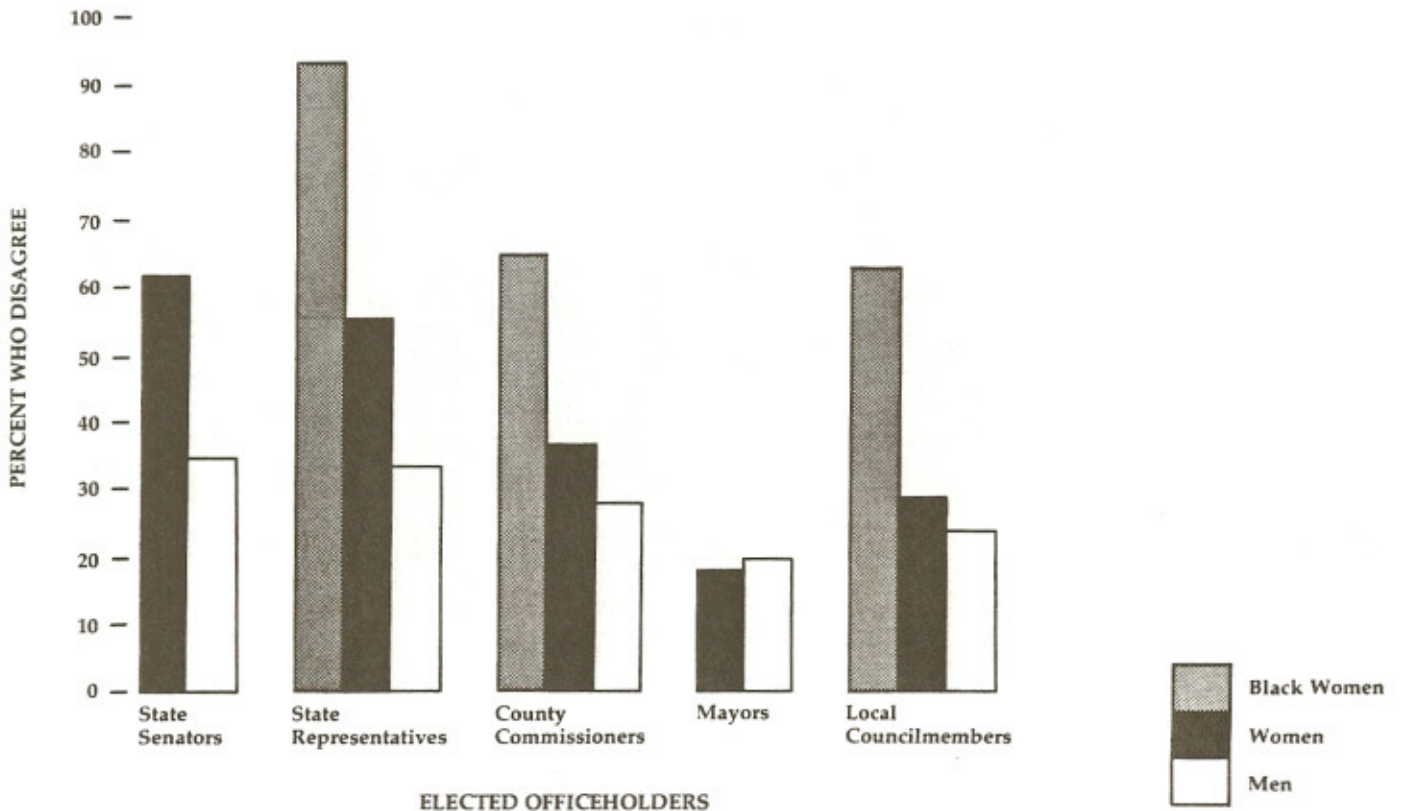
This pattern of findings remains consistent in support for women's issues as well. On two issues frequently associated with the contemporary women's movement—the Equal Rights Amendment and the legal right to have an abortion—women were far more supportive of the feminist position than were their male colleagues; women in higher offices were more likely than those in lower offices to hold feminist attitudes on these issues; black women were the most likely to take a feminist stance.

Majorities of women at all levels of office agreed that the ERA should be ratified. Over three-quarters of women in state legislatures, compared with only half of their male colleagues, supported ratification. Among black women state representatives, support for ratification of ERA was nearly unanimous (graph 3).

This gap between male and female legislators was even wider in states which failed to ratify the ERA by 1982. In those fifteen states there was an

GRAPH 2

Persons convicted of murder should receive the death penalty under most circumstances.



astounding forty point gender gap, with more than twice as many female legislators (76%) as male legislators (36%) saying that ERA should become law. Support among women legislators for ERA was so much stronger than support among men that one can only wonder what the fate of the amendment would be if women held substantially more seats in state legislatures across the country.

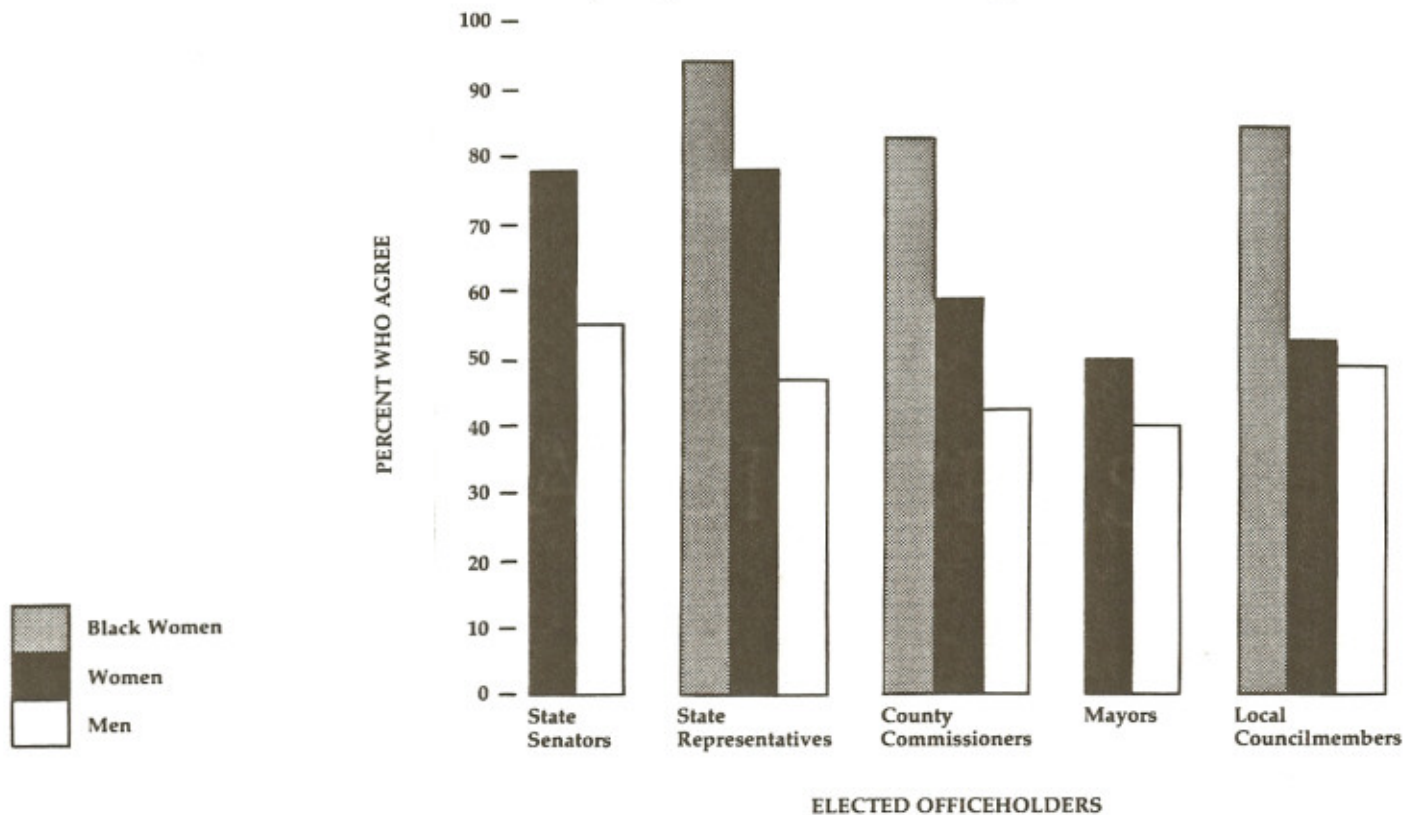
Finally, women were considerably more likely than men to oppose a constitutional amendment to ban abortion (graph 4). Again, the most feminist positions were taken by black women and by women state legislators.

Appointed Officials on the Issues

A gender gap is also evident among appointed officials. As with elected officials, women—whether Carter appointees or state cabinet members—were more liberal and feminist than their male counterparts (graphs 5-8).*

GRAPH 3

The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified.



*In our study of state cabinet members, women were compared to a sample of all appointees. The sample included mostly men and a few women.

