

Mack David Mariani

**A Gendered Pipeline?
The Advancement of State Legislators to Congress in Five States**

Abstract: The pipeline theory of women's representation suggests that increases in female representation at the state level will result in future increases in women's representation in Congress. This paper examines the opportunity structures in five state legislatures over a ten year period to assess whether female and male state legislators are similarly situated relative to a number of individual, cultural, and structural factors associated with congressional advancement. My analysis indicates that female state legislators are less likely than their male colleagues to advance to Congress. I conclude that there are a number of key differences between men and women in state legislatures that are relevant to the likelihood that male and female state legislators seek and win congressional office; in comparison with men, women state legislators are significantly older and are less likely to have an occupational background in the fields of business or law. These findings suggest that aggregate levels of female representation at the state legislative level are likely to be an unreliable indicator of future levels of female representation in Congress.

A Gendered Pipeline?

The Advancement of State Legislators to Congress in Five States

By

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Preface

This project has its origins in a paper I wrote for a class on Federalism and Intergovernmental relations taught by Professor Philip Joyce at Syracuse University. In the course of my research for that class, I was struck by the disparity in the levels of female representation at the state legislative level in comparison to Congress. Since the early 1970s, the percentage of women in state legislatures has been consistently (and often substantially) larger than the percentage of women serving in the U.S. Congress. In my Federalism paper, I argued that given this disparity, scholars and activists committed to increasing the number of women in positions of power should consider whether something might also be gained by shifting power to where women already *are* -- the state legislatures. In making this (admittedly controversial) argument, I thought it was necessary to assess whether the “women’s representation gap” between Congress and state legislatures was a short-term or long-term phenomenon. It is this rather circuitous route which led me to examine the “pipeline theory” and the assumption that women elected to state legislatures will inevitably trickle-up to Congress.

The pipeline theory argues that legislators who gain experience and resources at lower levels of political office are well-positioned to advance to higher-level elected offices. As a result, researchers and political observers have assumed that increasing numbers of women at the state legislative level will result, over time, in similar increases at the congressional level. In this paper, I argue that aggregate levels of female representation are an unreliable indicator of future levels of female representation in Congress. To assess this, I examine the patterns of congressional advancement among state legislators in five states over a ten year period (1993-2002) and find that women are less likely than men to seek congressional office. Consistent with previous research, I also identify a number of key differences between male and female state legislators which make it less likely that women will advance to Congress; moreover, these differences are directly related to the gender roles assumed by men and women in the areas of employment and family life.

The “pipeline” that takes men and women to state legislatures fits the definition of a “gendered” institution in that it exists as part of the political opportunity structure that influences both expectations and behavior, and it does so in a way that varies according to gender.¹ A look at the backgrounds of men and women serving in the state legislatures examined in this study shows that women have been successful in forging their own paths to state legislative offices. Women enter state legislative service at an older age than their male counterparts and are more likely than men to have primary occupations in community service and education and less likely than men to have primary occupations in the fields of business or law. In looking at the small subset of state legislators who sought congressional office, however, the female legislators who moved into the pipeline were more likely to

¹ Kenney argues that the idea of a “gendered institution” suggests several things, including the fact that “the experience of participants within an institution will vary according to gender. Not only will women most likely have fewer opportunities than men, but their perceptions of the obstacles and the existence of circumscribed opportunities will vary by gender.” Sally J. Kenney, “New Research on Gendered Political Institutions,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (June 1996): 456.

resemble their male colleagues in terms of age and occupation, than they were to resemble the broader group of women serving in the state legislature.

To be sure, this primarily quantitative analysis only scratches the surface in terms of the impact of gender on the pipeline. Sally Kenney, for example, argues that large-scale data analyses are limited because “focusing on the totality leads to a flattening of the variable ‘society’s attitudes about women’s roles’ (or the numbers of women) as the causal agent determining the degree to which women’s agenda will be furthered within the institution.”² I agree that additional analyses, both qualitative and quantitative, are needed to assess how men and women perceive the pipeline and the extent that gender plays an explicit or implicit role in state legislators’ decisions to run for Congress. This research is hopefully just one small step in a broader effort on the part of the discipline to assess the extent that the pipeline is gendered.

In 1993, Susan Carroll assessed the state of the discipline with regard to research on women candidates and officeholders. At that time, she noted that while much was known about the problems facing women running for office, “almost no research has examined...the frequency with which, and conditions under which, women officials move on to higher office or out of politics.”³ In recent years, the career patterns of female elected officials have become a more prominent subject of study due, in part, to the renewed attention on candidate recruitment and emergence that resulted from the research efforts of Cherie Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone.⁴ I am pleased to have this opportunity to contribute in a small way to this small, but growing body of research.

I am extremely appreciative of the support and assistance that I have received from my family, colleagues, and coworkers during the course of this research. Accordingly, I wish to thank the members of my dissertation committee, Kristi Andersen, Jeff Stonecash, Grant Reeher, Rogan Kersh and Kira Sanbonmatsu for their feedback and support during the course of my research; Vernon Greene from the Department of Public Administration for serving as the chair of my dissertation defense; Joseph Cammarano from Providence College for his encouragement and assistance with the formatting of various databases; Suzanne Mettler for her advice and ideas; and Philip Joyce (now with George Washington University) for inspiring this project. Kevin Hardwick and the late Fr. Edmund Ryan, S.J. at Canisius College and Dean Robert McClure at Syracuse University also deserve thanks for providing inspiration and advice at key moments along the way. The chair of my committee, Kristi Andersen, also deserves a special acknowledgement for inspiring me to overcome all

² Ibid., 451.

³ Susan J. Carroll, “The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials: an Assessment and Research Agenda,” in *Ambition and Beyond*, edited by Shirley Williams and Edward L. Lascher, Jr. (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies Press, 1993): 197-198.

⁴ Cherie Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone, “Stepping Up or Stopping? Candidate Emergence among State Legislators,” paper prepared for the Southwest Political Science Association meeting in San Antonio, TX (April 1-4, 1999); Cherie Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone, “When to Risk it? State Legislators and the Decision to Run for the U.S. House,” paper prepared for presentation at the Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC (August-September 2000). See also Sarah A. Fulton, Cherie D. Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, Walter J. Stone, “The Sense of a Woman: Gender, Ambition and the Decision to Run for Congress.” Unpublished manuscript, a later version of which is forthcoming from *Political Research Quarterly* (2006).

obstacles to pursue a career in teaching and scholarship. I could not have succeeded without her encouragement and good advice.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues at the Department of Political Science at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs for providing me with helpful comments, new ideas, and constructive criticisms: Mark Brewer, Lynn Eckert, Dan Kaloutsky, A. Lanethea Matthews-Gardner, R. Eric Petersen, Ryan Peterson, and McGee Young. Well deserved thanks also go to Candy Brooks and Jacqueline Meyer at the Department of Political Science at Syracuse University. They have been an important part of this project and I want to single them out for their patience and assistance over the course of this dissertation and my graduate career.

During the course of this project, I received assistance from librarians and staff members at a number of institutions, including the Cornell University Library, the Nazareth College Library, the Syracuse University Library, and state legislative libraries and clerk's offices in the states of Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. I am grateful for the help and direction these institutions, and their staff members, have provided to me.

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Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank my family for their support and encouragement; in particular, I want to thank my grandmother, Kay Fricon, and my mother, Linda Coleman. I also want to thank my late father, David F. Mariani, who asked me about this project nearly every time we talked. I wish I had finished it a year earlier so he could have seen it for himself.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Jean, and our children, Jack, Molly, and Livie. Jean has inspired me and supported me throughout this long project and she has stood by me despite my bizarre late-night work schedule, my meetings in Syracuse and frequent weekend trips to the Cornell Library. Jean has helped me work through this project from day one. I couldn't have done this – or much of anything – without her love and support.

Mack Mariani
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A Tale of Two Washingtons

The story of women's increasing success in American legislatures is a tale of two Washingtons. The first is the nation's capital, Washington, DC, where by 2006 women held 15.1% of seats in Congress. Once relegated to the sidelines as a group of congressional widows, placeholders and tokens, women have now assumed prominent and powerful leadership roles in both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.⁵

Given that three decades ago, women held only 3% of all congressional seats, one might view the routine election of women to Congress and the selection of women to prominent leadership positions as a significant achievement.⁶ Yet, increases in women's representation in Congress have not occurred rapidly. Progress in the 1970s and 1980s was particularly slow. By 1991 women made up just 6% of the total membership in the House and Senate (see Table 1.1).

The 1992 elections are the notable exception to the rule of slow progress for female representation in Congress. In that election year, the percentage of women in Congress increased sharply, rising to 10%.⁷ The unprecedented success of women candidates and the salience of "women's issues" in congressional campaigns led many political observers to describe the 1992 elections as the "Year of the Woman."⁸ Though the number of women in

⁵ Irwin N. Gertzog, *Congressional Women: Their Recruitment, Integration, and Behavior* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing, 1995); R. Darcy, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*, 2nd Edition (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

⁶ Fact Sheets, "Women in the U.S. Congress, 1917-2004" and "Women in the U.S. Congress, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey. Note: Fact Sheets and other historical data on women serving in Congress and the House of Representatives are available on the CAWP web site at: ><http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts.html><.

⁷ CAWP Fact Sheet, "Women in the U.S. Congress, 1917-2004."

⁸ See, for example, Michele Swers, "Whatever Happened to the Year of the Woman: Lessons from the 1992 and 2002 Elections," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37 (January 2004): 61; Jennifer L. Lawless and Sean M. Theriault, "Will She Stay or Will She Go? Career Ceilings and Women's Retirement from the US Congress," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 30 (November 2005): 581-596; Michael X. Delli Carpini and Ester R. Fuchs, "The

Congress has increased steadily since 1992, many political observers have expressed frustration that women remain a small minority in the House and Senate. Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon, for instance, describe the pace of women's integration into Congress as "remarkably slow."⁹ Another commentator even lamented that, in terms of female representation, "few meaningful electoral gains have been made since 1992 was erroneously hailed as "the year of [the woman]."¹⁰

Table 1.1
Female Representation in Congress, 1971-2006

Congress	Years	Number of Women in Senate	Number of Women in House	Total Women in Congress	% Women in Congress
92 nd	1971-1972	2	13	15	2.8
93 rd	1973-1974	0	16	16	3.0
94 th	1975-1976	0	19	19	3.6
95 th	1977-1978	2	18	20	3.7
96 th	1979-1980	1	16	17	3.2
97 th	1981-1982	2	21	23	4.3
98 th	1983-1984	2	22	24	4.5
99 th	1985-1986	2	23	25	4.7
100 th	1987-1988	2	23	25	4.7
101 st	1989-1990	2	29	31	5.8
102 nd	1991-1992	4	28	32	6.0
103 rd	1993-1994	7	47	54	10.1
104 th	1995-1996	9	48	57	10.7
105 th	1997-1998	9	54	63	11.8
106 th	1999-2000	9	56	65	12.1
107 th	2001-2002	13	59	73	13.6
108 th	2003-2004	14	60	74	13.8
109 th	2005-2006	14	67	81	15.1

Source: Fact Sheet, "Women in the U.S. Congress, 1917-2004," and "Women in the U.S. Congress, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Year of the Woman? Candidates Voters, and the 1992 Elections," *Political Science Quarterly* 108, No. 1 (Spring 1993): 29-36.

⁹ For example, nearly a decade after the 1992 elections, Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon noted that "women's remarkably slow integration into Congress has been well noted by scholars, women's activists, and the media." Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon, "The Political Glass Ceiling: Gender, Strategy and Incumbency in U.S. House Elections, 1978-1998," The Institute for Women's Policy Research, IWPR Publication #1907 (February 2001): 4.

¹⁰ Alex Massie, "Barbie for President," *The Scotsman*, June 24, 2004.

The relatively low levels of female representation in Washington, D.C. stand in stark contrast to the remarkable success enjoyed by women candidates in the other Washington in this story. In Washington State, the proportion of women serving in the state House at Olympia has exceeded 30% in every session since 1991.¹¹ In 1999 and 2000, female representation in the Washington legislature reached historic highs of 40% before dipping back down to the mid-to-low 30s.¹² As of 2006, women hold a third of all seats in the Washington State Legislature.¹³

The remarkable electoral success of women in the state of Washington has been mirrored, to a somewhat lesser degree, by substantial increases in the percentage of women serving in other state legislatures. As of 2006, women hold more than 30% of seats in thirteen state legislatures and more than 20% of the seats in nearly three-fifths of the state legislatures (see Table 1.2). All but six state legislatures have a higher percentage of female members than Congress.¹⁴

Over the last three decades, a clear pattern has emerged in which significantly higher proportions of women have been elected to state legislatures in comparison with Congress. The difference in women's representation at the state and congressional levels raises a number of questions about the causes and the consequences of female representation. Why are women more successful at the state legislative level than the congressional level? Will this pattern continue? What are the implications for public policy, representation, and citizen engagement?

¹¹ Source: Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 1917-2003," and "Women in State Legislatures, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey.

¹² Source: CAWP Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 1917-2003." Note also that female representation in the Washington State Legislature was at or near 40% from 1997 through 2000. See, for example: B. Drummand Ayres, Jr., "Women in Washington Statehouse Lead U.S. Tide," *New York Times*, April 14 1997, B1; and Sam Howe Verhovek, "Record for Women in Washington Legislature," *The New York Times*, February 4, 1999, A18.

¹³ Source: CAWP Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 2006."

¹⁴ Source: CAWP Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 2006."

Table 1.2
Female Representation in State Legislatures, 2006

State	Percent Female		State	Percent Female
Maryland	35.6		Missouri	21.3
Delaware	33.9		Michigan	20.3
Nevada	33.3		Utah	20.2
Vermont	33.3		Iowa	20.0
Washington	33.3		Texas	19.9
Colorado	33.0		New Jersey	19.2
Arizona	32.2		Ohio	18.9
Kansas	32.1		Tennessee	18.9
Minnesota	31.3		Arkansas	18.3
New Mexico	31.3		Georgia	18.2
California	30.8		Louisiana	17.4
New Hampshire	30.4		Indiana	17.3
Hawaii	30.3		Virginia	17.1
Connecticut	28.9		Alaska	17.0
Oregon	27.8		Rhode Island	16.8
Idaho	27.6		North Dakota	16.3
Illinois	27.1		South Dakota	16.2
Wisconsin	25.8		West Virginia	15.7
Massachusetts	25.0		Wyoming	15.6
Montana	24.7		Oklahoma	14.8
Nebraska	24.5		Mississippi	13.8
Florida	24.4		Pennsylvania	13.4
Maine	23.1		Kentucky	11.6
North Carolina	22.9		Alabama	10.7
New York	22.2		South Carolina	8.2

Source: Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey. Note: The broken line indicates where percentage of women in Congress (15.1%) would fall relative to the fifty states.

In the field of women and politics, the predominant theory among scholars is that women must first gain experience and political resources at lower level offices to put themselves in the position to win highly competitive congressional seats. The importance of state legislative service as a route to congressional office, and increases in female representation in state legislatures, have led a number of scholars to theorize that increasing

numbers of female state legislators are now poised to move up the “pipeline” to Congress.¹⁵ The expectation, therefore, is that increases in female representation in state legislatures will result in commensurate increases in the number of women serving in Congress.

It may not be correct, however, to assume that state legislative experience provides female legislators with the same advantages and opportunities enjoyed by their male colleagues. The consensus from more than three decades of research on women, elections and representation is that female officeholders and candidates continue to face individual, cultural and structural obstacles to their candidacies for public office. The goal of this study is to consider how gender differences affect the likelihood that male and female state legislators seek and win congressional office. To accomplish this, I analyze the patterns of congressional advancement for state legislators serving in five states from 1993 to 2002. I conclude that women and men serving in state legislatures are not equally well situated to run for Congress. In addition, I find that men and women in state legislatures differ in a number of ways that are relevant to congressional office-seeking; compared with men, women enter the state legislature at a later age and are less likely to have experience in the fields of business and law. These findings call into question the assumption that increases in female representation at the state legislative level will lead to similar increases in Congress.

Women, Elections, and Representation

For more than three decades, scholars have sought to understand why women are under-represented in American legislatures.¹⁶ The consensus in the discipline is that voter

¹⁵ See, for example, Janet Clark, “Women in State and Local Politics: Progress or Stalemate?” *Social Science Journal* 21, No. 1 (January 1984): 1-3; Susan J. Carroll, “Political Elites and Sex Differences in Political Ambition: a Reconsideration,” *The Journal of Politics* 57, No. 4 (November 1985): 1242; Wilma Rule, “Why More Women are State Legislators” *Western Political Quarterly* 43 (June 1990): 440. For a more recent example, see Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, “Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office,” *American Journal of Political Science* 48, No. 2 (April 2004): 265.

¹⁶ See for instance: Emmy Werner, “Women in Congress: 1917-1964,” *Western Political Quarterly* 19 (March 1966): 16-30; Emmy E. Werner, “Women in the State Legislatures,” *Western Political Quarterly* 21 (March 1968):

bias, which has historically been one of the biggest obstacles faced by female candidates, is no longer a significant factor.¹⁷ Moreover, researchers in this field have generally concluded that gender is *not* a significant factor in election outcomes; when women run, they are as likely as men to win elections.¹⁸ As a result, scholars have focused their attention on other factors affecting women's electoral opportunities; among the most prominent explanations are those relating to the effect of political ambition, the advantages of incumbency, and the opportunity pool.

Political Ambition

For many years, gender differences in political ambition were presumed to be the key factor that resulted in low levels of descriptive representation for women in American legislatures. The main concern was that women, even when well qualified, did not share levels of desire for political office equally with men. As one political scientist described it,

40-50; Martin Gruber, "From Nowhere to Where? Women in State and Local Politics," *Social Science Journal* 21, No. 1 (January 1984): 5-11; Wilma Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators"; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Wilma Rule, "Women's Under-representation and Electoral Systems," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37 (December 1994): 689-692.

¹⁷ Smith and Fox (2001) found that women voters were more likely to support a female candidate and, for male voters, there was no significant difference along gender lines. In addition, Rosenthal (1995) found that women were more likely than men to prefer a legislator of the same gender. Dolan (1998) found that women voters were more likely to support women in House races, but gender did not play a factor in Senate races. This could be the result of the relatively higher profile of Senate candidates, making gender a less important voting cue than in House races where other information about candidates was more limited. See Eric R.A.N. Smith and Richard L. Fox, "The Electoral Fortunes of Women Candidates for Congress," *Political Research Quarterly* 54, No. 1 (March 2001): 205-221; Cindy Simon Rosenthal, "The Role of Gender in Descriptive Representation," *Political Research Quarterly* 48, No. 3 (September 1995): 599-611; Kathleen Dolan and Lynne E. Ford, "Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators: Evidence From Three Decades," *Political Research Quarterly* 50, No. 1 (March 1997): 137-151.

¹⁸ See Jody Newman, "Perception and Reality: A Study Comparing the Success of Men and Women Candidates," Report, Washington, DC: National Women's Political Caucus, 1994; R. Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Eric R.A.N. Smith and Fox, "Electoral Fortunes," 205-221; Barbara C. Burrell, *A Woman's Place Is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); Barbara C. Burrell, "The Political Opportunity of Women Candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1984," *Women and Politics* 8, No. 1 (1988): 51-69; Richard A. Seltzer, Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable: Women as Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997).

“to the extent that it can be said that politics has been a man’s game, presumably this is at least in part because women have chosen not to play.”¹⁹

Research on the impact of gender on political ambition has focused on three main groups: party elites, officeholders, and potential candidates. Early efforts to assess the effect of gender on political ambition were focused primarily on party activists and convention delegates. These studies generally concluded that women were less politically ambitious than men.²⁰ Susan Carroll (1985) shifted the focus by looking more closely at the political ambition of officeholders rather than party volunteers and convention delegates. Carroll found no difference between the political ambitions of male and female officeholders and concluded that gender differences in ambition that existed at one time had diminished and become insignificant.²¹

¹⁹ See, for example: Edmond Constantini, "Political Women and Political Ambition: Closing the Gender Gap," *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (August 1990): 765.

²⁰ M. Kent Jennings and Norman Thomas, "Men and Women in Party Elites," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 7 (1968): 469-472; Edmond Constantini and Kenneth H. Craik, "Women as Politicians: The Social Background, Personality, and Political Careers of Female Party Leaders," in *Portrait of Marginality*, edited by Marianne Githens and Jewel L. Prestage (New York: McKay, 1977); Diane Fowlkes, Jerry Perkins, and Sue Tolleson Rinehart, "Gender Roles and Party Roles," *American Political Science Review* 73 (1979): 772-780; and Edmond Constantini and Julie Davis Bell, "Women in Political Parties: Gender Differences in Motives among California Political Activists," in *Political Women: Current Roles in State and Local Government*, edited by Janet Flammang (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1984). Edmond Constantini (1990) examined the political ambitions of California party activists in surveys taken from 1964 to 1986 and found that, "at each time point, the women studied prove less politically ambitious than the men and less likely to be motivated by a desire for the rewards of power, profit and prestige generally associated with political careers." Edmond Constantini, "Political Women and Political Ambition," 765. In his review of the political ambitions of political activists in California over the course of twenty years, Constantini concluded that the levels of political ambition expressed by female activists increased over time; however, he also found that among the political elites he studied, women were still less likely than men to express ambition to hold political office.

²¹ Susan J. Carroll (1985) looked at delegates to the 1972 national party conventions and found that office holding was a critical contextual variable. Among non office-holding delegates, women were less politically ambitious than their male counterparts. But there were no differences in the political ambitions of male and female officeholders. Carroll concluded that the failure for women to make gains at higher levels of office should not be dismissed as a lack of progressive ambition on the part of female officeholders. Rather, Carroll suggested that we look at other impediments to women's electoral success – such as patterns of discrimination and limitations in the structure of political opportunities - in the event that women do not continue to progress toward parity in representation. Carroll, "Sex Differences in Political Ambition," 1242. See also Susan J. Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials: an Assessment and Research Agenda," in *Ambition and Beyond*, edited by Shirley Williams and Edward L. Lascher, Jr. (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies Press, 1993), 197-230.

Carroll's conclusions were contradicted by other research, specifically that of Bledsoe and Herring (1990), Burt-Way and Kelly (1992), and Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone (2006) which indicated that female officeholders at the state and local level were less politically ambitious than their male colleagues.²² Each of these studies also demonstrated that, when considering its impact on office-seeking behavior, it is important to consider political ambition within the specific political and personal context faced by officeholders. For example, Bledsoe and Herring's study of city council members found that men and women respond to political ambition differently. Specifically, men were more likely than women to be "self-motivated" in that they were more likely to act on their political ambitions regardless of the political and personal circumstances. Bledsoe and Herring concluded that women had a more "balanced system of values and priorities," which put them at a disadvantage in the race for higher office.²³ Likewise, in their study of Arizona officeholders, Barbara J. Burt-Way and Rita Mae Kelly found that increases in the number of terms served in office affected the political ambitions of men and women differently. The political ambitions of female officeholders increased over the course of their time in office; in contrast, the political ambitions of male officeholders declined.²⁴ In addition, research by Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone (2006) found that although female state legislators were less ambitious for seats in the U.S. House of Representatives than their male colleagues, they remained as likely as men to run for Congress. Fulton and her co-authors argued that female

²² Timothy Bledsoe and Mary Herring, "Victims of Circumstances: Women in Pursuit of Political Office," *American Political Science Review*, 84, No. 1 (March 1990): 213-223; Barbara J. Burt-Way and Rita Mae Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition: Closing the Gender Gap," *The Western Political Quarterly* 45, No. 1 (March 1992): 11-25.

²³ Bledsoe and Herring, "Victims of Circumstances," 221.

²⁴ Burt-Way and Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition."

legislators were “more responsive to the expected benefit of office” than men, and this made up for any differences in political ambition.²⁵

A third area of political ambition research is focused primarily on potential candidates for office.²⁶ In a series of articles, Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless examined the political ambitions of nationwide samples of citizens working in the fields of business, law, and education. In 2003, Fox found that men were more likely than women to engage in initial campaign steps and consider running for office and that women were more likely to express an interest in lower-level local positions.²⁷ In subsequent research, Fox and Lawless (2004) found that among women and men with similar characteristics and credentials, women had lower levels of political ambition and were less likely to view themselves as qualified to seek and hold office.²⁸ A subsequent survey, which included political activists in addition to attorneys, educators and businesspeople, found that in comparison with men, women were less likely to express an interest in running for office. Women were also less likely than men to express a willingness to seek a congressional or statewide elected position in the future.²⁹

²⁵ Sarah A. Fulton, Cherie D. Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, Walter J. Stone, “The Sense of a Woman: Gender, Ambition and the Decision to Run for Congress.” Unpublished manuscript. Note: a later version of this paper is forthcoming in *Political Research Quarterly* (2006).

²⁶ The key challenge, of course, is how to define who qualifies as a “potential candidate.” There are two general approaches to this: the “reputational” approach that identifies potential candidates through interviews with officeholders and other political observers, and the “opportunity pool” approach that focuses on random samples of individuals working in the occupational fields from which political candidates are likely to emerge. These two approaches to identifying “potential candidates” are described by Fox and Lawless, “Entering the Arena?”

²⁷ See Richard Fox, “Gender, Political Ambition and the Initial Decision to Run for Office,” Report, Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey: Center for the American Woman and Politics, 2003.

²⁸ Fox and Lawless, “Entering the Arena?” It should be noted that a small scale study of political ambitions of potential candidates in New York State found that women and men “expressed equal levels of political ambition and viewed the campaign environment similarly.” See Fox, Lawless, and Feeley, “Gender and the Decision to Run for Office,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXVI, No. 3 (August 2001): 411-435. As this discussion indicates, this finding did not hold up in Fox’s subsequent nationwide studies of political ambition among potential candidates.

²⁹ Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, “To Run or Not to Run for Office: Explaining Nascent Political Ambition,” *American Journal of Political Science* 49, No. 3 (July 2005): 642-659.

