

# **A Sociocultural Analysis of Underrepresentation of Women in U.S. State Legislatures**

By

Meena Visvanathan

A Senior Honors Thesis Submitted to the  
Department of Political Science  
University of California, San Diego

April 2, 2012

## Contents

List of Figures.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Historical Background and Research Design.....	16
Chapter 3: Examining College Council Elections.....	27
Chapter 4: Multivariate Regression Results and Analysis.....	48
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	67
References.....	74

## List of Figures

2.1 Comparison of Democratic versus Republican Women Legislators.....	19
2.2 Women in State Legislative Elections, 1976-2010.....	20
3.1 Colorado % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	30
3.2 Vermont % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	32
3.3 Arizona % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	33
3.4 Hawai'i % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	34
3.5 Washington % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	35
3.6 South Carolina % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	37
3.7 Oklahoma % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	38
3.8 Alabama % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	40
3.9 Mississippi % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	41
3.10 Utah % of Women College Council Candidates versus..... % of Women in State Legislature	42
4.1 Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture,..... family/gender roles, early political socialization, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency	60
4.2 Regression model summary, measuring state political culture,..... family/gender roles, early political socialization, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency	60
4.3 Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture and family/gender roles.....	61

4.4 Regression model summary, measuring state political culture and family/gender roles.....	61
4.5 Regression coefficients, measuring early political socialization.....	62
4.6 Regression model summary, measuring early political socialization.....	62
4.7 Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture,..... family/gender roles, and early political socialization	63
4.8 Regression model summary, measuring state political culture,..... family/gender roles, and early political socialization	64
4.9 Regression coefficients, measuring legislative professionalization,..... term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency	65
4.10 Regression model summary, measuring legislative professionalization,..... term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency	65

## **Acknowledgments**

First and foremost, I would like to thank my incredible advisor, Professor Thad Kousser, for the immeasurable amount of help, feedback, and support he has provided me throughout the entire process. His mentorship and guidance helped to turn my vague ideas of what to research in American women and politics into a solid thesis proposal. It would not have been possible without you.

I would also like to thank Professor Maureen Feeley, whose class on gender and politics inspired me to do research on an unarguably important subject matter. Her moral support and feedback have also been extraordinary.

My friends and family members have provided me with unwavering support for the past six months. I thank them for their tolerance with my never-ending discussions on women and politics and their help with editing parts of it, never once complaining.

Last, but most certainly not least, I would like to thank my parents, who were the ones that showed me the importance of women involvement in the political process and have given me nothing but unconditional love and support. I will never forget going to the polls with you as little girl at the Woodland Vista Swim & Racquet Club or heatedly discussing which presidential candidate we thought was best over the dinner table. This thesis is most definitely yours as well.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Central Research Question and Significance

Why is it that as we near the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's suffrage, women's underrepresentation in American government persists? Tied with Turkmenistan, the United States currently ranks 78<sup>th</sup> out of 190 countries worldwide in women's representation. Among the percentages of women elected to the lower or only houses of national parliaments, the United States is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of 17 Western developed democracies in female representation (Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires 2006). As of 2011, women hold only 23.6% of all statewide legislative seats and 21.7% of all state senate seats (Center for American Women and Politics 2011). Since 1971, the number of women in state legislatures has quintupled, yet women are nowhere near full integration into the political system. In *It Still Takes a Candidate*, by Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox, the authors attribute this phenomenon to the fact that women lack political ambition that is somehow inherently present in men. They also assert that fundamental gender differences exist due to a three-part conception of traditional gender socialization (Lawless and Fox 2010). This includes evidence of traditional family role orientations, a masculinized ethos, and a gendered psyche.

It is imperative, then, that we continue research into why women are less politically ambitious than men. This thesis aims to address two main questions. (1) Why are some women not as politically ambitious as others – what role does early political socialization play in fostering political ambition in women candidates? (2) Why do some states elect more women to their state legislatures? Colorado currently has the highest percentage of women state legislators, at 38.0%, while South Carolina has the lowest, at 10.0%. When women constitute 50.8% of the population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) and they only hold 23.6% of the

statewide legislative seats, it is evident that this puzzle requires further investigation.

## **Women, Political Ambition, and Political Office: Existing Explanations for Women's Underrepresentation**

When scholars first began studying this phenomenon, the majority of the work ascribed the lack of women's presence in politics to discrimination and overt bias. In the past few decades, however, sociocultural opinions toward women in political office have changed and a greater number of women seek and win elections. This argument has thus become invalid. Recent theoretical literature written on women's lack of political ambition and underrepresentation of women in American politics can be categorized into three schools of thought, presented in *It Still Takes a Candidate* as the three aspects to traditional gender socialization. They are: sociocultural (traditional family role orientations), institutional (a masculinized ethos), and psychological (a gendered psyche). This section examines the literature in each of these three categories within the context of the central research question, and evaluates each according to its contribution to understanding political ambition in women and what causes underrepresentation of women.

### *Sociocultural*

The sociocultural explanation centers on traditional family role orientations (Lawless and Fox 2010, 9). This means that women are still required to fit into gender-specific family roles and continue to hold the responsibility for childcare and the majority of household labor. When they have professional lives, they face a much more complicated balancing act of these different responsibilities than do their male counterparts. A political career would amount to a third job for many women, due to the traditional division of household labor and family responsibilities. A

study of two-career families in developed countries, conducted in 1995 by the UN, found that women still complete almost three times as much of the unpaid household labor as men (Freedman 2002). Many professional women who hold MBAs or law degrees commonly leave the workplace once they have children due to substantial pressures, both private and professional (Stone 2007). Because men and women do not have equal roles in the household, it is much easier for men to enter politics since they do not face these pressures.

One of the biggest sociocultural arguments for the gender differential in political participation is the pipeline explanation (Lawless and Fox 2010, 30). There are four careers that typically put individuals on the “pipeline” to political careers. They include law, business, education, and politics. Women have historically been prevented from entering these professions and today are still underrepresented in them. The National Association for Law Placement (2009) finds that women constitute a mere 19 percent of the partners in the country’s major law firms and it was 13 percent a decade ago. In the realm of business, even though women account for 51 percent of the employees working in managerial and professional jobs, they are largely missing from the upper echelons. There are only fifteen female CEOs among the Fortune 500 companies (Lawless and Fox 2010, 32). Despite the fact that the number of women in higher education has been steadily increasing and a greater number of women are on a tenure-track, there has not been a higher number of female tenured professors. In fact, the number is currently not much higher than it was in the mid-1970s (Banerji 2006; Mason and Goulden 2002). Most scholars argue, furthermore, that complete integration of women into these pipeline careers will take a considerable amount of time.

There are certain sociopolitical contexts in which women potential candidates are least likely to stand for nomination and election to U.S. state legislatures. These include high



population states with small size state legislatures and states that are dominated by the Democratic Party (Rule 1981, 62). Both California and Michigan have comparatively smaller legislatures yet have a higher legislative salary, which heightens the salience of the office in comparison to other occupations. The exact opposite situation also deters women. In small population and large legislature states, campaign expenses are higher. This discourages potential women candidates from pursuing these seats because of the higher competition and higher cost of campaigning (Rule 1985, 62). There are two reasons why states that are dominated by the Democratic party discourage women from running for office. First, the Southern Democratic party states have historically had a more traditional view of gender roles and have thus restricted women's political and social roles, including prohibiting women's suffrage and Equal Rights Amendment. In Southern state legislatures, then, women would have to overcome the gender role biases that are much more entrenched culturally than in the rest of the country. "Ethnic men" such as the Irish, Italians, and Polish culturally dominate the Northern Democratic party states. Many of these so-called "old-world elites" in the party organization have their own views on what the "women's place" should be and women thus lack the critical party support needed to enter a race. Women, and most candidates in general, will rarely ever challenge the party-backed choices in the primaries (Rule 1985, 64).

There are three sociocultural eligibility variables that can determine women's recruitment to state legislatures (Rule 1985, 68). First, some of the Southern states that attempted to restrict suffrage from women still maintain an unequal political culture that is associated with low levels of female recruitment. The correlation is slowly decreasing, however, as Southern states somewhat lose their traditional views on gender and family roles. Second, in states where there are fewer female professionals, there are also fewer female state legislators. Other possible

confounding variables such as percentages of women in the workforce and in higher education have proven not to be that statistically significant, lending greater credence to the theory that highly entrenched traditional family roles deter women from political office. Third, the recruitment of women to state legislatures is typically less in “states with lower expenditures for education and aid to families of dependent children” (Rule 1985, 68). When states spend more in these areas, it is usually because they have more women in office. From this, we can infer that these states’ institutions are male-dominated due to a traditional conception of gender and family roles.

Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon (2003) explore the topic of women and political ambition in two case studies. The first is sociocultural and is a study of congressional widows; it compares discrete versus static ambition. It also explores the question of why some congressional widows (women who are recruited to run in a special election for their deceased husbands’ seat) attempt to formulate a career in politics for themselves while others only finish the term of their husbands. Congressional widows are believed to exhibit solely discrete ambition, which is when “a politician wants the particular office for its specified term and then chooses to withdraw from public service and steps down” (Schlesinger 1966, 10). Several problematic statements have been made about these women. First, only 3 of the 60 women in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress were widows, indicating that this phenomenon of “congressional widows” is not as common as presumed. Second, many believe that these widows are simply “reluctant placeholders” who have been “given” the seats by their deceased husbands. Empty House seats must be filled by a special election, which requires women to overcome the hurdles of running a political campaign. They do, however, have the advantages similar to those of an incumbent; because many worked on their husbands’ campaigns, they tend to know the district well and

have name recognition. Women are likely to display static ambition, or “when a politician seeks to make a long-term career out of a particular office and continues to seek reelection” when the sociocultural conditions are correct. The probability is highest when they have worked as congressional wives, have independent experience in politics, originate from non-southern states, and are less than 60 years old.

One of the most consistent predictors of whether or not a woman will seek office is if they worked outside of the home (Palmer and Simon 2003, 130). “Working outside of the home” includes whether women worked closely in her husband’s office and if she was active in politics separate from her husband’s career. Prior to the late 1960s, however, politics was solely a man’s game. Women have been historically barred from careers that lead to political office, such as law and business. Only with the Women’s Movement in the 1970s does America see significant increases in the percentages of women attending law school and entering into politics. Only when the traditional gender and family roles were changed, therefore, was there any change in women’s representation. Palmer and Simon conclude that further research must be made on ambition theory and the difference between discrete and static ambition in women.

### *Institutional*

The institutional barriers to political ambition entail the numerous male-dominated institutions that help candidates run for office by launching successful campaigns and providing great support (Lawless and Fox 2010, 11). These embody an “ethos of masculinity.” State legislatures have taken a long time to include women and the policies that they typically support. Political parties have not yet fully integrated women. Even though women have about equivalent campaign fundraising receipts, men are still more likely than women to participate in political

fundraising networks (Lawless and Fox 2010, 25). These political institutions are designed by men, operated by men, and continue to be controlled by men. Due to this situation, institutions facilitate men's emergence into politics and suppress women's emergence. Examples of these institutions include political parties, party leaders, legislative characteristics, incumbency, the social eligibility pool, and term limits.

Kira Sanbonmatsu (2006) finds that political parties determine who runs for and wins office because parties (1) promote the office to individuals who would not have previously thought about it, (2) discourage certain candidates from running, and (3) support their favored candidates in the primaries. Stronger party organizations, furthermore, have a negative effect on women's representation. Signs of organizational strength include recruitment, or party attempts to encourage candidates to run, and gatekeeping, or party efforts to influence the nomination (Sanbonmatsu 2006, 160). With the introduction of the direct primary, nominating candidates has moved from a function of the party organization to the general public. Parties, however, still hold a very important role in deciding who runs for office since party leaders actively recruit candidates. In some cases, recruitment even explains why individuals decide to run for office. In interviews that Sanbonmatsu held with state legislators and other political actors, she found that recruitment is highly dependent on the specific state and party; it is also statistically significant in determining whether or not an individual will pursue office. In the same interviews, party leaders stated that they do consider gender as one aspect of a candidate's profile. Some also believe that women have an electoral advantage, but nominating a woman depends on the specific candidate (Sanbonmatsu 2006, 118).

Legislative salaries, length of the session, size of legislative staff, and ratio of legislative seats to state population all have negative effects on women's representation. When there is more

prestige attached to the legislative office, it becomes more competitive and fewer women are found in these areas (Sanbonmatsu 2006, 158). Scholars commonly point to incumbency and the social eligibility pool as main obstacles to greater number of political women. The incumbency advantage is true, as most incumbents win reelection (and most incumbents are men). Individual women cannot do much to change this status quo and female representation will only increase when there are increased opportunities for women to run in realistic races (Carroll 1994; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994). Academics also believe that there is a much smaller social eligibility pool among women candidates; it is the lack of women candidates, then, that explains underrepresentation, not performance (Burrell 1994). The pool is smaller because there are not as many women as men in pipeline careers to politics. “This is a structural explanation that posits that changing the occupational distribution of women would influence their recruitment to public office” (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994, 108). As more women enter pipeline careers, we should see an increase of women in public office.

Palmer and Simon’s (2003) second study examines women running for the Senate and compares static versus progressive ambition. They question what it is that causes some females in the House to run for Senate while others choose to stay where they are. Rohde (1979) assumes that the majority of House members hold progressive ambition; the question then changes to: in what situations will progressive ambition appear? Schlesinger (1966) defines progressive ambition as “when a politician aspires to attain an office more important than the one that is currently held.” The initial decision to run for a congressional seat is largely determined by the opportunity structure. Again, one of the largest obstacles women face to political office is incumbency. In the results of their study, they find that women are more likely to exhibit progressive ambition when there is an open seat, when the seat is in a small state, and when they

are mid-career (Palmer and Simon 2003, 135). When the conditions are right, women will seek higher office. If not, they are likely to possess only static ambition.

Sanbonmatsu (2002) also finds that the incentive structure facing potential women candidates is different for Democratic and Republican women due to institutional factors. It is therefore beneficial to separate women by party for analysis; it provides a greater understanding of the pattern of where women run for and hold legislative office. She finds that a state's social eligibility pool has a much greater effect on Democratic women's representation than Republican women's representation. The social eligibility pool, mentioned earlier in her work, is a crucial determinant of women's representation in political office. This means that states with more women in the workplace, women executives, and women law students/lawyers are more likely to have more women state legislators than other states. The reason for the gender differential between parties is explained by history. There has been a greater involvement of Republican women in electoral politics in the late 1800s and through the 1900s (even still when they were not given the right to vote). This phenomenon is explained by class differences between the two parties since Republican women may have had more time, money, and resources to put into politics. Democratic women, on the other hand, have typically been less likely to be homemakers and more likely to be in the labor force. Women from both parties, therefore, come into political office through different networks and different bases of organizational support.

Sanbonmatsu (2002) discovers that the party strongly shapes the political opportunity structure facing women candidates. She defines the political opportunity structure as the structural factors that form candidate emergence. Specifically, these structural factors include incumbency, electoral rules, and party organizations. Legislative professionalism (salary, length of session, staff, etc.) has a much stronger effect on Democratic women's representation and is

positively related to turnover and ratio of seats to population. States with low pay and long sessions, furthermore, are positively related to Republican women's representation and have no effect on Democratic women's representation.