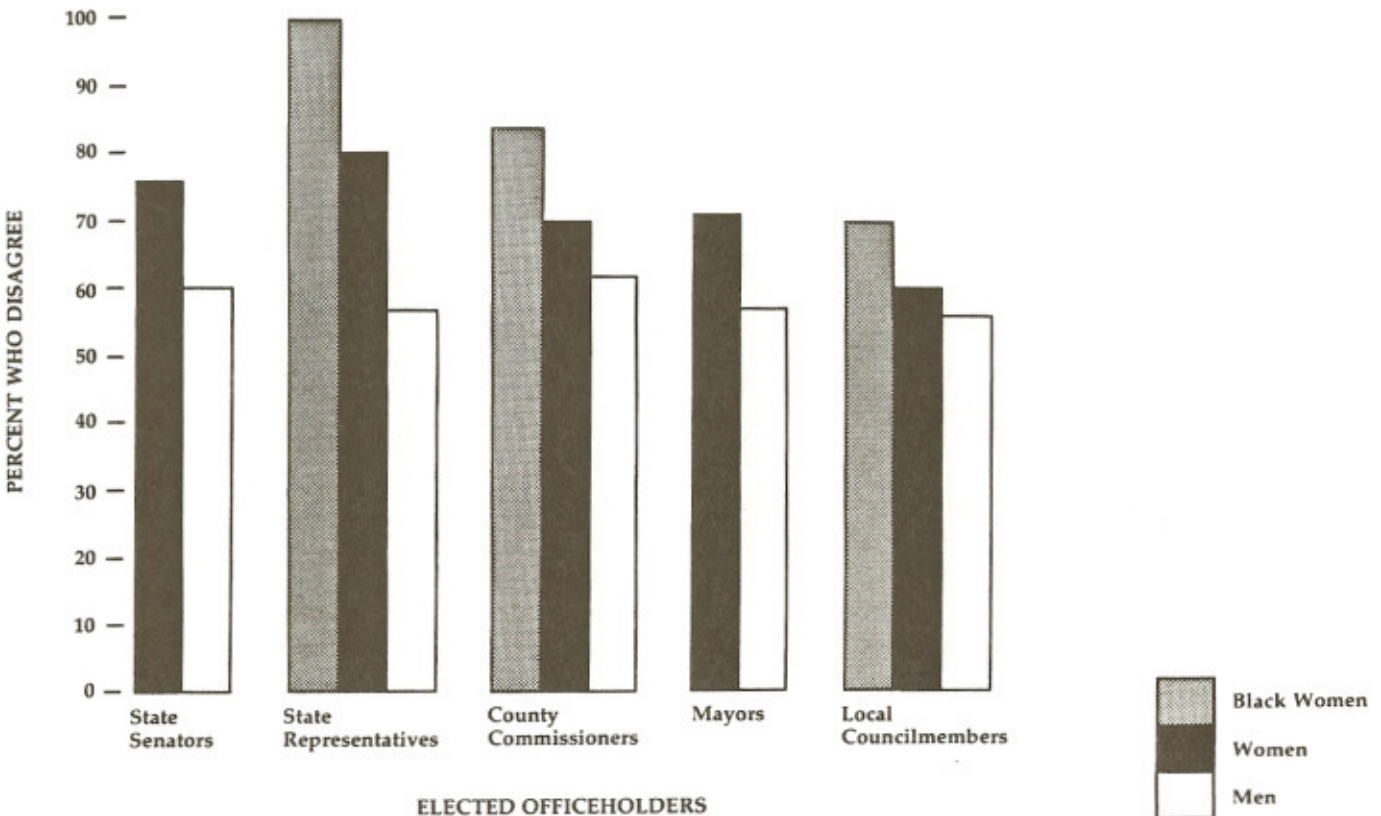
Almost all of President Carter's appointees were Democrats, and both the women and the men generally held moderate to liberal views. Still, women were more liberal than men on three of the four issues; the exception was capital punishment. Women more often than men disagreed that the private sector can solve our economic problems (graph 5). An overwhelming majority—three-quarters—of both women and men opposed the death penalty (graph 6).

While Carter appointees tended to take feminist stances (graphs 7-8), the women expressed stronger commitment to those positions. Thus, while the majority of Carter appointees agreed that ERA should be ratified (graph 7), 69% of the women but only 39% of the men agreed *strongly*. Similarly, Carter appointees expressed overwhelming opposition to a constitutional amendment restricting abortion (graph 8)—96% of the women, compared with 86% of the men, opposed such an amendment strongly.

At the state level, women cabinet officials, more often than cabinet officials in general, disagreed that the private sector can solve the nation's

GRAPH 4

There should be a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion under all or almost all circumstances.



economic woes (graph 5). Women were also more likely than appointees generally to oppose the death penalty (graph 6).

Women cabinet appointees' different perspectives were also apparent on women's issues (graphs 7-8). These differences emerged consistently, even across party lines, with women more feminist than appointees generally, regardless of whether they served in Democratic or Republican administrations.

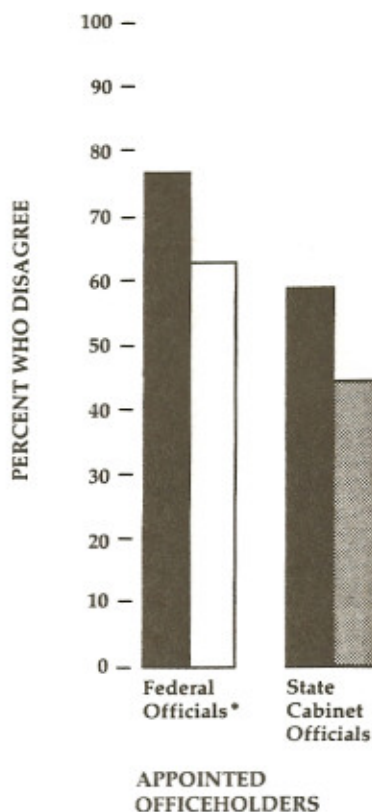
There *is*, then, a gender gap among public officials. We see it in women's more liberal and more feminist points of view, and it is apparent wherever we look—among Democrats and Republicans, in state houses and city halls, wherever public officials are making policy.

A Commitment to Women

The women who have chosen to enter public life make a statement simply by being there, telling the world that it is right for women to be leaders. Many women officeholders make that statement even more emphatically

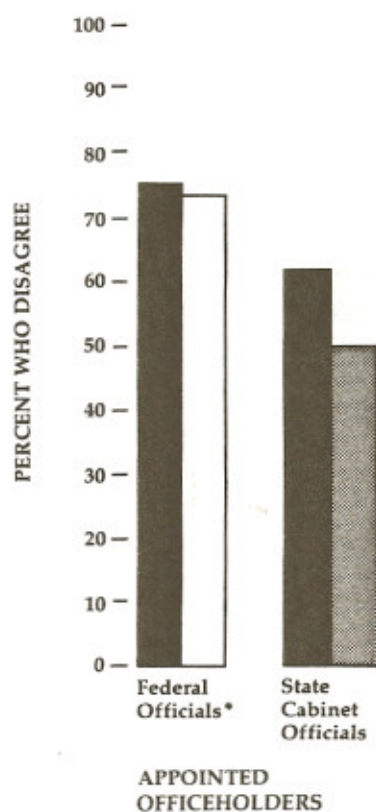
GRAPH 5

If left alone, except for essential federal regulations, the private sector can find ways to solve our economic problems.



GRAPH 6

Persons convicted of murder should receive the death penalty under most circumstances.



*Carter Administration

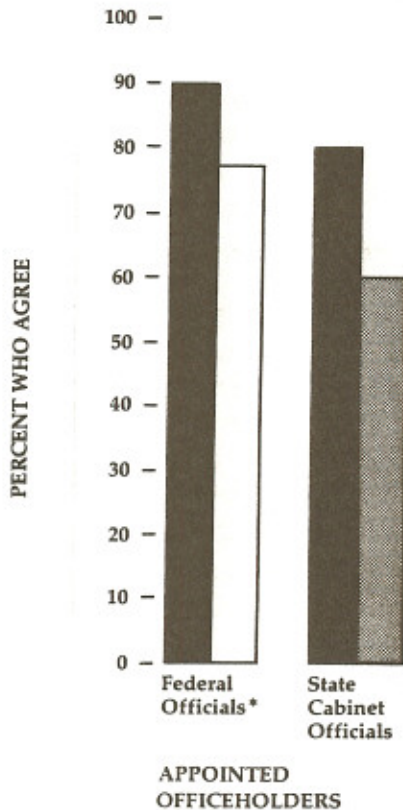
and explicitly by looking beyond themselves to other women who could join them in government, lending encouragement and aid to those women in a variety of ways.

Women officeholders by their very presence in our governing bodies are making a significant difference in the political world. Only a tiny number of women to date have had the visibility or power that could make them role models or mentors for other women. Yet a surprising number of the women we surveyed *had* been inspired or guided by women who came before them. In our studies, up to one-half of the women had role models and similar proportions had mentors. As many as one-third of the role models, and as many as one-fourth of the mentors, were women.