The evidence thus far indicates that women have lower levels of political ambition than men. The critical question in this study, however, is not whether female state legislators have political ambition, but whether they are as likely as male state legislators to act on it. As noted above, recent research by Sarah Fulton, Cherie D. Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter Stone suggested that differences in political ambition are mediated by other factors, including differences in the way men and women perceive the benefits of office.³⁰ Furthermore, gender differences in political ambition may simply reflect the different perceptions that men and women have as to the likelihood that they will be able to succeed in their pursuit of a particular career path (in this case, elective office). If women are less likely to win elective office for reasons other than ambition, it should not come as a surprise if they modify their ambitions accordingly.

Incumbency Advantage

Ambition-related analyses focus on the *demand* side of the question by examining women's desire to serve in particular elected offices. In contrast, questions about the impact of incumbency advantage relate to the *supply* of available political opportunities. In this argument, the supply of seats available to female candidates has been limited by the fact that many of the potential routes to legislative office are blocked by well-entrenched male incumbents.

The insulation of incumbents has been particularly acute at the congressional level. Since World War II, there has been a decline of turnover in congressional elections; this decline has been attributed to the rise of candidate-centered politics and the declining influence of political parties as a cue for voters.³¹ Between 1946 and 1998, an average of

³⁰ Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "The Sense of a Woman."

³¹ See, for instance: Robert S. Erikson, "Malapportionment, Gerrymandering and Party Fortunes in Congressional Elections," *American Political Science Review* 66 (1972): 1234-1245; Walter Dean Burnham,

91.8% of incumbents were re-elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.³² Members of Congress are able to insulate themselves from political competition by leveraging institutional resources such as staff and franking³³ and casework.³⁴ At the same time, incumbent members are also able to use their offices to increase their name recognition³⁵ and raise substantial amounts of funding for their campaigns.³⁶ Members of the majority party who serve in leadership positions are the most advantaged, due in part to their higher

“Communications,” *American Political Science Review* 68 (1974): 207-211; Walter Dean Burnham, “Insulation and Responsiveness in Congressional Elections,” *Political Science Quarterly* 90 (1975): 411-435; David Mayhew, “Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals,” *Polity* 6 (Spring 1974): 295-317; John Ferejohn, “On the Decline of Competition in Congressional Elections,” *American Political Science Review* 71, No. 1 (March 1977): 166-176; Michael Krashinsky and William J. Milne, “The Effects of Incumbency in U.S. Congressional Elections, 1950-1988,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVII, No. 3, (August 1993): 321-344. On the role of split-ticket voting and the incumbency advantage, see Richard Born, “Congressional Incumbency and the Rise of Split-Ticket Voting,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXV, No. 3 (August 2000): 365-387; Morris Fiorina, “The Reagan Years,” in *Resurgence of Conservatism in Anglo-American Democracies*, edited by Barry Cooper, Allan Kornberg, and William Mishler (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988), 430-459; and Gary C. Jacobson, *The Electoral Origins of Divided Government* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1990). Stonecash, Mariani, and Brewer argue that high re-election rates pre-date the rise of candidate centered politics and present data that high re-election rates are a long-term trend that, with a few notable exceptions, dates back to the late 1800s. Jeffrey Stonecash, Mark Brewer, and Mack Mariani, *Diverging Parties: Social Change, Realignment, and Party Polarization* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 2003), 137-138.

³² Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, *Congress and Its Members* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2000), 65-66.

³³ David Mayhew. “The Case of the Vanishing Marginals”; Morris Fiorina, “The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It,” *American Political Science Review* 71 (1977): 177-181; Albert D. Cover, “One Good Term Deserves Another: The Advantage of Incumbency in Congressional Elections,” *American Journal of Political Science* 21, Issue 3 (August 1977): 523-541; Albert D. Cover, “Contacting Congressional Constituents: Some Patterns of Perquisite Use,” *American Journal of Political Science* 24, No. 1 (February 1980): 125-135; Keith Krehbiel and John R. Wright, “The Incumbency Effect in Congressional Elections: A Test of Two Explanations,” *American Journal of Political Science* 27, No. 1 (February 1983): 140-157.

³⁴ George Serra and Albert D. Cover, “The Electoral Consequences of Perquisite Use: The Casework Case,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVII, No. 2 (May 1992): 233-246; Morris Fiorina, “The Bureaucracy Did It,” 177-181; Morris Fiorina, *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Diana Evans Yiannakis, “The Grateful Electorate: Casework and Congressional Elections,” *American Journal of Political Science* 25, No. 3 (August 1981): 568-580.

³⁵ See David E. Stokes and Warren E. Miller, “Party Government and the Saliency of Congress.” In *Elections and the Political Order*, edited by Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes (New York: John Wiley, 1966), 194-211; Ferejohn, “On the Decline of Competition in Congressional Elections”; Thomas E. Mann and Raymond E. Wolfinger, “Candidates and Parties in Congressional Elections,” *American Political Science Review* 74, No. 3 (September 1980): 617-32.

³⁶ See Davidson and Oleszek, *Congress and its Members*, 94; Gary C. Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, Fourth Edition (New York: Longman, 1997).

profile, their ability to secure legislative achievements and their ability to garner greater financial support for their campaigns.³⁷

Alternative explanations of incumbency advantage center on the ideological and demographic makeup of individual congressional districts rather than the resource advantages of congressional incumbents. Johannes and McAdams (1986), for instance, argued that institutional resources such as franking and staff play a relatively small role in the electoral success of incumbents. The key matter, they argued, is that incumbents are ideologically well situated relative to the districts they serve.³⁸ Another study suggested that the demographic makeup of districts (relative to race and income) effectively limits the number of competitive party against party races.³⁹

Low turnover has a negative impact on female representation for the simple reason that the vast majority of incumbents are men.⁴⁰ As relative newcomers to the political scene, women's electoral opportunities are often limited to the small handful of open or competitive seats. The effect of low turnover rates is to slow the process in which women are incorporated into legislatures, a situation described by Georgia Duerst-Lahti as "the bottleneck."⁴¹ Higher rates of turnover, on the other hand, are associated with higher levels of female representation.⁴²

³⁷ Thomas M. Holbrook, Charles M. Tidmarch, "The Effects of Leadership Positions on Votes for Incumbents in State Legislative Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 46, No. 4 (December 1993): 897-909.

³⁸ John R. Johannes and John C. McAdams, "The Congressional Incumbency Effect: Is It Casework, Policy Compatibility, or Something Else?" *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (1981): 512-42.

³⁹ Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani, *Diverging Parties*.

⁴⁰ Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*, 79.

⁴¹ Georgia Duerst-Lahti, "The Bottleneck: Women Becoming Candidates" in *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 15-25. See also, Kristi Andersen and Stuart J. Thorson, "Some Structural Barriers to the Election of Women to Congress: A Simulation," *Western Political Quarterly* 37, No. 1 (March 1984): 143-156; R. Darcy and James R. Choike, "A Formal Analysis of Legislative Turnover: Women Candidates and Legislative Representation," *American Journal of Political Science* 30, Issue 1 (February 1986): 237-255; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Barbara C. Burrell, *A Woman's Place Is in the House*; Susan Welch and Donley T. Studlar, "The Opportunity Structure for Women's Candidacies and Electability in Britain and the United

Through the 1970s and early 1980s, the “incumbency disadvantage” faced by women was compounded by the greater likelihood that female candidates would run as “sacrificial lambs” against popular, well financed incumbents or in non-competitive districts.⁴³

However, more recent research indicates that women are no longer running as mere “sacrificial lambs” and are as likely as men to run in competitive open seat districts.⁴⁴

Increasing numbers of women are being nominated for open seat races, where they are as successful as men in winning general elections, primaries, and special elections.⁴⁵

Although the “bottleneck” exists to some extent at all levels, it is less of a factor in state legislative races. One reason is that state legislative offices have significantly higher levels of turnover than Congress.⁴⁶ Turnover may be higher at this level because officeholders at lower levels are less entrenched than those in Congress. In comparison with

States,” *Political Research Quarterly* 49, No. 4 (December 1996): 861-874; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*.

⁴² Carol Nechemias, “Changes in the Election of Women to US State Legislative Seats,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 12, No. 1 (February 1987): 125-142.

⁴³ Irwin Gertzog and M. Michele Sinard, “Women and ‘Hopeless Congressional Candidacies: Nomination Frequency, 1916-1978,” *American Politics Quarterly* 9 (October 1981): 449-466; Susan Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*, Second Edition (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1994); Raisa B. Deber, “The Fault, Dear Brutus: Women as Congressional Candidates in Pennsylvania,” *Journal of Politics* 44 (May 1982): 463-479.

⁴⁴ Welch and Studlar, “The Opportunity Structure for Women’s Candidacies.”

⁴⁵ On general elections, see Irwin N. Gertzog, “Women’s Changing Pathways to the US House of Representatives: Widows, Elites and Strategic Politicians,” paper prepared for delivery at the Carl Albert Center Conference on Women Transforming Congress, the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center, University of Oklahoma, April 13-15, 2000; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*. See also Gaddie and Bullock (1995), who analyzed the impact of gender on electoral success from 1982-1990 and for 1992 and found that gender had no impact when controlling for open seats. Ronald Keith Gaddie and Charles S. Bullock, III., “Congressional Elections and the Year of the Woman: Structural and Elite Influences on Female Candidacies,” *Social Science Quarterly* 76, No. 4, (December 1995): 749-762. On primaries, see Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*; Barbara C. Burrell, “Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives: 1968-1990,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17 (November 1992): 493-508. On special elections, see Burrell, “Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries”; Ronald Keith Gaddie and Charles S. Bullock, III., “Structural and Elite Factors in Open Seat and Special US House Elections: Is There a Sexual Bias?” *Political Research Quarterly* 50, No. 2 (June 1997): 459-468; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*.

⁴⁶ Gary Moncrief notes that the average turnover in state legislatures has declined markedly since the 1930s, falling from the 50 to 60% range to the 20 to 30% range. Nonetheless, this level of turnover remains significantly higher than the 90%+ turnover rates that are typical for the U.S. Congress. See Gary Moncrief, “Average Turnover in State Legislatures by Decade,” slide presented at the Western Legislative Academy, December 11, 2002. For a discussion on historical turnover rates at the congressional level, see for example, Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani, *Diverging Parties*, 137-138.

Members of Congress, state and local officials have lower name recognition and their offices provide them with far fewer resources and perquisites which they can use to promote their re-election. In addition, potential candidates have much more flexibility at the state and local level because the number and proximity of seats enables them to “shop” for a competitive district or open seat.

The Opportunity Pool

In the event that an open seat or other event makes a congressional seat competitive, a politically ambitious female candidate still faces the challenge of running against and defeating other would-be officeholders in a primary or general election. Not surprisingly, those candidates who have a strong base of financial, community and political support are better able to wage a successful campaign. For this reason, candidates with the right mix of education, community contacts, political experience, and financial resources are often described as being in the “eligible pool” of potential candidates.

Scholars studying women’s representation have often noted the importance of the opportunity pool as a key factor in women’s electoral success.⁴⁷ Studies have found that female representation is correlated with the percentage of female professionals⁴⁸ and the number of female lawyers and law students in a state.⁴⁹ Additionally, research conducted in

⁴⁷ Some of the earliest versions of this argument were made by Kirkpatrick (1974) and Diamond (1977). See Jeane Kirkpatrick, *Political Women* (New York: Basic Books, 1974); and Irene Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

⁴⁸ Wilma Rule, “Why Women Don’t Run: The Critical Contextual Factors in Women’s Legislative Recruitment,” *Western Political Quarterly* 34 (March 1981): 60-77; Rule, “Why More Women are State Legislators.”

⁴⁹ Christine B. Williams, “Women, Law and Politics: Recruitment Patterns in the Fifty States,” *Women and Politics* 10 (1990): 103-123, as cited in Kira Sanbonmatsu, “Party Differences in the Recruitment of Women State Legislators,” paper prepared for delivery at the Annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago (2000).

the 1970s and 1980s generally found that women were at a disadvantage to men in terms of their professional backgrounds and education.⁵⁰

Early studies found that women were less likely than men to work outside the home, which is a critically important first step toward the development of political ambitions and political resources.⁵¹ Other studies found that women were less likely to be in the eligible pool of occupational, educational and socio-economic groups from which quality candidates emerge.⁵² In her study of state legislative officeholders in 12 Midwestern states, Susan Welch (1978) found that in comparison to their male colleagues, female legislators were less educated and less likely to come from the types of professional occupations that were stepping stones to political offices. Likewise, Raisa Deber (1982) found that female congressional candidates in Pennsylvania were less likely than male candidates to be lawyers, and less likely to come from professions that provided access and resources relevant to office-seeking. And Susan Carroll (1993) noted that women who were successful at winning election to political office were more likely than men to be teachers, nurses and clerical

⁵⁰ See Susan Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office: A Discriminant Analysis," *Western Political Quarterly* 31 (September 1978): 372-380; and Burt-Way and Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition."

⁵¹ Whether or not a woman works outside of the home has been found to be critical to determining their level of involvement in politics and their level of political ambition. See Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office," and Constantini, "Political Women and Political Ambition." See also Seltzer, Newman and Leighton (1997) who argue there is a connection between the increased role that women play in the workforce and the increased number of female officeholders. Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*. 91-92.

⁵² See, for instance, Susan Welch, "Women as Political Animals? A Test of some Explanations for Male-Female Political Participation Differences," *American Journal of Political Science* XXI, No. 4, (November 1977): 727-728; Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office"; Edmond Constantini, "Political Women and Political Ambition"; Lisa Solowiej and Thomas L. Brunell, "The Entrance of Women to the U.S. Congress: The Widow Effect," *Political Research Quarterly* 56, No. 3 (September 2003): 283-292. Eligible pool explanations are sometimes described as a "structural" explanation for women's under-representation because it is the structural characteristics of the larger society which advantages or disadvantages certain occupations, groups and economic conditions in terms of political office-seeking. For our purposes, however, this factor is more appropriately described as an "individual" factor, since it reflects individual backgrounds, choices or conditions. Norrander and Wilcox (1998) find that states with a "large pool of potential women candidates," elect higher percentages of women to their legislatures. Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox, "The Geography of Gender Power: Women in State Legislatures," in *Women in Elective Office: Past, Present and Future*, edited by Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103-117.

workers, even though officeholders in general were more likely to come from white collar and traditionally male dominated occupations.⁵³

Women were also found to be disadvantaged in terms of their personal income. In his study of men and women in the professions of business, law and education, Richard Fox found that women were less likely than men to report high personal incomes.⁵⁴ While later research by Constantini (1990) suggested that income does not have an independent effect on candidate ambitions, others have argued that increased economic status is critical to the expansion of political opportunities for women.⁵⁵ Professional and occupational differences have generally not been found to account for a significant extent of female under-representation, leading some scholars to suggest closer examination of other factors such as structural differences, political socialization and discrimination.⁵⁶

Finally, women are traditionally at a disadvantage in terms of political experience. As Raisa Deber pointed out, the lack of political experience among many women candidates hampered them in two ways: first, women candidates without political experience “did not have the history of political activity which might entitle them to machine support (and resources),” and second, “they would be subject to a good many mistakes which previous campaign experience might allow one to escape.”⁵⁷

Ironically, though women were less likely than men to possess prior political experience, they were more likely than men to rely on that experience. Because they were less likely to possess professional and occupational experience useful to seeking office, they

⁵³ Welch, “Recruitment of Women to Public Office”; Deber, “The Fault, Dear Brutus”; Susan J. Carroll, “The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials.”

⁵⁴ Fox, “Initial Decision to Run for Office.”

⁵⁵ See, for instance, Gertzog, “Women’s Changing Pathways,” and Edmond Constantini, “Political Women and Political Ambition.”

⁵⁶ Welch, “Recruitment of Women to Public Office”; Rule, “Why Women Don’t Run.”

⁵⁷ Deber, “The Fault, Dear Brutus,” 471.

were more likely than men to rely on lower level political experience to provide them with the resources and contacts they need to run successfully for higher level offices. For instance, in her study of candidates in open seat primaries for the U.S. House from 1968 to 1990, Barbara Burrell (1992) found that female open seat winners were more likely than male open seat winners to have prior officeholding experience.⁵⁸

One of the key advantages of prior political experience is its impact on candidate fundraising. Simply put: those with political experience raise more money than those without it.⁵⁹ Those with prior political experience often have fundraising networks already in place and established relationships with a donor base. Congressional candidates who have served in highly professionalized state legislatures are particularly advantaged, and as such, they raise significantly more money from Political Action Committees than candidates without prior experience and those from less professional legislatures.⁶⁰

Early studies suggested that women were less successful than men at fundraising and more reluctant than men to ask for contributions⁶¹ and more likely to report that fundraising was a major consideration in their decision to run.⁶² However, more recent research suggests that women are no longer disadvantaged due to their gender and, in fact, raise as much money as men and run similarly professional campaigns.⁶³ Rather, the key matter seems to be whether men and women are similarly situated in terms of incumbency,

⁵⁸ Burrell, "Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries."

⁵⁹ Peverill Squire and John R. Wright, "Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 15, No. 1 (February 1990): 89-98.

⁶⁰ Michael Berkman and James Eisenstein, "State Legislators as Congressional Candidates: The Effects of Prior Experience on Legislative Recruitment and Fundraising," *Political Research Quarterly* 52, No. 3 (September 1999): 481-498.

⁶¹ Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*; Ruth B. Mandel, *In the Running: The New Woman Candidate* (New Haven: Ticknor & Fields, 1981). See also: Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials."

⁶² Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*; see also Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials."

⁶³ Gaddie and Bullock, "Congressional Elections and the Year of the Woman"; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Kirsten LaCour Dabelko and Paul S. Herrnsen, "Women's and Men's Campaigns for the U.S. House of Representatives," *Political Research Quarterly* 50, No. 1 (March 1997): 121-135.

chairmanships, majority leadership positions, and length of tenure.⁶⁴ In their study of the 1980 congressional elections, Uhlaner and Schlozman (1986) argued that proximity to power was the key factor “because campaign contributors frequently have policy goals they wish to realize, money...flows to those in positions of power.”⁶⁵ As they found, however, women remained at a fundraising disadvantage to the extent that they did not have the same level of experience, seniority and leadership credentials as their male colleagues.⁶⁶

By the 1990s, however, the eligibility pool was no longer as male-dominated as it was in previous decades. First, women made up a larger (though not equal) percentage of officeholders at the state and local level, providing in the words of Martin Gruberg (1984), “an enlarged female talent pool from which new leaders will emerge.”⁶⁷ Female state legislators were also found to be three times more likely to have prior elected experience in 1992 than in 1972.⁶⁸ Likewise, in their study of open seat congressional races between 1982 and 1992, Gaddie and Bullock (1995) found no significant gender differences in political experience or fundraising.⁶⁹

Second, there is also evidence that the educational and occupational backgrounds of men and women have converged over time.⁷⁰ Thomas (1994), for example, found that by 1988 female legislators were more highly educated, more politically experienced, and more diverse occupationally than in previous years.⁷¹ Dolan and Ford (1997) analyzed data on all

⁶⁴ Carole Jean Uhlaner and Kay Lehman Schlozman, “Candidate Gender and Congressional Campaign Receipts,” *Journal of Politics* 48, No. 1 (February 1986): 30-50. Note that, as discussed below, structural factors such as district size also appear to impact fundraising ability.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ See Gruberg, “Nowhere to Where?” 10.

⁶⁸ Dolan and Ford, “Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators,” 137-151.

⁶⁹ Gaddie and Bullock, “Congressional Elections and the Year of the Woman.”

⁷⁰ Joan Hulse Thompson, “Career Convergences: Election of Women and Men to the U.S. House of Representatives,” *Women and Politics* 5, No. 1 (1985): 69-90; Burrell, “The Political Opportunity of Women Candidates,” 51-69.

⁷¹ See Sue Thomas, *How Women Legislate* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1994).

female legislators serving in 15 states over three decades. They found that by 1992, female legislators were more educated, more professional and more politically experienced than in past decades. Further, they found that the female legislators in the 1992 sample were, on average, younger and more likely to serve in chairmanships or leadership positions than in previous decades. A comparable group of men from each decade was found to be substantially similar over time in terms of education, professional background and experience.⁷²

Although women are more likely be included in the eligible pool of potential candidates for office, the playing field is not necessarily level. Women have made gains, but as a group they remain disadvantaged in terms of their professional, educational and political backgrounds. Women are still less likely than men to have advanced degrees, professional or management positions, and prior political office experience.⁷³ Furthermore, being in the eligible pool of potential candidates is a necessary, but by no means sufficient condition for advancement to higher office. Whether it comes as a result of experience in public office or improved status in the fields of business and law, the presence of women in the eligible pool facilitates their advancement to higher offices but does not preclude the existence of other limiting factors.

Thus, opportunities for political office are shaped by the political ambitions of potential candidates, the availability of winnable seats, and the skills and resources available to would-be candidates. Accordingly, this study focuses on a group of people – state legislators – who have already demonstrated their political ambitions and are considered, by virtue of the offices they hold, a key part of the opportunity pool from which congressional

⁷² Dolan and Ford, “Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators,” 137-151.

⁷³ Sue Thomas and Matt Braunstein, “Legislative Careers: The Personal and the Political,” paper delivered at the Carl Albert Center Conference on Women Transforming Congress, University of Oklahoma, April 13-15, 2000.

candidates are drawn. This study will increase our knowledge of “the pipeline” and the patterns of congressional advancement for men and women. Given the argument that female representation has both substantive and symbolic importance, this is an important subject for further research.

Plan of Work

Simply stated, the goal of this study is to investigate the assumption that men and women serving in state legislatures are equally well positioned to seek and win congressional office. Does the pipeline work similarly for men and women or is it, in fact, “gendered” in ways that make it less likely that either men or women will advance to Congress?

In Chapter 2, *The Symbolic and Substantive Importance of Female Representation*, I review the literature on female representation, which indicates that female representation does make a difference, both symbolically and substantively. As a result of these findings, I argue that the process in which women are incorporated into American legislatures is an important subject worthy of systematic study and examination.

In Chapter 3, *The Pattern of Women’s Representation and the Pipeline Theory*, I describe the pattern of female representation in which state legislatures have consistently elected higher proportions of women than the U.S. Congress and articulate key aspects of the “pipeline theory,” which argues that female candidates must first gain experience at lower levels before running for Congress. Based on this theory of advancement, a number of political scientists have predicted that increases in female representation at the state legislative level will inevitably lead to increases in female representation in Congress as greater numbers of female state legislators move up the “pipeline” to higher level offices. I note that previous scholarship on candidates and officeholders strongly suggests that men and women serving in state legislatures are not be equally likely to advance to Congress; as a result, I argue that

the pipeline is likely to work differently for men and women, a fact which would call into question the ability of political scientists to predict future levels of female representation based on aggregate state-level data.

In Chapter 4, *Methodology, Hypotheses, and Measures*, I re-state the main research question of this study and offer a series of hypotheses that will be used to assess the impact of gender on congressional advancement opportunities in five state legislatures. In this chapter, I describe the sample population and data collection procedures used in this study, the method of sample selection, and the representativeness of the sample. In addition, I also define the key variables that will be used in this study.

In Chapter 5, *A Gendered Pipeline?*, I review the evidence for each of this study's seven main hypotheses. I identify a number of key differences between male and female state legislators and assess the impact of these differences on the likelihood that men and women will seek and win congressional office.

Finally, in Chapter 6, *Conclusions and Consequences*, I review the main conclusions drawn from this research and describe a number of opportunities for further research. I then consider the impact that these findings have on the study of women's representation and efforts by political actors to develop effective strategies to increase the number of women elected to Congress.

2

The Symbolic and Substantive Importance of Female Officeholders

Understanding how women are incorporated into state legislatures and Congress is an important subject of study because the election of women to public office has both substantive and symbolic consequences. In this chapter, I will review various perspectives on women's descriptive representation and discuss the impact that women officeholders have on public policy outcomes and the legitimacy of American political institutions.

The Personal is Political

Through much of our nation's history, women were limited to the "private sphere" concerns of family, household and children and excluded from the "public sphere" by both law and tradition.⁷⁴ Jean Bethke Elshtain described this public-private division as follows:

Individuals do not share equally in both spheres. Man, for example, has two statuses: as a public person and as a private person; therefore, men are subject to two disparate judgments in capacities as public and private persons. Woman, however, is totally immersed in the private, not public realm and is judged by the single standard appropriate to that realm alone.⁷⁵

The public-private division served to discourage women's political activity, making politics a "man's business."⁷⁶ Women's role as candidates was, therefore, largely limited to those few congressional widows who served as placeholders, or later, those recruited as

⁷⁴ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Susan J. Carroll, "The Personal is Political: The Intersection of Private Lives and Public Roles among Women and Men in Elective and Appointive Office," *Women and Politics* 9, No. 2 (1989): 51-67; Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials."

⁷⁵ Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Moral Woman and Immoral Man: A Consideration of the Public-Private Split and Its Political Ramifications," *Politics and Society* 4 (Winter 1974): 453-474, as quoted in Virginia Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women: Roles, Socialization and Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 470.

⁷⁶ Virginia Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women: Roles, Socialization and Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 30.

sacrificial lambs in districts that were deemed un-winnable by party leaders.⁷⁷ Virginia Sapiro described it this way:

For women, entrance into politics is not a simple matter of taking up a new activity. Rather, it is participating in activities and institutions designed and populated primarily by men, people with a different set of social norms, rituals, language, dress, and to some degree, values.... Women's place is not in the public world of politics, it is in the private world, especially of the family.⁷⁸

Susan Carroll argued that these private sphere concerns are not separate from politics, but are, in fact, central to it. Carroll noted that “the personal is political,” contending that gender roles, household responsibilities and other “private sphere” concerns have a tremendous impact on political behavior. Carroll contended that women’s personal experiences made them better able than men to understand the way that private lives intersect with public decisions, while at the same time making them more aware and supportive of public policies relating to women’s “private sphere” concerns.⁷⁹

According to Virginia Sapiro (1981), women’s shared set of experiences creates a separate and identifiable “women’s interest” that is both different from men’s and politically relevant. Our efforts to understand politics, Sapiro argued, will be incomplete if we fail to account for the differences between men and women in terms of political participation and the impact of public policies. While women are not a monolith, they have a distinct interest that must be taken into account as other interests have been.

The idea that women have distinct, politically relevant experiences and interests undermines traditionalist arguments that men can understand the concerns of women and

⁷⁷ Gertzog, *Congressional Women*.

⁷⁸ Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women*, 30.