Many academics believe that term limits will lead to an increased number of women serving in office (e.g. Thompson and Moncrief 1993; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Carroll 1994; Darcy 1992; Rule and Norris 1992). Term limits, in theory, provide a good indicator of the extent to which incumbency acts as an obstacle to women's representation; they increase legislative turnover and provide more chances for women to win open-seat elections. Scholars, however, have different findings on the effects of term limits in women's representation. Thad Kousser (2005) finds that state legislatures that applied term limits saw no changes in the percentages of female legislators. In the late nineties, the number of incumbent women who were required to leave their seats as a result of term limits was higher than the number of women elected to open seats (Jenkins and Carroll 2003). Proponents of term limits as an avenue for greater women's representation should be concerned that a number of studies find that they are not as effective as previously thought (Jenkins and Carroll 2003; Jenkins and Carroll 2001).

### *Psychological*

The psychological explanation for underrepresentation focuses on studies in socialization and psychological development. It also includes discussion of the "gendered psyche, a deeply embedded imprint that propels men into politics, but relegates women to the electoral arena's periphery" (Lawless and Fox 2010, 12). Contemporary scholars in this field find that significant gender differences exist in confidence levels, the drive for achievement, and the proclivity to self-promote. Cynthia Enloe's (2004) argument about patriarchy asserts that the reason why

male-dominated institutions endure is because women do not even realize they are marginalized from the public sphere. These very same institutions work to make women feel “secured, protected, and valued” (Enloe 2004, 6). An example of this psychological difference lies in numerous studies of business executives; in negotiating salary, women commonly downplay their achievements whereas men are taught to over-promote themselves. They are taught to be confident, assertive, and self-promoting, whereas women are expected to fulfill traditional gender and family roles. American cultural attitudes imply that it is improper for women to have any of those “male” attributes. All females, then, are socialized from very early on not to have the qualities that will make them competitive in the modern political arena. When postulating about the recent rise of women in electoral office, Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (D-CA) perfectly sums up the gendered psyche. She states: “Women are doing a better job because they have to work twice as hard” (Lawless and Fox 2010, 13).

Scholars see gender ideology as an explanatory power of the gender differential in educational and professional achievement (Alexander and Eckland 1974; Eccles 1987; Jozefowicz, Barber, and Eccles 1993). Differences in professional choices, then, are a consequence of early socialization that teaches young boys and girls to pursue dissimilar careers. In a study about work-family gender ideologies, Davis and Pearce (2007) claim that there is a self-perception difference, which “is arguably an internalization of gendered norms regarding ability and achievement, leading girls to be more likely to question themselves and their abilities than would boys. Valuing a “gender egalitarian” family structure would mean concentrating on an education and career, which will lead to high incomes, independence, or job flexibility for both men and women. The central finding of their study is that the more gender egalitarian households ninth and tenth graders grow up in, the more education they are expected to attain.



Adolescents who view family and home duties as more of a female than male sphere will be less likely to attend both college and graduate/professional school (Davis and Pearce 2007, 265). This connection between work-family gender ideology and educational expectations explains how other socioeconomic factors such as parental education, mother's work status, mother's educational expectations, etc, are closely tied to the child's educational expectations.

## **Hypothesis and Theory**

I believe that the sociocultural explanation for underrepresentation of women in politics deserves further research and has the potential to be an even more valid argument. For my first question, I hypothesize that if girls are politically socialized at an early age, then we should see nascent political ambition in them. This political ambition will be manifested in the desire to run for executive seats in college council elections. It is important to examine both the percentages of women run for office and their success rates. The rate at which women run will tell us about their levels of political ambition in college; since they are in college, later family/gender roles that will be imposed on their professional lives does not apply. The rate at which women win, will tell us about how receptive the electorate is to their candidacies (even in college).

If less than 25% of them run for office and/or win seats, it can be argued that they did not experience early political socialization. If more than 50% of them run for office, but do not win seats about 50% of the seats, then some other factors are at play, possibly the imposition of family/gender roles. If more than 50% of them run for office and/or win seats, then it can be said that they must have experienced early political socialization.

For my second question, this early political socialization measure can be turned into an independent variable to explain the overall underrepresentation of women in American

government. I hypothesize that both early political socialization and the imposition of family/gender roles will provide the best explanation of the lack of female state legislators, and that the state political culture argument by itself no longer holds any weight. If it were still valid, the numbers of women running and their success rates should be about the same in both college council elections and state legislative elections. I do not believe that there will be equivalent running and success rates at both levels in college council elections.

I expect, furthermore, to see an overall lower number of women in the workforce in states that have fewer female legislators. This phenomenon would signify that family/gender roles are still strongly imprinted in the minds of Americans. Whether or not a state ratified the ERA will not be statistically significant in determining the low numbers of female state legislators.

I believe that the early political socialization measure will be significant in explaining the lack of political ambition in women. Results from Lawless's and Fox's Citizen Political Ambition Study (2001) already show that when friends, family, and coworkers talk to women about running for office, they are more inclined to do so. If young girls are constantly exposed to politics, taught from an early age that they make equally viable candidates for office, and receive constant cues in their formative years that they should run for office (be it middle school, high school, or college student councils), it seems obvious that they would more seriously consider running for elective office than the current average American woman.

### **Central Findings of the Study**

On an average across the nation, I found that only **19.4%** of candidates running for executive positions in college council elections are women, indicating that little to no early political socialization is taking place (since it is less than 25%). When women do run, however,

their success rates are higher. I recorded that their success rates are around **24.3%**, almost 5% higher than their run rates. Because of this great percentage difference, it is vital to find an explanation for this phenomenon. There are three specific explanations that give us insight. First, college council elections are low-information elections, which will favor female candidates. Second, there is a theory that states that when women run, women will win. Third, the voting bloc in college council elections favors female candidates.

I then turned to investigating why some states elect more women to their state legislatures than others. To explain these patterns, I ran multivariate linear regressions taking into account both sociocultural independent variables (early political socialization, family/gender roles, and state political culture) and institutional independent variables (term limits, legislative professionalism, and partisan composition of the constituency) to analyze their impact on greater underrepresentation of women in state legislatures. I found that the most statistically significant variables that provided the greatest explanatory power are family/gender roles and the partisan composition of the constituency. This disproves my initial hypothesis of early political socialization having a strong impact on overall underrepresentation across U.S. state legislatures.

## **Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis contains five chapters. The next chapter, Chapter 2, will cover a brief history of women's participation in politics (both worldwide and in the United States) in addition to my research design. Chapter 3 will address my first study, and will examine college council elections from forty-five of the top fifty state schools. It will provide an analysis of the explanatory power of the early political socialization argument. Chapter 4 will look at my second study of overall underrepresentation of women in state legislatures. It will examine multivariate linear

regressions and which variables are most statistically significant. Along with early political socialization, I will examine family/gender roles, the states' political culture, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency. Chapter 5 provides a conclusion and suggestions for further research in women's political ambition and underrepresentation of women in American government.

## Chapter 2: Historical Background and Research Design

### Women and Politics Worldwide

During the mid-1800s, women around the world first began to demand access to the vote. Sweden allowed limited suffrage for its women in local elections in the mid-nineteenth century. New Zealand became the first country to extend the right to vote to all women (even at the national level) in 1893. Australia, Finland, numerous European countries, and several former republics of the Soviet Union soon followed suit. By the 1930s, forty-two countries had extended the vote to women. The conclusion of World War I, World War II, and the subsequent decolonialization movement created a situation that was near perfect for creating a movement to claim women's suffrage in countries across the globe (Henderson and Jeydel 2007). As of 1999, Qatar has been the most recent country to extend the ballot to women.

As documented by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2011), the current world average for the percentage of women in national parliaments and legislatures is at 19.5%. Representation, however, varies greatly by geographic region. In the Nordic countries, women make up 42.0% of the national parliaments.<sup>1</sup> At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 11.3% of legislators are women in Arab states. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women account for 16.5% of legislators but Rwanda, South Africa, and Mozambique have some of the highest percentages of women in their national legislature. Rwanda actually has the highest number in the world, with 56.3% of women serving in the lower house of parliament. The reason behind this is gender quotas.

Rwanda is the only country in the top twenty countries in women's representation that has reserved seats for women (Baldez 2006). Political scientist Drude Dahlerup (2006) posits that there is a "quota fever" that is taking place around the world. It is true that the majority of

---

<sup>1</sup> This includes the lower or only house at the national level

countries that have gender quotas have only implemented them in the last fifteen years. It is puzzling why gender quotas have become so attractive. The answer lies not only in what makes them appealing, but also where they will and will not be adopted (Baldez 2006). For the longest time, politics have been defined worldwide by a dichotomous understanding of gender. Mala Htun (2005) succinctly states,

Sexism in candidate selection is a path-dependent process. Men began to dominate politics long ago... People became accustomed to seeing men in power; masculine characteristics and roles became virtues of leadership; places men socialize with one another (poker halls and locker rooms) turned into sites of political negotiation and pact-making; norms of work accommodated individuals who could delegate child rearing and other domestic tasks to care-giving partners; and formal arenas of power (such as Congress) adapted to male needs by installing urinals, weight rooms, spittoons and pool tables (n.p.).

Lisa Baldez asserts that due to this gendered character of politics, something she calls an “exogenous shock” is needed to break men’s stronghold on political institutions and arenas (2006, 104). Gender quotas are a perfect example of this “exogenous shock.”

Interestingly enough, despite the fact that gender quotas have become an international phenomenon, they have been maligned in the United States. Any attempt to set aside anything for any group of people has always been thought of as “reverse discrimination,” especially in light of the recent movement to reverse affirmative action policies (Baldez 2006, 103). In this context, it is important to classify the United States as an outlier. Once again, the United States ranks 78<sup>th</sup> out of a 190 countries in women and 14<sup>th</sup> out of 17 Western developed democracies.

## **Women in the United States**

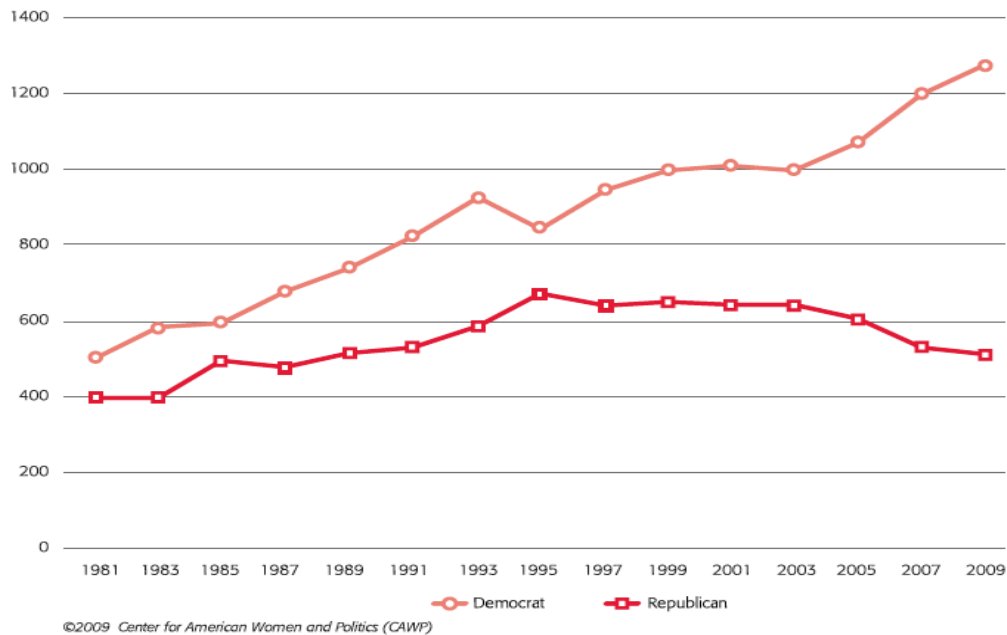
In 1756, Lydia Chapin Taft became the first legal voter in the United States. She voted in three town hall meetings in the Massachusetts Bay Colony with the consent of the electorate. Wyoming was the first sub-national territory to extend women the suffrage. They were soon

followed by Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Oregon, Illinois, and Montana. In 1872, Susan B. Anthony became the first American woman to vote illegally in a presidential election. She was soon after arrested and put on trial; this gave her a much more public voice to increase awareness of women's struggles in the United States. In 1894, three women were elected to the Colorado House of Representatives, becoming the first women elected to a state legislature in the United States. Their names were Clara Cressingham, Carrie C. Holly, and Francis Klock ("Firsts for women").

In United States history, women are relatively new to public office compared to the previous centuries of male-dominated institutions. The central question a majority of the work on American women and politics raise is why women constitute such a lower percentage of state legislators when they now comprise more than half of the American population. In the 2008 election, for example, women made up 54% of the voters, yet only 24% of women were elected to state legislatures (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009). The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) Recruitment Study, conducted once in 1981 and again in 2008, is one of the most widespread surveys of different routes to office for state legislators. Two central findings of the survey stand out in particular. First, the number of Democratic female legislators has steadily increased since 1981 while the number of Republican female legislators has decreased. Second, women of color only comprise 5% of all state legislators and 20% of female state legislators.

### **Comparison of Democratic versus Republican Women Legislators**

The numbers of Democratic women legislators have continued to increase while the numbers of Republican women legislators have declined (1981-2009).



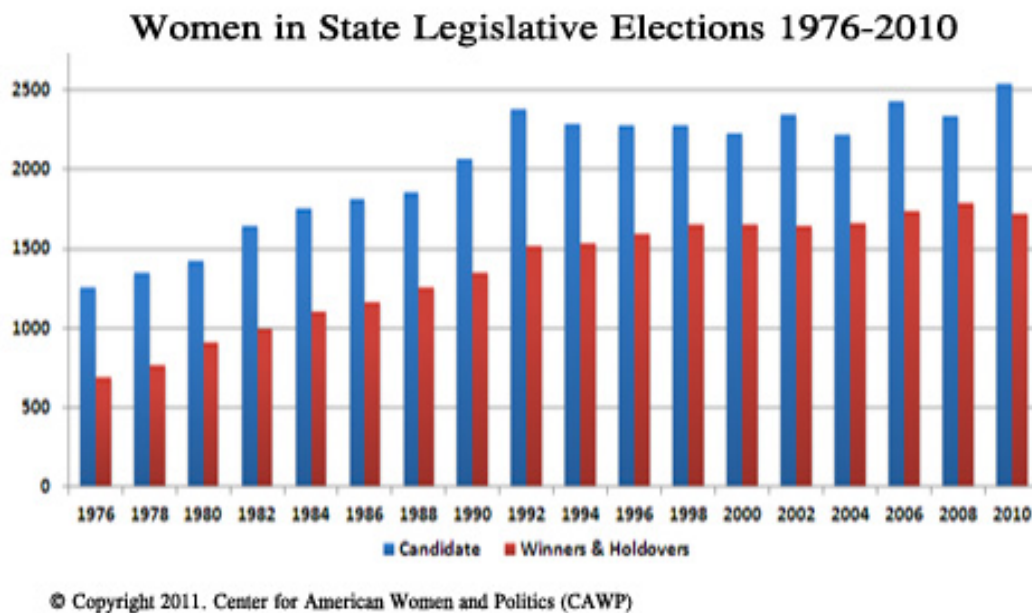
**Figure 2.1 Source: Center for American Women and Politics (2009)**

Prior to the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920, which granted the right of women to vote, a few women had been serving in state legislative seats in states that extended the franchise to women. Post 1920, women began to enter state-level office in great numbers. After this temporary increase, the number of women in office remained stagnant until the contemporary women’s rights movement in the late 1960s and 1970s (Carroll 2004). Only after this development did the number of women in elected office greatly increase. In 1971, women accounted for 4.5% of state legislators nationally. In 2004, this number was amplified to 22.4%. Most of this growth occurred from the 1970s to 1980s, and leveled off in the 1990s. In recent years, for some reason, this steady increase has significantly slowed. Surprisingly enough, fewer women served in 2004 than in 1995 (Carroll 2004, 4).