Not long ago, a young girl who wanted to become a U.S. Supreme Court Justice or a big-city mayor would have found only male role models; today, she can aspire to follow in the footsteps of a Sandra Day O'Connor or a Dianne Feinstein. Not long ago, a political leader would have selected as *his* protégé an up-and-coming young man; today either the mentor, the rising star, or both might well be women. The women

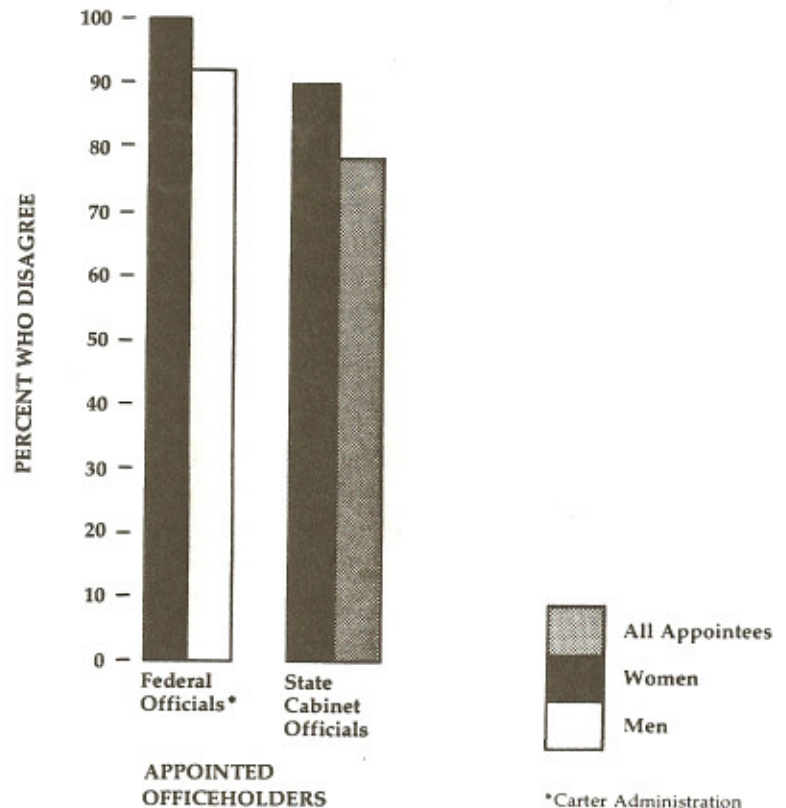
GRAPH 7

The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified.



GRAPH 8

There should be a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion under all or almost all circumstances.



All Appointees
 Women
 Men

*Carter Administration

who are today's role models and mentors provide the foundation on which their successors can continue to build.

Women serving as role models and mentors are important elements in any plan for expanding women's presence in public leadership. But the experiences of today's political women also highlight other necessary features of such a plan, steps which our studies indicate are already being taken by many women officeholders. Devoting a considerable amount of time and energy to a mission they have assumed as a personal responsibility, these women:

- ▶ make special efforts to hire women when they are staffing their offices
- ▶ speak with groups of women to stress the importance of political involvement
- ▶ meet with individual women to share their political knowledge
- ▶ actively seek out and promote women when they have opportunities to make appointments
- ▶ lend their names and prestige to efforts undertaken by others on behalf of women.

Large majorities of the women in our studies who have staff—state legislators and federal and state appointees—actively recruit women when filling jobs. More than three-fourths of women state legislators said they specifically look for women when filling staff positions. Almost all of the women who served in the Carter administration indicated that they made special efforts to identify women for posts in their departments and agencies. In fact, two of Carter's most prominent and visible appointees—Eleanor Holmes Norton, chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Patricia Roberts Harris, who held two cabinet posts—appointed women to an unprecedented 50% of positions in their departments. Similarly, women in state cabinets across the country reported making energetic efforts to recruit women for their staffs.

Once in office, women often take direct action, using their power of appointment to bring more women into government. Although our surveys did not address this issue, we learned in our consultations that women take this official responsibility seriously, seizing the opportunity to open doors for many women.

Leaders at our consultations confirmed what our survey data showed: that the "woman-to-woman" connection is an important tool used to spark political interest and awareness. Speaking with individuals or with groups, women at all levels of office, whether appointed or elected, urge increased political involvement.

In our surveys, we found that about three-fourths of women legislators and appointees frequently encourage individual women to become active in politics. Moreover, virtually all women state legislators and appointed women speak regularly to various groups of women for this purpose.

At our consultations, we heard story after story illustrating how women officeholders use their speaking engagements as occasions to politicize women. And most shared a desire to extend these types of efforts. "What we need," said Minneapolis Alderman Charlee Hoyt, "is a dog and pony show stopping in every town in Minnesota and telling every woman that the political system needs her talents."

Finally, we learned from our consultations that women officeholders around the country are willing to lend their names and their prestige to individual women candidates and to organizations working to support women seeking office. The women who have "made it" offer a helping hand by signing fund-raising letters for individual women candidates, by hosting events for women running for office, by supporting the efforts of women's PACs.

Given the demands of their positions, these women show evidence of a strong commitment when they take the time to educate women about political opportunities and to encourage women's political involvement. Contrary to the notion of the "Queen Bee"—the woman who wants to keep all of the attention and power for herself to the exclusion of other women—the women in our studies and at our consultations welcome the chance to support other women.

Women's presence as officeholders is altering public life. Regardless of whether women serve in municipal, county, state, or federal offices, whether they are elected or appointed officials, whether they are Democrats or Republicans, they bring different perspectives to the public agenda. Indeed, we believe that women's different perspectives will ultimately reshape the public policy agenda.

At a 1980 Conference for Leaders of Organizations of Women Public Officials conducted by the Center for the American Woman and Politics, Patricia Price Bailey, a member of the Federal Trade Commission, urged the audience to notice that women in public life are already making a difference. She illustrated her point with this statement about women's sensitivities to women's concerns:

Why does anyone think that . . . day care facilities, nursing home care, battered wives, the problems of divorced women, and displaced homemakers, just to mention only a few, are surging forward into the consciousness of the nation as issues that need to be addressed? . . . Because women are more sensitive to issues and decisions . . . as they will affect women.

As more women serve in public offices, their presence is bound to affect the composition, the processes, and the policies of government. Based on early indications, there is every reason to believe that as the numbers of women in politics increase, so do the differences they make.

Who Are The Women?

Our recommendations for bringing more women into public office are necessarily grounded in an understanding of who women officeholders are, including factors such as race, age, marital and family status, education, and occupation. Therefore, from the data collected in our surveys, we have selected key elements which together begin to provide a basic demographic sketch of elected and appointed women. Following this sketch, we offer observations and comparisons with our data on elected and appointed men.

Race

Elected Women

- ▶ The overwhelming majority of women elected officials are Caucasian.
- ▶ Black women make up less than 3% of all elected women (1981 figures).
- ▶ Hispanic, Asian-American, and native American women each comprise less than 1% of all elected women.

Appointed Women

- ▶ Minority women constituted a higher proportion of women appointees than they did of women elected officials.
- ▶ In the **Carter administration**, 12% of women in cabinet and subcabinet posts were black.
- ▶ In **state cabinets** in 1981, 5% of women were black; nearly 4% were Hispanic, Asian-American, or native American.

Age

Elected Women

- ▶ The average age of women elected officials ranges from 48 years for **women state representatives** to 50 for **women state senators, county commissioners, and mayors**. The average age of **women local councilmembers** is 49.
- ▶ Less than one-fourth of elected women are under age 40.

Appointed Women

- ▶ The average age of women who served in the **Carter administration** was 43. The average for **women state cabinet members** in 1981 was 42.

- ▶ More than two-fifths of women appointed to state and federal posts were under age 40 at the time of our survey.

Marital Status

Elected Women

- ▶ The majority of women in elective office are married.
- ▶ Among women elected officials, the proportion who are married ranges from a low of 68% of **state senators** to a high of 77% of **local councilmembers**.
- ▶ Among **women state senators, county commissioners, and local councilmembers**, at least 15% are widowed.
- ▶ Large majorities of elected women considered spousal support an important factor in their decisions to run for office.

Appointed Women

- ▶ In the **Carter administration**, 56% of the women were married; 22% had never been married; 19% were divorced or separated; 3% were widowed.
- ▶ Among **women state cabinet appointees** in 1981, 67% were married; 16% had never been married; 12% were divorced or separated; 5% were widowed.

Children

Elected Women

- ▶ The majority of elected women—more than 83% at all levels of office—have children.
- ▶ At all levels of office among those women who have children, less than one-fifth have children under the age of 12.

Appointed Women

- ▶ 70% of **Carter appointees** reported having children. Less than one-third had children under the age of 12.
- ▶ 80% of **women state cabinet members** reported having children. Less than one-third had children under the age of 12.

Education

Elected Women

- ▶ A majority of elected women at all levels of office have attended college.
- ▶ Among **women state legislators**, a majority are college graduates and at least one-fourth have advanced degrees.