⁷⁹ Susan J. Carroll, “The Personal is Political.” For another look at how private-public dichotomies affect women’s candidacies, see Linda Witt, Karen M. Paget and Glenna Matthews, “Squaring the Personal and the Political,” Chapter 4 in *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1994).

ensure that these concerns are fairly represented. Iris Marion Young, for instance, argued that women cannot be represented by a body that consists solely of men because:

A general perspective does not exist which all persons can adopt and from which all experiences and perspectives can be understood and taken into account. The existence of social groups implies different, though not necessarily exclusive, histories, experiences, and perspectives on social life that people have, and it implies that they do not entirely understand the experience of other groups. No one can claim to speak in the general interest, because no one of the groups can speak for another, and certainly no one can speak for them all. Thus the only way to have all group experience and social perspectives voiced, heard, and taken account of is to have them specifically represented in the public.⁸⁰

In other words, descriptive representation is necessary because women bring important characteristics and experiences to the legislature that men can neither fully appreciate or emulate.

The Symbolic Importance of Female Officeholders

The election of women to public office also has important symbolic value, helping to legitimize our system of government by making it more fully inclusive and more reflective of our entire society. As Virginia Sapiro puts it:

The mere presence of women in positions of power readjusts what is now a thoroughly inequitable distribution of political values in society: power, participation, and decision making. If we accept the democratic ideal that participation in government is valuable, can we argue that systematic exclusion of a particular social group is acceptable?⁸¹

By their very presence, female officeholders send an important message to voters and prospective candidates about the role that women can and should play in public decisions. For many years, the exclusion of women from positions of political influence enabled society to “think of politics as a male domain.”⁸² The election of women to public

⁸⁰ Iris Marion Young, “Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship,” *Ethics* 99 (January 1989): 262-263.

⁸¹ Virginia Sapiro, “When Are Interests Interesting? The Problem of Political Representation of Women,” *American Political Science Review* 75 (1981): 712.

⁸² Virginia Sapiro, “When Are Interests Interesting?” 712.

offices creates a very different image of what a legislator should look like – one that is not exclusively male.

The election of women to public offices has a “role model effect,” making it easier for other women to seek and secure positions in legislatures. Witt, Paget and Matthews (1994) noted that “as more women have run, prospective candidates have had less trouble imagining what a female politician might look like.”⁸³ It may also have a similar effect on *voters* who, as they observe more women in public office, grow more accustomed to the idea of female politicians⁸⁴ and more willing to view the experience that women bring to campaigns as politically relevant.⁸⁵ The presence of women in office may also have a positive effect on female voters’ perceptions about the quality of representation. Jennifer Lawless (2004), for example, found that women are more likely to offer positive evaluations of Members of Congress who are female.⁸⁶ Likewise, research by Cindy Simon Rosenthal (1995) found that, when presented with hypothetical choices, women were more likely than men to prefer to be represented by someone of the same gender.⁸⁷

The Substantive Importance of Female Officeholders

In her comprehensive study of representation, Hanna Pitkin (1967) argued that simply having legislators who “stand for” you in a descriptive or symbolic sense is not sufficient.⁸⁸ What also needs to be considered, Pitkin argued, is whether legislators are

⁸³ Linda Witt, Karen M. Paget and Glenna Matthews, *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 101-102.

⁸⁴ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, *Running as a Woman*, 101-102; Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*, 11.

⁸⁵ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, *Running as a Woman*, 113-114.

⁸⁶ Jennifer L. Lawless, “Politics of Presence? Congresswomen and Symbolic Representation,” *Political Research Quarterly* 57, No. 1 (March 2004): 81-99.

⁸⁷ Rosenthal, “The Role of Gender in Descriptive Representation,” 599-611.

⁸⁸ See also Mezey (1978), who put it succinctly: “simply counting female noses in political decision-making institutions does not provide a barometer of support for women’s policy issues.” Susan Gluck Mezey, “Does Sex Make a Difference? A Case Study of Women in Politics,” *Western Political Quarterly* 31 (December 1978): 492-501.

“acting for” those they represent in a substantive sense.⁸⁹ For Pitkin, “representing... means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them.”⁹⁰ Pitkin’s articulation of the multiple and sometimes conflicting expectations of representation profoundly influenced the study of women’s representation – focusing a great deal of scholarly attention on the linkages between the election of women to public office and the representation of women’s interests through public policies and the legislative process.

The idea that women bring something different to politics that is distinct and important is borne out, at least in part, by public opinion and voting behavior studies. These studies indicate that women and men vote differently, and have different motivations and political priorities. Women are more likely than men to support Democratic presidential candidates and congressional candidates and to identify themselves with the Democratic Party.⁹¹ Survey research has also found differences in the way men and women view public policies, with men being more supportive of tax cuts and the use of force, and women being more supportive of the expansion of government programs in areas such as education and health care.⁹²

⁸⁹ See, for instance, Hanna Pitkin (1967), who argued that “Both descriptive and symbolic representation, then, enlarge our view of the concept, but do not complete it....We need to find an equivalent in the realm of action for the descriptive and symbolic “standing for” view – not the activities of making representations or symbols, but the “acting for” equivalent of the connection between image an original or symbol and referent.” Hanna Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 111.

⁹⁰ Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 209.

⁹¹ See Kathleen A. Frankovic, “Sex and Politics: New Alignments, Old Issues,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 15 (1982): 439-448; Carole Kennedy Chaney, R. Michael Alvarez, and Jonathan Nagler, “Explaining the Gender Gap in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1980-1992,” *Political Research Quarterly* 51, No. 2 (June 1998): 311-339; Laura R. Mattei and Franco Mattei, “If Men Stayed Home...the Gender Gap in Recent Congressional Elections,” *Political Research Quarterly* 51, No. 2. (June 1998): 411-436. For a summary of history and evolution of the gender gap, see Barbara Norrander, “The Politicization of Gender,” in *The New American Politics: Reflections on Political Change and the Clinton Administration*, edited by Byron D. Jones (Boulder: Westview, 1995), 83-85.

⁹² Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*; Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*; Robert Y. Shapiro and Marpreet Mahajan, “Gender Differences in Policy Preferences: A Summary of Trends from the 1960’s to the 1980’s,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 50 (1986): 42-61; Susan Welch and John Hibbing, “Financial Conditions, Gender and Voting in American National Elections,” *Journal of Politics* 54, No. 1 (1992): 197-213; R. Michael Alvarez and Edward J. McCaffery, “Are There Sex Differences in Fiscal Political Preferences?” *Political Research Quarterly* 56, No. 1 (March 2003): 5-17; Lilliard E. Richardson Jr. and Patricia K. Freeman, “Issue Salience and Gender Differences in Congressional Elections, 1994-1998,” *Social Science Journal* 40 (2003): 401-417.

The relevant concern for this study, however, is whether the differences observed between men and women in the electorate also appear in the small subset of individuals who serve in office. The accumulated evidence of more than three decades of research on this subject strongly suggests that significant differences do exist between men and women in office. Differences between men and women are evident in terms of their ideologies, the policies they support, and the activities they pursue. Furthermore, there is evidence that female legislators approach the legislative process differently than men do and that the presence of women in the legislative body has an impact on both the legislative process and the type of policies that are approved.

In terms of ideology, female officeholders in both Congress and the state legislatures are more liberal, on average, than their male colleagues.⁹³ Furthermore, these ideological differences remain significant even after taking into account constituency, district type and party. While factors such as party were found to have a significant impact on ideology, female officeholders were found to be more liberal than male officeholders of the same party.⁹⁴ These ideological differences have persisted across three decades, although there is some indication that the degree of difference between men and women has diminished over time as more women have been elected to state legislatures and Congress.⁹⁵

⁹³ On Congress, see Arturo Vega and Juanita M. Firestone, "The Effects of Gender on Congressional Behavior and the Substantive Representation of Women," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XX, No. 2 (May 1995): 213-222; Susan Welch, "Are Women More Liberal than Men in the U.S. Congress?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* X (1985): 125-134; and Kathleen A. Frankovic, "Sex and Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1961-1975," *American Politics Quarterly* 5, No. 3 (July 1977): 315-329. On state legislatures, see Sarah Poggione, "Exploring Gender Differences in State Legislators' Policy Preferences," *Political Research Quarterly* 57, No. 2 (June 2004): 305-314; John M. Carey, Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell, "Are Women State Legislators Different?" in *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present and Future*, edited by Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox (Oxford University Press: New York, 1998), 87-101; and Susan J. Carroll and Deborah L. Dodson, "The Impact of Women in Public Office: An Overview," in *Reshaping the Agenda: Women in State Legislatures* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics, 1991).

⁹⁴ Carroll and Dodson, "The Impact of Women in Public Office"; Carey, Niemi, and Powell, "Are Women State Legislators Different?"; and Vega and Firestone, "The Effects of Gender on Congressional Behavior."

⁹⁵ Keith T. Poole and L. Harmon Ziegler, *Women, Opinion and Politics: The Changing Political Attitudes of American Women* (New York: Longman, 1985); Rita Mae Kelly, Michelle A. Saint-Germain, and Jody D. Horn, "Female

Female legislators are also more likely to introduce, support, and promote issues of particular concern to women. This is true in both Congress as well as state legislatures.⁹⁶ Female legislators are more likely than their male colleagues to support social welfare spending and an activist approach to government.⁹⁷ They are also more likely to agree that there are issues of common concern for women, to report that those issues are a priority, and to believe that they, as women, are uniquely qualified to deal with those issues.⁹⁸ The differences in support from male and female officeholders were also found to be more pronounced on “feminist” issues such as abortion and reproduction than on more traditional issues relating to children and the family.⁹⁹ Susan Carroll notes that similar differences also exist between male and female *candidates*. “A sizeable number of female candidates,” Carroll writes, “are both attitudinal and behavioral feminists who, “if elected to

Public Officials: A Different Voice?” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* # 515 (1991): 77-87.

⁹⁶ On Congress, see Michele L. Swers, “Are Women More Likely to Vote for Women’s Issue Bills than Their Male Colleagues?” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 23, No. 3 (August 1998): 435-448; Michele L. Swers, “Placing Women’s Issues on the National Agenda: An Analysis of Gender Differences in Women’s Issue Bill Sponsorship,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association, Boston, MA, November 12-14, 1998; Debra L. Dodson, “Representing Women’s Interests in the U.S. House of Representatives,” in *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present and Future*, edited by Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox (Oxford University Press, New York, 1998), 130-149. On State Legislatures, see Carroll and Dodson, “The Impact of Women in Public Office”; Sue Thomas and Susan Welch. “The Impact of Gender on Activities and Priorities of State Legislators,” *Western Political Quarterly* 44 (June 1991): 445-456; Michelle A. Saint-Germain, “Does Their Difference Make a Difference? The Impact of Women on Public Policy in the Arizona Legislature,” *Social Science Quarterly* 70, No. 4 (December 1989): 956-968; Sue Thomas, “The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies,” *Journal of Politics* 53, No. 4 (November 1991): 958-976; and Beth Reingold, “Concepts of Representation among Female and Male State Legislators,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVII, No. 4 (November 1992): 509-537.

⁹⁷ See Poggione, “Exploring Gender Differences.” The finding that female state legislators are more likely to support activist government and social welfare policies is reflected in similar findings regarding women in the electorate. See, for example, Richardson and Freeman, “Issue Salience and Gender Differences.”

⁹⁸ On issues of common concern facing women, see Dodson, “Representing Women’s Interests.” On issue prioritization, see Carroll and Dodson, “The Impact of Women in Public Office”; Thomas and Welch, “The Impact of Gender on Activities”; Sue Thomas, “The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies.” On the belief that women are uniquely qualified to deal with certain issues, see Reingold, “Concepts of Representation.”

⁹⁹ Michele L. Swers, “Women’s Issue Bills.”

office, are likely to work to pass legislation that would bring about greater equality between women and men.”¹⁰⁰

Women and men also have very different legislative “styles,” as is reflected in the activities they pursue in office and the approach they take toward decision-making. As members of a legislature, women devote more time and attention to constituent work, and report more constituent contacts, casework and service than men.¹⁰¹ Female legislators also demonstrate a more open style of decision-making that reflects the backgrounds and experiences that they bring with them, as women, to their legislative work. Cindy Simon Rosenthal, for example, found that female chairs in state legislatures were more likely than male chairs to take a “collaborative” approach to problems (Rosenthal, 1998a) that invited open discussion of disagreements and consensus-based decision-making. This trend toward greater collaboration on the part of female state legislators was, however, somewhat muted by a conflicting trend toward more professional legislatures, which facilitated a more hierarchical and conflict oriented legislative environment. In a related work, Rosenthal also found that women chairs were more “task specific” and more likely than men to focus on accomplishments and results rather than credit-claiming and political positioning (Rosenthal, 1998).¹⁰² Rosenthal suggested that the decision making approach taken by female legislators may be a reflection of the prior experiences of female officeholders in volunteer and community activities that promote cooperative, consensus-based resolutions to problems.

¹⁰⁰ Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*, 152.

¹⁰¹ Kirkpatrick, *Political Women*; Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*; Sue Thomas, “The Effects of Race and Gender on Constituency Service,” *Western Political Quarterly* 45 (1992): 169-180; Lilliard E. Richardson, Jr. and Patricia K. Freeman, “Gender Differences in Constituency Service Among State Legislators,” *Political Research Quarterly* 48, No. 1 (March 1995): 169-179.

¹⁰² Cindy Simon Rosenthal, “Determinants of Collaborative Leadership: Civic Engagement, Gender or Organizational Norms?” *Political Research Quarterly* 51, No. 4 (December 1998): 847-868.

Lynn Kathlene (1995) came to a similar conclusion in her study on the different approaches taken by male and female legislators in Colorado on the issue of crime. In her research, Kathlene “translated” the work of Carol Gilligan by separating legislators’ responses into the broad categories of “instrumental” (or individualistic) and “contextual” (inter-dependent), attitudes and behaviors. Kathlene found that men and women approached criminal justice issues very differently, with men more likely to value “individual responsibility” and women more likely to emphasize the “societal link” to crime. Kathlene concluded that the more contextual view of women officeholders is a result of socialization differences between men and women:

Their subordinate and relatively dependent position and function in society has socialized [women] to view individuals in connection with each other and society. People’s lives are interdependent, based on a continuous web of relationships. The world is not comprised of distinct and separate spheres; thus women will not tend to view the world in terms of dichotomies. The public sphere is not separate from the private sphere.¹⁰³

Critical Mass, Mutual Support, and Institutional Position

Do the different qualities women bring to the legislature – in terms of ideology, policy preferences, activities and style – actually make a difference in terms of legislative outcomes? One view is that female legislators do make a difference in terms of policy, but only when they move beyond token minority status and achieve the “critical mass” necessary to bring about change.¹⁰⁴

In her study of the Arizona Legislature, Saint Germain (1989) found that women were more likely to introduce legislation on women’s issues, and more successful in gaining

¹⁰³ Lyn Kathlene, “Alternative Views of Crime: Legislative Policymaking in Gendered Terms,” *Journal of Politics* 57, No. 3 (August 1995): 698.

¹⁰⁴ This has its foundation in the work of Kanter (1977), who suggested that critical shifts in group dynamics occur when women exceed 15% of a group. Less than 15% of the group is described as “tokens,” 15-40 as “tilted,” and 40-60 as “balanced.” Rosabeth M. Kanter, “Some Effects of Proportion on Group Life: Skewed Sex Ratios and Response to Token Women,” *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977): 965-90.

enactment of that legislation, when women exceeded 15% of the legislature. Thomas and Welch (1990) surveyed members of the lower houses in 12 states and found that the proportion of women in the legislature had a relatively small effect on sponsorship of legislation on women, children and the family, though women were more likely to point to accomplishments in these areas in legislatures where women exceeded 15% of the body. In a subsequent and more comprehensive examination of that same survey data, Thomas (1991) found that greater numbers of women in the legislature and the existence of a women's caucus were positively associated with the introduction and approval of legislation on women, children and the family:

Women appear to be more likely to introduce and pass distinctive legislation in situations in which they may find support – in this case, circumstances of increased numbers, or support from the creation of women's legislative caucuses.¹⁰⁵

Thomas argued that “women's distinctive interests” begin to develop when female representation reaches 10% or more. At the same time, she found that “25%-30% membership in legislative chambers does not constitute a critical mass able to affect overall policies and priorities,” and greater levels of representation would be needed to achieve broader representational goals.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, Jocelyn Elise Crowley (2004) argued that *even in small numbers*, female legislators can have a significant impact on public policies.¹⁰⁷ In her study of child support enforcement policies in 49 states between 1975 and 1984, Crowley found that even a small number of women in office affected the likelihood that the legislature approved child support enforcement legislation. She concluded that this was true in a “dynamic” sense too,

¹⁰⁵ Thomas, “The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies,” 974.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas, “The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies,” 970.

¹⁰⁷ Jocelyn Elise Crowley, “When Tokens Matter,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXIX, No. 1 (February 2004): 109-136.

in that the addition of even one additional woman can have an impact on child support policies.

Another critical factor may be the level of support that women legislators receive from one another, both informally and through a women's caucus. Flammang (1985) found that women were more likely to pursue issues when they had the benefit of support from other women, while Sue Thomas (1991) found that the ability of women officeholders to make a substantive difference in policy is related to the level of support that they receive from their colleagues (either by increasing the number of women in the body, or in terms of organized caucus support).¹⁰⁸ This suggests that women can have a disproportionately large impact on policy if they are organized and engaged with one another as women.

It has also been suggested that *where* women are in legislatures might be as important as *how many* women there are in legislatures. Swers (1998) for instance, noted that women's success in gaining institutional power in key positions such as committee chairmanships was critical to the success that women have in moving women's issue bills forward.¹⁰⁹ Dodson (1998) also found that the presence (and absence) of women in some key leadership positions helped to play a role in the success of abortion rights, women's health and health care reform legislation.¹¹⁰ These findings complement the conclusions of Jeydel and Taylor (2003), who concluded that overall "legislative effectiveness... is more a function of seniority and membership in important House institutions such as influential committees, the majority party, and leadership positions within the party and committee systems than it is

¹⁰⁸ Janet A. Flammang, "Female Officials in the Feminist Capital: The Case of Santa Clara County." *Western Political Quarterly* 38 (1985): 94-118; Sue Thomas, "The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies."

¹⁰⁹ Michele L. Swers, "Women's Issue Bills."

¹¹⁰ Dodson, "Representing Women's Interests."

of gender.”¹¹¹ The fact that women are increasingly attaining legislative leadership positions in state legislatures¹¹² and securing equally important committee assignments in the House of Representatives at the early stages of their careers¹¹³ could ultimately translate into even greater levels of success for women, both in terms of general effectiveness, and the passage of “women’s issue” legislation.

The Complexity of Descriptive Representation

Though researchers have generally found that women officeholders are more likely than their male colleagues to support and promote women’s interest legislation, a number of scholars have raised the concern that the election of greater numbers of women to office will not necessarily translate into better representation of women’s interests. Elizabeth G. Williams (1997), for instance, found that “increased numbers, percentages or other criteria of the descriptive representation of women do not necessarily equate with greater substantive policy representation for ‘women’s’ policy concerns.” Instead, she concluded that a legislator’s ideology is the most important determinant of their support for ‘women’s policy. Williams argued that ideologically moderate male legislators can provide more effective representation of ‘women’s policy than female legislators who are more conservative, regardless of party.”¹¹⁴

Williams noted that while male legislators did sponsor fewer “women’s policy” bills than female legislators, they were more successful than their female colleagues in securing

¹¹¹ Alana Jeydel and Andrew J. Taylor, “Are Women Legislators Less Effective? Evidence from the U.S. House in the 103rd – 105th Congress,” *Political Research Quarterly* 56, No. 1 (March 2003): 26. See also: Bratton and Haynie (1999) who, in their study of six state legislatures, found that white women were as successful as male legislators in successfully turning their bills into law. Kathleen A. Bratton and Kerry L. Haynie, “Agenda-Setting and Legislative Success in State Legislatures: The Effects of Gender and Race,” *Journal of Politics* 61, No. 3 (1999): 658-79.

¹¹² Malcolm Jewell and Marcia Lynn Whicker, “The Feminization of Leadership in State Legislatures,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 26 (December 1993): 705-712.

¹¹³ Jeydel and Taylor, “Are Women Legislators Less Effective?”

¹¹⁴ Elizabeth G. Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation in US State Legislatures* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, 1997), 145-147.

passage of the bills. This is a reversal of sorts of an earlier finding by Thomas (1991) that women were more likely than men to secure passage of legislation on children and the family issues of particular importance to women.¹¹⁵ Williams argued that “supportive” male legislators, particularly those with links to women’s organizations and legislative women’s caucuses are an overlooked factor in efforts to provide for the substantive representation of women:

By being successful in passing ‘women’s policy’ legislation, supportive males make excellent policy coalition partners on these [women’s] issues. Furthermore, to maximize the representation of ‘women’s policy’ issues, male legislators who support these issues would be preferable candidates and legislators over more ideologically conservative female candidates who lack linkages to women’s groups.¹¹⁶

Witt, Paget, and Matthews (1994) also found evidence that male officeholders are demonstrating a new interest in “women’s issues.” They suggest that men in the legislature may be responding to political opportunities that now exist as a result of women’s efforts to champion and promote women’s issues before they became popular.”¹¹⁷

The finding that men can and sometimes do “act for” women through the successful passage of “women’s issue” legislation is a useful reminder that male and female legislators should not be painted with too broad a brush. Just as some male legislators have a strong commitment to “women’s interests” and some do not, female legislators also come from a variety of backgrounds, parties and ideologies. Like all representatives, female legislators face a number of competing or cross-cutting pressures that can obscure or conflict with their interests *as women*.

¹¹⁵ Thomas, “The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies.”

¹¹⁶ Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation*, 145.

¹¹⁷ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, *Running as a Woman*, 275.

Suzanne Dovi (2002) noted that “some descriptive representatives fail to further, and can even undermine, the best interests of historically disadvantaged groups.”¹¹⁸ For her part, Dovi argued that scholars should move away from mere “quantification” of under-represented or disadvantaged groups, and focus more attention on the development of criteria to identify members of the dispossessed classes that are best suited to “bolster democratic participation and the legitimacy of our democratic institutions”.¹¹⁹

How female legislators prioritize women’s issues relative to other issues is a complicated process that is subject to change over time. We may, for instance, see the behavior and characteristics of men and women officeholders converge over time, only to diverge again at other points or in other circumstances. Dolan and Ford (1997) for instance, found that women candidates are younger, more educated, and have more business and political experience than women who served in previous eras.¹²⁰ In this respect, they have become more like male legislators, whose characteristics remained stable in comparison. Susan Welch (1985) found that the ideological positions of male and female members of Congress converged somewhat between 1972 and 1980, with variables such as party and constituency playing a larger role today relative to sex than was previously the case.¹²¹ Vega and Firestone (1995) also found party, constituency and district better predictors of voting behavior in most, but not all circumstances. In some instances, they conclude, gender disparities in voting behavior do emerge.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Suzanne Dovi, “Preferable Descriptive Representatives: Will Just Any Woman, Black, or Latino Do?” *American Political Science Review* 96, No. 4 (December 2002): 730.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 742. Dovi proposed that preferable descriptive representatives should have “strong mutual relationships with dispossessed subgroups.”

¹²⁰ Dolan and Ford, “Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators,” 137-151.

¹²¹ Welch, “Are Women More Liberal.”

¹²² Vega and Firestone, “The Effects of Gender on Congressional Behavior.” See also Dabelko and Herrnson’s (1997) survey of candidates for Congress in the 1992 campaign, which found few differences in the campaign styles and professionalism of male and female candidates’ campaigns. Dabelko and Herrnson do find, however, differences in the focus that male and female candidates bring to their campaigns in terms of

Although we know from experience that women and men are *not* the same, the critical question is whether the differences between them are politically relevant. After more than three decades of scholarly analysis on this subject, the evidence strongly suggests that the election of women to public office does make a difference, both symbolically and substantively.¹²³ Women bring different life experiences with them to the job of representing their constituents, and these different life experiences are translated into different policy preferences and legislative styles. Moreover, the election of women to legislatures appears to have an impact on policy outcomes, particularly in the case of policies that are defined in various ways, as “women’s issues.”

In Chapter 3, I will show that the percentage of women elected to state legislatures has consistently been greater than the percentage of women elected to Congress. Given the symbolic and substantive importance of female officeholders, differing levels of female representation at state and federal legislatures raise important questions about the way that women are incorporated into public offices and the impact of differences in descriptive representation on public policies.

issues, with men focusing more on economic issues and women on social issues. Dabelko and Herrnson, “Women’s and Men’s Campaigns for the U.S. House of Representatives.”

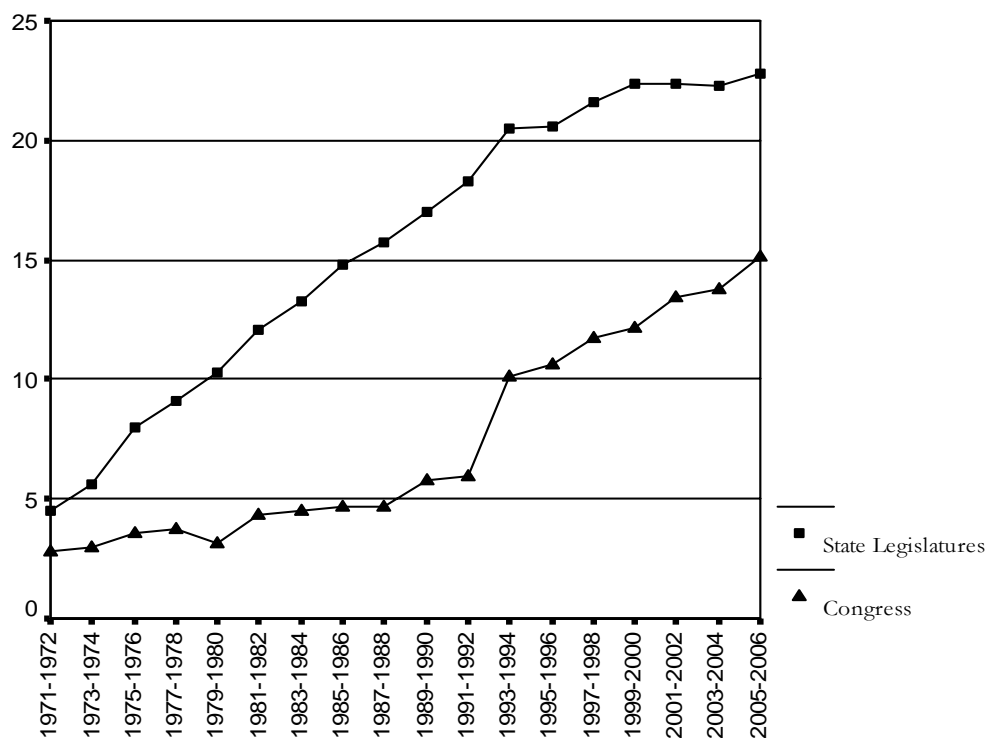
¹²³ This is not to say, of course, that the discipline has dealt conclusively with questions of measurement. Scholars are struggling to determine, for instance, how many women constitutes a “critical mass,” and there is no single, clear standard for determining which issues are properly defined as “women’s issues” for the purposes of measuring the impact that women have on public policies.