Scholars have not found any one, simple explanation for the wide variation in the



proportion of women in state legislatures across the country (Carroll 2004, 4). As of 2011, Colorado has the highest percentage of females in its state legislature, at 41.0%. Vermont, Arizona, Hawaii, and Washington closely follow it. At the very bottom of this list is South Carolina, with only 9.4%. Joining South Carolina in the bottom five is Oklahoma, Alabama, Wyoming, and Mississippi. In decades past, the South has lagged behind in female representation. Today, six of the ten states with the lowest percentage of female state legislators are located in the South.



**Figure 2.2 Source: Center for American Women and Politics (2011)**

Throughout American history, legislative seat holders have been predominantly Republican. Today, however, the divide is almost equal between Democrats and Republicans (Carroll 2004, 5). This is not the case for female legislators. In a little more than a twenty-year span from the late 1980s to early 2000s, the number of Republican women in state legislatures decreased from “...34.4 percent for state senators and from 41.4 percent to 40.2 percent for state representatives” (Carroll 2004, 5). In 2004, there were substantially more Democratic female

state legislators than Republican female state legislators. In that same year, Democrats numbered 63.2 percent of female state senators and 59.6 percent of female state representatives (Carroll 2004, 5).

Men and women public officials believe that female legislators possess a unique duty to advocate for women's concerns within state legislatures. It is proven that there is a higher chance for women from both the Democratic and Republican parties to support more moderate to liberal positions on a range of issues. Female state legislators are likely to support "harsher penalties for hate crimes, legally recognized civil unions for gay and lesbian couples, and laws permitting minors to obtain legal abortions without parental consent" ("Women state legislators," 2001). More than their male colleagues, they are also more likely to oppose reversing the decision in *Roe v. Wade*, federal or state-funded school vouchers, the death penalty, or a constitutional amendment allowing prayer in public schools. Furthermore, considerably higher numbers of female state legislators than male state legislators reported that they drafted and worked on bills that specifically help women. There have been more Democratic and Republican women working on such bills than Democratic and Republican men. Surprisingly, there have even been more Republican women working on these bills than Democratic men ("Women state legislators," 2001). Unlike men, women who are currently serve in state legislatures do not have plans within the next couple of years to leave their seats. The women who have decided they want to leave their seats soon, handpick a successor and are also more likely than men to have another women in mind.

Electing women into state legislatures across the country has very important consequences for American society. In much of the research already completed by CAWP, the organization has found numerous potential benefits to having more women in public office. An

increased presence of women, furthermore, has historically helped other underrepresented groups gain an entrance to office. Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh (2009) succinctly state, “Women often bring to politics and government life experiences, policy perspectives, and issue concerns that differ from those of men” (7). Most importantly, achieving an understanding of how women gain access to state legislative seats is key because these offices are pathways to higher statewide and federal offices. Approximately half of women governors and women congresswomen have previously held state legislative office (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009, 7).

## **Research Design**

My central research questions are: (1) Why are some women not as politically ambitious as others – what role does early political socialization play in fostering political ambition in women candidates? (2) Why do some states elect more women to their state legislatures? There are many possible explanations for these two questions, but there are a few that are more plausible than the rest. For my first question, Lawless and Fox already addressed the possibility that it can be caused by traditional gender socialization in America and that this concept is key in the precandidacy stage of the electoral process. It is crucial to examine if the early political socialization process during the formative years of a woman’s life affect her decision to run for office or not. For my second question, it is beneficial to research how family/gender roles, state political culture, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency act as obstacles to public office.

My first question yields one main hypothesis. In a comparison of candidates, those who had early political socialization during childhood will have success in obtaining political office at higher rates than those who have little to no early political socialization. My second question

yields two hypotheses. (1) In a comparison of states, those that have a less strict imposition of family roles will be more likely to have a higher number of women in their state legislature, than those that have a stricter imposition of family roles. (2) In a comparison of states, those which have experienced significant levels of early political socialization will be more likely to have fewer women in their state legislature, than those which have not experienced significant levels of early political socialization.

In this thesis, I examine one study relating to early political socialization and a second study that aims to understand what causes underrepresentation of women across U.S. state legislatures. Overall, I evaluate six different independent variables, each of which is operationalized below. For the first question, the dependent variable is candidate success rates in obtaining political office in the executive branch of college councils. Data for this question was collected from college council websites and student newspapers. For the second question, the dependent variable is the percentage of women in U.S. state legislatures. Data for this question was collected from the second question was taken from U.S. Census Bureau Data, the National Committee on State Legislatures, and the Center for American Women and Politics Website (CAWP 2012).

### *Early Political Socialization*

Early political socialization is measured by researching the percentage of college women that run for an executive position in college council elections and their subsequent success rates. To answer this first research question, I am going to study elections from most of the top fifty state universities (data is available for forty-five of fifty top universities, identified by U.S. News and World Reports). My belief is that if women run in college council elections, this will be an

indication of nascent political ambition, which will have been fostered in the early political socialization process. Observing women in this process also holds constant a lot of other possible intervening variables, some of which include education, socioeconomic status, etc. In my data set, the number of women that run for office is recorded in simple percentages. For success rates, I code it as a dummy variable; if a woman wins, it is coded with a 1 and if a man wins, it is coded with a 0. Average success rates, however, are recorded in percentages. This variable will help to answer the both research questions.

### *Family/Gender Roles*

Family/gender roles will assist to answer the second research question. To study the prevalence of gender and family roles, I am going to see in what in what numbers women are employed and the percentage of women-owned firms. I look specifically at the percentage of women in the workforce, specifically females aged 16 and older. The data comes from the American Community Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. This is a continuous survey that is conducted for the purpose of helping communities determine where they should plan future investments and services. The data that was collected for this study was a five-year estimate from 2006-2010 and is recorded in percentages. The percentages of women-owned firms were available from the State and County Quick Facts in 2007, also compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau. Both of these hopefully will approximate how each state views family/gender roles.

### *State Political Culture*

The Equal Rights Amendment was a proposed amendment to the United States

Constitution that was introduced in Congress for the first time in 1923. It finally passed both houses of Congress in 1972, but it failed to gain ratification by three-fourths of all the state legislatures (38 out of 50 states) by the time its deadline of seven years had passed. Whether a state ratified the amendment or not says a lot about its political culture. State political culture is essentially the political environment that has the potential to create a “gendered effect” on citizens’ attitudes about getting into statewide politics. There are likely to be higher numbers of women candidates in states that have had a history of supporting women’s participation and protecting their rights. I coded ratification rates as a dummy variable as well. If a state ratified it within the deadline, then I coded it with a 1. If it did not ratify, I coded it with a 0.

### *Legislative Professionalization*

Hopeful female candidates are more likely to declare candidacies for public office when they encounter advantageous structural circumstances. Among these circumstances is legislative professionalization. A professionalized legislature will include more and more expert staff, the salaries will be such in order to make being a state legislator a full-time career, and the session length will be yearlong (Sanbonmatsu 2002, 795). To measure this variable, I use the Squires index of legislative professionalism. This index “uses the United States Congress as a baseline against which to measure salary, staff, and time in session of all 50 legislatures” (Squires 1992, 69). Each legislature is measure on a scale from 0 to 1. A measure of 1 means the legislature is modeled perfectly after Congress, while a measure of 0 means that it is structured in no way like Congress. Data is presented in the thousandths.

### *Term Limits*

Like legislative professionalization, term limits are a structural circumstance that women consider before they decide to run for public office. Because term limits create more open seats, the probability of women and other minorities gaining seats is high. According to the National Conference on State Legislatures (2012), there are currently fifteen states that have term limits for legislators. Data was only available, however, for twelve of the fifteen states. I measured the percentage of open seats (in the lower or only house) of each state that was created by legislators who had termed out in 2010. This was calculated by dividing the number of open seats by the total number of seats in the legislature.

#### *Partisan Composition of the Constituency*

In my study, the constituency consists of each individual state. To measure levels of partisanship, I decided to look at the percentage of the vote that President Barack Obama received from each state in 2008. The data was taken from CNN.com, which still has the official results from the November 2008 general election.

### **Chapter 3: Examining College Council Elections**

The Citizen Political Ambition Study completed by Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox was one of the first studies that provided clear evidence that women are less politically ambitious than men to run for public office. The authors assert that the current gender differential in ambition is attributable to “long-standing patterns of traditional socialization that persist in U.S. culture” (Lawless and Fox 2010, 8). Traditional socialization entails teaching children about the gendered division of labor; this means that a woman’s place is in the private household while a man’s place is in the public workforce. In my thesis, I seek to determine whether early political socialization is happening among young girls in American and if it is statistically significant in explaining overall underrepresentation of women in American politics (specifically across U.S. state legislatures). Scholars have found that parents who are greatly involved in politics create an environment at home that is “charged with positive civic orientations...thus endowing their children with motivation prerequisites for later [political] participation” (Beck and Jennings 1982, 98). Furthermore, participation in campaigns, political groups, community service, and school elections has an affect on the levels of political efficacy and interest in women. A woman who has never been talked to about politics, current affairs, or about running for office with her parents has a 0.36 probability that she will consider running for office. A woman who has been surrounded by political discussions and encouragement from her parents to run for office during her childhood has 0.68. A woman’s likelihood of running for political office almost doubles if they have been exposed to politics at a young age (Lawless and Fox 2010, 68). In this chapter specifically, I attempt to determine the extent to which young girls in the United States are politically socialized.

I operationalize this variable by looking at college council elections in forty-five public



universities in every state (with the exception of Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Virginia, and Wyoming where data was unavailable). I gathered this information by looking at college council election websites and at student newspapers. At times, it was difficult to ascertain whether the candidate was female or not, so I resorted to looking them up on social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to see their gender. In this following chapter, I discuss the central findings of my data collection, and look at both the top and bottom five states with the highest and lowest percentages of women in their state legislature (I had no data for Wyoming or North Dakota so I looked at the seventh lowest state, Utah, instead). I also talk about the current makeup of the legislature and compare it with my findings from the state university's college council elections. My goal is that the rate at which women run will tell us about their levels of political ambition (specifically early political socialization) and that the rate at which women will tell us about the electorate's receptiveness to their candidacies.

### **Central Findings of this Study**

Once again, I hypothesized that if girls are politically socialized at an early age, then we should see nascent political ambition in them. This political ambition should be manifested in the desire to run for executive seats in college council elections. On an almost national average, I found that **19.4%** of candidates running for executive positions in college council elections are women, indicating that little to no early political socialization is taking place (since it is less than 25%). When women do run, however, their success rates are higher. I recorded that their success rates are around **24.3%**, almost 5% higher than their run rates. Because of this great percentage difference, it is important to find an explanation for this phenomenon. I found three possible explanations. First, there is a theory that states that when women run, women will win. Second,

the voting bloc in college council elections favors female candidates. Third, college council elections are low-information elections, so voters make use of voting cues. Each of these will be explored further in-depth later.

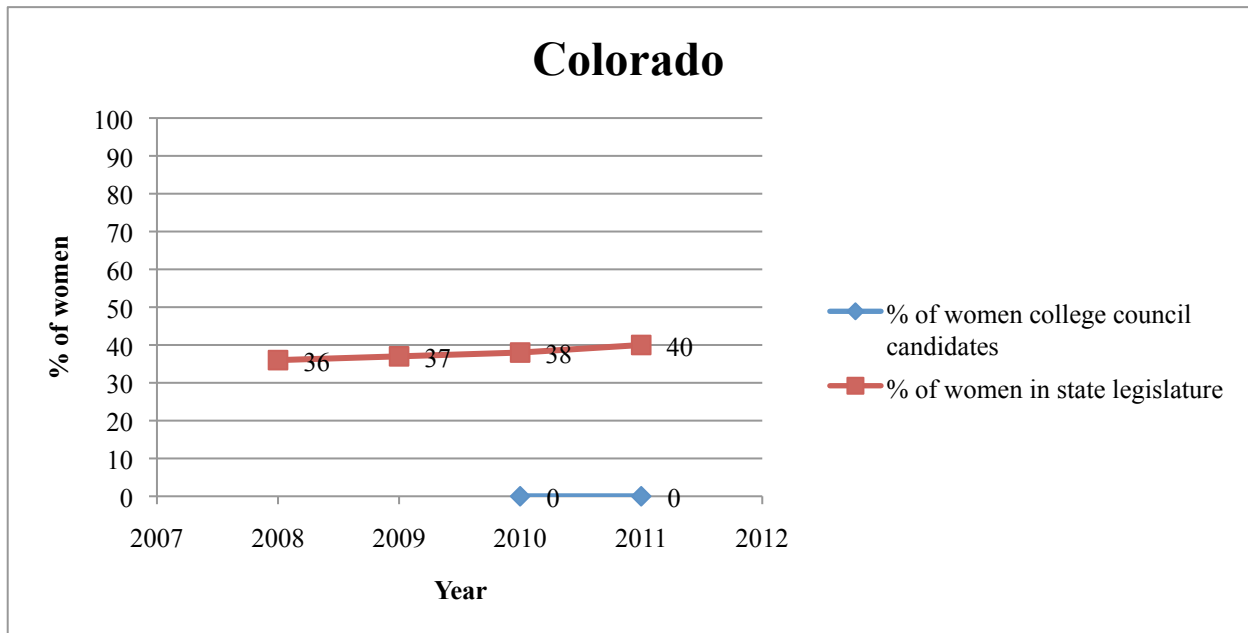
It is also important to note that I did not find any correlation between these findings and the percentage of women in each state legislature. This will be important later when I use this early political socialization measure to attempt to explain the overall underrepresentation of women in U.S. state legislatures. In order to visually show this point, I graphed the percentage of executive college council candidates alongside the percentage of women in the state legislature in the same year (this number is an average of the percentage of women in both the upper and lower houses). It is interesting to look at the top and bottom five states to see how the college council elections fare compared to their state legislatures. I looked at data from 2008 to 2011 and I was able to find data for executive college council candidates for the majority of states, but a number of states did have a year or two missing. Looking at the averages for college council elections, the data seems to be pretty stable; from year to year, however, the data varies greatly. For example, for the first two years there can be 0% of females running, but the third and fourth year there can be 50%. Data was available for every year for the percentage of women in state legislatures.