Appointed Women

- ▶ Almost all federal appointees and a large majority (86%) of state appointees graduated from college; a majority in each group held advanced degrees.
- ▶ In the **Carter administration**, about one-half of the women had law degrees or doctorates.
- ▶ 23% of women in the **Carter administration** earned their undergraduate degrees from women's colleges.
- ▶ More than one-fourth of **women state cabinet members** in 1981 had law degrees or doctorates.

Occupation and Employment

Elected Women

- ▶ About one-third of **county commissioners** and **state legislators** and **more than half of local elected women** are employed outside the home in addition to holding public office.
- ▶ One-half to three-quarters of women elected officials are working or have worked in professional/technical or managerial/administrative occupations.
- ▶ About one-third of **women state legislators** and about one-half of **women in county and local offices** are working or have worked in traditional female occupations—as elementary or secondary school teachers, secretaries, nurses and other health workers (excluding physicians), or social workers.

Appointed Women

- ▶ Immediately prior to receiving their Carter administration appointments, 43% of women had been working in government.
- ▶ Immediately prior to receiving state cabinet appointments, just under half of women had been working in government.
- ▶ Women state cabinet members under the age of 40 were more likely than those over 40 to have worked as attorneys immediately prior to being appointed.

Observations

Two key conclusions emerge from our analysis of officeholders' personal backgrounds. First, the background characteristics of women differ notably from those of men. Second, elected and appointed women's backgrounds are quite different.

In looking at race, we noted what is apparent to any observer of the political scene: that while the numbers of women in public office in general are small, the numbers of minority women in such positions are

appallingly tiny. At every level of office, minority women constitute less than 1% of elected officials; they are only about 3% of all women elected officials.

Although the number of high-level appointive offices is relatively small compared with the number of elective offices, our data suggest that it is easier for minority women to gain appointive office than to win elected positions. There are several plausible explanations for this. First, officials making appointments must bear in mind many political considerations: who supported them in reaching office; what interest groups constitute their political bases; who is monitoring their performance. Second, those making appointments may choose to count minority women as "twofers"; the appointer is credited with selecting both a woman and a minority group member. Third, officials who make appointments can select the candidates they see as best qualified on all counts including political and professional credentials; the appointment-seeker need only meet with the approval of those few people who make the decisions. This is in contrast to elective office-seeking, where the candidate must pass muster with party leaders and must be seen as electable before the electorate gets a chance to make its judgement. Minority women may be perceived by power brokers as not electable and thus may not be nominated. Finally, while minority women may have the best credentials for public service, they may not have the personal wealth or funding resources often needed to seek elective office, so appointive offices may prove more viable for them.

The majority of elected officials—both male and female—are middle-aged. Elected women, however, tend to be more concentrated in the forty-to-sixty age bracket, while male elected officials are more widely distributed in age. Appointed women are, on the average, younger than elected women. Moreover, in contrast to elected women, appointed women are younger than their male counterparts. More women than men at both state and federal levels were under forty when they were appointed.

The age differences between elected and appointed women are probably related to differences in the credentials necessary for these types of positions. To run for elected office, one often needs the kind of political base that can only be built over time; this makes access to elective office easier for an older woman who has visibility, political experience, and a track record in her community. For an appointment, professional credentials and connections are more important; since more women have recently moved into law, business, and other professions, there are more relatively young women with the appropriate qualifications for these jobs. Moreover, the younger women are more likely to have lifestyles that allow them to assume demanding appointive roles, since they are more likely to have built their life plans around careers or around family arrangements that allow them to maintain their professional responsibilities.

Our findings suggest that being married may pose greater difficulties for women in office than for men. Women officeholders, whether elected or appointed, are considerably less likely than their male counterparts to be married. Furthermore, women are more likely than men to report have spouses who are supportive of their political involvement. Combining marriage with a political career may pose difficulty for any public official; for married women, only a supportive husband can make it work.

Most elected officials have children, but elected women are more likely than their male counterparts to have children older than eighteen, and less likely to have children younger than six. Although the majority of appointees also have children, appointed women more often than appointed men have no children, in part, because many more of the women appointees are single.

Taken together, our findings about age and family situation point to the difficulty of being a "superwoman"—combining marriage, children, and a challenging career. Men, who generally shoulder fewer responsibilities for household and family duties, are free to enter public life regardless of such considerations. Indeed, the home support services provided by their wives ease the burdens of self-sufficiency for daily needs.

Perhaps these differences result in part from self-selection. Younger, unmarried women without children may be most willing to make themselves available for time-consuming, demanding appointive positions. Women who might consider running for office may wait until their children are grown. A woman with a husband supportive of her political involvement, or a woman with no husband, can more easily choose to enter public life. Women with few or no children, or children who are grown, can devote their time to campaigning and serving in public office.

Both female and male public leaders are highly educated. A majority of elected officials attended college, and a majority of appointees hold advanced degrees. Still, elected officials, whose posts require no specific credentials, have occupational backgrounds which mirror the sex-segregated American workplace. Appointees, in contrast, are drawn from a more narrow range of professions.

Public officials face multiple duties and full calendars; for most, having flexible schedules is essential. More than half of elected women list traditional female occupations—secretary or clerical worker, nurse, social worker, or teacher—which offer little time flexibility. However, many elected women are not employed outside the home and thus have room to vary their schedules. Elected men, by comparison, generally have another job besides holding office. That job, however, is more likely than the elected woman's to be attorney, real estate agent, insurance broker, or another such position which offers flexible hours.

As women move into the labor force in increasing numbers, they will lose the flexibility that comes from not being employed outside the home. If they remain largely in the traditional female occupations, their chances

to hold the most demanding public offices will be severely constrained. This could mean that a higher proportion of elected women in the future will come from nontraditional careers, or it could mean that women whose experience is in female-dominated job categories will be clustered in the elected positions that require less time.

Appointed officials, whether men or women, came to their posts with similar managerial or professional credentials. The only noteworthy difference was that, at the state level, women were more likely than men to have worked most recently as attorneys, college administrators, or professors. Since women are increasingly obtaining the professional and managerial credentials seen as essential for appointment to office, we can expect to see growing numbers of "qualified women" available for consideration when high-level appointments are being made in the future.

Routes to Office

In this section, we provide a summary of essential elements in the political backgrounds of the officials we studied, comparable to the summary of demographic characteristics in the previous section. We then offer observations and comparisons with our information about male officeholders.

Political Parties—Party Identification

*Elected Women**

- ▶ 52% of **women state senators** and **women state representatives** are Democrats; 48% are Republicans.
- ▶ 64% of **women county commissioners** are Democrats; 33% are Republicans; 3% are Independents.
- ▶ One-half of **women mayors** are Democrats; 37% are Republicans; 13% are Independents.
- ▶ 45% of **women councilmembers** are Democrats; 45% are Republicans; 10% are Independents.

Appointed Women

- ▶ An overwhelming majority (84%) of **women in the Carter administration** were Democrats.
- ▶ Democratic governors were more likely to appoint women from their own party than were Republican governors.
- ▶ In Democratic administrations, 88% of **women state cabinet members** were Democrats. In Republican administrations, 61% of **women appointees** were Republicans.

Political Parties—Party Recruitment

Elected Women

- ▶ Among those who ran in partisan races, more than two-thirds of women at all levels of office report that political party leaders sought them out and encouraged them to run and/or supported their candidacies after they had decided to run.**
- ▶ 71% of **women state senators** and 68% of **women state representatives** were recruited and/or supported by party leaders.

*Figures presented are for those responding to our survey.

** At the county level, about three-fifths of commissioners ran in partisan races. At the local level, about one-fifth of mayors and one-third of councilmembers ran in partisan races.

- ▶ 78% of **women county commissioners** were recruited and/or supported by party leaders.

Political Parties—Party Activity

Appointed Women

- ▶ About two-thirds of women appointed at federal and state levels reported current or former party activity.
- ▶ 38% of **women in the Carter administration** reported having held elective or appointive party offices.
- ▶ 27% of **women in the Carter administration** had served as delegates to national party conventions.
- ▶ About one-third of **women state cabinet members** reported having held an elective or appointive party office.
- ▶ 13% of **women state cabinet members** had been delegates to national party conventions.

Campaign Experience

Elected Women

- ▶ The higher the level of office in which they serve, the more likely women are to have worked in political campaigns.
- ▶ The proportion who have worked in political campaigns ranges from a low of 36% among **women mayors** to a high of 84% among **women state senators**.
- ▶ The proportion of elected women who have worked for female candidates ranges from slightly less than 15% of **mayors** and **local councilmembers** to nearly 30% of **county commissioners** and over 40% of **state legislators**.

Appointed Women

- ▶ About one-third of **women in the Carter administration** worked in the general election campaign of President Carter.
- ▶ More than one-third of **women state cabinet members** worked in the general election campaigns of the chief executives who appointed them.