3

The Pattern of Women's Representation and the Pipeline Theory

Although women continue to be under-represented at all levels of government, the percentage of women serving in American legislatures has increased considerably over the last three decades. In the U.S. Congress, for example, the percentage of women increased from just 2.8% in 1971 to 15.1% in 2003. The percentage of women in state legislatures also increased during that same period, rising from 5.6% of all legislative seats to 22.8% (see Figure 3.1).¹²⁴

Figure 3.1
Percent Women in Congress and State Legislatures, 1971-2006



Source: Fact Sheets, "Women in the U.S. Congress, 1917-2004," "Women in the U.S. Congress, 2006," "Women in State Legislatures, 1975-2003," and "Women in State Legislatures, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey. Note: This data is also presented in Table 3.2 at the end of this chapter.

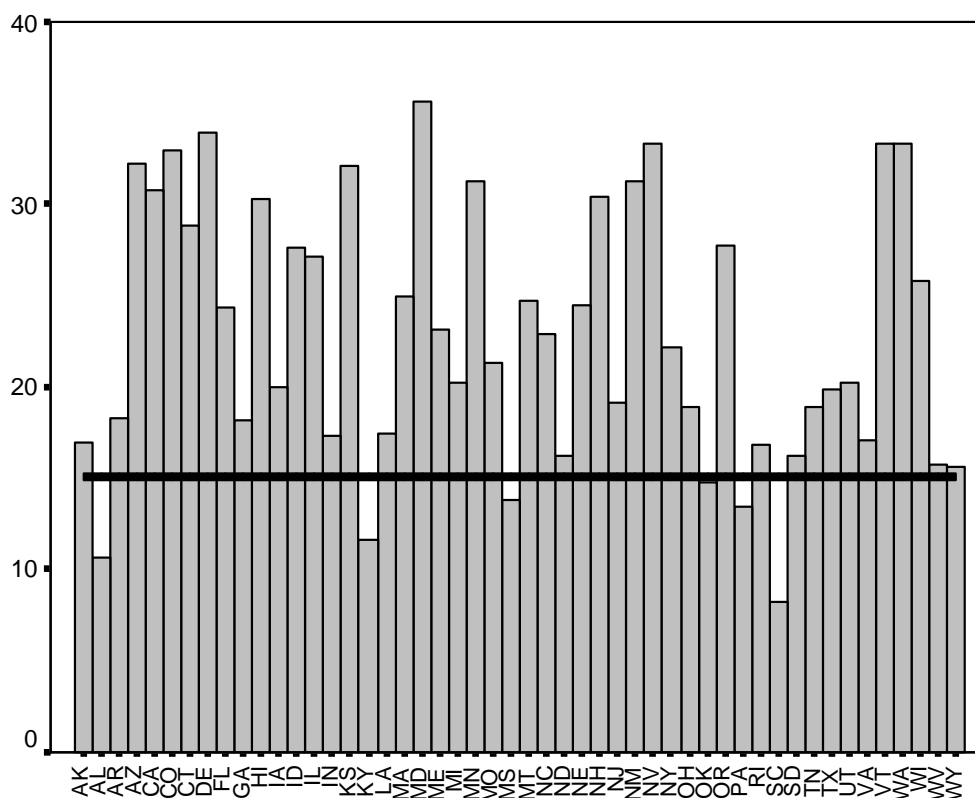
¹²⁴ CAWP Fact Sheets, "Women in the U.S. Congress, 1917-2004," and "Women in the U.S. Congress, 2006."

The number of women elected to legislative office has increased at all levels; however, women's electoral gains have come more quickly at the state legislative level than Congress. From 1971 through 1999, the percentage of women in state legislatures grew steadily, before leveling off at 22% in recent years. In contrast, growth at the congressional level has been slow and uneven, increasing only 3.4% between 1971 and 1991 before jumping sharply from 6% to 10% in the "Year of the Woman" congressional elections of 1992. From 1993 to 2006, the percentage of women in Congress has grown slowly, increasing at an average rate of one-half a percentage point per year.

One complicating factor is that female representation varies considerably across individual state legislatures. In 2006, for instance, the percentage of women in individual state legislatures ranged from a high of 35.6% in Maryland to a low of 8.2% in South Carolina. Though there is variation across states, women have achieved a broad level of electoral success at the state legislative level, at least in comparison to Congress. All but six state legislatures have a higher percentage of female members than Congress and women make up more than 20% of the legislature in nearly three-fifths of the states (see Figure 3.2).

Thus, we see a clear pattern of women's representation in which the level of female representation in Congress lags behind the level found in state legislatures. To the extent that political scientists have recognized this pattern of representation, they have seen it primarily as a consequence of a political opportunity structure that advantages individuals with prior elected office-holding experience.

Figure 3.2
Percent Women in State Legislatures, 2006



Note: Horizontal line represents percentage of women in Congress, 2006 (15.1%). Source: Fact Sheet, "Women in State Legislatures, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey. Note that state by state data is also presented in Table 1.2: Female Representation in State Legislatures, 2006.

Political Ambition and the Political Opportunity Structure

Patterns of political advancement are strongly influenced by the political ambitions of lower level legislators and shared understandings about which offices are more valuable than others. In *Ambition and Politics* (1966), Joseph Schlesinger put forward a theory of political behavior that placed ambition at the center of political life. Schlesinger argued that political behavior is best understood from the context of political ambition; often the key factor is not where an officeholder is, but where he or she *wants* to be:

The central assumption of ambition theory is that a politician's behavior is a response to his office goals. Or, to put it another way, the politician as

officeseeker engages in political acts and makes decisions appropriate to gaining office.¹²⁵

Schlesinger placed political ambitions in three general categories: discrete, static, and progressive. Candidates who wanted to serve in a particular office only for that specified term and then withdraw from politics were described as having “discrete” ambitions. Congressional widows and other placeholders often fell into this category. Political actors who wanted to serve in one particular office for a long period of time were described as having “static ambitions.” Career politicians who did not desire a higher office were placed in this category. The third group was individuals with “progressive” political ambitions; those political actors who were aiming for a more important office than the one they were currently holding.

Schlesinger argued that ambitions, as well as the ability to act upon them, are constrained by the surrounding political opportunity structure, which is “constructed from numerous and varied chances at offices ranging from drain surveyor or fence viewer to President.”¹²⁶ The opportunity structure reflects patterns of electoral behavior on the part of both candidates and voters, who, by their actions, create (and/or reinforce) expectations about the direction of political ambitions, the source of potential candidates, and the routes that can be taken to various elective offices.

State legislatures play a key role as base offices in the political opportunity structure:

In every state the legislature brings together for a period of between one and seven months a sizeable number of politically-minded men from all parts of the state. It is, therefore, a natural breeding ground for political ambition and a logical base office.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Joseph A. Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics: Political Careers in the United States* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966), 6.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 72. Schlesinger also pointed to local elected offices, appointed political positions (administrative offices) and law enforcement offices as important base offices in the opportunity structure. He found that in some states, law enforcement offices were a principal route to elected office and local offices, while less

This assumption was confirmed by Schlesinger's subsequent review of base offices across the states, which demonstrated that state legislatures are "by far the commonest office experience of the states' political leaders."¹²⁸ Schlesinger noted that political careers generally proceed "from the state to the nation," suggesting there is a clear direction to legislative careers, with state offices viewed as a lower rung on the career ladder than national offices.¹²⁹ Thus, we can expect to find that state legislators have ambitions for congressional office, but rarely encounter a Member of Congress with ambitions to serve in the state legislature.

The political opportunity structure shapes patterns of congressional office-seeking in ways that facilitate the advancement of state legislators to Congress; as a result, candidates who have state legislative experience have a number of advantages over those who do not. As Gary Jacobson noted:

Other things being equal, the strongest congressional candidates are those for whom politics is a career. They have the most powerful motive and the greatest opportunity to master the craft of electoral politics. They are most likely to have experience in running campaigns and in holding elective office. They have the incentive and opportunity to build up contacts with other politically active and influential people and to put them under some obligation.¹³⁰

This is especially true in the case of state legislative seats, which provide officeholders with both resources and a highly visible platform from which to pursue progressive political ambitions. As Schlesinger noted, the key offices for advancement are those that have a "manifest institutional relationship with the goal office; the offices share either the same electorate or the same political arena."¹³¹ State legislators have a number of

important individually, served as important stepping stones on a careerist's path from local office to state legislatures to Congress.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 74.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 194.

¹³⁰ Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 38.

¹³¹ Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*, 196.

advantages, including the benefits of a shared constituency that results from the overlap of congressional and state legislative districts, albeit to varied extents.

State legislative offices provide state legislators with a range of experiences that parallel and complement those they will need to run successfully for Congress. Like their congressional counterparts, state legislators have experience serving on committees, proposing, debating and considering legislation, tending a home constituency, developing relationships with lobbyists and interest groups, and running in a political campaign. By virtue of their positions, state legislators are likely to develop ambitions for congressional service and well positioned to draw upon their experiences to facilitate those ambitions.¹³²

Michael B. Berkman (1993) argued that “state legislatures are good training grounds; they are structured much like the House, employ similar processes, demand similar skills, and confront many of the same issues.”¹³³ Linda Fowler and Robert McClure (1989) came to a similar conclusion in their case study of political ambition in a single Upstate New York congressional district:

State legislative experience is valuable to those who aspire to national office. Lawmakers in the state capital learn to deal with complex issues, bargain, and tend a constituency. They also hone their campaign techniques and build their local name recognition. This experience provides a valuable head start in a congressional race, which is why observers of House elections often classify as competitive races those in

¹³² Gordon Black (1972) rejects the notion that pre-existing political ambition is the driving factor behind progressive political ambition among officeholders. Instead, Black argues that officeholders make decisions about seeking higher offices based on the changing costs and benefits that they are faced with at the moment. For Black, political structures play a key role in shaping officeholder ambitions by changing the relative costs and benefits of seeking higher offices. Gordon S. Black, “A Theory of Political Ambition: Career Choices and the Role of Structural Incentives,” *American Political Science Review* 66 (1972): 145.

¹³³ Michael B. Berkman, “Former State Legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives: Institutional and Policy Mastery,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVIII, No. 1 (February 1993): 104. Also, see Maestas, Maisel and Stone (2000), who note that “the skills honed by the legislative and electoral context of the professional legislature leave an incumbent well situated to launch a strong campaign for a U.S. House seat.” Cherie Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone, “When to Risk it? State Legislators and the Decision to run for the U.S. House,” paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC (August-September 2000): 4.

which a state legislator runs. In the view of one national party official, ‘a state legislator is, by definition, a good candidate.’¹³⁴

Congressional election studies generally confirm this conventional wisdom; candidates with prior elective office-holding experience raise more money, receive a greater percentage of the vote, and win congressional races more often than candidates who lack similar experience.¹³⁵ These studies further conclude that candidates with larger constituency bases (such as members of the upper house of many state legislatures) are most advantaged.¹³⁶

Moreover, the advantages of state legislative service appear to have increased as a result of the increasing professionalism of state legislatures. Once largely part time, informal institutions, modern state legislatures have become increasingly professional, providing members with higher levels of compensation and greater staff and institutional resources. These additional resources have enabled state legislators to devote more time and attention to tending their constituency and promoting their legislative agenda. Professional legislatures provide their members with greater opportunities to strengthen their political skills by managing their constituency, working with the press and running campaigns. In these settings, legislators are likely to establish relationships with party leaders, political donors and special interest groups, making it easier for them to secure the political and financial backing needed for a successful congressional campaign.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ See Linda A. Fowler and Robert D. McClure, *Political Ambition* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1989), 74-75.

¹³⁵ Uhlaner and Schlozman (1986) found that non-incumbents who held elective office were more likely to raise more money and to win than those without prior office-holding experience. Berkman and Eisenstein (1999) found that experienced candidates raise more money and a higher percentage of their contributions come from Political Action Committees, and experienced candidates with the largest constituencies raised the most. See Berkman and Eisenstein, “State Legislators as Congressional Candidates”; Uhlaner and Schlozman, “Candidate Gender and Congressional Campaign Receipts.”

¹³⁶ Squire and Wright, “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates.”

¹³⁷ See, for example: Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, “When to Risk it?” and Michael B. Berkman, “State Legislators in Congress: Strategic Politicians, Professional Legislatures, and the Party Nexus,” *American Journal of Political Science* 38, No. 4 (November 1994): 1025-55.

Schlesinger's theory of political ambition reflects, in the words of Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon, "the hierarchy of political offices in the United States that functions as a 'career ladder' or 'opportunity structure' for ambitious politicians. The assumption is that lower level offices serve as a spring board into higher office."¹³⁸

State Legislatures as Springboards

Elected officials at lower levels of office – such as local council members and state legislators – often possess progressive ambition to someday hold higher-level office.¹³⁹ By virtue of the offices they hold, these elected officials are able to leverage important political resources to pursue higher elective offices, taking advantage of their lawmaking and policy-making experience, political contacts, organization, name recognition, staff resources, and fundraising ability to secure a seat in a more highly desired legislature. Because of these advantages, individuals with prior elected office-holding experience make up a sizable percentage of the candidates for higher level offices such as Congress, and an even larger percentage of the successful ones.¹⁴⁰ State legislators running for Congress are, for instance, more likely to be successful than non-state legislators and typically win by larger margins.¹⁴¹ In their study of candidate emergence in the 1994 elections, L. Sandy Maisel and Walter Stone (1997) concluded that the single most important factor affecting a potential

¹³⁸ Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon, "Political Ambition and Women in the US House of Representatives, 1916-2000," *Political Research Quarterly* 56, No. 2 (June 2003): 128.

¹³⁹ See Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*, 6.

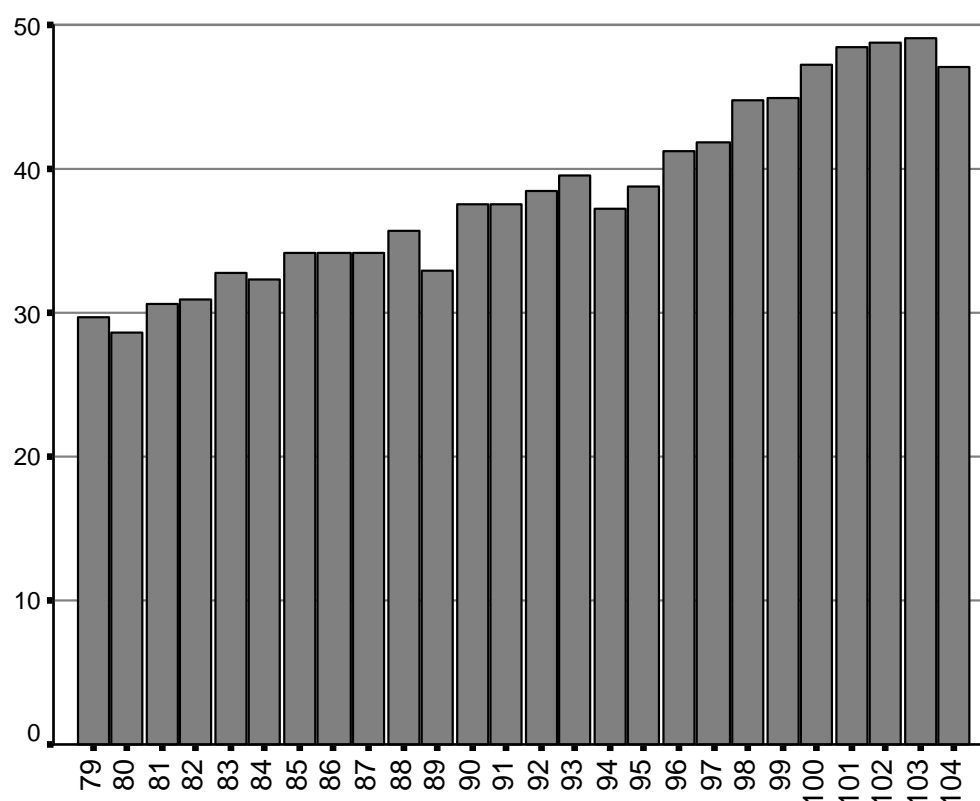
¹⁴⁰ See, for instance: Alan I. Abramowitz, "Incumbency, Campaign Spending and the Decline of Competition in U.S. Elections," *Journal of Politics* 53 (1991): 34-56; and Gary C. Jacobson, "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments," *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (1990): 334-362. As Berkman and Eisenstein (1999) point out, one reason that state legislators are more likely to be successful is that they are more risk-averse than other candidates, entering "only those races they were most likely to win." See Berkman and Eisenstein, "State Legislators as Congressional Candidates," 496. See also: David T. Canon, *Actors, Athletes, and Astronauts: Political Amateurs in the United States Congress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); and Cherie Maestas, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone, "Stepping Up or Stopping? Candidate Emergence among State Legislators," paper prepared for the Southwest Political Science Association Meeting in San Antonio, TX (April 1-4, 1999).

¹⁴¹ Jacobson, "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections."

candidate's likelihood of running for Congress was whether or not they held political office.¹⁴²

An analysis of data from Carroll McKibbin's *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803) indicates that the percentage of members with state legislative experience increased steadily between 1945 and the mid-1990s (see Figure 3.3).¹⁴³

Figure 3.3
Pct. of House Members with State Leg. Experience, 79th to 104th Congress



Source: Carrol McKibbin, *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803). Note: This data on the state legislative experience of House members is also presented in Table 3.3: Percent Members of Congress with State Legislative Experience, 79th Congress (1945-46) to 104th Congress (1995-96), which appears at the end of this chapter.

¹⁴² L. Sandy Maisel and Walter J. Stone, "Determinants of Candidate Emergence in U.S. House Elections: An Exploratory Study," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXII, No. 1 (February 1997): 79-96.

¹⁴³ This general trend upward over time is also observed in the percentage of *first-time members* with prior state legislative experience, though there is more year to year variation in the data. The figures for the percentages of first-time members with state legislative experience are presented in Table 1.4: First-Time House Members with State Legislative Experience, 1945-1995, which appears at the end of this chapter.

By 1994, nearly 50% of all members of the US House of Representatives served in a state legislature immediately prior to their election to Congress.¹⁴⁴ McKibbin's database also indicates that state legislatures are an increasingly important route to Congress for women (see Table 3.4). The number of female members of the House with prior state legislative experience increased from 5 in 1971 to 20 in 1993.

Table 3.1
House Members with State Legislative Experience, by Sex, 1973-1995

Congress #	Women with State Leg. Experience/ Total Women	Pct. Women with State Leg. Experience	Men with State Leg. Experience/ Total men	% Men with State Leg. Experience
92	5/13	38.5	166/431	38.5
93	5/16	31.3	170/426	39.9
94	3/19	15.8	161/422	38.2
95	2/18	11.1	169/423	40.0
96	2/16	12.5	180/426	42.3
97	4/22	18.2	182/422	43.1
98	3/22	13.6	192/415	46.3
99	3/23	13.0	195/417	46.8
100	7/24	29.2	201/417	48.2
101	10/29	34.5	207/418	49.5
102	10/28	35.7	204/411	49.6
103	20/47	42.6	197/395	49.9
104	20/49	40.8	189/396	47.7

Source: Carrol McKibbin, *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803).

The Pipeline Theory

Prior to the 1970s, very few women were elected to serve in state legislatures; as a result, women were largely excluded from the single most important “opportunity pool” from which future members of Congress were drawn. That began to change over the next three decades, as increasing numbers of women were elected to public – and particularly

¹⁴⁴ Carroll McKibbin, *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803). See also: Berkman, “State Legislators in Congress,” 1025; Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, “Stepping Up or Stopping?”

state and local – offices. Between 1973 and 1993, the percentage of women serving in state legislatures increased more than four-fold.¹⁴⁵ As Martin Gruberg (1984) noted, the increasing electoral success of women at the state and local level would change the dynamic of American politics by creating “an enlarged female talent pool from which new leaders will emerge.”¹⁴⁶

Because the number of women elected to state legislatures was increasing dramatically at the same time that state legislatures were becoming an increasingly important route to Congress, a number of scholars assumed that female state legislators would be well situated to leverage the resources and experiences they gained from these offices to run successfully for Congress.¹⁴⁷

The experience and resources that state legislative positions provide was believed to be critically important to individuals seeking election in a highly competitive legislature like the U.S. House of Representatives. As relative newcomers to elected office, women lacked the political experience and resources available to male officeholders. Thus, in order to succeed at higher levels, women must first make gains at lower-level local and state offices, where prior political experience was less essential and competition for positions less fierce. Over time, women in lower-level legislative positions would gain experience and amass political resources, expanding the number of “quality” female candidates in the opportunity pool; in turn, this would lead to greater numbers of female candidates moving from local to state offices, and then, ultimately, from state offices to Congress. Georgia Duerst-Lahti described this process, which became known as “the pipeline”:

¹⁴⁵ Susan J. Carroll, “Women in State Government: Historical Overview and Current Trends,” in *The Book of the States, 2004* (Council of State Governments: Lexington, KY, 2004).

¹⁴⁶ See Gruberg, “Nowhere to Where?” 10.

¹⁴⁷ Clark, “Progress or Stalemate”; Rule, “Why More Women are State Legislators”; Witt, Paget, and Matthews, *Running as a Woman*; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*; and Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation*.

The pipeline is another explanation for the shortfall of elected women. It refers to the fact that experience in one elected office is seen as providing credentials for other offices. Serving in elected or appointed office is seen as providing credentials for other offices. Serving in elected or appointed office at a local level creates credentials for county or state office. For this reason, the number of women who serve in local office is a critical indicator of the number of women who will be seen as credible candidates for higher office.¹⁴⁸

Witt, Paget and Matthews (1994), also acknowledged the important role that the pipeline plays in the future success of women at higher level offices. They argued that experience at lower levels of political office is vital to the future advancement of women to higher level offices:

The primary way that women candidates have achieved credibility is by entering politics at the local level, running for a city council seat or a school board, and then working their way up the political ladder. Historically, women's office-holding experience has been more convincing to voters than credentials earned in another arena.¹⁴⁹

Although prospective candidates can find many kinds of political experience helpful in their congressional campaigns, state legislative experience is considered particularly valuable. Darcy, Welch and Clark (1994) described state legislatures as "crucial to women because they are key entry points to higher elective office," and they argue that "barriers to women entering state legislatures will effectively limit the recruitment of women to higher office."¹⁵⁰

Williams (1997) described state legislatures as "important penultimate offices in the career paths of the few women elected to the United States Congress."¹⁵¹ Indeed, her review of the career paths taken by women in the U.S. House of Representatives found that most

¹⁴⁸ Duerst-Lahti, "The Bottleneck," 15.

¹⁴⁹ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, *Running as a Woman*, 100.

¹⁵⁰ Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*, 51.

¹⁵¹ Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation*, 33.

congresswomen shared a similar career path that included initial service in local government or on a school board, followed by service in the state legislature.¹⁵²

Based on these observations, a number of scholars asserted that the percentage of women elected to Congress is largely a function of women's past electoral successes in state legislatures. As the number of women serving in state legislatures increased, an increasing number of women would move through the "pipeline," resulting in greater levels of female representation in Congress.¹⁵³

The basics of this theory were articulated by Janet Clark (1984), who emphasized the importance of lower level political experience for those seeking higher level offices. Clark argued that the increase in the number of women gaining political experience at lower levels set the stage for increased female representation in higher political offices like the U.S. Congress. In Clark's words:

candidates generally start a career at the bottom and progress to higher level offices. Local and state offices are major political training grounds... as the number of women in state and local posts increases, greater representation in higher political office should eventually follow.¹⁵⁴

Susan Carroll came to a similar conclusion in her study of female officeholders, finding that once in office female legislators were as likely as their male colleagues to desire advancement up the legislative career ladder. As a result, she concluded that:

in the absence of other impediments to women's advancement, the stagnation which has characterized the representation of women at the highest levels of office should soon come to an end. Within the next few years women should move into major statewide and national political positions in roughly the same proportions as they were represented in the early 1980s at lower levels of government.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation*, 33.

¹⁵³ For direct references to the "pipeline," see for instance: Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*, 91-92; Palmer and Simon, "Political Glass Ceiling." See also, Duerst-Lahti, "The Bottleneck."

¹⁵⁴ Clark, "Progress or Stalemate?"

¹⁵⁵ Carroll, "Sex Differences in Political Ambition," 1242.

Articulating the theory a bit more explicitly, Wilma Rule (1990) suggested that women's representation in state legislatures would follow a "time-lagged, two tiered pattern" as women gained experience in the lower house and moved on to seats in the upper house. As a consequence, Rule expected that:

...those states where women were first elected in large numbers to state assemblies in the 1960s and 1970s, such as New England, will now have the largest percentage of women state senators. This is likely because women who have served some terms in the assembly and who have become well known should have greater chances for senate action than persons without such a legislative background.¹⁵⁶

Rule believed this same process would eventually be seen at the congressional level, arguing that "as more women gain legislative, and particularly state senate experience from which to launch their campaigns, modest increases in the number of women elected to the House should follow."¹⁵⁷

The "time-lagged, two tiered pattern" described by Rule is a consequence of two factors. First, it takes time for candidates at lower levels to accumulate political resources, build name recognition, impress and win the favor of constituency and advocacy groups, and cement strong relationships with lobbyists and party leaders. Since women are relatively new to political office, there will initially be fewer women than men who have accumulated the requisite resources for electoral success at a higher level. A second reason women's advancement to higher office is delayed is the advantages of incumbency flow entirely to incumbents (naturally!). As Welch and Studlar point out, the advantages of incumbency

¹⁵⁶ Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators," 440. Rule found that moralistic Republican states that were favorable to women in the 1960s and 1970s continued to elect high percentages of women, while other "New Wave" states emerged where Democratic Party dominance no longer served as a barrier to female representation.