## **Highest Percentages of Women in State Legislatures**

### *Colorado*

The top public university in Colorado is the University of Colorado, Boulder. CU Boulder's college council is called University of Colorado Student Government, or CUSG. According to the organization's website, "...it is the most financially powerful and autonomous

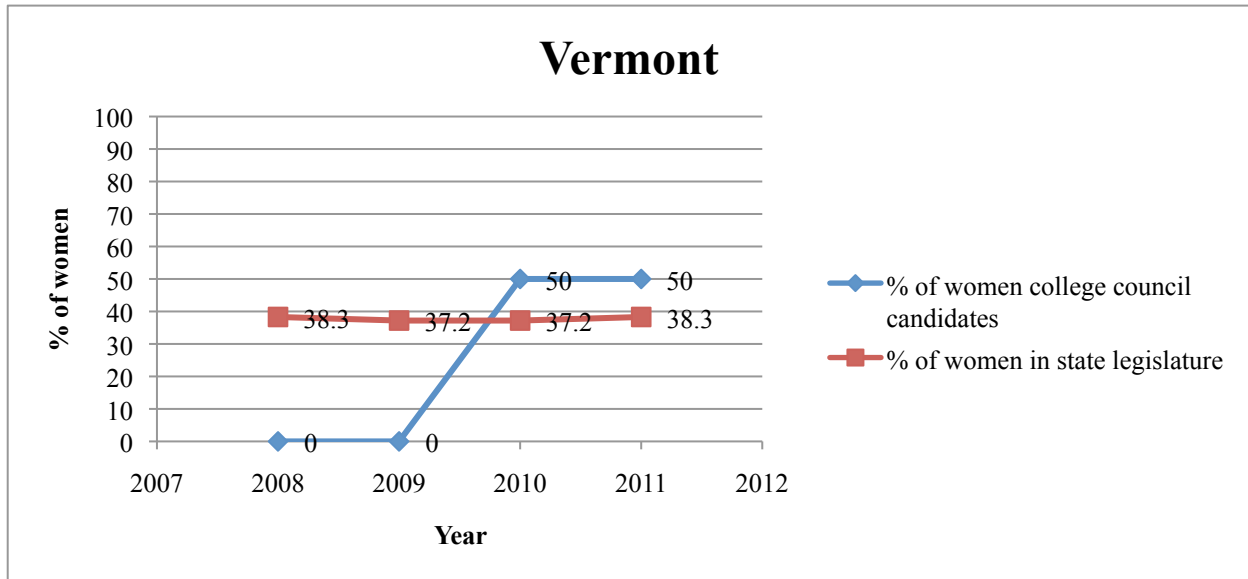
student government in the nation. CUSG creates, implements and oversees a \$37 million budget generated by student fees and other revenue...” (CUSG website). Their college council has three separate branches, the executive, legislative, and judicial. From their website and from the student newspaper’s website, the *CU Independent*, data was collected for the 2010 and 2011 spring all-campus elections (data was unavailable for 2008 and 2009). In 2010, two candidates ran, and zero of them were female. In 2011, three candidates ran, and none of them were female as well. This puts CU Boulder at an average of 0% for female executive candidates and at an average of 0% for female elected executives. When looking at their state legislature though, Colorado clearly performs much better. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, the state saw 36%, 37%, 38%, and 40% of women in their state legislature, respectively.



**Figure 3.1: Colorado % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

## *Vermont*

The University of Vermont is the top public university in Vermont. Their college council is called the University of Vermont Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA is split up into two branches, an executive and a legislative. The SGA President specifically “reports to the Board of Trustees at quarterly meetings... represents students and the legislation of the SGA Senate in these roles, reports University action to the students as necessary, and often times is the only student representative in policy or initiative forming meetings” (SGA website). I collected data on elections from their website and the website of the school’s newspaper, the *Vermont Cynic*. Data was available on their general spring elections from 2008 to 2011. In both 2008 and 2009, zero female candidates ran out of a total of two candidates running. In both 2010 and 2011, there was one female candidate that ran out of a total of two candidates. This puts the University of Vermont at an average of 25% of female executive candidates. The average percent of female executive candidates, however, remains at 0%. In this situation, Vermont is in the minority of cases in the dataset. The average of female executive candidates in my dataset is typically is equal to or lower than the percentages of female executive candidates. Vermont’s state legislature as well does much better in representing women than does the university’s college council. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Vermont saw 38.3%, 37.2%, 37.2%, and 38.3% of women in office, respectively.

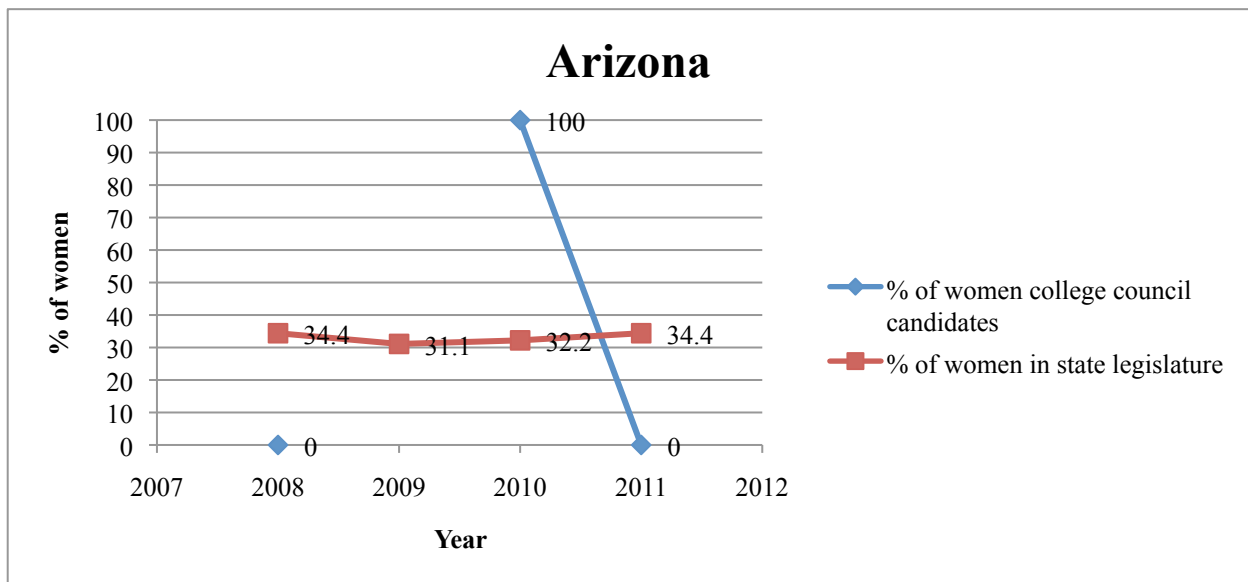


**Figure 3.2: Vermont % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

### *Arizona*

The top public university in Arizona is the University of Arizona. Their college council is called the Associated Students of The University of Arizona (or ASUA). The President of ASUA is also required to act “as Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and most importantly, the Chief Spokesperson for the students...responsibilities include creating committees, programs, services, projects, and various task forces” (ASUA website). The President is also responsible for all of ASUA’s funds and ensuring that they are disbursed and spent properly. Data on the university’s executive position elections were available primarily from the school newspaper, *The Daily Wildcat*. I found data from 2008, 2010, and 2011 (2009 was missing). In 2008, zero female candidates ran out of a total of one candidate. In 2010, there was one female candidate out a total of one candidate. In 2011, there were zero female candidates out of a total of three candidates. This makes for a three-year average of 33.3% of

female executive candidates and also a 33.3% of female executives. The high averages of candidates and executives at the college council level coupled with the fact that it is in the top five states in women’s representation make Arizona an outlier in the entire dataset. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Arizona saw 34.4%, 31.1%, 32.2%, and 34.4% of women in their state legislature; this shows that here too, there is no correlation.

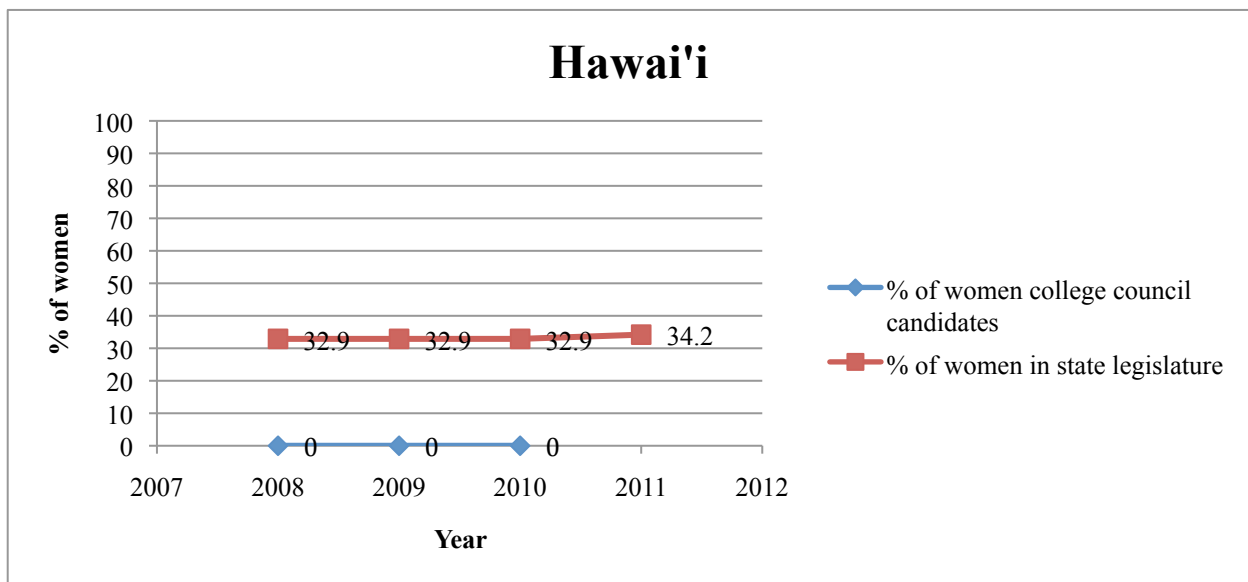


**Figure 3.3: Arizona % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

*Hawai’i*

The University of Hawai’i at Manoa is the highest-ranked public university in Hawai’i. Their college council is called the Associated Students at the University of Hawai’i (ASUH) and the organization was chartered in 1912. It is thus in its 99<sup>th</sup> year of serving the undergraduate student body and is one of the oldest in the country. Like many other schools, ASUH is also broken down into an executive branch, a legislative branch, and a judicial branch. The data collected on

the school's spring executive elections from 2008 to 2011 was obtained from the university's student newspaper, *Ka Leo*. From 2008-2010, zero female candidates ran out of a total of three executive candidates. In 2011, data could not be found on the candidates but the ASUH website indicated that the current executive is a female. This puts the university's average of executive female candidates at 0% from 2008-2010, but it puts the average of female executives at 25% from 2008-2011. The numbers of women in the state legislature in Hawai'i are also much higher than the numbers of women running. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Hawai'i saw 32.9%, 32.9%, 32.9%, and 34.2% of women in office, respectively.

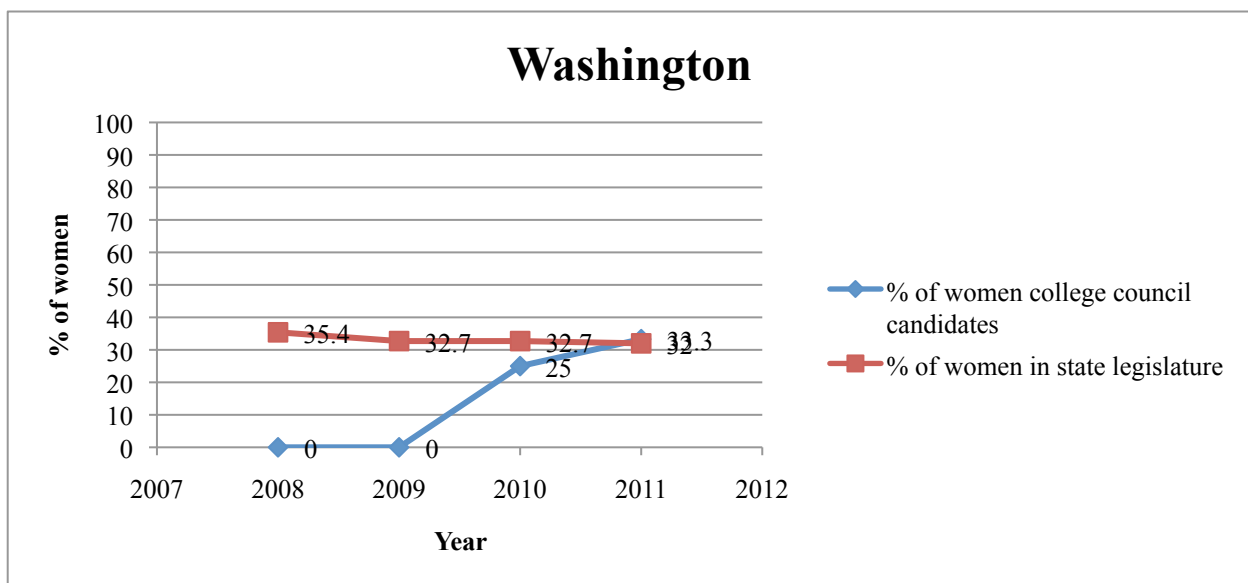


**Figure 3.4: Hawai'i % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

*Washington*

The top public university in Washington is the University of Washington. The school's student government is called the Associated Students of the University of Washington (ASUW).

ASUW is a 105-year old organization that is a “complex composition of government, corporation, advocacy, and programming elements which have been created and modified by thousands of students over more than a hundred years” (ASUW website). The ASUW President is the head of the Board of Directors (BOD), which is the final overseeing body over all of ASUW. The rest of the executives also sit on the BOD, and the rest of ASUW is comprised of a Student Senate, Programs, Commissions, and Committees. Data from 2008 to 2011 was collected on college council elections from the student newspaper, *The Daily*. In 2008, zero female candidates ran out of a total of three. In 2009, the zero female candidates ran out of a total of two. In 2010, one female candidate ran out of a total of four candidates and won. In 2011, one female candidate ran out of a total of three, but lost. This puts the university’s average of executive female candidates at 14.6% and the average of female executives at 25%. This situation is typical of the dataset. The percentage of executive female candidates is usually equal to or lower than the average number of female executives. In the state’s legislature, however, female representation was at 35.4%, 32.7%, 32.7%, and 32.0% for 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively.



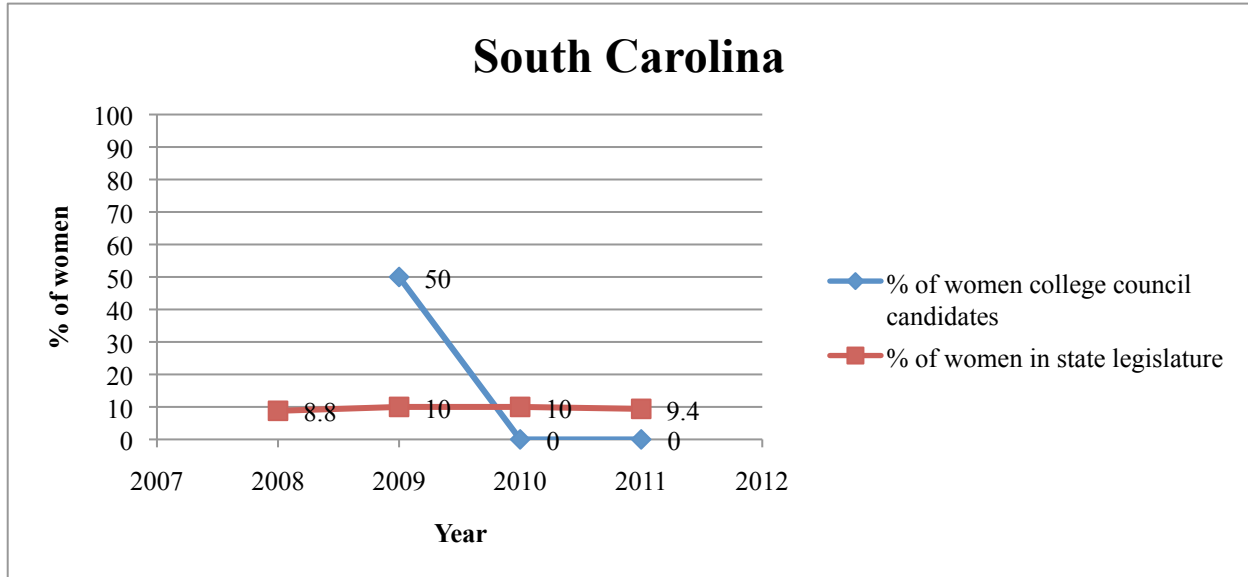


### **Figure 3.5: Washington % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

### **Lowest Percentages of Women in State Legislatures**

#### *South Carolina*

The top public university in South Carolina is Clemson University and their student government is called Clemson University Student Government, or CUSG. CUSG is made up of three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. I collected all of the data from 2009 to 2011 (2008 was unavailable) from the school newspaper's website, *The Tiger News*. In 2009, one female candidate ran out of two total and won the position. In both 2010 and 2011, zero female candidates ran out of a total of three. This puts the university at an average of 16.7% female candidates and 33.3% of female executives. Even though this state is in the bottom five, it has similar data to some of the top five states. This further proves the fact that there is no correlation between the percentage of female executive candidates and the percentage of women in the state's legislature. In this state, the college council averages are higher than the percentages of women who served in state legislative office. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, South Carolina saw 8.8%, 10%, 10%, and 9.4% of women in office, respectively.