Candidate Workshops

Elected Women

- ▶ The higher the level of office in which they serve, the more likely women are to have attended candidate workshops.
- ▶ Most candidate workshops attended by women were sponsored by political parties.
- ▶ Over one-half of **women state legislators** attended candidate training sessions.
- ▶ About 10% of **women state legislators** attended workshops sponsored by women's organizations.

Appointive Officeholding Experience

Elected Women

- ▶ Sizeable proportions of women officials have appointive officeholding experience.
- ▶ 55% of **women state senators** and 42% of **women state representatives** have held appointive offices.
- ▶ 40% of **elected women at the county level**, 22% of **women mayors**, and 36% of **women local councilmembers** have held appointive offices.

Appointed Women

- ▶ Among **women appointed by President Carter**, 22% had served in a previous presidential administration, 26% had appointive or administrative experience in county or local government, and 28% had state government experience.
- ▶ Among **women state cabinet appointees**, 26% had served in previous governors' administrations, 26% had held appointive or administrative positions in county or local government, and 22% had federal government experience.

Elective Officeholding Experience

Elected Women

- ▶ **Women state senators** and **mayors** are more likely than women at other levels of office to have previous elective officeholding experience.
- ▶ Nearly one-half of **women state senators** and **mayors** and one-fourth of **state representatives** had prior elective experience.

Appointed Women

- ▶ Only about 10% of women appointed at federal and state levels had held elective offices at some time before receiving their appointments.

Organizations

Elected Women

- ▶ **Women in state legislatures** are more likely than **women in county and municipal offices** to report that organizations were important in motivating them to run for office.
- ▶ About one-third of **women state legislators** report that organizations played important roles in their decisions to run for office.
- ▶ Women elected officials cite women's organizations more often than any other type of group as having played important roles in

stimulating them to run for office (with the exception of local councilmembers, who more often point to community groups).

- ▶ 26% of **women state senators** and 27% of **women state representatives** report that they were actively encouraged to run for their current offices by women's organizations.
- ▶ Women's organizations formally or informally supported the candidacies of over half of **women state legislators**.

Appointed Women

- ▶ About one-third of **women in the Carter administration** reported receiving organizational assistance in obtaining their appointments.
- ▶ Among **women appointed by President Carter** who had received organizational assistance when they sought appointments, nearly half reported receiving help from women's organizations.
- ▶ 22% of **women state cabinet members** reported receiving assistance from organizations in obtaining their appointments.
- ▶ Among **women state cabinet members** who had received organizational assistance when they sought appointments, 29% reported receiving help from women's groups.

Money

Elected Women

- ▶ **Women state legislators** are more likely than **women in county and local offices** to report that having sufficient financial resources to conduct a viable campaign was important to their decisions to run for office.
- ▶ Two-thirds of **women state legislators** cite money as very or somewhat important.
- ▶ 40% of **women county commissioners** cite money as very or somewhat important.
- ▶ Less than one-fifth of **local women officeholders** cite money as very or somewhat important.

Friends and Supporters

Elected Women

- ▶ Nearly 100% of **women state legislators** consider having a loyal group of friends and supporters to be important to their decisions to run for office.
- ▶ About 90% of **women county commissioners** and **mayors** consider having loyal friends and supporters to be important.
- ▶ 86% of **women councilmembers** consider having loyal friends and supporters as important.

Observations

The traditional pressure points, the old ways of getting political position and power, have worked for many men and for a few women. Some women *have* entered public life by the same routes as men, but the still-small numbers of women in office suggest that new strategies may be needed.

The discussion of women's routes to office must be viewed within a broader context of characteristics almost universally shared by those who seek positions of all types. High self-esteem and personal support networks are two critical prerequisites without which few women seek elective or appointive positions. Only women who have strong confidence in their own abilities to perform the required duties and to serve the public will seek positions in the public arena. Similarly, our research indicates that almost all women officials have strong support groups which they consider essential. Sometimes husbands or children provide the needed approval and encouragement; sometimes a core group of friends offers necessary support. Those who seek elective office almost universally point to a loyal group of friends and supporters without whose backing they probably would not have run.

More specifically, though, there are six additional factors which, according to our research, will influence the numbers of women who run for elective offices or seek appointive offices:

- political parties
- campaign work
- political officeholding experience
- organizations
- money
- political networks, mentors, and individual contacts.

While these factors may be critical for any woman wanting a political position, the relative importance varies for elective and appointive office-seekers. The qualities and experiences may be similar, but the weights attached are different. Strong educational and professional credentials and achievement, technical and/or managerial expertise, and professional contacts are far more important for those who aspire to appointive positions than for those who want to run for elective office. They are necessary but not sufficient prerequisites for selection for high-level appointments. In contrast, these characteristics may add feathers to the caps of those who aspire to elective office, but they are not in most cases essential. Political contacts and political experience of all types, while potentially helpful to those aspiring to appointive positions, are far more critical for success in electoral politics.

For some of these factors, there is a special woman's approach—a new or different way for women to make their mark. In other cases, the goal must be to link more women directly into existing systems. In each of the

areas we discuss, change is possible and necessary to bring more women into public life.

Political Parties

Despite recent speculation on the decline of political parties in the United States, they remain in many areas of the country important factors influencing the success of candidates, particularly for state legislatures and statewide and federal offices. Thus, to increase the numbers of women in public leadership, the parties must begin—whether motivated by self-interest or by fairness—to recognize the importance of including women in meaningful ways. Parties must take active leadership roles in promoting increased participation of women in elective and appointive offices if the numbers of women in public leadership are to increase significantly. The parties must move beyond the proverbial smoke-filled rooms and find women, inside and outside the party ranks, who want to serve in public office.

Party support is viewed as an important factor among women who have emerged victorious in their bids for elective office. In fact, among those responding to our survey, large majorities say that party leaders supported their initial bids for their present positions. CAWP's consultations, which included women who were successful *and* unsuccessful candidates, painted a less rosy picture. These women, who were speaking from their own experiences as well as those of other women they knew who had sought public office, felt that party leaders made few efforts to identify, groom, and support women candidates. Some even felt that the parties made the strongest efforts to find women to run in those situations which were the most difficult—the "sacrificial lamb" races.

The importance of party activity varies from state to state and from race to race. In some states, the parties play important roles in almost all municipal, county, state, and federal elections. In those states, partisan activity is important for any woman interested in running, no matter for what level of office. In other states, parties are weaker and play minor or insignificant roles in the process of nominations and elections for some or all offices. In such situations, party activity might be helpful, but not critical, for the woman who wants to run for office; community activities and visibility are likely to be more important than party work.

Activity within one's political party can vary. One can, for example, attend the meetings of a partisan club in one's community; become an officer in a local political organization; contribute money to political candidates; work in party-sanctioned campaigns; become an elected member of a political party committee at local, county, state, or federal levels; become an elected delegate to a national party convention.

Among federal and state appointees, partisan credentials appear to be more important for women than for men. Even though similar proportions of women and men (about two-thirds) reported being active

in their parties, party loyalty may be more necessary for women than for men. For example, women appointed by President Carter were more likely than men to be Democrats (84% of women compared with 73% of the men were Democrats). A similar pattern was evident at the state level in both Democratic and Republican administrations.

· Serving as a delegate to a national party convention was one type of party activity that was important for women who served in the Carter administration. Women were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to have served as delegates.

There is evidence that the parties can be convinced to dedicate resources to women, whether because of the prodding of dedicated women or because of a recognition of potential benefit to the party. As co-chair of the Republican National Committee in the late seventies, Mary Dent Crisp initiated a series of party-sponsored workshops which stimulated record numbers of Republican women to run for state legislative seats. Many women won, and still more became active in politics for the first time. More recently, the Democratic party has begun paying special attention to women candidates. In 1982, the Democratic National Committee formed the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund to channel money to Democratic women candidates. With growing evidence of a "gender gap" suggesting the increasing power of women voters, the parties will probably look for still more ways to be seen as actively promoting women.*

As women become more active in their parties, and as the parties pay more attention to promoting and supporting women, opportunities for placing more women in appointive office will also increase. Party activity has been an important factor in the backgrounds of women appointees; as more women become better known in their parties, those who make appointments will be more likely to consider them. Here, too, the "gender gap" is already having an impact; governors whose margins of victory could be credited at least in part to a women's vote have recognized the importance of sustaining and rewarding that support, and, in many cases, have appointed substantial numbers of women to important posts. Party activity has provided many women with political background experience and contacts which have been very useful in later bids for elective or appointive offices. For the immediate future, party activity is likely to remain an important route to office for women.

Campaigns

Work in campaigns is one way to get people excited about politics while training them in the skills necessary for seeking political office. For women, more than for men, campaigns have been important stops *en*

*During the summer of 1983, Senator Richard Lugar, chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee, was reported to be seeking women to run for the U.S. Senate in 1984 as one way of combatting the Republicans' "gender gap" problems.

route to elective and appointive offices; this is especially true for minority women.

At nearly every level of office, more women than men have worked in campaigns. Moreover, elected women officeholders are more likely than men to have worked for women candidates; at the state legislative level, nearly two-fifths of the women had worked in other women's campaigns. Virtually all black women in state legislatures and on county commissions have campaign experience; three-quarters of black women legislators worked for female candidates.