¹⁵⁷ Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators," 446.

create a barrier for all challenger candidates, but “since most incumbents are male, this barrier disproportionately affects women.”¹⁵⁸

Some women’s groups have used the pipeline theory as the basis for their strategies to increase the role that women play in important political, social, and economic institutions. Marie Wilson, founder of the White House Project, noted that “the pipeline theory of women’s ascendancy is definitely the means to an end: insert enough women at all levels and their promotion to higher business ranks or election to higher office is statistically inevitable.”¹⁵⁹

A Closer Look at the Pipeline

The pipeline theory suggests that the election of greater numbers of women to state legislatures will result in future gains for women at the congressional level because experienced female state legislators will eventually move through “the pipeline” to Congress. The assumption is that as women are elected to state legislatures, they will advance to Congress in the same proportion as the men with whom they serve. The key problem with this assumption is that all state legislators are *not* equally likely to advance to Congress.

As of 2005, there were 7,382 state legislative seats across the fifty states.¹⁶⁰ Given the length of many congressional careers and the fact that there are only 535 seats in the House and Senate, it is reasonable to conclude that only a small fraction of state legislators will ever serve in the United States Congress.¹⁶¹ This raises the question: what is it that separates state legislators who seek and win congressional office from those who do not? Furthermore, what role does gender play in this process?

¹⁵⁸ Welch and Studlar, “The Opportunity Structure for Women’s Candidacies,” 871, footnote #7.

¹⁵⁹ Alex Massie, “Barbie for President,” *The Scotsman*, June 24, 2004.

¹⁶⁰ CAWP Fact Sheet, “Women in State Legislatures, 2006.”

¹⁶¹ In this respect, the “pipeline” might be better described as a funnel that is very, very wide on one end and very, very small on the other.

Several recent studies indicate that gender plays an important – and underappreciated -- role in candidate emergence. Fox and Lawless (2004), for instance, contended that the opportunity pool and incumbency explanations for female under-representation – which are the foundation of the pipeline theory -- fail to fully account for the impact of gender. They noted that:

...most studies of gender and political candidacies conclude that the remedy for gender disparities in elective offices is an increase in women's proportions in the pipeline professions.... To assess prospects for gender parity in our electoral system based on these institutional explanations is to fail to consider a critical piece of the candidate emergence process: the manner in which gender interacts with the initial decision to run for office.¹⁶²

To assess the impact of gender on candidate emergence, Fox and Lawless conducted a large-scale national survey of potential candidates from various key professions. They found that, among men and women with similar personal characteristics and professional credentials, women expressed lower levels of political ambition, were less likely to be encouraged to run for office, and viewed themselves as less qualified to run.¹⁶³

Likewise, Fulton, Maestas, Maisel and Stone (2005) also identified a number of gender differences that affect the likelihood male and female state legislators will run for higher office.¹⁶⁴ In their study, the authors examined the effect of gender on the office-seeking decisions of a group of 875 state legislators that were surveyed as part of the Candidate Emergence Study. They found that female state legislators express lower levels of

¹⁶² Fox and Lawless, "Entering the Arena?" 265.

¹⁶³ Fox and Lawless use an "eligibility pool" approach, defining prospective candidates by their professions and background. This is in contrast to Maisel's "reputational" approach, which focuses on individuals mentioned as possible candidates for office by community, party and opinion leaders in the community. See Fox and Lawless, "Entering the Arena?"

¹⁶⁴ Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "The Sense of a Woman." Fulton, et. al., find that although women state legislators are less likely to possess political ambition, they are higher quality candidates (generally) and more responsive than men to the benefits of office and the strategic considerations of congressional candidacy. For a contrary finding, see Fox and Lawless, "Entering the Arena?" Using the Citizen Political Ambition Study, Fox and Lawless look at a broad nationwide sample of potential candidates, defining potential candidates based on their professional background. Though they find that women express lower levels of political ambition, there is reason to be concerned about the breadth of the "opportunity pool" as they define it.

ambition than their male colleagues, and are also more responsive than men to office-seeking opportunities. In this case, the gender differences work against one another and, as a result, the men and women in their sample were found to be equally likely to run for Congress.

Thus, recent scholarship strongly suggests that gender does have an effect on state legislators' decisions to seek higher legislative office. This raises three concerns pertinent to this study: first, male and female legislators may have different backgrounds, characteristics, and experiences that are relevant to congressional office seeking; second, the factors relevant to seeking and winning congressional offices may not affect men and women in the same way; and third, men and women may not be equally likely to serve in the states and/or districts that provide the best opportunities for political advancement.¹⁶⁵

Individual Factors

The pipeline theory assumes that men and women in state legislatures are equally likely to advance to Congress. However, a number of studies have identified key differences between male and female state legislators that are relevant to the likelihood that they will seek and win congressional office. The conclusions drawn from these studies suggest that women officeholders and candidates are more likely than men to delay their political careers until they are older and their children are grown. In addition, women are also less likely than

¹⁶⁵ Fulton, Maestas, Maisel and Stone describe this as the interactive effect of gender, in which "the characteristics that shape ambition and the decision to run may operate differently for men and women." Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "The Sense of a Woman." One example of the interactive effect which has been extensively documented is the differing impact of family responsibilities on men and women. Because there are often different societal expectations for men and women when it comes to child rearing and household responsibilities, men and women with similar family situations in terms of marriage and children appear to feel very different pressures relative to office seeking or legislative service. See, for instance, Virginia Sapiro, Private Costs of Public Commitments or Public Costs of Private Commitments? Family Roles versus Political Ambition," *American Journal of Political Science* 26, No. 2 (May 1982): 265-279. See also Bledsoe and Herring, "Victims of Circumstances."

men to have occupational backgrounds that provide them with experiences and resources relevant to a congressional campaign.

Age

Age is an important factor that affects whether or not an individual will seek (or be recruited for) political office.¹⁶⁶ As Joseph Schlesinger (1966) noted, structures of opportunity and age timetables “work as controls because they are as obvious to the members of the political community at large as to the individual ambitious politician. They set the framework of expectations.”¹⁶⁷ Schlesinger found that those who enter public office earlier have a greater range of ambitions and opportunities for advancement. He concluded that the “manifest age” for running for Congress was between 35 and 40. According to Schlesinger, “Congressman do best to arrive in the 15-year age span between 35 and 50, and better earlier than later.”¹⁶⁸ Similarly, in his analysis of progressive ambition among members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Paul Brace (1994) found that age had a strong curvilinear affect on political ambition. As a result, he noted that both younger and older members were less likely to run for higher office.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ As Joseph A. Schlesinger (1966) noted, “the age cycle restricts a man’s political chances. A man’s reasonable expectations at one period of his life are unreasonable at another time. A man can fail to advance in politics as much because he is the wrong age at the wrong time as because he is in the wrong office,” Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*, 174.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 193.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 195.

¹⁶⁹ Across the age spectrum, very young members of the state legislature may find the costs of running for congressional office prohibitive. They are less likely to have accumulated significant personal wealth, and are also less likely to have amassed the political resources needed to run successfully for congressional office. Younger members are also more likely to have school-age children, increasing the personal costs of seeking and holding a congressional office. Members on the older end of the age spectrum, on the other hand, have fewer potential years remaining in their political careers. This has the effect of reducing the benefits that a state legislator can expect to gain by winning congressional office. In comparison to a younger legislator, it is less likely that an older legislator would have time to accumulate the seniority necessary to have a significant impact on public policies. Further, because older legislators are closer to retirement age, they would be less likely to see significant retirement or pension benefits from their service in Congress. This is particularly true if they would have to weigh the new congressional benefits against additional state pension and retirement benefits that would be foregone by leaving the state legislature. In addition, older state legislators would be less likely

A number of studies have found that, for both candidates and officeholders, women are typically older than their male counterparts.¹⁷⁰ In their survey of state legislators in 15 states, Sue Thomas and Matt Braunstein (2000) found that male state legislators were more likely to have sought and gained political office at a younger age than women.¹⁷¹ These age differences are believed to result from the fact that women are more likely to delay seeking a political career until after their child bearing years are over or their children are grown.¹⁷² Because they enter office later in life, women are likely to see fewer open seat congressional opportunities than men, and have a smaller window of opportunity to accumulate the experience, resources and support needed to run successfully for Congress.

Occupation

All things being equal, state legislators who have occupational backgrounds that facilitate and complement their accumulation of both financial and political resources will have an advantage over those state legislators who have occupational backgrounds that provide fewer resources and less politically relevant experience.

In the 1970s and 1980s, a number of studies found that women were at a disadvantage relative to men in terms of their professional backgrounds and education.¹⁷³

Women had lower levels of education than men and were less likely to be represented in

than their younger colleagues to factor in the potential for a high-paying post-congressional career. Age could also have an impact on the likelihood that a state legislator will receive party support for their run for congressional office. Younger members may be disadvantaged because they have not build the political resources and experience needed to secure critical party and outside financial support. Older members, on the other hand, will be disadvantaged because party leaders will want to maximize the return on their party's investment in a candidate. As a result, party leaders are likely to prefer candidates from their party who will hold congressional office (and enjoy the benefits of incumbency) for a longer period of time.

¹⁷⁰ Werner, "Women in Congress"; Kirkpatrick, *Political Women*; Mezey, "Does Sex Make a Difference?"; Sapiro, Private Costs of Public Commitments or Public Costs of Private Commitments?"; and Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials."

¹⁷¹ Thomas and Braunstein, "Legislative Careers: The Personal and the Political."

¹⁷² Werner, "Women in Congress"; Werner, "Women in the State Legislatures"; Kirkpatrick, *Political Women*; Deber, "The Fault, Dear Brutus"; Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials."

¹⁷³ See Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office," and Burt-Way and Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition."

occupations such as business and law, which have traditionally served as stepping stones to political office.¹⁷⁴ Women were also at a disadvantage because they were more likely than men to serve in lower-paid professions and to have lower personal incomes in comparison to men.¹⁷⁵

There is some evidence that the educational and occupational differences between men and women have diminished somewhat over time.¹⁷⁶ Thomas (1994), for instance, found that by 1988 female legislators were more highly educated, more politically experienced, and more diverse occupationally than in previous years.¹⁷⁷ Likewise, Dolan and Ford (1997) looked at data on all female legislators serving in 15 states, and found that female legislators serving in 1992 were more educated, more professional, and more politically experienced in than female legislators from past decades.¹⁷⁸

Though the differences between men and women may have narrowed somewhat from the 1970s and 1980s, women remain at a disadvantage in terms of their professional, educational, and political backgrounds. Women are still less likely than men to possess

¹⁷⁴ See, in particular, Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office." See also Deber, "The Fault, Dear Brutus"; and Carroll, "The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials." Deber found that female congressional candidates in Pennsylvania were less likely than male candidates to be lawyers, and less likely to come from professions that provided access and resources relevant to office-seeking. Susan J. Carroll noted that women who were successful at winning election to political office were more likely than men to be teachers, nurses and clerical workers, even though officeholders in general were more likely to come from white collar and traditionally male dominated occupations.

¹⁷⁵ Fox, "Initial Decision to Run for Office." See also, Janet Clark, "Getting There: Women in Political Office," In *Different Roles, Different Voices*, edited by Marianne Githens, Pippa Norris, and Joni Lovenduski (New York: Harper Collins, 1994); and Fox, Lawless and Feeley, "Gender and the Decision to Run for Office." Later research suggests that income does not have an independent affect on candidate ambitions, but others argue that increased economic status is critical to the expansion of political opportunities for women. See, for instance, Gertzog, "Women's Changing Pathways"; and Edmond Constantini, "Political Women and Political Ambition."

¹⁷⁶ Thompson, "Career Convergences"; Burrell, "The Political Opportunity of Women Candidates," 51-69.

¹⁷⁷ See Thomas, *How Women Legislate*.

¹⁷⁸ Dolan and Ford, "Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators," 137-151.

degrees, hold professional or management positions, and have prior political office experience.¹⁷⁹

Gender as an Intervening Variable

Women and men may, in fact, weigh the costs and benefits of office seeking very differently because they must deal with a different set of responsibilities and expectations than men. Thus, even when men and women appear to be similarly situated, some factors may have the effect of limiting opportunities for women, while having little or the opposite effect on men.

Family Responsibilities

Female officeholders are less likely than male officeholders to be married and less likely to have children.¹⁸⁰ When they do have children, female officeholders typically have fewer of them than their male colleagues, and their children are typically older.¹⁸¹ In a survey of delegates to the 1972 conventions, Virginia Sapiro (1982) found that “the aspect of family life cited most often as the domestic source of role conflict for politically active women is the presence of children, particularly preschoolers.”¹⁸²

Women tend to begin their political careers at an older age than men, reserving their public energies especially for the time after their children become more independent. Female elites are more likely than male elites to be widowed, divorced, or never to have been married in the first place. Their employment status affects the likelihood that they will run for office as does their gender ideology, their definition and conception of women’s roles in the family.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Thomas and Braunstein, “Legislative Careers: The Personal and the Political.” See also Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*, 108.

¹⁸⁰ Sapiro, Private Costs of Public Commitments or Public Costs of Private Commitments?” Susan J. Carroll and Wendy S. Strimling, *Women’s Routes to Political Office: a Comparison with Men’s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics, 1983).

¹⁸¹ Carroll, “The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials”; and Carroll, “The Personal is Political.”

¹⁸² Virginia Sapiro, Private Costs of Public Commitments or Public Costs of Private Commitments?” 270.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 266.

Sapiro concluded that, as they increased their role in the political process both men and women experienced conflict between their public roles and private commitment. However, women felt the conflicts more deeply than men did and were less likely than men to see their sense of conflict diminish as their children aged.

In recent years, several researchers have concluded that family responsibilities and children are less of a factor for women than they were in the past. Maisel and Stone (1997), for instance, found that personal factors such as family income, marital status and gender had no significant effect on a potential candidate's decision to run for Congress.¹⁸⁴ In addition, Dolan and Ford (1997) found that female state legislators elected in the 1990s were younger and more likely to be married than the female state legislators elected in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁸⁵ Fox, Lawless and Feeley (2001) concluded that the presence of children in the home did not significantly affect whether women in the eligible pool of potential candidates in New York State ran for Congress.¹⁸⁶ In contrast to these findings, however, other studies indicate that marriage, children and family responsibilities remain a more significant hurdle for women than for men – even among those already serving in political office. For example, Sue Thomas and Matt Braunstein's (2000) survey of state legislators in 15 states found that male state legislators continue to seek and gain political office at a younger age than their female counterparts. Further, women in office were less likely to have kids, had fewer kids and were more likely to be single or divorced than their male colleagues. Female officeholders were also more likely to be the primary person in charge of child care and housework, despite their political responsibilities.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Maisel and Stone, "Determinants of Candidate Emergence in U.S. House Elections."

¹⁸⁵ Dolan and Ford, "Change and Continuity among Women State Legislators," 137-151.

¹⁸⁶ Fox, Lawless, and Feeley, "Gender and the Decision to Run for Office."

¹⁸⁷ Thomas and Braunstein, "Legislative Careers: The Personal and the Political."

As Barbara Burrell (1992) noted, gender expectations related to family responsibilities could lead men and women in very similar circumstances to very different conclusions about whether to pursue a seat in Congress:

...we should consider whether, if more women were positioned to run for seats in the House, more women would be candidates. A move to a seat in Congress is qualitatively different from service in the state capitol or the mayor's office. Wifehood and motherhood, the personal realms of their lives, are significant elements of the decision-making equation with which women must deal and which men do not face in the same way.¹⁸⁸

Political Ambition

As Chapter 1 details, studies of political elites, officeholders and potential candidates have generally concluded that, compared with their male counterparts, women have lower levels of political ambition and are less likely to express an interest in running for office. The critical factor here, however, is not the differences in political ambition themselves, but the differences in the way that men and women develop and respond to political ambitions.

In their study of city council members, Bledsoe and Herring (1990) found that female council members who perceived themselves as vulnerable in their current positions were less likely than similarly vulnerable male colleagues to express ambition for higher office.¹⁸⁹ Bledsoe and Herring concluded that men were more self-directed and driven in their political ambitions, while women were more likely to put office-seeking ambitions aside in favor of meeting family or community responsibilities.

As Schlesinger (1966) suggested, the very act of holding office is likely to affect an individual's political ambitions.¹⁹⁰ Along these lines, Susan Carroll (1985) and others have found that female officeholders develop greater ambitions for higher office as their political

¹⁸⁸ Burrell, "Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries," 505.

¹⁸⁹ Bledsoe and Herring, "Victims of Circumstances."

¹⁹⁰ Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*.

careers continue.¹⁹¹ Likewise, Barbara J. Burt-Way and Rita Mae Kelly's (1992) study of Arizona officeholders found that the political ambitions of female officeholders increased over the course of their time in office. Male officeholders, in contrast, were more likely than their female colleagues to seek higher office early in their careers and to have their political ambitions diminish over time.¹⁹²

State and District Context

State legislators' political opportunities depend, in part, on the context of the opportunity structure in which they are pursued. Aspects of the political opportunity structure in one state can facilitate the election of women to state legislatures and their advancement to Congress, while a different structure and political environment in another state can have the opposite effect.

States differ in the number of political opportunities available at the state and congressional levels, the size of their state legislative districts, the professionalism of their legislatures, the strength of their parties, and the role that party leaders play in selecting candidates. Consider, for example, Wilma Rule's (1981) finding that women achieve their greatest levels of electoral success in states that have little opportunity for future advancement:

Where women are elected in large proportions to state legislatures, they are not then advantaged in recruitment to Congress. Where women have difficulty in getting recruited to state legislatures, such as in the Democratic party dominated states, potential women candidates with legislative experience are few, which, in turn, adversely affects the proportions of congresswomen. We find, then, a "Catch 22" of women's congressional recruitment: success at the state legislative level results in few women recruited at the congressional level, and defeat at the legislative level also leads to few women recruited to the U.S. Congress.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Carroll, "Sex Differences in Political Ambition," 1231-1243; Burt-Way and Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition." This is consistent with the arguments put forward first by Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics* (1966) and later, Black, "A Theory of Political Ambition" (1972).

¹⁹² Burt-Way and Kelly, "Gender and Sustaining Political Ambition," 22-23.

¹⁹³ See Rule, "Why Women Don't Run," 71-72.

Thus, it is important to consider not only *whether* women are elected to state legislatures, but *where* they are elected, as well. Researchers have identified a number of state and district-based factors which are associated with varied levels of political opportunity for women in the electoral arena, including: legislative professionalism, political culture, district size, and the strength of the state legislators' political party in the legislature.

Legislative Professionalism

In the pursuit for higher office, one of the main advantages that state legislators have is their access to the resources and perquisites of their offices and the experience that comes with legislative service; resources, perquisites, and experience are not evenly distributed, however. Some state legislatures are highly professionalized, full-time institutions that provide members with a high salary and benefits, significant staff resources and political and governmental experiences similar (though not equal) to those found in the U.S. House of Representatives. At the same time, other state legislatures are part-time institutions that provide members with low salaries, few perquisites, and little experience building the political and fundraising networks needed to run a modern congressional campaign.

In his often-cited study of factors related to membership stability in state legislatures, Peverill Squire (1988) found that some state legislatures provide greater advancement opportunities than others. Squire described the state legislatures that were most likely to provide their members with opportunities to advance to higher state or congressional offices as "springboards." In contrast, other state legislatures were described as either "career legislatures" or "dead ends."¹⁹⁴ Whether a particular legislature serves as a springboard or a dead end partly depends on the range of experiences and institutional resources that are

¹⁹⁴ Peverill Squire, "Career Opportunities and Membership Stability in State Legislatures," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 13, No. 1 (February 1988): 65-82.

available to its members. In this respect, there is considerable variation between the states.¹⁹⁵ As Michael B. Berkman, pointed out:

State legislatures are good training grounds; they are structured much like the House, employ similar processes, demand similar skills, and confront many of the same issues. But there is also diversity among state legislatures. The differences between the experiences of a state legislator in New Hampshire and one in New York, for example, may well outweigh the similarities.¹⁹⁶

Moreover, the variation in professionalism across states has persisted – if not increased – over time. James King (2000) noted that although the average level of professionalism in the states has grown, the disparities between more professional and less professional states have also increased. Using a modified version of Squire’s index to assess professionalism over three decades, King concluded the overall trend toward greater professionalism obscures the fact that some states made significant gains in professionalism, while others remained stagnant. He concluded that “A higher degree of professionalism is a general, not a universal trait of American state legislatures.”¹⁹⁷

Early studies on the impact of professionalism on women’s representation, which often relied on legislative salary as a proxy for professionalism, generally found that state legislative professionalism had a negative impact on the percentage of women serving in state legislatures.¹⁹⁸ Irene Diamond (1977) argued that women’s electoral success was largely limited to non-prestigious, non-competitive legislatures where salaries were low.¹⁹⁹ Diamond concluded that the more competitive the political environment, the less likely it was for a

¹⁹⁵ See Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*; Squire and Wright, “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates,” 90; Berkman, “Former State Legislators,” 77.

¹⁹⁶ Berkman, “Former State Legislators,” 77.

¹⁹⁷ James D. King, “Changes in Professionalism in State Legislatures,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXV, No. 2 (May 2000): 338. See also Peverill Squire, “Another Look at Legislative Professionalism and Divided Government in the States,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXII, No. 3 (August 1997): 417-432. Squire argues that, while state legislatures are more professional than they used to be, very few states can be considered truly professional, at least relative to Congress.

¹⁹⁸ See Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*; and Carroll, “Sex Differences in Political Ambition,” 1231-1243.

¹⁹⁹ Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*.

woman to be elected. Other scholars, including Susan Welch (1978) and Wilma Rule (1981), reached similar conclusions, finding that women were less likely to be candidates in states with higher legislative salaries, and states with more costly and competitive elections.²⁰⁰

The development of Squire's (1992) index and other more sophisticated measurements of professionalism enabled scholars to consider the impact of a broad range of factors relevant to professionalism (beyond legislative salary) on women's representation.²⁰¹ Using Congress as the yardstick against which to measure state legislatures, Squire created an index based on legislative salary and two additional factors: staff resources and time spent in session. Like the majority of previous studies, Squire's research found a strong negative relationship between professionalism and the percentage of women in state legislatures. Squire speculated that highly professional legislatures were more attractive to politically ambitious individuals; as a result, highly professional legislatures were also more competitive:

Given that the political value of legislative seats is likely to increase with level of professionalization – as well as the personal or financial value – competition may increase proportionally. That is, more politically ambitious people will be attracted to service, especially those holding lower political offices. Such competition may work against disadvantaged groups, at least over the short run, until they acquire the political credentials and financial contacts necessary to compete.²⁰²

As a result of these findings, scholars such as Wilma Rule (1981) expressed concern that women were most successful winning elections in the legislatures that were least likely to provide them with an effective base of advancement.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ See: Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office"; and Rule, "Why Women Don't Run."

²⁰¹ For other indices, see King, "Changes in Professionalism in State Legislatures"; and Squire, "Another Look at Legislative Professionalism."

²⁰² Peverill Squire, "Legislative Professionalism and Membership Diversity in State Legislatures," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVII (February 1992): 73. See also Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*.

²⁰³ Rule, "Why Women Don't Run."

Though early studies concluded that state legislative professionalism was negatively associated with female representation in state legislatures, other scholars, subsequent research suggested that the relationship between state legislative professionalism and the election of women to public office has changed over time. Carol Nechemias (1987), for instance, found that by the early 1980s, state legislative professionalism was no longer a statistically relevant factor in the election of women.²⁰⁴ A later study by Norrander and Wilcox (1998) came to a similar conclusion, finding no relationship between professionalism and the number of women serving in state legislatures in 1995.²⁰⁵ More recent research by Kira Sanbonmatsu (2000) concluded that the relationship between professionalism and female representation was non-linear, with women's representation higher in states with moderate levels of professionalism and lower at the two extremes.²⁰⁶

Sanbonmatsu's findings are consistent with the theory that the qualities that make a state legislative office an effective base from which to advance (higher salaries, larger staffs, greater prestige) are also likely to discourage legislators from seeking higher office. As Linda Fowler and Robert McClure noted in their study of political ambition in a single Western New York congressional district, more highly professionalized state legislatures can create disincentives for advancement by offering members high salaries, benefits and job security.²⁰⁷ Berkman and Eisenstein (1999) argued that legislators from highly professionalized states "employ more strategic decision-making" and are more selective in their decisions to run for office than legislators from non-professional states as well as non-

²⁰⁴ Nechemias, "Changes in the Election of Women to US State Legislative Seats," 131.

²⁰⁵ In their analysis, Norrander and Wilcox relied on the same factors utilized Squire (salary, staff, length of session). Norrander and Wilcox, "The Geography of Gender Power."

²⁰⁶ See Karl T. Kurtz, "Understanding the Diversity of American State Legislatures," APSA Legislative Studies Newsletter, Extension of Remarks, (June 16, 1992): 2-5.

²⁰⁷ Fowler and McClure, *Political Ambition*.

officeholders.²⁰⁸ In support of this argument, they found that the more professional the legislature, the less likely its members will run for Congress. Berkman and Eisenstein also find that legislators from more professional legislatures serve longer terms, on average, than legislators from less professional legislatures and experienced legislators are more likely to run in open seat races and less likely to run against an entrenched incumbent who won by a significant margin in the previous election.²⁰⁹

Likewise, in their survey of state legislators in 200 congressional districts, Maestas, Maisel and Stone (2000) found that while legislators from professional districts are more likely to express an interest in and seek higher offices, they are also more risk-averse.²¹⁰ As they explain it:

...the professional legislator's current seat provides him or her with a comfortable political life where many politically and personal goals are already met. The cost of losing such a valuable post may cause a legislator to think twice before risking the seat on unfavorable odds... On one hand, state legislators in professional legislatures are advantaged in the electoral arena because of their prior experience winning election to a desirable legislative seat. On the other hand, potential candidates in legislatures with ample resources and opportunities may be loathe to gamble their seat on an uncertain House election.²¹¹

Maestas, Maisel and Stone conclude that state legislators from more professional legislatures would run for higher office only when the likelihood of success is high. Because they are hesitant to put their current position at risk, they are likely to focus on open seat opportunities and avoid running against experienced and well-financed incumbents.