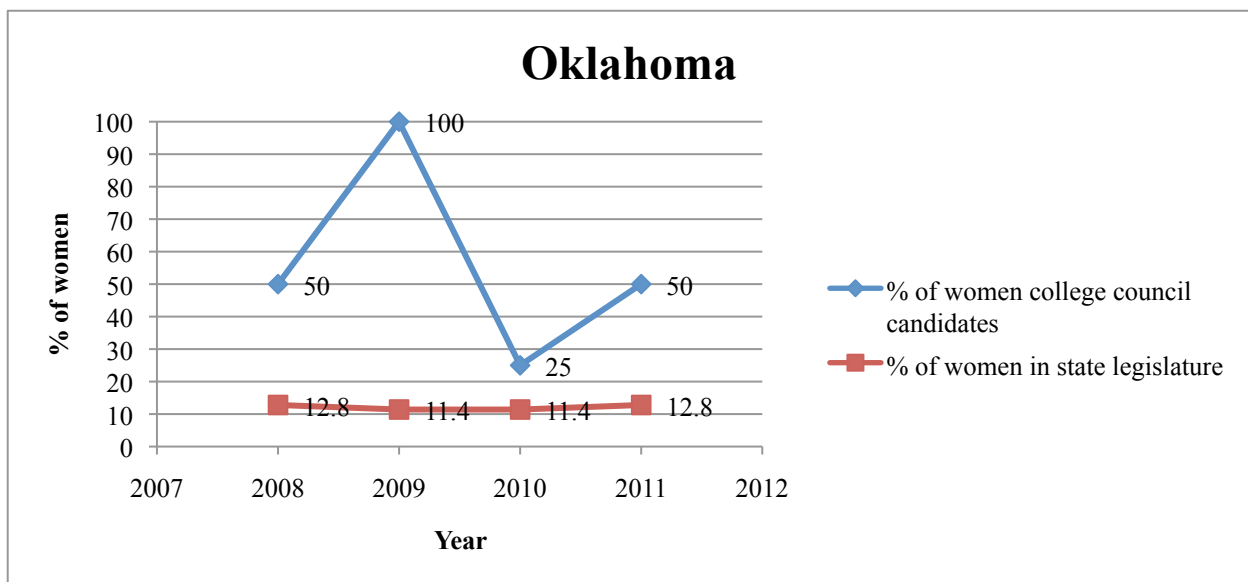


**Figure 3.6: South Carolina % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

### *Oklahoma*

The highest-ranked public university in Oklahoma is the University of Oklahoma. Their student government is called UOSA, or University of Oklahoma Student Association. UOSA is comprised of an Executive Branch, a Legislative Branch (which includes the Undergraduate Student Congress and the Graduate Student Senate), a Judicial Branch, and a Programming Branch. UOSA is given a budget just over \$700,000 to manage; the money is used primarily to fund student organizations, pay staff assistants, pay bills on student government property, etc. The Executives specifically “act as advocates for the students by meeting with administration, promoting resolutions passed by the legislature, and ensuring that all laws of the UOSA are faithfully executed” (UOSA website). I collected all of the data from the university newspaper’s website, *The Oklahoma Daily*. In 2008, one female ran out of a total of two candidates and won. In 2009, one female ran out of a total of one candidate; the female clearly won this race. In 2010,

one female candidate ran out of a total of four, but she did not win. In 2011, one female ran out of a total of two candidates and she won. This puts Oklahoma at one of the highest averages in the entire dataset. UOSA has an average of 50% for female executive candidates and 56.3% of actual female executives over the past four years. It is evident that this does not happen at the level of the state legislature. Similar to South Carolina, Oklahoma has higher averages in their college councils than their percentage of women in the state legislature. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Oklahoma saw 12.8%, 11.4%, 11.4%, and 12.8% of women in office, respectively.

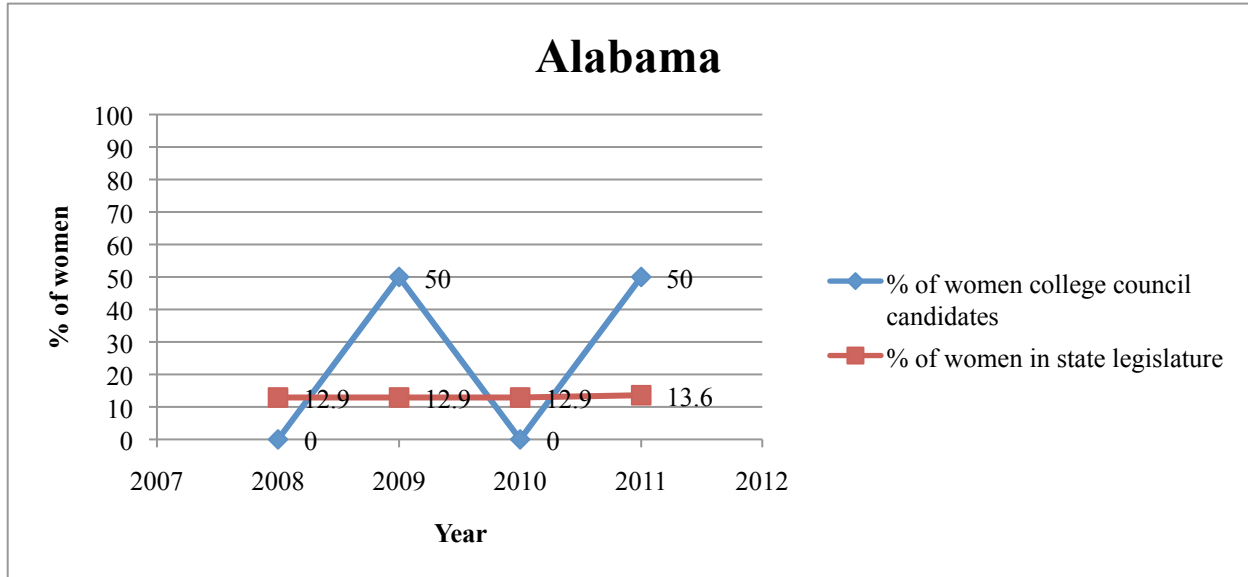


**Figure 3.7: Oklahoma % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

*Alabama*

The best public university in Alabama is the University of Alabama and their student government is called Student Government Association at University of Alabama, or SGA at UA. The Machine (the former Alpha Rho chapter of Theta Nu Epsilon) is a secret society made up of traditionally white fraternities and sororities that has had a powerful influence on campus and

statewide politics. The organization selects candidates for SGA office positions and attempts to secure their election. The group is known to use intimidation techniques (like cross burning, racist threats, etc) against all those who oppose them. In 1993, the entire SGA was suspended for three years because the Machine beat up SGA presidential candidate Minda Riley. An article from *The Guardian* states that “she was attacked at night by a knife-wielding masked man, a cross was burned in her garden, and she was sent a note reminding her: “Machine rules, bitch” (“Sororities”). When the SGA was reinstated later, the Machine seemed to stop using violent tactics, but still have a presence at UA. In March of 2000, Emily McMurphy was elected SGA president for the 2000-2001 school year, making her only the third female SGA president in UA history. UA currently has an “Elect Her – Campus Women Win” group, which aims to elect females to the SGA and provides them with a space to talk about the stereotypes they have encountered as student leaders. I collected all of the data on general spring elections from their newspaper, *UA News*. In 2008 and 2010, zero female candidates ran out of a total of two. In 2009 and 2011, one female ran out of a total of two and lost. This puts the SGA at UA at an average of 25% of female executive candidates and 0% of actual female executives. In Alabama, the college councils only do slightly better than the state legislature in terms of women’s representation. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Alabama saw 12.9%, 12.9%, 12.9%, and 13.6% of women in office, respectively.

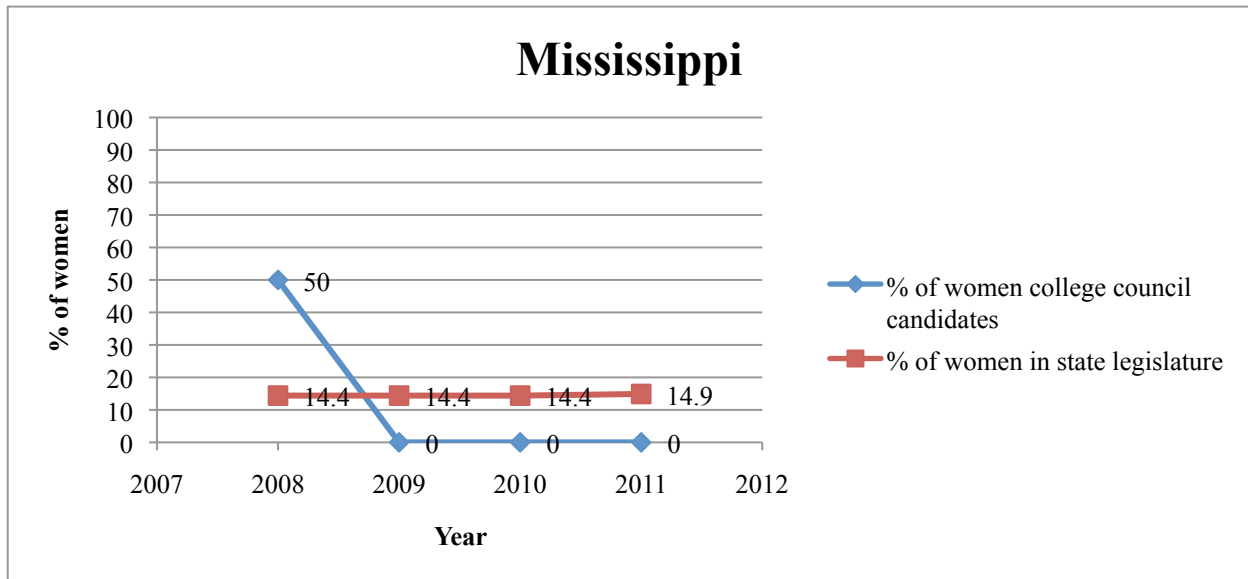


**Figure 3.8: Alabama % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

### *Mississippi*

The top public university in Mississippi is the Mississippi State University. Their student government is named the Student Association (SA) at Mississippi State. The SA, like many others, is a three-branch student government made up of executive, legislative, and judicial branches and was established in 1916. The executive branch entails a nine-member executive council (five elected and four appointed officers) in addition to a 40 member Cabinet. The President of this council leads almost the entire branch. The second woman to obtain public office in the state of Mississippi, Ms. Amy Tuck, was the former SA Director of Governmental Relations, an appointed position within the executive (SA website). She was elected Lieutenant Governor in 1999, served as the Secretary of State until 2002, and was the first woman in the history of Mississippi to be reelected. I found data on executive college council elections from the university's newspaper, *The Reflector*. In 2008, one female ran out of a total of two candidates and she did not win. In 2009, zero females ran out of a total of one candidate. In

2010, zero females ran out of a total of three candidates. In 2011, zero females ran out of a total of two candidates. This makes for an average of 12.5% of female executive candidates and 0.0% percent of female executives. The state legislature does better than the university’s college council in terms of women’s representation. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Mississippi saw 14.4%, 14.4%, 14.4%, and 14.9% of women in state legislative office, respectively.

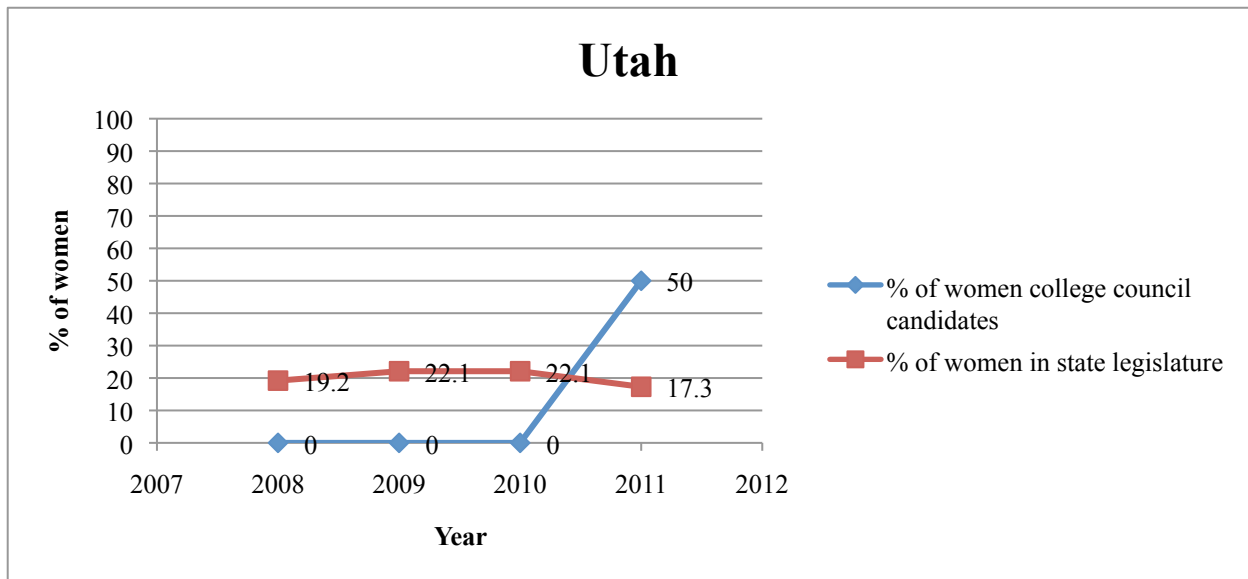


**Figure 3.9: Mississippi % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

*Utah*

The highest-ranked university in Utah is the University of Utah. Their student government is known as the Associated Students of the University of Utah (ASUU). It is split into three separate branches: an Executive Branch, a Legislative Branch, and a Judicial Branch. The Executive Branch is comprised of elected officials of ASUU and their appointed cabinet members. All members in this branch are tasked with “working with the student body to accurately represent and provide support for all students of the University” (ASUU website). In

the university's 2008, 2009, and 2010 general spring elections, there was one woman who ran for office out of total of two candidates. In every year, the female candidate lost. In 2011, one female ran for office out of a total of two candidates, but she lost as well. This puts ASUU at an average of 12.5% of female executive candidates and 0% of female executives over the four-year span. Utah fares very similar to Mississippi in terms of the percentages of women in the state legislature and candidates for the university's college council. In 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, Utah had 19.2%, 22.1%, 22.1%, and 17.3% of women in office, respectively.



**Figure 3.10: Utah % of Women College Council Candidates versus % of Women in State Legislature**

### Possible Explanations for this Phenomenon

#### *Low-Information Elections*

When voters do not possess solid knowledge of candidates' stances on important issues, they tend to employ political stereotypes of a candidate to assist them make a voting decision (Conover and Feldman 1982; Rahn 1993). Students who vote in college council elections quite

commonly have little to no idea what candidates' stances are, making them quintessentially low-information elections. In these kinds of elections, voters do not have any previous knowledge or former experience with the candidate. As a result, they use two different, basic cues to help them make a decision. Most commonly, voters look at the partisanship and party identification of the candidate. People have typically had some kind of prior knowledge or former experience with a political party. They more or less understand the policy positions each party holds and its past performance in government. With this information, they can employ partisan stereotyping; people can safely assume that a Democratic candidate would be more likely to focus on social programs over defense programs, while a Republican candidate would favor "hawkish" foreign policy, lower taxes, and an overall smaller government. Voters use this information to determine which candidate has policies that most closely match their own (McDermott 1998, 898).