Campaigns are hectic and stimulating environments in which women can learn much in a very short time. They can learn some of the skills and resources they will need to wage their own campaigns. They can make important contacts in their parties and communities. They can accumulate political "chits" to be called in when they run themselves. They can gain a better understanding of local voters, issues, and political traditions. If they work for women candidates, they can also become familiar with the issues and barriers that are special to women's campaigns.

Many high-level appointees in state and federal government are drawn from among the campaign staffs of governors or of the president. This is especially true for women. Work in campaigns is one way for women to come to the attention of those who later make appointments; it is a way that many women seem to have compensated for their exclusion from traditional political networks. When the candidate is a woman who is herself committed to supporting the advancement of other women, it could prove particularly important, although we have had too few women to date in elected positions as chief executives to verify this.

Committed volunteers in a campaign can give the winning edge to a candidate. Our research shows that those same volunteers may well seek office themselves at some time in the future. Thus, getting women involved in campaigns may be one of the most effective means of increasing women's involvement in politics over the next several years.

Officeholding Experience

It is important for women to know the value of appointive offices as training grounds for other kinds of offices.

Alderman Sally Howard
Minneapolis, Minnesota

At every level of government, there are hundreds of boards, commissions, and councils to which members are appointed. The majority of these boards and commissions function in an advisory capacity and require a minimal commitment of time. Their mandates may include studying issues, reviewing regulations, or making recommendations to elected officials. Serving on such a board or

commission can enable an individual to develop expertise in a particular policy area, to work with public leaders, to make valuable contacts, and to become visible in the community.

Many women elected officials have taken their first steps into the public arena through their service in appointive offices. Women elected officials more often than men have experience in appointive officeholding. This route to elective office for women is important and, in many cases, easily attainable.

Competition for seats on boards and commissions at the state level is often very fierce. Those who receive such appointments at the state level frequently have a history of activity in their political parties or expertise in the subject area addressed by the board. However, it is important to remember that many such panels are required by statute to include bipartisan representation, and some are required to include members of the general public or consumers in addition to experts. Therefore, women should give serious consideration to the idea of seeking out such positions.

Competition for appointments to boards and commissions at local or county levels is often minimal or nonexistent. In fact, many positions go begging to be filled. Women interested in such appointments should indicate their interest to local elected officials. Since elected women often have a strong commitment to appointing other women when they have the opportunity, a good first step might be to contact an elected woman to indicate willingness to serve.

Elective offices at lower levels are also stepping stones to higher offices. Although women in office are less likely to have elective experience than are their male counterparts, it is not uncommon for a mayor to have served on a municipal council or for a state senator to have held office as a state representative. Although the experience of serving in lower offices before moving up may help build a political résumé and the personal confidence which is essential in running for higher office, *not* having held an elective office should not deter women who want to run. Men have won offices as U.S. senators and governors with little more experience than as basketball players or movie stars.

Organizations

Organizations can provide training, motivation, leadership experience, contacts, volunteers, and sometimes even funding for candidates. They can help to identify and promote potential appointees. They can publicize the efforts and views of office-seekers and mobilize backing from their members. They have done all of these things for male candidates in the past. Now, individuals and groups interested in increasing the numbers of women in office should look to women's and community organizations in planning recruitment efforts.

Activity in organizations has proven an important route of entry into politics for women who have run for office. Community organizations (for

example, the PTA, tenant associations, and issue-based groups) and women's organizations (the League of Women Voters, the American Association of University Women, and the National Women's Political Caucus) are prominent in the backgrounds of women who currently hold elective office. In addition, church organizations, civil rights groups, and black and Hispanic community organizations have been important in stimulating minority women's political participation.

Findings from our study of women elected to office support the idea that women's organizations play a special role in recruiting and supporting women running for office. Across all levels of office, a larger proportion of women than men indicated that organizations other than political parties played important roles in motivating them to seek their current offices. Women's organizations make up much of this difference, and the function which women's groups perform in prompting women to run for office is a major difference between women's and men's routes to elective office.

The League of Women Voters has emerged as critical to motivating women's candidacies; and in ever-increasing numbers, women in public office also report membership in feminist organizations, such as the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Organization for Women. The League of Women Voters, while a nonpartisan organization which does not support or endorse candidates, has stimulated many women to enter the political arena. The League is the women's organization which most frequently motivated women to run for office. Membership in the League is reported by about half of women state legislators, and among women in county and local offices, the League is named most often as the organization to which they belong. About half of women legislators and a quarter of women county commissioners belong to feminist groups such as NOW or the Women's Political Caucus. Women state legislators most often named the Women's Political Caucus as a group which encouraged their candidacies and formally or informally endorsed them once they decided to run.

Women's professional associations and networks have also proven especially helpful in identifying women for candidacies or for state or federal appointments. These groups, which are becoming increasingly politically active, include associations of nurses, teachers, labor union women, women lawyers, women business owners, and others whose awareness of the importance of women working together to support one another has been sharpened by experience in the workplace. In some cases, they are banding together to push for women's appointments and are encouraging their members to seek appointments. In other cases, they are actively seeking out women to run for office, and some are contributing money to women's campaigns.

Efforts to recruit women into political life, to groom women candidates, and to identify women for appointments must be targeted toward women's organizations and networks and other groups in which women

play central roles. These groups have constituted a base of support for women already in office, and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Women's organizations are beginning themselves, in various states and communities around the country, to encourage members' participation, but their work needs to be strengthened and supported. Community groups must be alerted to the ways in which it would benefit them to support the movement of more women, and especially more minority women, into public life. Those organizations which care about fair representation and about the impact of public policy on women's lives must know how crucial they can be, and must learn why it is in their interest to help in bringing more women into public office.

Money

It is our responsibility to change the ways that money for campaigns is raised and distributed.

Eva Garcia
State Board of Education
California

The importance of financial resources in a campaign can vary greatly depending on the level of office sought and the size of the district in which a woman runs. For many local offices, victory can be assured by a committed band of volunteers and a campaign budget of well under \$500. For congressional or statewide seats, upwards of a million dollars may be required to run. For state legislative seats, the cost of running varies greatly by districts and states.

Structural reforms in campaign finance might be an ideal solution for candidates. Public financing of campaigns, limitations on campaign spending, or limitations on the amount which could be donated by any individual or group might offer advantages to candidates less able to raise massive sums—a category that often includes women. However, such changes may not come soon or at all, so women must find ways of raising the necessary funding to conduct serious campaigns.

Traditional sources of political money—wealthy individuals and political action committees—must become accessible and committed to funding women's campaigns. They must come to recognize that women can win and that they deserve support.

At the same time, the new sources of support that have sprung up recently should be strengthened and expanded. PACs which dedicate their resources specifically to women candidates are generally new and small, but they constitute a significant development in the efforts being undertaken to increase women's numbers in elective office. They signify women's growing willingness to play for higher stakes.

Individual women and women's organizations also need to understand the importance of putting their dollars into electing women. Kathy Wilson of the National Women's Political Caucus puts this idea into perspective by pointing out to women with money to spend on themselves, "You can buy a pair of shoes—or you can buy a democracy." More women must recognize that it is both in the public interest and in their own interest to learn to give money to women's campaigns—not just in nickels and dimes, but in substantial amounts. And the men who share women's concerns about electing the best candidates must share this responsibility as well.

Political Networks

I think it is crucial that if we want women to be strong, that we draw circles larger, to bring people in, and not draw them smaller to keep people out.

Sally Olsen
State Representative
Minnesota

Getting ahead in politics frequently means knowing the actors on the political stage. Therefore, getting to know elected and appointed officials, party leaders, and others involved in the electoral process is helpful for one who wants to launch a political career. For those seeking local offices in small communities, the cast of characters is small. For higher level offices or in large communities, the cast can be quite large.

Working on the staff of a public official, working in government, and working in campaigns, organizations, and political parties all help one's political networks to grow. Women and men have served as political mentors and trainers for women now serving in public office. For women it has been—and always will be—useful to include in their political networks both women and men.

Many women in office today, though, feel that they have a *special* responsibility to serve as mentors for other women moving into public life. Thus, women interested in political activity can and should make special efforts to tap into the existing networks of political women and take advantage of the expertise and commitment they offer. These formal and informal associations of women active in politics, including elected women's organizations, generally cite as one of their goals expanding the numbers of women officeholders—both elective and appointive. To do this they must reach out to new constituencies as they increase their membership. At the same time, channels can be created for one-to-one contacts outside of organizations that will permit women with political aspirations to meet the women already in office to get strategies, support, and inspiration from them.