²⁰⁸ Berkman and Eisenstein, "State Legislators as Congressional Candidates."

²⁰⁹ A similar strategic thinking has been observed among House members, whose high rates of success in Senate races are found to be related to their selectivity in deciding whether to run or not. House members focus on open seat races and challenger races when the likelihood of success is high, helping to explain their high rates of success. See Wayne L. Francis, "House to Senate Career Movement in the U.S. States: The Significance of Selectivity," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XVIII (August 1993): 309-320.

²¹⁰ Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "When to Risk it?"

²¹¹ Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "When to Risk it?" 5.

Political Culture

A number of studies have also examined the impact of political culture on women's representation. These studies were based primarily on Daniel Elazar's identification of three distinct political cultures in the United States – individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic.²¹² Scholarship in this area has found that states with moralistic political cultures were more likely than others to have greater levels of female representation.²¹³ Conversely, women were less likely to be nominated and elected in states with more traditionalistic political cultures.²¹⁴ Individualistic political cultures do not appear to either hinder or facilitate women's representation to any remarkable degree.²¹⁵

Carol Nechemias' research on this subject suggests that region plays a key role in the relationship between political culture and women's representation. Nechemias found that a traditionalistic political culture was a hindrance to the nomination of women, but this relationship was driven by the dominance of the traditionalistic political culture in the southern states. This conclusion reflects the findings of Wilma Rule (1981), who found that southern states had a "non-egalitarian heritage" and were negatively associated with the election of women to legislatures and Barbara Burrell (1992), who found that women were less likely to run for open seat primaries in southern congressional districts.²¹⁶

²¹² Daniel Elazar, *American Federalism*, Second Edition (New York: Irwell, 1972).

²¹³ Kirkpatrick, *Political Women*; Diamond, *Sex Roles in the State House*; Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators"; Norrander and Wilcox, "The Geography of Gender Power"; Kevin Arceneaux, "The Gender Gap in State Legislative Representation: New Data to Tackle an Old Question," *Political Research Quarterly* 34, No. 1 (March 2001): 143-160.

²¹⁴ Welch and Studlar, "The Opportunity Structure for Women's Candidacies"; Norrander and Wilcox, "The Geography of Gender Power."

²¹⁵ See, for example, Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators."

²¹⁶ Nechemias, "Changes in the Election of Women to US State Legislative Seats"; Rule, "Why Women Don't Run"; Burrell, "Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries."

District Size

The population size of legislative districts varies considerably across legislatures and legislative houses. Given the wide variation of state populations and the fact that the size of legislative houses ranges from a low of 20 to a high of 400, the population size of legislative districts varies considerably from state to state.²¹⁷ In many states, the number of seats in the legislature's upper and lower house also varies, with upper house districts typically encompassing larger populations of voters than lower house districts.

Notwithstanding other factors, state legislators who represent larger population districts are better positioned to run for Congress than those who represent smaller population districts. State legislators from larger districts are likely to have broader name recognition, a bigger base of political supporters, and a larger base of donors. Large districts are also likely to provide state legislators with electoral experiences that more closely resemble a congressional campaign.

David W. Rohde (1979) argued that "the greater the degree of overlap between a potential candidate's present constituency and his prospective constituency, the more likely he is to seek higher office."²¹⁸ Both Rohde and, later, Paul Brace (1984) found that House members who shared a greater degree of the electorate with state-wide offices were more likely to run for those offices. Though Rohde and Brace focused on the advancement of House members to the U.S. Senate, the same principle applies to state legislators seeking to advance to Congress.²¹⁹ Likewise, in their study of congressional campaigns in 1980, 1982,

²¹⁷ *The Book of the States*, Vol. 36 (Lexington, KY: Council of State Governments, 2004).

²¹⁸ David W. Rohde, "Risk-Bearing and Progressive Ambition: The Case of Members of the United States Representatives," *American Journal of Political Science* 23, No. 1 (February 1979): 10.

²¹⁹ Brace (1984) breaks the variables into three distinct categories: (1) Variables that shape the nature of the opportunity for higher office, (2) Variables that condition the value of the member's House seat and (3) variables that relate to the personal attributes of members Paul Brace, "Progressive Ambition in the House: A Probabilistic Approach," *Journal of Politics* 46, No. 2 (May 1984): 563.

and 1984, Squire and Wright (1990) found that candidates who represent large state legislative districts were able to raise more money than candidates who represented smaller districts and those who did not serve in state legislatures.²²⁰ Candidates from large districts were able to tap into a relatively larger pool of pre-existing financial support because their districts “encompass more organized interests and more individual contributors.”²²¹ Consequently, they concluded that the advantages of state legislative service were not distributed equally across the state legislatures, but varied depending on the nature of the political base provided by the seat:

Being one of 400 members in the New Hampshire House of Representatives and representing 3,000 constituents, for example, is very different from being one of 40 members in the California State Senate and representing 600,000 people. Candidates having fought and survived in a large, competitive field are probably stronger candidates- better public speakers, more efficient managers, and more determined campaigners – than candidates who represent small districts. On this basis alone, candidates who represent large districts may make stronger congressional candidates. But even aside from the personal qualities of the candidates, differences in the sizes of the legislative districts produce very different electoral incentives and experiences. Large districts probably simulate congressional electoral experience better than small ones. Consequently, we think legislative experience per se obscures some subtle but important differences in the abilities of state legislators to wage successful campaigns and, in particular, their abilities to raise money.²²²

A later study of House races from 1988-1994 by Berkman and Eisenstein (1999) came to the same conclusion, finding that state legislators from larger districts raise more money for their congressional races than state legislators from smaller districts and non-state legislators.²²³

Several studies suggest that women are less likely than men to be elected to high population districts. Wilma Rule (1981), for example, found that women were less likely to be elected to legislative seats in states with large populations and small legislatures.²²⁴ She

²²⁰ Squire and Wright, “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates.”

²²¹ Squire and Wright, “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates,” 91.

²²² Squire and Wright, “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates,” 90.

²²³ Berkman and Eisenstein, “State Legislators as Congressional Candidates.”

²²⁴ Rule, “Why Women Don’t Run.” See also, Brace, “Progressive Ambition in the House,” and Carol Nechemias, “Geographic Mobility and Women’s Access to State Legislatures,” *Western Political Quarterly* 38 (March 1985): 119-31.

concluded that female candidates were discouraged by the increased level of competition and greater costs associated with campaigns in larger population districts.²²⁵

Relative Party Strength

The opportunity structure is also shaped by political parties which, in organization, government and the electorate, alter the incentives and risks of running for office faced by would-be office seekers. As strategic decision makers, state legislators must take into account local partisan forces and their impact on the likelihood that they can successfully win a congressional seat. Bond, Fleischer and Talbert (1997) concluded that a district's partisan makeup was the strongest factor in predicting whether an experienced candidate would seek an open congressional seat. National party forces are also important; state legislators are more likely to run for Congress in situations where their party leaders are viewed favorably and their party's candidates are running strong nationwide. Likewise, state legislators are less likely to run in situations where their national parties are doing poorly.²²⁶ The proportion of state legislators who win election to Congress may actually decline in landslide elections, however, because of the political amateurs who are swept into office along with the more experienced candidates from their party.²²⁷

In making a decision about whether or not to seek congressional office, state legislators are likely to take into account the partisan makeup of Congress, as well as the state legislature in which they currently serve. All things equal, members in the majority party of a state legislature have more to lose than those in the minority, because they have more policy leverage and perquisites than those in the minority. Legislators also have to weigh the

²²⁵ Rule, "Why Women Don't Run," 63.

²²⁶ Berkman and Eisenstein, "State Legislators as Congressional Candidates"; Jon R. Bond, Richard Fleisher and Jeffrey C. Talbert, "Partisan Differences in Candidate Quality in Open Seat House Races, 1976-1994," *Political Research Quarterly* 50, No. 2 (June 1997): 281-299.

²²⁷ Michael B. Berkman, "State Legislators in Congress."

benefits (or lack of) that follow from their party's majority or minority status in Congress.

Not surprisingly, studies have found that legislators in the minority party of a state's legislature are more likely than those in the majority party to retire or seek higher office.²²⁸

This is an issue of concern for this study because there is evidence that female officeholders have enjoyed differing levels of success in the two major political parties. Until the early 1980s, research on women's representation found that female legislators were more likely to be Republicans and more likely to come from Republican dominated states.²²⁹ Democratic party dominance in a state was negatively associated with the percentage of women in the legislature.²³⁰ This pattern began to fade in the 1980s, when the negative relationship between the Democratic party and female representation was no longer evident outside of the (then largely Democrat) southern states.²³¹ As women candidates became more common in the 1980s and 1990s, the Democrats became more successful in the recruitment, nomination and election of women. As a result, the Democratic party was more likely than the Republican party to nominate women for open seats or competitive challenger races.²³²

²²⁸ On retirement, see Stephen Ansolabehere and Alan Gerber, "Incumbency Advantage and the Persistence of Legislative Majorities," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXII, No. 2 (May 1997): 161-178; on running for higher office, see Brace, "Progressive Ambition in the House: A Probabilistic Approach."

²²⁹ Werner, "Women in the State Legislatures."

²³⁰ Rule, "Why Women Don't Run"; Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators."

²³¹ Nechemias, "Changes in the Election of Women to US State Legislative Seats."

²³² Burrell, "Women Candidates in Open-Seat Primaries"; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable*; Rosalyn Cooperman and Bruce I. Oppenheimer, "The Gender Gap in the U.S. House of Representatives," in *Congress Reconsidered*, Seventh Edition, edited by Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2001) 125-140. Note that research by Sanbonmatsu (2000) found that Democrat dominance continues to be a negative factor relative to female representation. Sanbonmatsu argues, however, that the relationship between political parties is more complex than previously acknowledged; requiring scholars to carefully consider the political environment and political competition affect the relationship between parties and women's descriptive representation. See Kira Sanbonmatsu, "Party Differences in the Recruitment of Women State Legislators," paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL (2000).

In the race for highly desirable congressional offices, state legislators have many advantages - but they are by no means *equally* advantaged. As this chapter has detailed, previous scholarship suggests that we need to take into account the role that gender plays in shaping the opportunities for congressional advancement available to male and female state legislators.

Susan Carroll predicted that female state legislators would move up the legislative career ladder “in the absence of other impediments.”²³³ It is exactly these “other impediments” that this study is concerned about. By articulating the contexts in which male and female state legislators run for Congress (as well as those in which they do not), we can better understand the legislative career ladder and its impact on female representation in Congress and state legislatures.²³⁴

In Chapter 4, I will offer a series of hypotheses relating to gender and its effect on the likelihood that men and women in state legislatures will seek and win congressional offices. I will then describe the five-state database which will be used to assess how gender directly and indirectly shapes state legislators’ opportunities for congressional advancement.

²³³ Carroll, “Sex Differences in Political Ambition,” 1242.

²³⁴ Sanbonmatsu argues that, in order “to understand why more [women] do not run, and why women run where they do, we must understand the contexts in which women run. Indeed, understanding the factors that lead women to run for office and why more women do not run is a neglected area of research.” See Kira Sanbonmatsu, “Party Differences in the Recruitment of Women State Legislators,” 3. Also, see Carroll, “The Political Careers of Women Elected Officials.”

Table 3.2
Percent Women in State Legislatures and Congress, 1971-2006.

Years	State Legislatures	Congress	Senate	House
1971-1972	4.5	2.8	2.0	3.0
1973-1974	5.6	3.0	0.0	3.7
1975-1976	8.0	3.6	0.0	4.4
1977-1978	9.1	3.7	2.0	4.1
1979-1980	10.3	3.2	1.0	3.7
1981-1982	12.1	4.3	2.0	4.8
1983-1984	13.3	4.5	2.0	5.1
1985-1986	14.8	4.7	2.0	5.3
1987-1988	15.7	4.7	2.0	5.3
1989-1990	17.0	5.8	2.0	6.7
1991-1992	18.3	6.0	4.0	6.4
1993-1994	20.5	10.1	7.0	10.8
1995-1996	20.6	10.7	9.0	11.0
1997-1998	21.6	11.8	9.0	12.4
1999-2000	22.4	12.1	9.0	12.9
2001-2002	22.4	13.5	13.0	13.6
2003-2004	22.3	13.8	14.0	13.8
2005-2006	22.8	15.1	14.0	15.4

Source: Fact Sheets, "Women in State Legislatures, 1917-2003," "Women in State Legislatures, 2006," "Women in Congress, 1917-2003," and "Women in Congress, 2006," The Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers University (CAWP), New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Table 3.3
Percent Members of Congress with State Legislative Experience,
79th Congress (1945-46) to 104th Congress (1995-96)

Congress Number	House	Senate	Entire Congress	Congress Number	House	Senate	Entire Congress
79	29.7	21.4	28.0	92	38.5	29.8	36.9
80	28.6	18.4	26.7	93	39.6	29.1	37.6
81	30.6	19.3	28.3	94	37.2	25.7	35.1
82	30.9	18.1	28.5	95	38.8	26.0	36.3
83	32.8	20.4	30.3	96	41.2	24.8	38.1
84	32.3	17.8	29.6	97	41.9	23.0	38.4
85	34.1	16.7	30.8	98	44.7	23.8	40.8
86	34.2	17.1	31.0	99	45.0	23.5	41.0
87	34.2	19.3	31.3	100	47.2	23.8	42.8
88	35.7	22.9	33.2	101	48.5	18.6	43.0
89	32.9	23.8	31.1	102	48.7	19.8	43.1
90	37.5	26.2	35.4	103	49.1	23.8	44.2
91	37.5	28.2	35.8	104	47.0	25.0	35.4

Source: Carrol McKibbin, *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803).

Table 3.4
First-Time House Members with State Leg. Experience, 1945-2005

Term Beginning	Freshman members	Pct. with State Leg. Experience	Term Beginning	Freshman members	Pct. with State Leg. Experience
1945	80	35.0	1971	58	41.4
1947	107	23.4	1973	76	44.7
1949	104	31.7	1975	92	20.7
1951	66	30.3	1977	72	48.6
1953	88	33.0	1979	82	47.6
1955	53	34.0	1981	81	42.0
1957	49	30.6	1983	78	49.4
1959	90	35.6	1985	46	43.5
1961	67	29.9	1987	53	50.9
1963	76	38.2	1989	42	42.9
1965	92	23.9	1991	50	52.0
1967	65	43.1	1993	118	48.3
1969	50	36.0	1995	89	38.2

Source: Carrol McKibbin, *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803).

4

Methodology, Hypotheses and Measures

In the previous chapter, I detailed a number of factors that are potentially relevant to the likelihood that men and women in state legislatures will seek and win congressional seats. In this chapter, I will first articulate the main research question and offer a series of hypotheses that will be used to assess the impact of gender on congressional advancement opportunities in a sample of five state legislatures.²³⁵ Second, I will describe the sample population and data collection procedures used in this study, the method of sample selection, and the representativeness of the sample relative to the actual population of state legislators. Finally, I will define the key variables which will be used to analyze the effect of the “pipeline” on the advancement of male and female state legislators to Congress.

Research Question

The main research question is to assess whether male and female state legislators are equally likely to advance to Congress. In this regard, my analysis focuses on the impact that individual, cultural, structural differences have on the likelihood that men and women seek congressional office. Specifically:

1. Do age and occupational differences among male and female state legislators affect the likelihood that members of each group will seek and win congressional office?
2. Does gender affect the relationship between congressional office seeking and factors such as family circumstances and length of time in office?
3. Do differences in state and district context result in differing congressional advancement opportunities for male and female state legislators?

²³⁵ I have organized this chapter along similar lines as those taken by Elizabeth G. Williams, who detailed her study’s methodology, hypotheses, and measures in Williams, *The Impacts of Increased Female Representation*.

Hypotheses

There are seven main hypotheses for this research, the first two of which relate to individual-level differences between men and women that have the potential to affect the likelihood that members of each group will seek and win congressional office. The third and fourth hypotheses relate to factors which affect congressional advancement differently for men and women; in these cases, gender is likely to work as an intervening or contextual variable. Finally, hypotheses six and seven relate to differences in the types of districts, states, and legislatures represented by male and female state legislators and the impact these differences have on the likelihood that members of each group will seek and win congressional office (for overview of main hypotheses, see Figure 4.1).

The first hypothesis is that women are less likely than men to come from backgrounds and professions that provide money, resources, and contacts that can be leveraged in congressional campaigns. The second hypothesis is that women are more likely than men to delay seeking elective office until their children are older; as a result, women will first enter public office at an older age and have a smaller window of opportunity in which to seek congressional office.

The third hypothesis is that female officeholders will initially express lower levels of political ambition than their male counterparts, but more likely to see their ambitions develop over the course of their time in office. These gendered timetables will make female state legislators less likely to seek congressional office early in their state legislative careers. The fourth hypothesis is that female state legislators with children will be less likely than male state legislators with children to seek and win congressional office. Similarly, female state legislators of child-bearing age who are married will also be less likely than similarly-situated male colleagues to seek and win congressional office.

Figure 4.1
Main Hypotheses

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| H ₁ | Opportunity Pool Hypothesis – Female state legislators will be less likely than male state legislators to have occupational backgrounds associated with congressional advancement. |
| H ₂ | Delayed Ambition Hypothesis – In comparison to male state legislators, female state legislators will be older when first elected to the state legislature and will be more likely to fall outside of the manifest age group for running for Congress (35-50). |
| H ₃ | Developed Ambition Hypothesis – Female state legislators who seek congressional office will have served more years in the state legislature, on average, than the male state legislators who seek congressional office. |
| H ₄ | Family Role Hypothesis – Marital status and number of children will be negatively associated with the likelihood that female state legislators will seek and win congressional office (but have no significant effect on male state legislators). |
| H ₅ | District Size Hypothesis – Female state legislators will be hampered in their ability to move up the legislative career ladder because they represent smaller legislative districts, on average, than male state legislators. |
| H ₆ | Professional Legislature Hypothesis – Female state legislators will be less likely than male state legislators to serve in the highly professionalized legislatures that are most likely to provide them with the resources needed to run a successful campaign for Congress. |
| H ₇ | Party Strength Hypothesis – Female state legislators will be more likely than male state legislators to be Democrats and to serve in Democrat dominated legislatures. As a result, women state legislators will be more likely seek congressional office when Democrats are a majority in the House (in this case, 1993-94) and less likely to seek congressional office when they are in the minority (1995-2002). |

The fifth hypothesis is that female legislators will be less likely than male state legislators to represent larger population districts, which have previously been associated with congressional advancement. The sixth hypothesis is that female state legislators will be less likely than male state legislatures to serve in the highly professionalized state legislatures that are believed to provide the best possible opportunities for congressional advancement. Finally, the seventh hypothesis is that female state legislators will be more likely than male

state legislators to be Democrats; as a result, female state legislators will be more likely than men to seek congressional office when Democrats are the congressional majority (1993-1994) and less likely to seek office when they are the minority (1995-2002).

The Five-State Database

In order to assess how gender shapes state legislators' opportunities for congressional advancement, I have created a dataset of state legislative districts in five states over a ten year period (1993-2002). By examining the political career ladder from the "bottom-up," this study will be able to take into account the individual careers of particular officeholders within the context of the state based political opportunity structures in which they pursue higher office. This approach will enable me to consider the political careers of male and female state legislators who did not move up the career ladder, as well as those who did. As Kira Sanbonmatsu notes, "we miss half the story of women's representation if we only study women who run for office and ignore the women who do not run."²³⁶

In some respects, this study adopts the approach taken in candidate emergence studies which examine the process by which individuals make decisions about seeking public office. In particular, I have benefited from Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone's recent analysis (2005) of office seeking among a broad national sample of state legislators.²³⁷ This study – which examines the political careers of state legislators in five states – is more limited in scope, but has the advantage of looking at patterns of congressional advancement across multiple election cycles rather than just one. By studying decisions to run and not run for higher office over multiple election periods, we can learn more about the strategic decision

²³⁶ Kira Sanbonmatsu, "Party Differences in the Recruitment of Women State Legislators," 3.

²³⁷ Fulton, Maestas, Maisel, and Stone, "The Sense of a Woman."

making process employed by state legislators and take into account the changes in individual circumstances and the political environment that occur across different election cycles.

The dataset covers five states (Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin), with a separate entry for each state legislator serving in the lower and upper houses of the legislature during the five two-year state legislative sessions between January 1993 and December 2002. Legislators elected during the regularly scheduled general elections of 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000 are included in the database along with those legislators who were elected in special elections or appointed to a state legislative office during the time period studied.

Individual/Biographical data was obtained from a number of sources, including: the *Connecticut State Register and Manual* (1992-1993 through 2001-2002); *The New York Red Book* (1991-1992 through 2001-2002); Texas State Directory (1993 through 2002); *Washington State Yearbook: A Guide to Government in the Evergreen State* (1992 through 2002), *State of Wisconsin Blue Book* (1993-1994 through 2001-2002). This data was supplemented by a review of each state legislator's biography as it appeared in *Who's Who in American Politics* (various editions, 1992 through 2002) and, in the case of legislators still serving in 2002, a review of the official biographies appearing on the web sites of the respective state legislatures. In order to address the problem of missing or conflicting data, additional information was obtained from phone calls to legislative offices of state legislators still active in 2003.

State legislative election data was obtained either from the state yearbooks referenced above or from official returns published by the respective state Secretaries of State or Boards of Elections. Congressional election data was obtained from *America Votes: a Handbook of Contemporary American Election Statistics* (1992 through 2003), and was further supplemented by additional information from state yearbooks and official returns from the respective

Secretaries of State or Boards of Election. Structural and cultural data was obtained from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Diefenderfer, 1994); *State Legislative Elections: Voting Patterns and Demographics* (Barone, Lilley, and DeFranco, 1998); *The Almanac of State Legislatures: Changing Patterns, 1990-1997* (Lilley, DeFranco and Bernstein, 1998); *The Book of the States*, (1992/1993-2002); and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The data is organized by legislative sessions, with a separate record for each district in each two-year session. For example, New York's 1st Assembly District will have a minimum of five separate records associated with it, one each for the 1993-94 session, 1995-96 session, 1997-98 session, 1999-00 session, and 2001-02 session.²³⁸ When more than one individual represents a district during the course of a single session, multiple records are created. A separate variable, *order of service*, identifies the order of service in that district during that particular session. In the case of Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, the upper houses of the legislature serve four year terms that overlap two successive legislative sessions.²³⁹ These districts have two distinct entries -- one for each of the two-year electoral cycles of the United States Congress during their specific term of office.

There are a total of 1,371 individual legislators and 4,447 records in the database. This includes five cases for each of 858 individual legislative districts (one for each of the two year legislative cycles between 1993 and 2002) and an additional 157 records for cases where a district was represented by more than one legislator in a single two year legislative cycle. With the notable exception of the lower house of the Washington State Legislature, all of the districts in this database are single-member districts. The Washington State

²³⁸ Users of the database may find it most easily readable after sorting the database by V#01 through V#06 (in that order).

²³⁹ Elections were held for all Texas State Senate seats in November 1992, with one half of the state senate running in elections for four year terms in November 1994 and 1998 and the other half of the state senate running elections for four year terms in November 1996 and 2000.

Assembly has two members in each legislative district that are elected in separate head-to-head elections.

Time Period of Study

This study examines congressional advancement of state legislators during the 1990s redistricting period (1993-2001). This is a good starting point because by the 1990s there were a significant number of women serving in state legislatures who, by virtue of their experience in office, were well positioned to run for a congressional seat.

Until and through most of the 1970s, the election of women to state legislatures was a relatively rare occurrence. Until the end of the decade, women held fewer than 10% of all state legislative seats. Through the 1980s, the proportion of women elected to state legislatures grew steadily, rising from 10.3% in 1979 to 17.0% in 1989.²⁴⁰ The pipeline theory argues that women must build experience and accumulate political resources at the state legislative level before running for Congress. By the 1990s, therefore, the female state legislators who were first elected in the 1970s and 1980s should be well positioned to seek congressional office.

In addition, the 1992 “Year of the Woman” elections marked a turning point in the history of women’s representation. The unparalleled level of success that female candidates enjoyed in the 1992 congressional elections provided lower level female officeholders and other female potential candidates with new, highly-visible female role models in Congress. At the same time, the success of women in the 1992 congressional elections reflected (and strengthened) the emergence of a strong network of support for female candidates; these

²⁴⁰ According to figures from the Center for the American Woman in Politics, the percentage of female state legislators remained under 10% until 1979, when 10.2% of all state legislators were female. CAWP Fact Sheet, “Women in State Legislatures 1975-2003.”

networks provided women with critically important financial and political support for their campaigns.²⁴¹

How the States Were Selected

The database includes states with large delegations in the House of Representatives like New York (31 members) and Texas (30 members), and medium-sized delegations like Washington (9 members) and Wisconsin (9 members). Connecticut, a relatively small state with 6 House members, is also included. The states selected for this database also vary in professionalism, with highly professional states (New York and Wisconsin) and moderately professional states (Texas, Washington and Connecticut). States with low levels of professionalism, which the NCSL describes as “citizen legislatures,” are excluded from this analysis (for overview of states, see Table 4.1).

A disproportionate number of citizen legislatures are in states which are small in population size. Excluding citizen legislatures makes sense because the ratio of House seats to state legislators in these states is very high; as a result, state legislators in these states have few opportunities for congressional advancement (only one citizen legislature – Indiana – had fewer than 20 state legislators per congressional seat). In this study, I focus on states with mid-to-high levels of professionalism (“hybrid” and “professional” legislatures), where the political opportunity structures are more amenable to advancement and state legislators have a reasonable chance of advancement to congressional office. In total, the 16 states with citizen legislatures have a total of 49 members in the House of Representatives – just 11% of the total House membership.

²⁴¹ Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*, 190-194.