Similarly, voters use demographics as a voting cue. Voters can ascertain (most of the time) a candidate's gender by the name on the ballot, a picture on campaign flyers, or from campus television. Stories about candidates in the university's student newspapers can talk about their race, gender, and background. Since obtaining this information is relatively low-cost compared to finding out candidates' stances on policy issues (and that partisan identification does not apply in these elections), we can expect college students to use this cue. Quite simply, college voters will stereotype candidates and then use this information to help them make a choice. Political scientists Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) assert that there are two different types of demographic stereotyping that can happen. The first are belief stereotypes, and are "based on ideologies or beliefs held by women... the gender gap in voting behavior has resulted in the stereotype that women are more liberal than men because they vote more heavily Democrat" (McDermott 1998, 899). The second are trait stereotypes, which are created from women's



emotional and physical traits. Due to the fact that women have been conventionally seen as more compassionate, voters believe they are more knowledgeable about “compassion issues” such as assisting those in need or promoting children’s needs. McDermott (1998) claims that belief stereotypes “function as general ideological guides” while trait stereotypes “function as policy preferences or competency cues, signaling to voters which issues may be most important to a candidate or on which issues a candidate is most competent” (899).

It is important to determine exactly what belief and trait stereotypes college student voters formulate about women and how it leads them to make a decision on a candidate. The general public belief stereotype women as more liberal than men; this is due in large part to the gender differential in voting. The trait stereotype of women is that they are more competent on social issues; this includes assisting the poor, promoting children’s needs, education, healthcare, and maintaining a just and principled government (McDermott 1998, 900). College council voters will then use these gender cues in two different ways. First, liberals and Democrats on campus should be attracted to and more likely to vote for female candidates. Second, since women are more likely to be seen as competent on social issues (i.e. education, healthcare, etc) that are important to college students, they should be more like to vote for a female candidate. In the November 2008 general election, President Obama carried 68% of the 18-29 vote, compared to Senator McCain’s 32%. The vast majority of college students are in the 18-29 age range, so it is no surprise that college campuses generally lean to the left politically. In the rare occasion that a woman does choose to run for an executive position in a university’s college council then, it is only logical that the campus should favor her election.

*When Women Run, Women Win*

The saying “when women run, women win” has become popular among women’s political action committees and interest groups. It is also a very powerful message because it sends the message that female candidates are just as likely as male candidates to be elected to public office. The question of “will voters elect a woman?” thus, no longer seems to have that much validity. The saying also points out that it is not the failure of women to win their contests that causes underrepresentation of women in American politics, but rather the shortage of women who actually run for office (Sanbonmatsu 2005). Political parties and especially party leadership is still largely consequential in the recruitment of candidates. They have the most power to attract endorsements, donations, volunteers, etc. When the leadership thinks that women are less likely to win as men, they have no incentive to recruit them as candidates. Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton (1997) very clearly state,

No one likes to back a sure loser, so the message that women have a tougher time winning elections and a tougher time raising money can only make it more difficult for women to achieve credibility and attract supporters, endorsements, and financial contributions. And if potential women candidates keep hearing how tough conditions will be for them, they will be less likely to decide to run, which will exacerbate the shortage of women candidates, the most severe obstacle to women’s political progress today (9).

1992 was known as the “Year of the Woman” in American Politics. In that year, there was a solid 70 percent increase in the number of women serving in the U.S. Congress. From thirty-two members, representation jumped to fifty-four members. This led many people to wonder whether women were able to outperform men in electoral contests. Scholars have confirmed the notion that women could possibly have an electoral advantage with their gender because it leads voters to form stereotypes of female candidates as agents of change (Burrell 1994). The question of whether the public will elect a woman no longer needs to be asked; the answer is a clear “yes.”

This adage of “when women run, women win” can definitely be applied to elections at the college level. There are no real, organized parties at the college level (or other institutional factors) that attempt to exclude female students from the political process. For the longest time, the basis for the claim that voters will not elect women has been that the public is prejudiced against women and does not think that it is their place to be in the public sphere. Recent successful elections of women to office prove this wrong. When women run for their respective college councils at the college level, their gender will not be the factor that keeps them from office.

#### *Male/Female Ratio of College Students*

The average gender gap on college campuses throughout the United States is at 57% female, and 43% male. While this may appear troubling at first, these numbers are not anticipated to worsen. Men have constantly obtained about 43% of enrollment and of four-year degrees awarded since 2000. What is important to note for this study’s purpose, however, is the fact that the average percentage of women in college is at 57%. Scholars have shown that women do have a greater inclination to vote for same-sex representation due to “...a sense of shared gender identity or common concern about issues may motivate women to select women candidates” (Dolan 2008, 124). When that 57% of women see another woman to vote for on their college election ballots, they are more likely to vote for her over another man. In my dataset on college council elections, it is common that when a woman runs, there are at least one or two men who run against her. Unlike women, men are not as likely to vote based on gender. Their 43% of the vote becomes split between two or three candidates, and not as concentrated as the female vote. In the rare occasion that a woman runs for an executive position then, it is likely

that she will win her race.

Kira Sanbonmatsu's work also reveals that women "are more likely to have a 'baseline' gender preference for women candidates, whereas other work on vote choice indicates that party identification and incumbency drive voting for women" (Dolan 2008, 124). Conversely, other scholars assert that some women will even cross party lines to vote for other women (Brians 2005; King and Matland 2003). It is also imperative to state that women are not a "monolithic voting bloc" who are tightly bonded to their sex and gender concerns and only vote for other women. The fact that women commonly support other women can be traced to the same political forces that shape other voting decisions (i.e. incumbency, race, level of office, etc).

## **Conclusion**

The point of my study on college council elections was to determine if young girls are currently being politically socialized at an early age. If this was the case, then I would have seen nascent political ambition in them, displayed in running for executive seats in college council elections. On a near-national average, I found that **19.4%** of candidates running for executive positions in college council elections are women, showing that little to no early political socialization is taking place (since it is less than my hypothesis of 25%). When women do run, however, their success rates are almost 5% higher than their run rates, at **24.3%**. Due to the great differential in run and success rates, it was vital to find an explanation. The three reasons for this occurrence are: (1) college council elections are low-information elections that favor women, (2) when women run, women win, and (3) the male/female ratio of college students favors women as well.

## **Chapter 4: Multivariate Linear Regression Results and Analysis**

In this study I attempt to do two things. First, I attempt to find a measure of political ambition, looking at early political socialization specifically. Second, I use this measure along with five other independent variables (both sociocultural and institutional) to see which best explains the overall underrepresentation of women in state legislatures across the United States. Current research on the number of women in state legislatures mainly focuses on the institutional factors that prevent women from obtaining political office. The body of literature that focuses on the sociocultural factors, furthermore, does not typically include an early political socialization measure. My work, then, operationalizes early political socialization and attempts to see how statistically significant it is in comparison to other commonly researched explanations.

In this chapter, I review each of my six independent variables that are predicted to impact the representation of women across state legislatures in the U.S., present hypotheses of regression results, and then run five different multivariate linear regressions to determine which variables are most statistically significant. The first regression model analyzes all of the variables in this study: early political socialization, family/gender roles, state political culture, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency. The second model looks at only the sociocultural variables without the early political socialization measure; this includes only family/gender roles and state political culture. The third model looks at only the early political socialization measure. The fourth model looks at all of the sociocultural variables, including early political socialization. The last model looks at the institutional variables, which are legislative professionalization, term limits, and a partisan composition of the constituency.

The multivariate linear regressions that are shown in this chapter most importantly produce “a statistic, the regression coefficient, that estimates the size of the effect of the

independent variable on the dependent variable” (Pollock 2009, 170). Results from each regression are shown in SPSS coefficient output tables, which provide the unstandardized coefficient B, the unstandardized coefficient standard error, the standardized coefficient Beta, the t-statistic, and the significance. I will look at some of these in each model, but the most important statistics will arguably be the unstandardized coefficient B and the standardized coefficient Beta, both of which measure the *percentage increase in the dependent variable with a one percentage point increase in the dependent variable*.

## **Predictions and Importance of Each Independent Variable**

### *Early Political Socialization*

One of the most under-researched areas in the literature on women and political ambition is in the field of early political socialization. Work has been done on the effects that political socialization has on young children, but not that much work has been done to understand why a gender differential exists. Early political socialization has been proven to be crucial for both young boys and girls because it almost doubles the chance of considering a run for public office. This is because the process instills in children the idea that they have the ability to take part in the democratic process. In Lawless and Fox’s (2010) Citizen Political Ambition Study, therefore, their interviewees who were part of their selected candidate eligibility pool were asked if they were exposed to similar levels of political socialization. In this same pool, more than half of both men and women ran for office as high school and college students. Even though the majority of them grew up in politicized households, women were 15% less likely than men to have their parents encourage them to run for office and 20% less likely to have their fathers speak to them about politics.

In my study, the candidate eligibility pool consists of female executive candidates and female elected executives in college councils across the United States. The measure of early political socialization is the number of women who decide to run for office. As my study shows, women run in college councils in much lower numbers than men; when they do run, though, they quite often obtain office. On an almost average of all fifty states, I found that only 19.4% of all executive candidates in college council elections are women. When 19.4% of women run, they have a success rate of 24.3%, almost five percent more. As mentioned previously, this differential is due in large part to the fact that (1) college elections are low-information elections, (2) when women run, women win, and (3) the male/female ratio of college students favors female candidates. When the average percentage of women in colleges across this country is close to 57% and only 19.4% of them are running for office, however, these numbers demand investigation.

When early political socialization is examined in the context of its overall effect on the underrepresentation of women in U.S. state legislatures, it seems logical that the two should at least have some kind of correlation. If scholars in the past have noted that a desire to run for office even at the college level is an indication of nascent political ambition, then this should have an effect on the overall numbers of women in state legislative office. Because my measure does not take into account other external factors at play between the time when a woman leaves college and the time she decides to run for political office, I believe that this variable will be only somewhat statistically significant. The percentage of female elected executives (from 2008-2011), 24.3%, also closely matches the percentage of women in state legislatures (in 2011), 23.7%. It is difficult to deny a relationship, but the possibility that it is just coincidence cannot be ruled out. There was also a high variation in the percentage of candidates across the years and in

the percentage of female elected officials between the states. This probably does have an effect on the strength of the variable, so its true significance might remain unknown. Given the time constraints, however, as much data was collected as possible and done in an accurate fashion.

### *Family/Gender Roles*

One of the most commonly discussed sociocultural explanations for underrepresentation of women in political office is family/gender roles. Traditional family orientations have long endured in the United States, and they maintain the traditional division of labor; women belong in the private sphere (the household), while men belong in the public sphere (the workplace). Many scholars on gender and American politics posit that, “a great deal of women’s political participation and activism throughout U.S. history can be linked to their family roles” (Lawless and Fox 2010, 69). A prime example of this is the Feminist Movement of the 1960s. A majority of this movement’s goal was to “dismantle the gendered conceptual framework” of the public and private spheres. One of the greatest psychological manifestations of family/gender roles is the “double bind” that many women have to face when they decide to have professional lives. The core of this “double bind,” coined by Kathleen Hall Jamieson, is that women in the professional world are continually judged not by the performance or management of their careers, but rather how well they carry out the duties of a wife and mother.

It is vital that this “bind” be studied because it greatly affects the candidate eligibility pool for elective office. It is no overstatement to say that for the majority of professional women, a political career amounts to a third job. Current Democratic National Committee chairwoman, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL) speaks to the difficulty of keep up her relationships with her husband and three children in Florida while working out of Washington



D.C. She states, “It feels like someone’s ripping my heart out...No matter how good your spouse is, kids want their mom when they’re sick” (Lawless and Fox 2010, 72).

I have come up with two ways to measure how strict or lax the imposition of family/gender roles are in each state. The first is to simply examine the percentage of women in the workforce. If the traditional division of labor states that women belong in the home, then a good way to measure how tightly this is enforced is to see the percentage of women who break that norm. States that have more women in the workforce, then, should have relatively higher percentages of women in the state legislature. The second is to look at the percentage of women-owned firms. Not only is this also indicative of how states view family/gender roles for the same reason as the number of women in the workforce, but it has an even greater importance. Business is one of the four careers, the “pipeline professions” that lead women to elected office. As mentioned earlier, women are greatly underrepresented in these pipeline professions (the three others being education, law, and politics). A looser imposition of family/gender roles should lead to a higher number of female-owned firms, and thus a higher number of women in the state legislature. I feel like this will be one of the most statistically significant explanations of underrepresentation due to the fact that traditional division of labor has been so highly entrenched in our society for centuries; it is not so easy to get rid of something that is the norm in American culture.

### *State Political Culture*

Political culture is another much-researched topic in the field of women and politics. It has been proven that there is a greater likelihood of women to emerge as candidates in states which have “established an early pattern of electing women to the state legislature, support

women's participation in public affairs, and do not have a tradition of sex discrimination in income, or gender disparities in educational achievement" (Lawless and Fox 2010, 155). States such as these have a much more liberal or progressive political culture. In many of these states, it is more likely for female candidates to appear in more Democratic states and states in which there are already a high percentage of women serving in state legislative office. Furthermore, women are not as likely to run for office in states with traditional political cultures, such as many in the south.

The way that I measure state political culture in this study is by looking at the Equal Rights Amendment and its ratifications. Originally written by Alice Paul in 1923, the Equal Rights Amendment, or ERA, was an amendment proposed to the United States Constitution that was intended to end all legal discrimination based upon sex. The main text of the amendment states, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex" (Francis). It passed both houses of Congress in 1972, and was given a seven-year deadline for the state legislatures across the country to approve it. As with all constitutional amendments, the ERA needed a 2/3 ratification rate for it to pass, or 38 states. By the end of the deadline, however, only 34 states had ratified. This makes for a good indicator of political culture because it shows that states that ratified it have historically been in favor of the expansion of women's rights; I believe that it will be at least somewhat significant. It is my theory that those states that ratified the ERA have a more liberal or progressive political culture and the states that did not likely have a traditional political culture. We should also anticipate higher numbers of female state legislators in the progressive states. If states have had a long history of denying women access to the political arena, the opportunities for women are not going to change drastically in a short period of time.

### *Legislative Professionalization*

More and more expert staff, higher salaries, and a yearlong session length are all characteristics of a professionalized state legislature. There have been mixed opinions by scholars, however, as to whether professionalized legislatures are more conducive to women's representation. Rosenthal (1997, 1998) believes that legislative professionalism is greatly gendered and privileges "traditional manifestations of masculinity in both its conception and its effect on legislative behavior" (95). It has been shown that both male and female committee chairs in professional legislatures are much less likely to implement integrative models of leadership than those in less professionalized legislatures. Carroll and Taylor (1989b) on the other hand, found that women in professionalized legislatures are not only more likely to make women's issues a major legislative priority, but also actually work on this legislation at a greater rate than women in non-professionalized legislatures. Peverill (1992b) also states that women are most likely to be elected in a northern, liberal, and non-professionalized legislature. Scholars have cited that when women look at the political opportunity structure to decide whether or not to declare a candidacy, they also evaluate how professionalized the legislature is.