Women in the U.S. Congress

***M**y business is to get legislation through. My added business is to get legislation through to help women.*

Barbara B. Kennelly
U.S. Representative
Connecticut

As of July 1983, there were twenty-four women serving in the U.S. Congress—two in the Senate and twenty-two in the House. Less than 5% of members of Congress are women. Both women Senators are Republicans. In the House, there are thirteen Democrats and nine Republicans.*

Two-thirds of the states (thirty-three) have no women in their congressional delegations. The seventeen states with women in their delegations are California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Tennessee. Three women serve in the California and Maryland delegations; Connecticut, Illinois and Ohio each have two. The other twelve states have one congresswoman each. Among our findings about the congresswomen:

Background

- ▶ Half of the women serving in the U.S. House were first elected in 1980 or later. Both women senators are in their first term of office.
- ▶ Four women entered office by succeeding their husbands; two won special elections; two assumed their husbands' candidacies. Three have since been re-elected; the fourth, Sala Burton, entered office in June 1983.
- ▶ The median age is forty-eight. The two youngest members are both thirty-six; the oldest is seventy-two.
- ▶ One-half are currently married.

*CAWP surveyed all women members of the U. S. Congress (except for Sala Burton, who won office in a special election on June 21, 1983). Fifteen completed our survey (eight Democrats and seven Republicans), four sent biographies, and four did not respond. Some information for this brief profile was compiled from other sources.

-
- ▶ More than three-quarters hold at least a bachelor's degree.
 - ▶ Three women are lawyers; four have worked as teachers; three have owned small businesses. Many have worked in several occupations.

Routes to Office

- ▶ Eight of the congresswomen have worked for public officials; four served as aides to congressmen.
- ▶ Of the thirteen women who responded to our question about campaign activity, twelve reported working in campaigns. Eight of the twelve have worked for female candidates.
- ▶ About half held governmental offices before being elected to Congress.
- ▶ About half reported having had a role model and/or a political mentor.

Organizations

- ▶ Of the thirteen congresswomen who answered our question about organizational membership, a majority belonged to at least one women's organization.
- ▶ Five of the thirteen were encouraged to run for office by women's organizations.
- ▶ Twelve of the thirteen received support from a women's organization when they ran for office.

Issues

- ▶ Of the congresswomen who completed our survey, a majority gave liberal or moderate responses to all questions about current issues.
 - ▶ A majority disagreed with the proposition that the private sector can solve our economic problems.
 - ▶ A majority are against capital punishment.
 - ▶ Four-fifths favor ratification of ERA.
 - ▶ Nearly two-thirds oppose a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion.
-

Black Women in Elective Office

W*e minorities and women must bring our own unique skills to politics; we must speak for ourselves and defend our positions. I ran because I wanted to represent minorities and women on the vital issues that affect all our lives.*

Augusta Alexander Clark
City Councilwoman
Philadelphia

In 1982, 421 black women served in elective offices as members of the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, county governing boards, local councils or as mayors.* This figure represents 2.5% of all women serving in these offices during 1981, and less than three-tenths of 1% of all elected officials. (The most recent year for which complete figures are available is 1981.**)

No black woman has ever served in the U.S. Senate. In 1981, two of the eighteen women serving in the U.S. House of Representatives were black, constituting 11% of all women in the house. Of 908 women in state legislatures in 1981, sixty-three were black (7%); forty of 1,128 women on county governing boards were black (3.5%); twenty-two of 1,707 women mayors were black (1%); 294 of 12,755 women elected to local councils were black (2%).

As part of its study of women's routes to elective offices, the Center for the American Woman and Politics surveyed a sample of black women who were serving as state legislators, members of county governing boards, and local councilmembers. Analyzing the responses of 121 black elected women, we provided a detailed profile of black women holding elective office in 1981. We also compared the sample of black women to a sample of all women elected officials.***

*These figures were compiled by the Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20004.

**The total number of women elected officials in these offices in 1981 was 16,518. As of July 1982, a total of 451 black women served in these five offices: two in the U.S. House of Representatives; sixty-four in state legislatures; forty-three on county governing boards; twenty-seven as mayors; 315 on municipal councils. The total number of all women serving in these offices during 1982 is not yet available.

***Detailed findings from the survey of black elected women appear in Part 2 of "Women's Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison With Men's," one report in CAWP's series, *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*.

The profile of black elected women differs from the profile of all elected women in several significant ways. Differences between black women and all elected women emerge in personal background, political experiences, organizational ties, and political ambitions. The routes black women take into elective office, although similar to the routes of women overall, are different in some noteworthy ways. Key findings from our study of black women elected officials include:

Background

- ▶ Black elected women, like elected women overall, are most likely to be between the ages of forty and sixty.
- ▶ Black women are less likely to be married than elected women overall. About two-fifths of black women state representatives and county commissioners and slightly over one-half of black women councilmembers are married.
- ▶ Black elected women are highly educated—more so than elected women overall—with half of local councilwomen and more than half of state legislators and county commissioners holding college degrees.
- ▶ Black elected women are more likely than women in office overall to be lawyers; 11% of black women legislators, 6% of black women county commissioners, and 3% of black women local councilmembers are lawyers.

Routes to Office

- ▶ The overwhelming majority of black elected women are Democrats: 100% of state legislators, 92% of county commissioners, and 84% of local councilmembers.
 - ▶ Black elected women have a great deal of campaign experience; 95% of state legislators and county commissioners and 68% of local councilmembers have worked in campaigns.
 - ▶ Three-fourths of black women legislators and one-third of black women at county and local levels have worked for female candidates.
 - ▶ About one-third of black women state representatives and local councilmembers and nearly one-half of black women county commissioners have held appointive offices. Few black women have held elective offices prior to serving in the offices they now hold.
 - ▶ One-half to two-thirds of black elected women reported having role models or mentors.
-

Organizations

- ▶ Organizations play a greater role in encouraging black women to run for office than they do for women in general.
- ▶ National and local black organizations, community groups, and churches play particularly important roles in encouraging black women's political participation at county and local levels; for black women state representatives, partisan groups and women's organizations were similarly important.
- ▶ Black women are more likely than women overall to be encouraged by women's organizations to seek public office. However, civil rights organizations are also instrumental in black women's decisions to run.
- ▶ Black women are more likely than women overall to belong to feminist organizations. Over two-thirds of black women state representatives compared with less than one-half of all women state representatives belong to feminist organizations. Among local councilmembers, one-third of black women compared with one-twentieth of councilwomen in general belong to feminist groups.

Political Ambition

- ▶ Substantial majorities of black elected women at all levels said they planned to seek an additional term in their current offices.
 - ▶ About half of black women elected officials at state, county, and municipal levels indicated that they would like to hold other political offices in the future.
-
-

Hispanic Women in Elective Office

Any group whose social and economic participation has been restricted will develop insights and sensitivities that can make them more effective when they gain power and prominence. I have great faith that as women take their rightful places in all sectors of society, we will apply the lessons we have learned from the years of listening and watching others act. I am also hopeful that community, professional and political women's groups will make sure that minority women are an integral part of the movement.

Rosaria Anaya, President
San Francisco Board of Education

As part of its study of routes to elective office in 1982, CAWP identified and interviewed twelve Hispanic women elected officials—five state legislators, four county commissioners, one mayor, and two local councilmembers. It is certain that, while the total numbers are extremely small, there are many more Hispanic women holding local offices than we were able to identify in our survey. Therefore, the following profile, because it is not based on a representative sample, provides only a “first snapshot” of Hispanic elected women.

The twelve women who participated in our study were from eight states—Arizona, California, Connecticut, Colorado, Michigan, New Mexico, New York, and Texas. Half were currently married. They were similar in age and education to elected women overall. Half were under fifty years of age and half were over fifty. More were in their fifties than in any other age group. One-third held college or advanced degrees.

Eleven of the twelve participants were Democrats; one was a Republican. A quarter were serving in their first terms of office. As was the case for elected women generally, few Hispanic women had held a previous elective office but nearly half had held appointive positions prior to their election.

Five of the twelve officeholders had been encouraged to run for office by Hispanic or women's organizations or coalitions—for example, Mujeres Unidas of Michigan, a local Women's Political Caucus, or Comision Femenil Mexicana Nacional. Eight reported membership in women's organizations, with the Women's Political Caucus cited most frequently.

Nearly all the women we questioned were politically ambitious. All planned to seek another term in their current offices, and ten of the twelve aspired to other elected or appointed posts.

The participants in our study were asked whether Hispanic women encountered any special barriers to holding elective office. Two-thirds felt that there were some special obstacles faced by Hispanic women running for office. One woman described the barriers this way:

Being from a culture that is very male-oriented presents some problems. Women are supposed to have a husband and children and not be active in politics. I have encountered problems within my community because of that mentality.

Another woman said, "Many men, mostly anglos, feel women are not capable of handling any kind of job."

Like many other women, Hispanic women saw political parties as obstacles for women like themselves who want to run for public office. One woman said:

As far as the party is concerned, there are 'Hispanic' seats. Usually these seats are filled by men. There are no efforts made to have Hispanics run in non-Hispanic districts, and even fewer efforts are made for Hispanic women in any district.