Table 4.1
Legislative Professionalism and Opportunities
for Congressional Advancement, 1993-2002

Ratio of State Legislators to House Members	Citizen Legislatures		Hybrid Legislatures		Professional Legislatures
Over 20:1	NH (212.0) VT (180.0) MT (150.0) ND (147.0) SD (105.0) ME (93.0) WY (90.0) RI (75.0)	ID (52.5) WV (44.7) NM (37.5) UT (34.7) AR (33.8) NV (31.5) GA (21.5)	DE (62.0) AK (60.0) KS (41.3) HI (38.0) MS (34.8) CT (31.2) IA (30.0)	SC (28.3) MN (25.1) KY (23.0) OK (24.8) MD (23.5) LA (20.6) MO (21.9)	
Between 10.1:1 and 20:1	IN (15.0)		AL (20.0) OR (18.0) CO (16.7) WA (16.3) NE (16.3)	AZ (15.0) TN (14.7) NC (14.2) VA (12.7)	MA (20.0) WI (14.7) PA (12.0)
0-10:1			FL (7.0) TX (6.0)		MI (9.3) NJ (9.2) IL (8.9) OH (6.9) NY (6.8) CA (2.6)

Source: *The Book of the States*, Vols. 29-34, Lexington, KY: Council of State Governments, 1993 -2002.

Representativeness of the Sample

The five states selected for this database have a total of 85 members in the House of Representatives – 19.5% of the entire body. The five states that were selected are regionally varied, with states from the Northeast (New York and Connecticut), the Midwest (Wisconsin), the Southwest (Texas) and the Northwest (Washington). The states are also varied in terms of partisan control of their legislatures, though they lean more Democratic than Republican. Over the ten year period examined in this study, Democrats controlled 29 chambers in the five states, while Republicans controlled 16. On five occasions, the parties

had joint control of a chamber or control over the chamber alternated due to a party switch or a special election (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Partisan Control in Five State Legislatures, 1993-2001

State (house)	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001
CT (lower)	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem
CT (upper)	Dem	Rep	Dem	Dem	Dem
NY (lower)	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem
NY (upper)	Rep	Rep	Rep	Rep	Rep
TX (lower)	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem	Dem
TX (upper)	Dem	Dem	Rep	Rep	Rep
WA (lower)	Dem	Rep	Rep	Even	Even
WA (upper)	Dem	Dem	Rep	Dem	Dem
WI (lower)	Dem	Rep	Rep	Rep	Rep
WI (upper)	Alternating	Alternating	Alternating	Dem	Dem

Sources: *Connecticut State Register and Manual*; *The New York Red Book*; *Texas State Directory*; *Washington State Yearbook: A Guide to Government in the Evergreen State*; and the *State of Wisconsin Blue Book*.

The state legislatures selected for analysis were also varied in terms of their overall levels of female representation (see Table 4.3). Four of the states were slightly higher or lower than the fifty-state average of 21.5%. Connecticut (28.0%) and Wisconsin (24.4%) were slightly higher than average, and Texas (17.8%) and New York (19.2%) were slightly lower. The fifth state legislature, Washington, was an extreme outlier. It ranked first among the fifty states during this time period, with female representation averaging 40% between 1993 and 2001.²⁴²

In comparison with the overall population of state legislators, the sample population has similar percentages of upper and lower house members, and similar percentages identifying with each of the two major parties (See Table 4.4). The sample population does, however, have a slightly higher percentage of female members than the overall population of

²⁴² Source: CAWP Fact Sheet: "Women in State Legislatures, 1975-2003."

Table 4.3
Female Representation in Five State Legislatures, 1993-2001

State	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	Average
CT	25.1	26.7	28.9	29.4	29.9	28.0
NY	16.6	18.0	18.5	20.9	21.8	19.2
TX	16.0	18.2	18.2	17.7	18.8	17.8
WA	39.5	39.5	39.5	40.8	38.8	39.6
WI	27.3	24.2	23.5	23.5	23.5	24.4
50-state Average	20.5	20.6	21.6	22.4	22.4	21.5

Source: Fact Sheets: "Female Representation in State Legislatures," 1993-2001, The Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

state legislators (25.5% to 21.5%). This bias is small and it is largely due to the inclusion of Washington, a state with unusually high female representation.

Table 4.4
Comparison of Sample and Actual Population of State Legislators

	CT, NY, TX, WI, and WA, 1993-2002	Population (All States), 1993-2002*
Male	74.5%	88.5%
Female	25.5%	21.5%
Republican	44.8%	46.3%
Democrat	55.2%	53.4%
Upper House	24.6%	26.7%
Lower House	75.4%	73.3%

Source: Fact Sheets, "Female Representation in State Legislatures," The Center for the American Woman in Politics (CAWP), Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Party figures are derived from data taken from *The Book of the States*, Vol. 29-34 (Council of State Governments, Lexington, KY), 1993-2002. Note: 0.3% of state legislators are "Other" party affiliation. The Nebraska legislature is non-partisan and is therefore excluded from these figures.

When the state of Washington is excluded, the percentage of female state legislators in the four remaining states in the sample dropped to an average of 22.4 during the period of study, only slightly higher than the 21.5% average for all 50 states. Nonetheless, including the state of Washington strengthens this study because it provides an opportunity to analyze the effect of gender on the pipeline in a state legislature that is approaching gender parity.

Key Variables

There are four major dependent variables in this research. The first indicates whether a state legislator ran for congress at the conclusion of each two-year legislative session.²⁴³ One limitation of this variable is that it does not include state legislators who unsuccessfully sought their party's nomination in a party convention (as opposed to a primary). Unfortunately, information on party convention activities on a congressional district-by-district basis is not readily available. Nonetheless, I believe that the primary and congressional election data provide the best possible measure of congressional office seeking behavior. Given the political resources and experiences that state legislators enjoy – and the high profile of congressional races –it is likely that state legislative candidates for Congress who are unsuccessful at the convention level would take their appeal directly to the voters in a primary election. I assume this in part because in nearly all circumstances, state legislators must choose between running for their state legislative seat and running for Congress. State legislators are likely to take into account the support they expect to receive from party leaders and activists in advance of a congressional race. Furthermore, given their political experience, their personal, financial and institutional resources, and the significant “investment” they make by giving up their legislative seat to run for Congress, a state legislator is likely to continue their pursuit of a congressional seat all the way through to a primary election.

The second dependent variable indicates whether a state legislator won a congressional race at the conclusion of the two-year legislative session.²⁴⁴ In addition, there

²⁴³ This variable (RANCON) is coded as “1” for state legislators who appeared on a congressional primary or general election ballot for the election occurring at the conclusion of the two-year legislative session and “0” for all others.

²⁴⁴ This variable (WONCON) is coded as “1” for state legislators who won a congressional election at the conclusion of the two-year legislative session and “0” for all others.

are also variables that indicate the percentage of the total vote and the percentage of the two-party vote received by a state legislator in a general election for Congress. These dependent variables are useful because they provide a scale measure of electoral success for state legislators who appear on the general election ballot for a congressional seat.

There are seven main independent and intervening variables in this research, including: sex, age, occupation, years in office, marital status, number of children and district population. Biographical information and photographs published in state legislature yearbooks were used to confirm the sex of the state legislators in the database.²⁴⁵ To minimize missing data, state legislature yearbooks were supplemented by data from the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) and *Women State and Territorial Legislators, 1895-1995*.²⁴⁶

Occupational information was obtained through biographical profiles obtained from each state legislature's yearbooks. For each legislator, a primary and secondary occupation was identified and sorted into one of 15 occupational categories, which include: education, law, professional, business, agriculture, politics government and community, administrative,

²⁴⁵ This variable (SEX) was coded as "1" for male state legislators and "2" for female state legislators. In a small number of cases, the sex of a legislator could not be determined; this was usually due to the fact that the member was elected to a single term in a special election and the biographical information was therefore missing or incomplete. The variable (AGE) indicates each legislator's age at the beginning of the legislative cycle, as reported in various state yearbooks and election materials. Using this data and information on legislators' length of time in office, a second age variable was created, indicating the age that a legislator was first elected to the state legislature (AGEFIRST). In addition, two other variables indicate whether a legislator is within the 35-50 age timeline considered by Schlesinger as the "manifest age" in which to run for Congress. Both variables take into account the fact that legislators who are younger than the manifest age still have the potential to hold office during the manifest period. Those younger than the manifest age are coded as "1," those within the manifest age are coded as "2," and those older than the manifest age are coded as "3." The first of these variables (AGECTGY) categorizes legislators according to their age at the beginning of the legislative cycle, while the second (FRSTCAT) categorizes them according to their age when first elected to the state legislature.

²⁴⁶ Elizabeth M. Cox, *Women State and Territorial Legislators, 1895-1995*, McFarland & Company, Jefferson, NC, 1996.

medical, military, transportation, labor/union, human services, sports arts and entertainment, the environment, and miscellaneous .²⁴⁷

A years of service variable indicates the total number of combined years that an individual has served in both houses of the legislature as of the beginning of that legislative session. Though incidental service that occurs prior to the start of a new legislative session is excluded, any part-year service that occurs as a result of an appointment, special election or retirement, is credited as 1 year of service. Legislators who serve in the lower and upper chambers at different points in the same year as a result of a special election are only credited with a single year of state legislative service.

Information on marital status and number of children was obtained through biographical information provided in state legislative yearbooks and internet biographies that were available on official state legislative websites.²⁴⁸ In cases where there is no reference to marital status, legislators are considered unmarried or single for the purposes of this database. Likewise, legislators' profiles that do not mention children are also coded as having "no children."²⁴⁹

There are a number of caveats that must be taken into account when conducting analyses using these variables for marital status and children. First, in four of the states included in this analysis (NY, TX, WI, WA), it was common for state legislators to provide personal information on marital status and number of children in their member profiles and biographies. In the case of Connecticut, however, legislators did not typically include this

²⁴⁷ Primary and secondary occupations are listed in text format in the variable occupation (OCCP). Primary and secondary occupations were then coded into two variables: primary occupation (PRIMEOCC) and *secondary occupation* (SECONOCC). A collapsed version of the primary occupation variable that reflects the main occupational categories (and excludes subcategories) was also added to the database (OCCUCLPS).

²⁴⁸ In the variable (MARRIED) legislators who are listed as unmarried or single are coded as "0," legislators who are listed as married are coded as "1," and legislators who are listed as divorced/widowed are listed as "2."

²⁴⁹ Stepchildren identified in a members' profile are included in the total number of children for that legislator.

information in their candidate profiles. Accordingly, I supplemented data on the marital status and number of children for Connecticut state legislators with phone and e-mail inquiries to those members who were still in the legislature in the summer and fall of 2002.²⁵⁰ A second concern is that it was impossible to know if a legislator failed to report a spouse or a child.²⁵¹ In the case of the four states where this information was regularly provided, we can assume that legislators who did not provide this information did so by choice – either because they were, in fact, unmarried and without children or because they did not wish to make the information public. It might be more accurate, therefore, to say that these variables reflect the marital status and number of children *reported* by each legislator.²⁵² Given this limitation, analyses relating to this personal data will be treated with caution.

District population figures indicate the estimated population for individual state legislative districts in 1997. The population estimates, which are taken from *the Almanac of State Legislatures: Changing Patterns, 1990-1997, 2nd Edition*, are based on U.S. Census data.²⁵³ Though figures that reflect the year-to-year changes in population are not available, the 1997 figures do provide a snapshot of each district's approximate population at a point that is roughly midway through the 1993-2002 period examined in this study.

²⁵⁰ This raises a number of concerns about the validity of this measure as it pertains to the state of Connecticut. The data is more accurate for members who were still in the Connecticut state legislature in the summer or fall of 2002 than those who were not. Furthermore, a number of state legislators who were contacted by phone were unwilling to provide this type of personal information. Given the security-conscious climate during this period of time, that reluctance is understandable.

²⁵¹ The exception, of course, being those cases in which the members' marital status was specifically described with terms such as "single," "unmarried," "divorced," or "widowed." In the case of the variable for number of children, a small number of member profiles specified "no children," but most that failed to list children by number or names were silent on the subject.

²⁵² There is, of course, the potential that women and men differ in the likelihood that they will include detailed personal information in their legislative biography. Based on the data that I have, however, there is no way to determine whether that is the case.

²⁵³ For additional detail on district population estimates, see William Lilley, Laurence J. DeFranco, and William M. Diefenderfer, *The Almanac of State Legislatures, Changing Patterns, 1990-1997*, Second Edition (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1998): viii.

There are also two variables that measure state legislative professionalism. The first is based on the National Conference of State Legislatures' division of state legislatures into three categories of professionalism -- citizen, hybrid and professional (NCSL). The second measure of state legislative professionalism is an updated version of Peverill Squire's professionalism index.²⁵⁴ As noted in Chapter 2, the index assigns state legislatures a score based on their level of professionalism relative to Congress. Squire's updated index is based on state legislative data from 1994 and 1995, which is within the time period of this study.

Finally, there are several variables that measure party status and competition, including variables that indicate whether a legislator is a member of the party that holds a majority of seats in either the state legislature or Congress. A party competition index was also created to measure the closeness of party competition in the chamber in which a state legislator serves. A perfectly competitive chamber (a 50-50 percent split) is scored as a 1.0.²⁵⁵ Figures for party strength were drawn from *the Almanac of American Politics* (in the case of the U.S. House of Representatives) and *The Book of the States* (in the case of state legislatures).²⁵⁶

In Chapter 5, I will describe the patterns of congressional advancement for men and women in the five state legislatures selected for this study. Following this analysis, I will use data from the sample of five state legislatures to assess the evidence with regard to each of the seven main hypotheses put forward in this chapter.

²⁵⁴ Peverill Squire, "Uncontested Seats in State Legislatures," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXV, No. 1 (Feb. 2000): 131-146. For an alternative measure, which is also an updated version of Squire's original data, see King, "Changes in Professionalism in U.S. State Legislatures."

²⁵⁵ The party competition variable (PTYCMP) takes the proportion of seats held by each legislator's party multiplied by two. For example, in a chamber where an individual legislator's party holds 40% of the seats, PTCMP would be .80 (0.40*2), while a chamber where an individual legislator's party holds 48% of seats would have a party competition score of .96 (.48*2).

²⁵⁶ *The Book of the States*, Vols. 29-34 (The Council of State Governments, Lexington, KY, 1993-2002); and Lilley, DeFranco, and Diefenderfer, *The Almanac of State of Legislatures*.

5 A Gendered Pipeline?

This chapter describes the patterns of congressional advancement for state legislators in the five states examined in this study and considers whether men and women are similarly situated relative to the factors that are relevant to congressional advancement. In addition, I review the evidence for each of this study's seven main hypotheses, identifying the key differences between male and female legislators and assessing their impact on the likelihood that members of each group will seek or win congressional office.

Overview of the Sample

Between 1993 and 2002, 346 women and 1023 men served as state legislators in the states of Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin. In comparison with male state legislators, female legislators in this sample are older, entered the legislature at a later age, and have fewer years of service in the legislature. Female state legislators are also more likely than their male colleagues to be married. There is also evidence that suggests that women with children are less likely to pursue higher level legislative offices, these findings are limited to women under age 35, however, and the relationship with congressional officeseeking is not statistically significant.

In addition, there are significant differences in the occupational backgrounds of male and female legislators. Female legislators are more likely than the men to have a primary occupation in the field of education or political, governmental, or community service. In contrast, male legislators are more likely to have a primary occupation in the field of law or business.

Male and female state legislators are equally likely to serve in the upper and lower houses of the legislature. They are also equally likely to serve as committee chairs and as

lower ranking members of their party leadership (men are more likely to serve in the top leadership positions such as Speaker, Majority Leader, and Minority Leader). There is, however, a significant difference in the size of the districts represented by men and women, with male legislators representing districts with larger populations than their female colleagues.

An analysis of the state legislators in the sample confirms that, despite the electoral advantages enjoyed by state legislative officeholders, very few ran for Congress. Out of the 1360 individual state legislators who served during the ten year period examined in this study, just 51 ran for Congress (3.8%). Of the 51 who ran, 13 were successful and 38 were not.

Though few state legislators of either sex ran for Congress, female state legislators are less likely than their male colleagues to run for Congress. Women make up 25.2% of the overall sample of state legislators in this study, but just 13.7% of those state legislators who ran for Congress. To put it another way, men are more than twice as likely as female state legislators to run; 4.3% of men ran for Congress compared with just 2.0% of women (see Table 5.1).²⁵⁷ Overall, male legislators are more likely than their female colleagues to be elected to Congress; 1.1% of all male legislators in the sample were elected to Congress, compared with just 0.6% of female legislators. Though women are less likely to run in the first place, among those few state legislators who enter a congressional race, the women are as likely as men to win.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ $p=.054$.

²⁵⁸ In fact, among those who run, women have a slightly higher winning percentage than men (28.5% for women compared with 25% for men).

Table 5.1
Demographic Overview of Individual State Legislators

	Men	Women	All
	N=1023	N=346	N=1369
Ran for Congress* (p=.054)	44 (4.3%)	7 (2.0%)	51 (3.8%)
Won congressional race (p=.416)	11 (1.1%)	2 (0.6%)	13 (1.0%)
Marital Status (p=.000)***			
Unmarried (Single/Div/Sep)	19.3%	29.7%	21.9%
Married	80.7%	70.3%	78.1%
Number of children (p=.887)			
No children reported	24.8%	23.6%	24.5%
1-2 children	35.5%	36.6%	35.8%
3 or more	39.7%	39.8%	39.7%
Age (p=.000)***			
<35 years	5.9%	3.9%	5.4%
35 to 50 years	44.8%	31.6%	41.7%
>50 years	49.3%	64.6%	52.9%
Age first elected to leg. (p=.000)***			
<35 years	30.0%	11.6%	25.6%
35 to 50 years	50.8%	55.1%	51.8%
>50 years	19.3%	33.3%	22.6%
Occupation (p=.000)***			
Law	28.2%	9.9%	23.6%
Business	28.6%	23.3%	27.3%
Education	6.9%	14.3%	8.8%
Politics, Govt or Community	12.6%	23.3%	15.3%
Other	23.7%	29.2%	25.1%
House (p=.447)			
Assembly/lower house	74.9%	77.0%	75.4%
Senate/upper house	25.1%	23.0%	24.6%
Party (p=.001)***			
Republican	47.4%	36.7%	44.7%
Democrat	52.6%	63.3%	55.3%
Leadership			
Top leadership (Speaker, Maj. or Min. Leader)(p=.062)*	3.8%	1.7%	3.3%
Any Leadership (p=.962)	22.6%	22.7%	22.6%
Chair (p=.143)	33.4%	29.2%	32.4%
Mean district pop. (p=.000)###	132,107	109,297	126,341

Chi Square test, *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01; T-test, ##p<.05, ###p<.01

Note: Individuals were coded from their final year of service. Ran for Congress is EVERAN. Legislators who died or were appointed in November of an election year or later were excluded from this analysis.

Gender Differences in the Sample

There are a number of significant differences between the men and women who served in the five state legislatures examined in this study (See Table 5.2). In comparison to the male state legislators in the sample, female legislators:

- are less likely to have primary occupations in the field of business or law;
- are 5 ½ years older, on average, when first elected to the state legislature;
- have fewer years of state legislative service;²⁵⁹
- are less likely to be married;
- represent districts that are smaller in population size;
- are more likely to be Democrats.

Each of these differences is significant at the .001 level. Furthermore, with the exception of the fact that no significant difference is observed in the average number of children, these findings are consistent with the hypotheses articulated in Chapter 4.²⁶⁰

Table 5.2
Comparing Male and Female State Legislators

	Women	Men
Age	54.58***	51.07
Age when first elected to legislature	46.76***	41.23
Within Manifest Age Group (35-50)	.32***	.45
Years in State Legislature	9.38***	11.33
Married	.70***	.81
Number of Children	2.22	2.13
Republican Party	.37***	.47
State leg. Professionalism	.290***	.313
District Population	109,297***	132,107
Field of business or law	.33***	.57

Two-tailed T-Test. *** p<.001, ** p<.05, *p<.10. Note: Individual data reflects legislators' final term of service between 1993 and 2002. Legislators who died during the term or did not serve prior to election were not included in this analysis.

²⁵⁹ Years of service reflect the number of years accumulated in each individual's final year of service during the time period of this study.

²⁶⁰ It should be noted that the finding that female state legislators have fewer years of service is not inconsistent with the developed ambition hypothesis, however, as that hypothesis is concerned with the years of service for office seekers rather than legislators in general.

This initial analysis confirms that there are differences between male and female state legislators. In the following section, I will consider whether these factors are relevant to the likelihood that individual state legislators will seek congressional office.

Congressional Advancement

In order to assess the potential impact of differences between men and women, it is important to consider which factors are associated with congressional advancement. Table 5.3 illustrates that age is a statistically significant factor on several levels. First, the state legislators who ran for Congress are 5½ years younger, on average than their colleagues who did not run. Second, state legislators who ran are more likely than those who did not run to fall within the manifest age of congressional office seeking (35 to 50 years). Finally, those who ran for Congress were first elected to the state legislature at a relatively young age – 36 years of age on average, compared with 42 for those who did not run.²⁶¹

Table 5.3
Comparison of State Legislators who Ran and Did Not Run for Congress

	Didn't Run for Congress	Ran for Congress
Age	52.13	46.71***
Age when first elected to legislature	42.80	36.88***
Within Manifest Age Group (35-50)	.41	.61***
Years in State Legislature	10.80	11.67
Married	.78	.82
Number of Children	2.16	2.00
Republican Party	.45	.45
Shares party with congressional majority	.49	.47
State leg. Professionalism	.306	.330
District Population	126,003	135,016
Field of business or law	.50	.65**

Two-tailed T-Test. *** p<.001, ** p<.05, *p<.10; Note: Legislators who died during the term or did not serve prior to election were not included in this analysis; Individual data reflects legislators' final term of service between 1993 and 2002.

²⁶¹ Note that the individual sort for this database selects individual legislators in their final year of service during the time period studied. As a result, state legislators who ran for Congress in off-year elections prior to their final year of service will appear in their final year of service rather than the year in which they ran for office. Thus, the age difference between those who ran for Congress and those who did not is, if anything, understated.

Table 5.3 also shows that state legislators who ran for Congress are more likely to have an occupation in the field of business or law than those who did not run. 65% of state legislators who ran for Congress have a primary occupation in business or law compared with 50% of state legislators who did not run for Congress.²⁶² At the same time, those who ran for Congress and those who did not run are substantially similar to one another in marital status, number of children, political party, state legislative professionalism, and district population size. These factors will be considered in greater detail in the following section, which reviews and analyzes the evidence relating to each of this study's seven main hypotheses.

Review of Hypotheses

In this section, I review the evidence for each of this study's seven main hypotheses. The focus here is on the differences between male and female state legislators and the effect that these differences have on the likelihood members of each group will seek congressional office.

The Opportunity Pool Hypothesis

The opportunity pool hypothesis suggests that female state legislators will be less likely than male state legislators to have occupational backgrounds associated with congressional advancement. An analysis of the data supports this hypothesis; female state legislators are significantly less likely than their male counterparts to have occupational backgrounds in the fields of law and business, the occupations most frequently associated with congressional office seeking by the state legislators examined in this study. .

²⁶² This difference was significant at the .001 level.

Table 5.4
Selected Occupational Backgrounds

Primary Occupation	Ran for Congress		Didn't Run for Congress	
	N	Pct	N	Pct
Law	20	39.2%	303	23.1%
Business	13	25.5%	359	27.4%
Education	7	13.7%	113	8.6%
Politics, Govt, Community	5	9.8%	204	15.6%
Professional	3	5.9%	88	6.7%
Agriculture	2	3.9%	78	6.0%
Medical	0	0.0%	54	4.1%
Human Services	0	0.0%	50	3.8%
Other/Misc.	1	2.0%	60	4.7%
Total	51	100%	1309	100%

As Table 5.4 shows, the most common occupations for state legislators are the fields of business and law, followed by education and politics, government and the community. The fields of law and business stand out as “springboard” occupations for state legislators who pursue congressional office; 64.7% of state legislators who ran for Congress have a primary occupational background in one of these two fields. This finding is consistent with opportunity pool explanations that suggest that business and legal experience complements state legislators’ efforts to build the political skills, support, and fundraising base needed to compete effectively in a congressional campaign.

The evidence indicates that female legislators are *not* as likely as male legislators to have a primary occupation in the fields of business or law. Men are more than three times as likely as women to report a primary occupation in the field of law (28.2% to 9.9%) and more than twenty-percent more likely to have a primary occupation in a business-related field (28.8% to 23.3%). Female state legislators in the sample are, however, more likely than men

to have a primary occupation in the field of education or politics, government, and the community (“PGC”).²⁶³

Both education and PGC have the potential to be springboards to congressional office because they can provide legislators with opportunities to strengthen their relationships with political and community leaders and constituent groups. As Table 5.4 shows, education and PGC are a significant but secondary route to congressional office. Moreover, to the extent that education and PGC have acted as springboards, the primary beneficiaries have been men, not women. Male state legislators make up the large majority of congressional office seekers from these categories (see Table 5.5). Thus, even though women make up 41.2% of all legislators with a primary occupation in education, and 38.5% of all legislators from PGC, they are just 16.6% of the congressional office seekers in these fields (2 of 12).

Table 5.5
Occupational Backgrounds of Legislators who Ran for Congress, by Sex

Primary Occupation	Men		Women	
	N	Pct	N	Pct
Law	17	38.6%	3	42.9%
Business	12	27.3%	1	14.3%
Education	6	13.6%	1	14.3%
Politics, Govt, Community	4	9.1%	1	14.3%
Professional	2	4.5%	1	14.3%
Agriculture	2	4.5%	0	0.0%
Other/Misc.	1	2.3%	0	0.0%
Total	44	100%	7	100%

Notwithstanding the small number of women in the sample who ran for Congress, the male and female state legislators who ran had remarkably similar occupational backgrounds. As Table 5.5 shows, among state legislators who sought congressional office,

²⁶³ Though only 25% of the individuals serving during this period were female, 41.2% of all legislators from the educational field and 38.5% from the field of politics, government and the community were female.

the legal profession is the most common occupational background for both men and women. Altogether, 57% of the female state legislators who sought congressional office had a primary occupation in the field of either law or business; this is only slightly lower than the 65% for their male counterparts.