Nelson W. Polsby, who studied the professionalization movement, states that this has been, "...a movement toward the establishment of a respectable pay scale, provision for independent staff services, and increases in the time allowed for legislatures to sit" (1975, 297). Peverill Squire (1992b) finds that this definition perfectly fits Congress and thus uses the legislative body as a baseline by which to compare all the other state legislatures across the country. He operationalizes Polsby's definition by looking at data on members' salary, total days in session (for both the legislatures and Congress), and the staff numbers per member. He uses

these three measures to form an index on the scale of zero to one. Even though scholars have had differing opinions on the explanatory power of legislative professionalism on the number of women in state legislative office, it is something that is always cited as a key aspect of the political opportunity structure. I predict that this variable will be somewhat significant.

### *Term Limits*

Scholars have speculated that the recent increase of women in state legislative leadership is caused by the increased opportunities created by term limits. By their very function, term limits create more open seats, getting rid of the obstacle of incumbency. When no incumbents are running and the seat is open, women have more of a chance of being elected (Deen and Little 1994). Sanbonmatsu (2005) showed that term limits had a positive impact on Democratic women's representation, but no real effect on Republican women's representation; she did not provide any explanations as to why this is the case. She also states that other scholars have found that term limits do have a positive impact on women's representation, but they also found that there were already relatively higher numbers of women in office in term-limited states (Carey, Niemi, and Powell 2000). She ultimately concludes by saying that it is probably too early to say with conviction whether term limits have an effect on women's representation since the literature has conflicting opinions.

To measure term limits, I collected data from the National Conference on State Legislatures (NCSL). There are only currently fifteen states that have term-limited legislatures, and data was available only for twelve. In this study, I calculated the percentage of open seats that were created by term limits in the lower house in 2010. The data ranges from a high of 34.0% in Arkansas to a low of 4.0% in North Dakota. I do not think that this variable will be

statistically significant due to the fact that scholars have not agreed on its effects and there are only fifteen cases to consider. To prove with certainty that it is significant, the sample size should theoretically be larger. I include it as an independent variable, however, to examine its relative significance.

### *Partisan Composition of the Constituency*

One of the most-discussed topics in American politics today is the “decline of parties.” Bartels (2000) proves that this discourse is greatly outdated and overstated. The total impact of partisan voting in the 1996 presidential election saw an 80% increase than the 1972 presidential election. One of the phenomena that he attributes this increase to is the political realignment of southerners following the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Many conservative white southerners abandoned the Democratic Party in the decades following. The steady increase in partisanship, however, is not regional but national. He also points to an increase in partisanship at the elite level as a cause. Parties in government today play a vital role; when political leaders strongly identify with a party, it makes the public develop partisan tendencies. There is no doubt that the importance of partisanship has greatly increased in recent times.

Since I am looking at the percentage of women in state legislative office in this study, the constituency is the entire state. I chose to look at the 2008 presidential election results (specifically the percentage of the votes that then-Senator Barack Obama received). I chose not to look at just party registration numbers, because the majority of the time, they do not reflect the partisan votes during the general election. Hirano and Snyder (2007) prove this point; they show that the Democratic Party tends to receive a disproportionate percentage of independent votes. Weisberg (2002) further states that, “Partisanship is a crucial determinant of the vote decision...the precise strength of its effect on the presidential vote has waxed and waned over

the years, but it remains an essential element of the vote question” (339). Clearly the constituency’s vote-share, then, should be a good indicator of its partisanship.

I believe that partisanship will be a strong explanation for the low numbers of women in state legislatures. Women are much more likely to identify with the Democratic Party and there are more Democratic women in office than Republican women. There are currently 1,051 Democratic women state legislators, as opposed to 676 Republican women state legislators. In Congress furthermore, there are 61 Democratic congresswomen and only 29 Republican congresswomen (Center for American Women and Politics 2012). The Democratic Party has historically sided with women’s rights and even though overall numbers are still low, they have incorporated women into their party in relatively greater numbers than the Republican Party.

#### *Overall Thoughts on the Data*

An analysis of the underrepresentation of women in U.S. state legislature seems to suggest that family/gender roles and the partisan composition of the constituency will provide the greatest explanatory power. Early political socialization could be significant too, but it does not account for other factors that come into play in the time difference between when a woman leaves college and when she decides to run for political office. Legislative professionalism and state political culture could both prove to be somewhat significant, since women look at those conditions in the political opportunity structure before they decide to declare a candidacy. There is little chance that term limits will be significant because the number of cases is too small to conclude anything with real certainty.

### *A Note About Multicollinearity*

In my study, I am running multiple independent variables to estimate their partial effects on my overall independent variable. Some of my independent variables, however, could be so strongly related to each other that it can be difficult to estimate the partial effects on the dependent variable, the percentage of women in state legislative office (i.e. early political socialization, family/gender roles, etc). To compensate for this possible issue in my study, though, I ran separate models to see the effects of variables in different groups.

## **Data Results and Analysis**

Following this review of the independent variables, I ran five different multivariate linear regressions to see which are most statistically significant in accounting for the number of women in state legislatures.

### *Model #1 – Accounting for all Variables*

The first model shows the SPSS output of the multivariate linear regression that takes into account all of the independent variables of the study (See Figure 4.1). From looking at the standardized Beta coefficients, it is evident that family/gender roles (workforce) and partisan composition of the constituency (Obama) provide the best explanation of the percentage of women in state legislatures. The significance of the family/gender roles variable is completely valid and consistent with the literature on women and political ambition. The majority of scholars in this field point to the challenges that women face balancing work and home lives as one of the biggest reasons why they do not pursue political office. The 0.342 standardized Beta coefficient shows that, holding all other variables constant, a state with 10% more women in the

workforce will have 3.24% more women in their state legislatures. The significance of partisan composition of the constituency was not entirely unexpected since the Democratic Party has integrated women into their ranks in higher numbers than the Republican Party. The 0.457 standardized Beta coefficient means that, holding all other variables constant, states that voted 10% more for President Obama in 2008 will have 4.57% more women in their state legislature.

Legislative professionalization (squires) and term limits are less significant. This is just as predicted. Scholars could not come to a consensus on the effect of legislative professionalism on women’s representation so it was uncertain whether the variable would be important. Figure 4.1 shows that there is a negative relationship between legislative professionalism and the number of women in office. Holding all other variables constant, when there is a 10% increase in legislative professionalism, there is a 3.14% decrease in the number of women in office. Compared to the other variables, furthermore, term limits only has a sample size of twelve cases (since the majority of states have not implemented them). It cannot be said with certainty, then, that it is statistically significant. Figure 4.1 shows that, holding all other variables constant, when there is a 10% increase in open seats created by term limits, there will be 3.06% more women in the state legislature. State political culture (ERA) is not significant, and early political socialization (female executives and female candidates) is the least significant explanation in the entire study.

Figure 4.2 shows that these six variables altogether account for around 44% of the variance in explaining the number of women in state legislatures.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-45.450	18.880		-2.407	.021



ERA	2.153	1.984	.149	1.085	.285
Firms	.709	.467	.234	1.518	.138
Workforce	.630	.238	.342	2.653	.012
Female Executives	-.012	.065	-.027	-.180	.858
Female Candidates	.020	.038	.081	.537	.595
Squires	-16.383	7.101	-.314	-2.307	.027
Term Limits Pct	.206	.084	.306	2.447	.019
Obama	.301	.119	.457	2.523	.016

a. Dependent Variable: Female Legislature

**Figure 4.1: Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture, family/gender roles, early political socialization, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.736 <sup>a</sup>	.542	.440	5.047

a. Predictors: (Constant), Obama, Female Candidates, Term Limits Pct, Workforce, ERA, Squires, Female Executives, Firms

**Figure 4.2: Regression model summary, measuring state political culture, family/gender roles, early political socialization, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency**

*Model #2 – Sociocultural Analysis*

Figure 4.3 shows the SPSS output for the multivariate regression that takes into account sociocultural variables of the study (minus early political socialization) and evaluates their statistical significance; only state political culture and family/gender roles are examined here.

The standardized Beta coefficients indicate that the family/gender roles variable is still more statistically significant than the state political culture explanation. In this regression analysis, one of the family/gender roles variables, firms, increases greatly in significance (0.003). The other family/gender roles variable, workforce, actually decreases in significance (0.024). Despite this fact though, the family/gender roles explanation still remains the most important in explaining

the number of women in office. This finding is consistent with the literature on women and political ambition (i.e. Lawless and Fox 2010).

Although the significance of the state political culture measure went up in this regression model, it is still not as statistically significant as the family/gender roles measure. It retains a significance level of only 0.136. Its standardized Beta coefficient, furthermore, is not as strong. It tells us that states that ratified the Equal Rights Amendment should see 2.04% more women in their state legislatures, holding all other variables constant. This finding is puzzling due to the fact that political culture entails how women have been historically treated by the state and how/when their rights were given; it would seem as though this should have been a stronger explanation than the results show.

As Figure 4.4 shows, this model accounts for 25% of the variance in explaining the percentage of women in state legislatures.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	-46.806	19.292		-2.426	.019
	ERA	2.970	1.957	.204	1.518	.136
	Firms	1.209	.384	.395	3.150	.003
	Workforce	.583	.249	.317	2.337	.024

a. Dependent Variable: Female Legislature

**Figure 4.3: Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture and family/gender roles**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.544 <sup>a</sup>	.296	.250	5.848

a. Predictors: (Constant), Workforce, Firms, ERA

**Figure 4.4: Regression model summary, measuring state political culture and family/gender roles**

*Model #3 – Early Political Socialization Analysis*

This model takes into account only the early political socialization measure, which so far has proved to be greatly insignificant. Figure 4.5 shows that the SPSS output of this regression is consistent with the first model. Early political socialization is even more insignificant when run solely by itself, signifying that it does not explain the number of women in the state legislature at all. The female executives (for college council) measure has a significance of 0.787 while the female candidates (of college councils) measure has a significance of 0.903. These numbers worsened from the first model. This finding is somewhat consistent with what was predicted. This model does not take into account other possible intervening variables that can affect a woman between the time that she leaves college and the time that she decides to run for public office.

Figure 4.5 shows that this model does not account for any of the variance in explaining the numbers of women in state legislature (the adjusted R-square is a negative value).

<b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	24.521	1.653		14.831	.000
3 Female Executives	-.023	.084	-.054	-.273	.787
Female Candidates	.006	.049	.024	.123	.903

a. Dependent Variable: Female Legislature

**Figure 4.5: Regression coefficients, measuring early political socialization**

<b>Model Summary</b>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	.043 <sup>a</sup>	.002	-.046	6.897

a. Predictors: (Constant), Female Candidates, Female Executives

**Figure 4.6: Regression model summary, measuring early political socialization**

*Model #4 – Sociocultural and Early Political Socialization Analysis*

The fourth model takes into account all of the sociocultural variables that were discussed in this study. As Figure 4.7 shows, the most important variable is family/gender roles. Both of its measures, “Firms” and “Workforce” are highly significant (0.004 and 0.003, respectively). The standardized Beta coefficients show that for states that have 10% more women-owned firms and 10% more women in the workforce, they will have 3.88% and 4.30% more women in their state legislature. These findings remain consistent with what was predicted. In the foreseeable future, women will continue to face the “double bind” where they are constantly judged by how they fulfill their roles as a mother or wife, and not by how successful they are professionally.

The other measures in this model, early political socialization and state political culture, prove to be insignificant. This finding is also consistent with the previous models. The significance levels for early political socialization (Female Executives and Female Candidates) remain incredibly high, at 0.920 and 0.788, while the level for the state political culture (ERA) stays at 0.246.

Figure 4.8 indicates that this model accounts for about 30% of the variance in the number of female state legislators.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-57.259	19.182		-2.985	.005
4 ERA	2.362	2.005	.164	1.178	.246
Firms	1.177	.389	.388	3.027	.004
Workforce	.793	.253	.430	3.134	.003
Female Executives	-.007	.070	-.017	-.101	.920
Female Candidates	-.011	.041	-.044	-.271	.788

a. Dependent Variable: Female Legislature

**Figure 4.7: Regression coefficients, measuring state political culture, family/gender roles, and early political socialization**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
4	.618 <sup>a</sup>	.381	.302	5.635

a. Predictors: (Constant), Female Candidates, Workforce, Firms, ERA, Female Executives

**Figure 4.8: Regression model summary, measuring state political culture, family/gender roles, and early political socialization**

*Model #5 – Institutional Analysis*

The fifth model shows the SPSS output for the multivariate regression that takes into consideration the institutional variables. Upon analysis of the standardized Beta coefficients (in Figure 4.9), it is clear that the partisan composition of the constituency measure (Obama) is the most significant in explaining the number of women in state legislative office. This result, once again, is consistent with what was predicted. The Democratic Party has higher numbers of women within its rank compared to the Republican Party, so it should be no surprise that the partisan leaning of the state will have an impact on the number of women in office. The 0.720 standardized Beta coefficient shows that, holding all other variables constant, for every 10% more votes for President Obama the state received, it is likely to have 7.20% more women in its legislature.

The two other variables in this regression proved to be insignificant. The legislative professionalization measure (Squires) has a significance of 0.059 while the term limits measure has a significance of 0.041. At first glance it could seem that term limits are important, but it is important to note that the sample size is only twelve, rendering it not as significant.

Figure 4.10 shows that this model accounts for about 37% of the variance in explaining the number of women in state legislatures.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
-------	-----------------------------	---------------------------	---	------

	B	Std. Error	Beta		
5 (Constant)	4.341	3.694		1.175	.246
Squires	-13.773	7.111	-.263	-1.937	.059
Term Limits Pct	.172	.082	.246	2.098	.041
Obama	.484	.090	.720	5.371	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Female Legislature

**Figure 4.9: Regression coefficients, measuring legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
5	.638 <sup>a</sup>	.408	.369	5.365

a. Predictors: (Constant), Obama, Term Limits Pct, Squires

**Figure 4.10: Regression model summary, measuring legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency**

## Concluding Remarks

The multivariate regressions run in this study produced interesting results. The data shows that family/gender roles and the partisan composition of the constituency are considerably the most important predictors of how many women will be in state legislative office. The high level to which family/gender roles are entrenched in American society will be difficult to change. Traditional family role orientations, in which women bear the majority of the responsibility for household work, are quintessentially characterized by heterosexual marriages. Although gender roles are slowly but surely changing, it seems like it will be a while before gender parity is achieved in political offices across the nation. The significance of partisan composition of the constituency also tells us that gaining a greater understanding of how women can overcome obstacles in male-dominated spheres will be crucial. If women want parity, they have to also be represented in equal numbers within political parties.

Term limits and legislative professionalization were found to be much less significant, and state political culture and early political socialization have no effect at all. One of the most

interesting findings of this data analysis was that state political culture does not have a significant effect on the number of female state legislators. It would seem obvious that the way a state has treated the status of women should have some effect on representation today, but that does not seem to be the case.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### Findings and their Significance

This thesis accomplishes three central goals. First, it creates an original dataset on executive college council elections from top public universities across the country from 2008 to 2011; it looks at the percentage of female executive candidates and the percentage of female executives (who obtained office). Second, it gives an original analysis on the underrepresentation of women in state legislatures across the United States by taking into account both sociocultural and institutional variables. Third, it contributes to the body of literature on women and political ambition by giving insight into early political socialization among young girls and the general puzzle of underrepresentation in American politics.

In my first study on early political socialization, I hypothesized that if girls are politically socialized at an early age, then we should see nascent political ambition in them. I believed that this political ambition would be manifested in a desire to run for executive seats in college council elections. I created an original datasheet of forty-five public universities' college council election results (data was unavailable for five of the states). I looked spring general elections from 2008 to 2011 and found that **19.4%** of candidates for executive offices were women, indicating that little to no early political socialization is taking place (since it is less than my theory of a 25% minimum). I also found, however, that when women do run their success rates are higher. I recorded success rates at an average of **24.3%**, almost 5% higher than their run rates. Due to this significant difference, I researched why it could be that women have relatively high success rates, even though their run rates are overall low. I found three plausible explanations to the phenomenon. First, there is a theory that states that when women run, women will win. Second, the voting bloc in college council elections favors female candidates because



there is currently a higher percentage of women than men enrolled in American universities (57%-43%). Third, college council elections are quintessentially low-information elections, so student voters make use of voting cues.