The women we interviewed made several recommendations for increasing the numbers of Hispanic women in office. These included:

- ▶ providing formal and informal opportunities for Hispanic women to meet and talk with Hispanic elected women in meetings and conferences.
 - ▶ encouraging Hispanic women to work with community groups in order to build bases of support for their candidacies.
 - ▶ strengthening networks of elected women generally, and urging elected women to encourage Hispanic women's involvement.
-

The Wave of the Future: Women Supporting Women

*I*t's important to have women in our legislative bodies—diversity in the decision-making process makes a difference. It's our job, as women, to make sure that more women get into public office. The more women we have, the more they can do for each other and for all of us.

Joy Picus
Councilwoman
Los Angeles

The most encouraging evidence suggesting that we can and will see more women moving into public life can be captured in one phrase: women supporting women. While some women will continue to follow the old channels, many others are looking at what is special about women and seeking new routes into office—women's ways of constructing political careers. Increasing numbers of women find substitutes or supplements for traditional backing and experience by relying, at least in part, on women's resources. Women are recognizing the importance of supporting one another and they are establishing mechanisms for doing so.

The drive to bring more women into public office is not exclusively linked to feminist ideology, although feminists initiated it in the early seventies and are among its strongest proponents. Today some of the most conservative women see the value of electing and appointing more women. Phyllis Schlafly has chided President Reagan for not appointing enough women to high-level positions. And Linden Kettlewell, political director of the Republican National Committee, has said that one of her responsibilities was to recruit more women to run for office, "not because of the hue and cry about the gender gap, but because they're qualified and give a different perspective."*

Ten years ago, only a few pioneering feminist organizations, such as the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) and the National Organization for Women (NOW) were speaking out about the importance of having more women in office. Today those groups have reaffirmed and strengthened their commitments, and they have impressive company: long-established women's organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, the American Association of University Women, and the Business and Professional Women; professional and occupational groups with many or mostly women members, such as associations of nurses,

**New York Times*, August 10, 1983.

teachers, lawyers, trade union women, and women business owners; associations of women in government and of elected women; and organized subgroups within the major parties.

Women have also organized to pressure both federal and state executive branches to place more women in high-level appointive offices. Women first began paying attention to the appointments process in the mid-seventies. The Washington, D.C.-based Coalition for Women's Appointments, which included more than fifty women's organizations, formed during the 1976 presidential election season and began establishing guidelines for identifying suitable women and pressuring for their appointments. Such efforts did not cease after the first wave of Carter appointments; the Coalition, administered by the NWPC, continued to promote the appointment of women whenever openings occurred in the administration. These efforts became a model for states which subsequently began similar projects. In some states, such as Minnesota, the pressure for women's appointments came from informal coalitions; in other states, such as New Jersey and Massachusetts, women created new structures to press for the appointment of women. In still other states, such as Missouri, women have assembled lists of women who could appropriately be appointed to boards and commissions, not just to the high-level posts. These efforts have met with varying degrees of success, but there is no question that both federal and state administrations are aware of the pressure to appoint more women, and the various appointments projects can take at least some credit for that awareness. Especially in states where new governors received significant organized women's support or could attribute their victories in large part to the women's vote, there have been concrete responses in the form of noteworthy appointments.

The new phenomenon of women's PACs is further evidence of women deciding to support women's advancement in public life in a serious, concerted fashion. The national Women's Campaign Fund and the PACs of NOW and NWPC were the forerunners in the seventies and remain the largest and most broad-based such organizations, but the growth of state and local PACs dedicated to infusing money into women's campaigns has been impressively fast and widespread. That much of the money given to these groups comes from women confirms the old adage that "the best way to get something done is to do it yourself." Women, recognizing the critical importance of money in campaigns, are beginning to do it themselves, rather than waiting for the traditional sources of campaign funding to back women as energetically as they do men. The women's PACs are still tiny by comparison with those of the doctors, realtors, or major corporations, and much remains to be done to channel adequate funding to women candidates. But the problem has been recognized, and even modest efforts are a good beginning.

Women already in public life increasingly turn to formal or informal associations that bring them together; these groups, in turn, often press

for more women in public office. Today, five states have statewide associations of elected women. There are caucuses of women state legislators in six states as well as one new such association for the New England region. The National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the National Conference of State Legislatures have women's caucuses or networks. These organizations often serve as support networks for women already in public office. Belonging to such groups, the women report, "recharges our batteries," and encourages them to draw other women into public life.

Individual women, too, have played important roles in supporting the advancement of other women. Women in the Carter administration, such as Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris and Assistant Secretary Donna Shalala, appointed women to half of the positions in their jurisdictions. Several women were able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars overnight so that they could convince Ann Richards that her candidacy for the job of Texas state treasurer would be viable. In many less visible cases, women have pressured, cajoled, encouraged, inspired, chided, advised, or otherwise supported other women—sometimes strangers, sometimes women from other states or other parties, sometimes at moments when it was difficult or when they were themselves discouraged. The camaraderie in our consultations confirmed our sense that there is a special bond among political women, one that sustains them and motivates them to bring others in.

Finally, there are programs women have created which are aimed at encouraging other women to consider public life, whether right away or in the distant future. CAWP and other women's organizations collect and disseminate information about women's participation in politics and design and conduct programs aimed at bringing more women into public life. The National Women's Education Fund offers political skills training programs around the country. The Public Leadership Education Network, a consortium of ten women's colleges and two national resource organizations (the Center for the American Woman and Politics and the National Women's Education Fund), has initiated several programs to increase the awareness and involvement of students and community women.

Somehow, whether consciously or unconsciously, all of the women involved in all of these efforts recognize that women will make a difference. As we learn more and experience more to confirm that recognition, we will no doubt see even more women—and men—joining together to bring more women into public office. Our strongest recommendation, then, is that such efforts—particularly those by women for women—be nurtured and strengthened. Pressure must be maintained on parties and those in power to identify, groom, and support women who aspire to public office. Women's organizations must recognize and consolidate their own power, and they must capitalize on the advantages

they already have in creating networks for women. The women already in office must be reminded of their important responsibilities as role models and path breakers, and they must be acknowledged for their dedication to supporting other women. More educational programs must be created, and those that exist must be expanded so that more women will learn about how they can enter public life and why it matters. Financial support for women's campaigns must be sustained and increased and new sources for such support must be identified. Women must learn how and when to use traditional channels for entering public leadership as well as how and when to create their own routes and support systems. And all of us who care about the goal of bringing more women into public office must rededicate ourselves to these efforts, reminding ourselves and the world that women will make a difference.

Bringing More Women into Public Office

Since 1981, in a project supported by the Charles H. Revson Foundation, CAWP has been studying routes to political office, comparing the paths taken by women and men into both elective and appointive positions. Based on its studies, CAWP has issued seven reports in a series entitled *Bringing More Women Into Public Office*. These reports are currently available directly from CAWP.

Women Make a Difference

\$4
56 pages

Selected findings from CAWP's studies are highlighted in this monograph. A key theme is the difference women can and do make as elected and appointed public officials. The report outlines steps which may be taken to expand women's participation in politics, focusing on those findings which are relevant and useful for women interested in seeking public offices and for people who conduct programs to increase women's numbers in public life.

Women's Routes to Elective Office: A Comparison with Men's

\$10
180 pages (approx.)

Based on data collected through surveys of women and men elected to state legislatures, county governing boards, and municipal offices, this report examines the factors which influence women's entry into elective offices. A major section focuses on black women's routes to elective office.

Women Appointed to the Carter Administration: A Comparison with Men

\$6
88 pages

This first profile of women who have held high-level appointive offices at the federal level analyzes data about all the women and a sample of the men who served as cabinet and subcabinet officials under President Jimmy Carter. Women who served in selected positions on the president's and vice-president's staffs are also included in our study.

Women Appointed to State Government: A Comparison with All State Appointees

\$6
75 pages (approx.)

This study examines appointed state cabinet-level officials. Based on data collected through telephone surveys, it

compares the first national profile of women in state cabinets to a profile of a sample of all appointees.

Women's PACs

\$3
28 pages

This monograph is based on information gathered at a meeting with representatives of fourteen political action committees which solely or primarily support women candidates. It describes some of the key questions faced by such groups, and illustrates the varied ways in which they have answered these questions.

Political Women Tell What It Takes

\$3
37 pages

This report presents information CAWP gathered at six consultations held with women public leaders in 1981 and 1982. It focuses on the roles which political parties, women's organizations, and individual women have played in recruiting and supporting women candidates and appointees. Participants at our sessions suggested ways to bring more women into public office. These are outlined in the report.

Getting Women Appointed: New Jersey's Bipartisan Coalition

\$3
20 pages (approx.)

This monograph documents the formation and activities of New Jersey's Bipartisan Coalition for Women's Appointments, an ad hoc group organized after CAWP convened a meeting of politically active women to discuss how to get more women appointed to state-level posts.

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The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) is the only research, education, and public service center of its kind. Established in 1971 with a Ford Foundation grant to the Eagleton Institute of Politics, the Center designs and sponsors a variety of programs aimed at developing and disseminating knowledge about women's political participation. CAWP encourages women's full and effective involvement in all areas of public life.

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