In my second study on what causes the underrepresentation of women in U.S. state legislatures, I decided to examine six different independent variables and through multivariate regression analysis, see which was most statistically significant. I created the early political socialization measure with data from the first study, and found ways to operationalize family/gender roles, state political culture, legislative professionalization, term limits, and partisan composition of the constituency. Based off of evidence from the literature on women and political ambition, I hypothesized that the best explanations for the current number of women in state legislative office would come from the state political culture measure, the family/gender roles measure, and the partisan composition of the constituency measure.

The results of the multivariate regression analyses showed that the most significant explanations were family/gender roles and the partisan composition of the constituency. Both of these results made perfect sense and were consistent with the literature's previous findings (e.g. Lawless and Fox 2010, Center for American Women and Politics 2012). What I found puzzling, however, was the fact that state political culture was not important. It has been cited in the literature that women are more likely to emerge as candidates in states that have had historical patterns of being on the side of women's rights (Hill 1981). Compared with the magnitude that family/gender roles and the partisan measures hold though, it is possible for it to be not as statistically significant.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Both studies (on early political socialization and overall underrepresentation of women in state legislatures) have three limitations that are important to mention. First, I mentioned three main areas of study in the literature review: sociocultural, institutional, and psychological. My thesis discusses mainly sociocultural topics and a little bit on institutional topics. It neglects the psychological dimension completely. The psychological dimension would have considered how young girls and boys are socialized and attempt to explain why there is a gender differential in confidence levels, the drive for achievement, and the proclivity to self-promote. Put together with the sociocultural and institutional explanations, it would paint a complete picture of why women are supposedly less politically ambitious than men. Due to time constraints, however, this full process is impossible.

Second, my measure of early political socialization takes into account only the executive seats in college council elections. I could have looked at legislative elections as well and reduced the probability of random error. This data is much harder to gather and is typically not published (both candidates and winners) in student newspapers and student government websites. This would have required me to contact each school's student government individually for data. Once again, given the time, this was not feasible.

Third, there is variation in the candidates running for executive seats for college council elections between the states, especially among the data for the average percentages of female elected executives. Many states have an average of 0% over the four years of data that was collected, while others have averages around 75%. If data was collected for much more than four years and averaged, this variable could possibly have a more significant outcome on the percentage of women in state legislative office. The true significance of the variable for now

remains unknown. The methodology by which the data was obtained though, could not have been done better given time constraints.

## **Importance of Equal Representation of Women in American Politics**

I chose to study women and political ambition because having gender parity in American politics is of utmost importance. Most notably, having women in office sets an example for young girls across the country. The media constantly bombards girls with the message that the most important thing about them is not their brains, but rather their sex appeal. Campbell and Wolbrecht (2006) found that in areas where there are visible female campaigns for high-profile office, young girls report more of an interest in political activism. The authors also find that this phenomenon is not influenced by the “appropriateness of politics for women” or “perceptions of government responsiveness.” It actually leads to an increased discussion of politics within families, proving that the role model effect is quite strong. An increased number of women in high-profile office has the potential to strongly affect the levels of early political socialization among girls across the country. Current Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) stated that, “What made the 1994 campaign [for governor] worthwhile was the realization that I had become a role model for women and young girls.” She also said that a young girl came to her after the election and told her that, “You made me feel I could do anything” (Campbell and Wolbrecht 2006). Male candidates, on the other hand, do not boast about their positions as role models because men have always felt that the realm of politics has been open to them.

For democracy to function, furthermore, every demographic group should be properly represented. The fact that women constitute 50% of the American population and only have 23.6% of all state legislative seats and 21.7% of all state senate seats reflects very poorly on our nation’s democracy. Having women in state legislatures is important because it is one of the first

points of entry into politics; a career there can also lead to careers in higher-level offices, like Congress, a governorship, or even the presidency. The enormous underrepresentation of women in politics ultimately leaves feminists goals and women's issues out of the picture and very few people to advocate for women. Sue Thomas (1998) sums up these sentiments and argues that, "A government that is democratically organized cannot truly be legitimate if all its citizens...do not have a potential interest in and opportunity for serving their community and nation" (1).

### **Contributions to the Literature on Women and Politics**

Despite the limitations to the thesis mentioned earlier, my research contributes to the current literature on women and politics in two very significant ways. My first study on early political socialization shows that little to no political socialization is happening among young girls across the United States. It also posits that there are three significant reasons as to why even though they do not run in high numbers, when women run, they win. First, the voting bloc for college council elections favors female candidates because there are now more women enrolled in colleges across the country than men. This could have a profound impact in the future when more women will have college degrees than men. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) noted that higher education levels are closely tied to higher voter turnout levels since "formal education increases one's capacity for understanding and work with complex, abstract, and intangible subjects – that is, subjects like politics..." (79-80). More women voting in the future could possibly lead to them voting for women candidates when they appear in the political arena. Second, the current theory of "when women run, women win" is supported by this study. Even though it is at the collegiate level, women analyze the political opportunity structure to see if there is a good chance of electoral success. Third, college council elections are low-information elections, so voters make use of voting cues (e.g. gender). The second study further solidifies the

current work in the literature by finding that the most statistically significant explanations for the underrepresentation of women in state legislatures are family/gender roles and partisan composition of the constituency. Both are quite commonly cited in work on gender and politics.

### **Suggestions for Continued Research**

It is evident that both studies in this thesis contribute to the general literature on gender and political ambition. They clearly show that early political socialization does not occur in high levels in the United States and that family/gender roles and the partisan composition of the constituency provide the best explanation for the underrepresentation of women in state legislatures. This information provides valuable insight into why women seem to be less politically ambitious than men and offers pathways for future research on the topic.

Upon multivariate regression analysis, it was found that early political socialization was not a statistically significant independent variable. In one of the two measures of this variable, the percentage of female elected executives, there was a large variation in the dataset. As mentioned earlier, many states had 0% of female executives while many had around 75%. The data was collected as carefully as possible, but one way to determine the measure's true importance would be to collect data for more than four years. Increased data almost always provides a better evaluation of the variable's importance. To completely rule out random error, furthermore, data could be collected on legislative college council elections. Comparing how many women run for those seats and their success rates would paint an even more interesting picture of early political socialization and ambition. Another possibility for examining early political socialization would be to find a completely different way to operationalize it. Surveys have been completed of eligible candidates for office (e.g. Citizen Political Ambition Study), but

perhaps it could be analyzed by conducting surveys of teenage girls about their exposure to politics and how it has or has not affected their political ambition.

If partisan composition of the constituency and family/gender roles are two of the greatest obstacles to the number of women in state legislative office, then any research into how women can overcome them would be invaluable. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, women are still far from full integration into political party networks. If their representation is highly dependant upon partisanship, then a way for them to reach equal representation in political parties should be researched. Only then will they have the institutional strength to attempt gender parity in office. The traditional division of labor is still highly entrenched in American society and it seems as though a sociological or psychological analysis is ultimately needed to figure out how women can overcome this barrier. The longest-serving woman in the U.S. Senate, Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), posits that future equal representation is dependant upon female candidacies. She states that, “Every Tom, Dick, and Harry is now going to be Hillary, Debbie, Jean, and Maria” (Lawless and Fox 2010, 164). The pre-candidacy stage of women’s representation still requires continued research. Gender parity in American politics is going to require more than just institutional changes. Most fundamentally, it will rely on decreasing the gender differential in political ambition and finding a way to overcome family/gender roles in American society.

## References

- Alexander, Karl L. and Bruce K. Eckland. 1974. "Sex Differences in the Educational Attainment Process." *American Sociological Review*. 39: 668-82.
- Associated Students of Arizona State University. 2012. "About ASUA." N.p. Web. 2 Apr 2012. <<http://asua.arizona.edu/ASUASite/Officers.html>>.
- Associated Students of the University of Utah. 2012. "About ASUU" N.p. Web. 2 Apr 2012. <<http://www.asuu.utah.edu/about-asuu/>>.
- Associated Students of the University of Washington. 2012. "About ASUW." N.p. Web. 2 Apr 2012. <<http://www.asuw.org/about.php>>.
- Baldez, Lisa. 2006. "The Pros and Cons of Gender Quota Laws: What Happens When You Kick Men Out and Let Women In?" *Politics and Gender* 2 (May):102-109.
- Banerji, Shilpa. 2006. "AAUP: Women Professors Lag in Tenure, Salary." *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, October 26, <http://diverseeducation.com/article/6660/I.php>
- Bartels, Larry M. 2000. "Panel Effects in American National Election Studies." *Political Analysis*. 8(1): 1-20.
- Beck, Paul Allen, and M. Kent Jennings. 1982. "Pathways to Participation." *American Political Science Review* 76(1): 94-108.
- Borger, Julian. "Secret network keeps sororities white." *Guardian UK* [London] 10 Sep 2001, n. pag. Print. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/sep/11/usa.julianborger>>.
- Burrell, Barbara. 1994. *A Woman's Place Is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Campbell, David E. and Christina Wolbrecht. 2006. "See Jane Run: Women Politicians as Role Models for Adolescents." *Journal of Politics*. 68:233-47.

- Carey, John H., Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell. 2000. "Incumbency and the Probability of Reelection in State Legislative Elections." *The Journal of Politics* 62:671–700.
- Carroll, Susan J. and Krista Jenkins. 2001. Do Term Limits Help Women Get Elected?. *Social Science Quarterly*, 82(1), 197-201.
- Carroll, Susan J. and Krista Jenkins. 2005. Increasing Diversity or More of the Same? Term Limits and the Representation of Women, Minorities, and Minority Women in State Legislatures. *National Political Science Review*, 10, 71-84.
- Center for American Women and Politics. 2012. Facts on Women Officeholders, Candidates and Voters. [http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast\\_facts/index.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/index.php). March 25, 2012.
- Center for American Women and Politics. 2012. Firsts for Women in U.S. Politics. [http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast\\_facts/resources/Firsts.php](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/resources/Firsts.php). March 25, 2012.
- Dahlerup, Drude. 2006. "Introduction." In *Women, Quotas and Politics*, ed. Drude Dahlerup. New York: Routledge.
- Darcy, Robert, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark. 2004. *Women, Elections, and Representation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Davis, Shannon N. and Lisa D. Pearce. 2007. Adolescents' Work-Family Gender Ideologies and Educational Expectations. *University of California Press*.
- Deen, Rebecca E. and Thomas H. Little. 1999. "Getting to the Top: Factors Influencing the Selection of Women to the Positions of Leadership in State Legislatures." *State and Local Government Review*. 31(2): 123-134.



- Dolan, Kathleen. 2008. "Is There a 'Gender Affinity Effect' in American Politics? Information, Affect, and Candidate Sex in U.S. House Relations." *Political Science Research Quarterly*. 61(1): 79-89.
- Eccles, Jacquelynne S. 1987. "Gender Roles and Women's Achievement-Related Decisions." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 11: 135-72.
- Enloe, Cynthia. 2004. *The Curious Feminist*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fox, Richard L. and Jennifer Lawless. 2004. Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office. *Midwest Political Science Association*, 48(2), 264-280.
- Francis, Roberta W. "The History Behind the Equal Rights Amendment." *The Equal Rights Amendment*. N.p., n.d. Web. 2 Apr 2012.  
<<http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>>.
- Freedman, Estelle. 2002. *No Turning Back*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Henderson, Sarah L., and Alana S. Jeydel. 2010. *Women and Politics in a Global World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hill, David. 1981. "Political Culture and Female Political Representation." *Journal of Politics*. 43(1):159-68.
- Htun, Mala. 2004. "Is Gender like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups." *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (September): 439-458.
- Huddy, Leonie and Nayda Terkildsen. 1993. "Gender Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates." *American Journal of Political Science*. 37(1): 119-147.
- Jenkins, Krista, and Susan J. Carroll. 2003. "Term Limits and the Representation of Women." *American Political Science Association Newsletter*,  
<http://www.apsanet.org/~Iss?Newsletter/jano3/Jenkins.htm>.

- Jozefowicz, Debra M., Bonnie L. Barber, and Jacquelynne S. Eccles. 1993. "Adolescent Work-Related Values and Beliefs: Gender Differences and Relation to Occupational Aspirations." Paper presented at Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, New Orleans, LA, March 25-28.
- Kousser, Thad. 2005. *Term Limits and the Dismantling of State Legislative Professionalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Krook, Mona Lena, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires. 2006. "Western Europe, North American, Australia, and New Zealand: Gender Quotas in the Context of Citizenship Models." In *Women, Quotas, and Politics*, ed. Drude Dahlerup. New York: Routledge.
- Lawless, Jennifer and Richard Fox. 2010. *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Mason, Mary Ann, and Marc Goulden. 2002. "Do Babies Mater? The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Women." *Academe*, <http://www.aaup.org/publications/academe/2002/02nd/02ndmas.htm>.
- McDermott, Monika L. 1998. "Race and Gender Cues in Low-Information Elections." *Political Science Research Quarterly*. 51(4): 895-918.
- National Association for Law Placement Foundation. 2009. "Women and Minorities in Law Firms by Race and Ethnicity." <http://www.nalp.org/jan2009womenminorities>.
- National Conference of State Legislatures. *The Term Limited States*. Last modified 2012. <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/legisdata/chart-of-term-limits-states.aspx>.
- Palmer, Barbara and Dennis Simon. 2003. Political Ambition and Women in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1916-2000. *Sage Publications, Inc.*, 56(2), 127-138.

- Rohde, David W. 1979. "Risk-Bearing and Progressive Ambition: The Case of the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Journal of Political Science* 23(1), 1-26.
- Rule, Wilma. 1981. Why Women Don't Run: The Critical Contextual Factors in Women's Legislative Recruitment. *The Western Political Quarterly*, 34(1), 60-77.
- Rule, Wilma. 1994. Women's Underrepresentation and Electoral Systems. *American Political Science Association*, 27(4), 689-692.
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira, Susan J. Carroll, and Debbie Walsh. 2009. "Poised to Run: Women's Pathways to State Legislatures." Center for American Women and Politics: Eagleton Institute of Politics.
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2002. Political Parties and the Recruitment of Women to State Legislatures. *The Journal of Politics: Southern Political Science Association*, 64(3), 791-809.
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2006. *Where Women Run: Gender and Party in the American States*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1966. *Ambition and Politics: Political Careers in the United States*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Scola, Becky. 2006. Women of Color in State Legislatures: Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Legislative Office Holding. *Routledge*, 28(3-4), 43-70.
- Squire, Peverill. 1992a. Legislative Professionalization and Membership Diversity in State Legislatures. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17:69-79.
- Joel Thompson and Gary Moncrief. 1993. "Implications of Term Limits for Women and Minorities: Some Evidence from the States," *Social Science Quarterly*. 74:300-309.
- Stone, Pamela. 2007. *Opting Out: Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

University of Colorado Student Government. 2012. "About CUSG." N.p. Web. 2 Apr 2012.  
<<http://cusg.colorado.edu/content/about-cusg-0>>.

University of Oklahoma Student Association. 2012. "About UOSA." N.p. Web. 2 Apr 2012. <  
<http://www.ou.edu/uosa/home.html>>.

University of Vermont Student Government Association. 2012. "About SGA." N.p. Web. 2 Apr  
2012. <<http://www.uvm.edu/sga/?Page=about.html>>.

U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey. 2010. 2010 American Community Survey.  
<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>. February 29, 2012.