My analysis indicates that an occupational background in the field of business or law is a key factor in the advancement of both male and female state legislators to Congress. Women, however, are disadvantaged relative to their male colleagues because fewer women come from these “springboard” professions. The evidence suggests that women are forging their own paths to state legislative offices; however, education and PGC occupations have not proven to be effective springboards to congressional office for female state legislators.

The Delayed Ambition Hypothesis

The delayed ambition hypothesis is that female state legislators will be elected to the state legislature at an older age than their male counterparts and will be less likely to be at an age that falls within the manifest age of congressional office seeking (35-50). An analysis of the data provides strong support for the contention that female state legislators enter the state legislature at an older age than their male counterparts. Additionally, female state legislators are more likely than men to be older than the “manifest” age range of 35 to 50 years that Schlesinger considered optimal for congressional office-seeking.

The female state legislators in the sample are older, on average, than their male colleagues. Table 5.6 shows the mean age of male and female state legislators in each legislative cycle from 1993-2002. Two things stand out in this table: first, in all of the legislative cycles examined here, female state legislators are 2.5 to 4 years older than their male colleagues. Second, the age of both men and women in the sample trends upward across time, with each subsequent cycle having a higher mean age than the cycle preceding it.

For women, the average age increased from a low of 50.57 years in 1993-1994 to a high of 54.76 years in 2001-2002. Between 1993-94 and 2001-02, the average age of men in the state legislatures increased from a low of 47.93 years to a high of 51.25 years.

Table 5.6
Mean Age of State Legislators Serving in Each Legislative Cycle, by Sex

Cycle	Women	Men	Difference
1993-1994	50.57	47.93	2.64
1995-1996	52.00	48.08	3.92
1997-1998	53.22	48.97	4.25
1999-2000	54.33	49.94	4.39
2001-2002	54.76	51.25	3.51

Note: age is legislator's age at beginning of legislative cycle.

To put these trends into additional perspective, I compared the ages of the different cohorts of state legislators who were first elected to the legislature during each of the five legislative cycles between 1993 and 2002. As Table 5.7 illustrates, the mean age of newly elected men and newly elected women stays relatively stable. What does change, however, is the number of newly elected state legislators, which drops significantly from 1993 to 2001.

Table 5.7
Mean Age of State Legislators First Elected
in Each Legislative Cycle, by Sex

Cycle	Women		Men		Difference
	Mean Age	N	Mean Age	N	
1993-1994	47.77	71	43.43	130	4.34
1995-1996	46.80	30	42.10	102	4.70
1997-1998	50.60	20	44.76	74	5.84
1999-2000	47.08	25	43.69	70	3.39
2001-2002	46.43	21	47.08	52	-0.65

Note: Cohorts are state legislators who were first elected or appointed to the state legislature during that particular legislative cycle.

The number of new female legislators drops from a high of 71 in 1993-94 to a low of 21 in 2001-02. Over this same period, the number of new male legislators also drops, from a high of 130 to a low of 52. As a result of this dynamic, returning members make up a larger proportion of legislators over time, while new members (who are, on average, younger than

returning members) make up a smaller proportion.²⁶⁴ Thus, the increasing age of state legislators across time appears to be related to membership stability rather than the election of older legislators.²⁶⁵

Table 5.7 also shows that in four of the five legislative cycles, female legislators were first elected to the legislature at an older age than their male colleagues. This parallels the earlier finding that, the average age that women first enter the legislature is nearly five years older than the average age the men first enter the legislature. Among all individual legislators in the sample, female legislators are first elected or appointed to the legislature at an average age of 46.76 years; in contrast, men average just 41.23 years.²⁶⁶

In addition to being older when first entering the legislature, female state legislators are also less likely to be within the age range that Schlesinger considered optimal for congressional office seeking. Table 5.8 indicates that the percentage of female legislators within the manifest age category ranges from a high of 48.6% in 1993-1994 to a low of 28.9% in 2001-2002. In each of the legislative cycles, the percentage within the manifest age category is higher for men than for women, ranging from 3.5 percentage points higher in 1993-1994 to 16.6 percentage points higher in 2001-2002.

²⁶⁴ Note also that the large influx of new female members in 1993-1994 may indicate that the legislative cycle was subject to the broader “year of the woman” trends. Additional analysis is needed to assess whether this influx of new women substantially altered the percentage of women in the chamber.

²⁶⁵ Additional research would be needed to assess the extent that membership stability is a cyclical one that is related in some way to redistricting cycles and the increased competition (and instances of retirements) that result from the redrawing of district boundaries.

²⁶⁶ Note that this difference in means is statistically significant. T-test statistic, $p < .001$.

Table 5.8
Percent of Male and Female State Legislators in Manifest Age Categories

Cycle	Women			Men			Manifest Difference
	<35	Manifest	>50	<35	Manifest	>50	
1993-1994***	3.4	48.6	48.0	10.9	52.1	37.0	-3.5
1995-1996***	3.2	43.8	53.0	11.4	49.7	38.9	-5.9
1997-1998***	3.2	37.1	59.7	8.9	47.9	43.2	-10.8
1999-2000***	3.1	32.3	64.6	5.7	48.9	45.5	-16.6
2001-2002***	4.0	28.9	67.2	4.4	44.7	50.9	-15.8
All***	3.4	37.9	58.7	8.3	48.7	43.0	-10.8

Note: Manifest age is between 35 and 50 years of age. Manifest difference is the manifest age of men subtracted *from* the manifest age of women (*manifest women-manifest men*). All represents entire database, 1993-2002. ***Pearson Chi Square $p < .001$

Looking at the overall sample of state legislators, 37.9% of the terms served by women are served by legislators within the manifest age range of 35 to 50. This is significantly lower than the 48.7% of terms served by their male counterparts within the manifest age category.

The critical factor seems to be the age at which legislators are first elected to state legislatures. One-third of female legislators were elected to the state legislature after age 50, compared with just 20% of male state legislators (see Table 5.1 at the beginning of this chapter). Furthermore, the patterns of congressional office seeking observed in this study provide added support for Schlesinger's contention that 35 to 50 years of age constitutes the most likely age at which an individual will seek congressional office (see Table 5.9). Of the subgroup of state legislators who ran for congressional office, 60.8% were within the manifest age range; this is significantly higher than the 46.1% of the overall population that fell within the manifest age group.

Table 5.9
State Legislators who Ran for Congress, by Manifest Age Categories

	N	<35	35 to 50 (manifest age)	>50
Men	44	13.6%	63.6%	22.7%
Women	7	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%
All	51	13.7%	60.8%	25.5%

Among the 51 state legislators in the sample who ran for Congress, 60.8% are within the manifest age of 35 to 50 years of age. Men are more likely than women to be within the manifest age (63.6% of men compared with 42.9% of women). It should be noted, however, that the small number of female state legislators who ran for Congress (N=7) makes it difficult to draw any firm conclusions about gender differences among those seeking congressional office. Likewise, no definitive conclusions can be drawn from the very small group of 13 state legislators from our sample who were successful in getting elected to Congress; of which, 9 of 13 (or 69%) were between the ages of 35 and 50.

The Developed Ambition Hypothesis

The developed ambition hypotheses suggests that female state legislators who run for Congress will have served more years in the state legislature than male state legislators. Again, the argument is that female state legislators are more likely to develop higher ambitions over time, while men are more likely to see their ambitions diminish over time. An analysis of the data finds that female legislators who ran for Congress actually served fewer years in the state legislature than the men who ran for Congress. Among the small group of 51 legislators who ran for Congress, women served an average of 2.55 fewer years than men. Female legislators who ran for Congress had 8.29 years of service in the state

legislature, on average, while male state legislators who ran for Congress had an average of 10.84 years of service.²⁶⁷

This is contrary to the developed ambition hypothesis articulated in Chapter 4. Taken with other evidence which indicates that women enter state legislatures at an older age than men, this finding suggests that women who do run for Congress are acting quickly and taking advantage of their relatively small window of opportunity for congressional advancement.

Table 5.10
Mean Years of Service for State Legislators, by Cycle and Sex

Cycle	Women	Men	Difference
1993-1994***	6.41	9.49	-3.08
1995-1996***	7.42	9.33	-1.91
1997-1998***	8.49	9.83	-1.34
1999-2000	9.46	10.27	-0.81
2001-2002***	9.94	11.29	-1.35
All***	8.38	10.03	-1.64

Independent Samples T-Test, ***p<.01

The diminishing turnover that occurred across the five legislative cycles (see Table 5.7) contributes to the increases in the average years of service for male and female state legislators that are observed in Table 5.10. By definition, incumbent state legislators have more years of legislative service than their newly elected colleagues. Moreover, the number of years that an incumbent has served in office increases with every succeeding legislative cycle, while newly elected state legislators are younger, on average, than the incumbents. As a result, the decreasing rates of turnover led to increases in the average age of state legislators over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s.

It is important to emphasize, once again, that the number of female legislators in the sample who run for Congress is very small (N=7); for this reason, no firm conclusions can

²⁶⁷ The independent samples t-test found that these differences in mean were not significant (p=.061).

be drawn as to whether the years of service for women who run for Congress is representative of the broader population of women who have run for Congress.

Nonetheless, the data do suggest that female legislators who run for Congress serve fewer years, on average, than the male legislators who run for Congress. This runs counter to the prediction that female state legislators would serve longer in office than men prior to running for Congress. Though the data is not conclusive, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected in this case.

Family Role Hypothesis

The family role hypothesis suggests that marital status and number of children will be negatively associated with the likelihood that female state legislators will seek and win congressional office. An analysis of the data suggests that both marital status and the number of children are negatively associated with female office seeking. In both cases, however, the relationships are not statistically significant and the hypothesis cannot, therefore, be supported by this data. Additional research and more reliable measures of the number of children a legislator has may help shed additional light on this subject.

An analysis of the data indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean number of children of the male and female state legislators who did not run for Congress.²⁶⁸ Likewise, there is virtually no difference between the men who ran (mean children = 2.07) and the men who did not run (mean children = 2.13). There is, however, a substantial difference between the women who ran and the women who did not. Female legislators who ran for Congress have nearly 25% fewer children, on average, than those

²⁶⁸ The data indicate that the women in the sample who first attained state legislative office at a young age were nearly twice as likely as similarly situated men to have no children. Of those state legislators who first entered the legislature before age 35, 60.6% of women had no children, compared with just 32.7% of men. The data also indicate that, for both men and women, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the age at which a legislator was first elected to the state legislature and number of children.

who did not run. As previously noted, the number of women who ran for Congress is small; as a result, the difference in means is not statistically significant (see Table 5.11).

Table 5.11
Mean Number of Children for Individual Legislators,
by Office Seeking and Sex

	Did not run for Congress	Ran for Congress	Difference
Men	2.13	2.07	-.05
Women	2.24	1.57	-.67

For both males and females, the differences in means are not statistically significant. Independent Samples T-Test (Women, $p=.349$; Men, $p=.816$)

Though the sample of state legislators who ran is small, the overall number of state legislators in this study provides a sample that is large enough to allow for a more conclusive analysis of the impact of children on state legislative office-holding. In this case, the data provides additional evidence that female officeholders delay seeking elective office until their children are older. Table 5.12 shows that 60.6% of women who entered the state legislature before age 35 have no children. In contrast, only 32.7% of men who entered the legislature by that relatively young age are childless. The number of children appears to be a significantly greater limitation for women than men. Only 3.0% of female state legislators under age 35 have 3 or more children, in contrast with 26.9% of similarly aged men.

The impact of children on state legislative careers appears to be limited primarily to legislators who enter at a younger age. As Table 5.12 indicates, there is little, if any difference in the number of children reported by men and women in the two oldest categories (35 to 50 and over 50). In contrast, the differences between men and women in the youngest age category are substantial; women in this category are twice as likely as men to be childless and men are eight times as likely as women to report having three or more children.

Table 5.12
Mean Number of Children, by Manifest Age Categories and Sex

Cycle	Women			Men		
	<35	Manifest	>50	<35	Manifest	>50
0 Children	60.6	20.3	11.5	32.7	20.1	7.9
1-2 Children	36.4	43.7	28.1	40.4	37.0	31.1
>3 Children	3.0	36.1	59.4	26.9	42.6	61.0

Number of men = 919 (missing=104); Number of women = 286 (missing = 60).

The evidence presented here indicates that, for younger women, children are an important factor that limits the ability of women to seek and win state legislative offices; men are not similarly affected. There is also some evidence, albeit suggestive, that the number of children that a female state legislator has is negatively associated with the likelihood that they will seek congressional office; again, men do not appear to be similarly affected.

In addition to children, marital status is another factor that is believed to affect the likelihood that men and women will seek congressional office. An analysis of the data indicates that female state legislators are significantly less likely than male state legislators to be married; this is true across all five legislative cycles. The proportion of female state legislators who are married ranges from .68 to .71; this is significantly lower than the proportion of male state legislators who are married, which ranged from .79 to .83 (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13
Proportion of State Legislators who are Married, by Cycle and Sex

Cycle	Women	Men	Difference
1993-1994***	.68	.79	-.11
1995-1996***	.69	.78	-.11
1997-1998***	.68	.79	-.11
1999-2000***	.70	.82	-.12
2001-2002***	.71	.83	-.12
Entire Sample***	.69	.80	-.11

Independent Samples T-Test, ***p<.01

Also notable is the finding that male state legislators who run for Congress are *more* likely to be married than those who do not run, while female state legislators who run for Congress are *less* likely to be married than those who do not seek a congressional seat (see Table 5.14). The data also indicates that the women who run for Congress are less likely to be married than the men who run for Congress. These findings are not conclusive, however, since the number of women who sought congressional office is small and the relationship is not statistically significant.

Table 5.14
Percent Married, by Office Seeking and Sex

	Did not run for Congress***	Ran For Congress[#]	Difference
Men	80.1	86.4	+6.3
Women	69.3	57.1	-12.2

N=4447 (Men = 3304, Women =1129). Total Missing = 14 (0.3%). ***Differences between men and women were statistically significant at the .01 level or below (Chi Square, $p=.000$). # Differences between men and women were not statistically significant (Chi Square, $p=.06$)

The District Size Hypothesis

The district size hypothesis suggests that female state legislators will represent smaller legislative districts than male state legislators, and district size will be positively associated with congressional office seeking. My analysis finds that female state legislators represent districts that are significantly smaller in population size than their male colleagues. These differences are largely due to the fact that a disproportionate percentage of women serve in upper houses of state legislatures that have relatively small district populations. Though women represent smaller districts than men, there is little evidence that this has any effect on the likelihood that state legislators of either sex will seek or win congressional office.

The average district population for female state legislators is 109,349, which is 17% smaller than the average district population of 132,370 for male state legislators. This

difference is statistically significant at the .01 level (t-test, $p=.001$). Further analysis indicates that differences in district populations for male and female legislators are, for the most part, driven by differences between the men and women serving in the upper houses of the state legislatures examined in this study. There is little difference in the mean population for male and female legislators in lower houses. In those lower houses, female legislators have an average district population size of 86,632 and male state legislators 90,815. In contrast, there is a significant difference between male and female state legislators in the upper houses. Female state legislators in the upper houses have a mean district population of 185,039; this is nearly 28% smaller than the 255,496 mean district population for men serving in an upper house.

Table 5.15
Percent Serving in Upper House, by Sex

State	% of Women in upper house	% of Men in upper house	Mean District Population
Connecticut	13.9	17.6	90,713
New York	17.7	29.4	297,465
Texas	6.3	16.9	625,057
Washington	45.6	22.4	114,280
Wisconsin	16.5	13.7	158,007
Total	100%	100%	--

Note: Mean district population reflects the mean district population of all individual legislators serving in the upper houses.

The difference in population between men and women in the upper houses is not due to the disproportionate exclusion of women from service in the legislatures' upper houses. 23.0% of female legislators in this study serve in upper houses, roughly equivalent to the 25.1% of male state legislators who serve in upper houses. In fact, the differences in mean population between men and women in upper houses is largely due to the fact that a disproportionate number of women in upper houses serve in the Washington State Senate, which has districts that are relatively small in comparison to 3 of the remaining 4 states in

this study. Men, on the other hand, are disproportionately likely to represent larger population districts in the upper houses of New York State and Texas (see Table 5.15).

Though men are more likely than women to represent large state senate districts, legislators from large districts are not any more likely to run for Congress than those from smaller districts. State legislators that ran for Congress represented districts with an average population of 135,016; this is somewhat larger than the 126,135 mean district population for state legislators that did not run, but the difference is not statistically significant.²⁶⁹

Likewise, legislators serving in an upper house are not any more likely than those serving in the lower house to seek congressional office. In fact, a solid majority – 64.7% --- of all state legislators who ran for Congress came from lower houses. Though this is somewhat below the proportion of lower house members in the overall sample (75.4%), the difference is relatively small and suggests that state legislators are not unduly hindered by lower house status. In addition, state legislators from lower houses who ran for Congress have a higher rate of success in their congressional races than those from upper houses. 10 of 33 lower house members who ran for Congress were elected, compared with just 3 of 18 upper house members (see Table 5.16).

Table 5.16
Number of Congressional Office Seekers, by State, House and Sex

State	Lower House			Upper House			All
	Male Won/Total	Female Won/Total	Lower House Won/Total	Male Won/Total	Female Won/Total	Upper House Won/Total	Both Houses Won/Total
CT	1/3	0/0	1/3	0/2	0/0	0/2	1/5
NY	3/8	0/2	3/10	0/2	0/0	0/2	3/12
TX	2/6	0/1	2/7	1/2	0/0	1/2	3/9
WA	1/4	0/1	1/5	1/7	1/2	2/9	3/14
WI	2/7	1/1	3/8	0/3	0/0	0/3	3/11
Totals	9/28	1/5	10/33	2/16	1/2	3/18	13/51

²⁶⁹ Independent Samples T-Test, $p=.592$.

Professional Legislature Hypothesis

The professional legislature hypothesis suggests that female state legislators will be less likely than male state legislators to serve in the highly professionalized legislatures that are most likely to serve as springboards to congressional office. An analysis of the data indicates that, while women do serve in less professionalized legislatures, there is no evidence that legislators from more professional legislatures are more likely to seek and win congressional office. One concern is that the number of states in this study may be too small (N=5) to draw any firm conclusions about the relationship between legislative professionalism and congressional office seeking.

On average, female state legislators serve in less highly professionalized legislatures than their male colleagues. Using the Squire index as a measure of professionalization, the mean score for female legislators is .290 and the mean score for male state legislators is .313 (t-test, $p=.007$).²⁷⁰ The difference is due, in part, to the fact that higher percentages of women serve in Washington and Connecticut, states which score low on the Squire index relative to the other states in this study (see Table 5.17).

Table 5.17
Legislative Professionalism and Women's Representation, by State

State	Squire Index	NCSL Category	Percent Female	Pct. Ran for Congress	Pct. Elected to Congress
New York	.515	Professional	19.7	3.9	1.0
Wisconsin	.459	Professional	24.3	5.6	1.5
Texas	.215	Hybrid	18.2	3.2	1.1
Washington	.198	Hybrid	39.5	4.9	1.0
Connecticut	.178	Hybrid	28.1	1.7	0.3

Note that percent female represents all legislators across multiple years. Note that percent of members who ran for Congress and Percent of members elected to Congress are for individual members only.

²⁷⁰ I also analyzed the data using James D. King's index as an alternative measure of state legislative professionalism. The findings were similar, with the mean professionalism score for men at .378 and the mean professionalism score for women at .357. The difference in the means was statistically significant at the .05 level ($p=.022$). King, "Changes in State Legislative Professionalism."

I also conducted a chi-square analysis using the NCSL categorization of state legislatures into professional, hybrid and citizen legislatures. As noted earlier, the five states in this study fall into just two of the three categories. The analysis indicates that more professional legislatures elected a lower percentage of women than hybrid legislatures; 21.7% of legislators from “professional” states were female, compared with 27.3% of legislators from “hybrid” states.²⁷¹ Although this analysis cannot be considered definitive, the patterns of female electoral success in these five states are consistent with previous studies that found women are less likely to be elected to highly professionalized legislatures.

Though women may represent less professionalized legislatures than their male colleagues, the data suggest that it doesn’t make much of a difference in terms of who seeks and wins congressional office. First, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean legislative professionalism of those who run for Congress and those who do not. Using Squire’s index as a measure of professionalism, legislators who run for Congress have an average professionalism score of .330, while those who do not run have an average score of .306. Though the difference appears substantial it is not statistically significant ($p=.256$).²⁷² Second, though state legislators from professional states are more likely to run for Congress than those from hybrid states, the difference is small and also not statistically

²⁷¹ This was statistically significant at the .05 level ($p=.021$). Note that this analysis reflects individuals in the sample. A similar analysis was conducted using the entire database across the five legislative cycles. The results were similar: professional legislatures were 21.4% female and hybrid legislatures 28.0% female. The differences were statistically significant at the .01 level ($p=.000$).

²⁷² A similar analysis was conducted using James D. King’s index as an alternative measure of professionalization. Those who ran for Congress had a professionalism score of .378 and those who did not run had a professionalism score of .372. Once again, this was not statistically significant ($p=.901$). King, “Changes in State Legislative Professionalism.”

significant ($p=.237$). 4.5% of all individual state legislators from professional states sought congressional office, compared with 3.3% of individuals serving in hybrid states.²⁷³

Party Strength Hypotheses

The party strength hypothesis suggests that female state legislators are more likely to be Democrats and to serve in Democrat dominated legislatures. As a result, female legislators may be less likely to seek congressional office when Republicans are in the majority, as was the case in four of the five legislative cycles examined here.

My analysis indicates that female state legislators are more likely than male state legislators to be Democrats. 63.3% of women in the sample are Democrats, compared with just 52.6% of men; a difference that is statistically significant at the .01 level.

Though women are more likely to be Democrats, the expectation that women are more likely than men to serve in Democrat dominated legislatures is not confirmed. Men and women in the state legislature served in chambers with substantially similar percentages of Republicans – 44.4% for women and 45.0% for men. Given that there are only five states in this study, further research may be warranted to take into account more variation across the states.

The evidence also fails to support the expectation that Democratic legislators are less likely to seek congressional office when Republicans are in the majority in their state legislatures. In fact, Democrats who run for Congress are more likely to be in the majority than the minority (see Table 5.18). Of the Democrats who ran for Congress, 85.7% served in their state legislature's majority, compared with only 73.5% of individual Democrats in the sample. In contrast, 69.6% of Republicans who ran for Congress were in the minority in

²⁷³ A similar analysis of the entire database also shows no statistically significant difference between hybrid and professional states in terms of office seeking. The percentage of the entire sample from professional states that ran for Congress was 1.3%, compared with 1.1% of the sample from hybrid states. This was not statistically significant ($p=.469$).

their state legislative chamber, a figure which exceeds the 60.6% of Republicans in the overall sample who are in the minority. These patterns are more clearly evident in the first three cycles of this study and less clear in the final two years, so continued research may help ascertain whether this pattern has persisted as we move further away from the 1994 elections.

Table 5.18
Legislators who Ran for Congress, by Party and Majority Status in State Legislature

Cycle	Democrats			Republicans		
	Majority	Minority	Split/ Alternating	Majority	Minority	Split/ Alternating
1993-1994	8	0	0	0	6	0
1995-1996	5	0	0	1	3	1
1997-1998	10	2	1	2	3	0
1999-2000	0	1	0	0	3	1
2001-2002	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	24	3	1	3	16	4

Most Democrats who ran for office are in the majority in their legislatures, a pattern of congressional office seeking that is exactly opposite to what is expected.²⁷⁴ Part of the explanation may be that Democrat-controlled legislatures are over-represented in this sample, so further research that takes into account a broader selection of states may provide additional insight.

Review of Findings

My analysis of state legislators serving in five states between 1993 and 2002 finds that male and female state legislators differ in several ways that are relevant to the likelihood that they will seek and win congressional office. Most notably, there are statistically significant differences in the age and occupational backgrounds of male and female state legislators. Female legislators in the sample are older than their male colleagues, enter the

²⁷⁴ It should be noted that Republican patterns are exactly the opposite. Republican legislators are more likely to run for Congress when they are in the minority.

state legislature at a later age, and are less likely to be within the manifest age for seeking congressional office. Female state legislators are also less likely than male state legislators to have an occupational background in the fields of business and law. A separate analysis indicates that age and occupation in the field of business and law are associated with congressional office seeking; legislators who run for Congress are younger and more likely to have an occupation in the fields of business or law than state legislators who do not run.

My analysis also identifies a number of other differences between male and female state legislators that are consistent with this study's main hypotheses. In comparison to male state legislators, female state legislators represent smaller legislative districts, on average, and are more likely to be elected to less professional state legislatures. Women are also more likely than their male counterparts to be Democrats and to be unmarried. Despite these differences, I find no statistically significant relationship between district size, legislative professionalism, or marital status and the likelihood that a state legislator will seek congressional office.

It should also be noted that, contrary to the hypotheses, there is no statistically significant difference in both the number of children and the total years of state legislative service for male and female state legislators. In the case of total years of state legislative service, the difference that does exist, though not significant, runs in the opposite direction. The women who run for Congress serve fewer years in the legislature – not more, as was predicted -- than the men who run for Congress. In addition, the data does provide suggestive evidence that women with children are less likely to seek congressional office. Men with children do not appear to be similarly constrained. Though the relationship is not statistically significant, the findings are strong enough to warrant continued research.

In the sixth and final chapter of this study, I will perform one final test of the data, using a binary logistic regression model to measure the effect of each of the variables examined here on the likelihood that men and women seek congressional office. I will then consider the implications of this study on the pipeline theory and the political strategies of groups seeking to expand female representation in Congress before concluding with a brief consideration of avenues for additional research.

6 Conclusions and Consequences

According to the pipeline theory, female representation advances in stages, with women winning elections to lower level offices first and then moving up the ‘pipeline’ to higher level political offices. As a consequence, a number of scholars and political observers have predicted that increases in female representation at the state legislative level will lead to similar gains for women at the congressional level. In this study, I have argued that aggregate levels of female representation in state legislatures should not be used to predict future levels of female representation in Congress because we cannot assume that male and female state legislators are equally likely to advance to Congress.

Previous studies of female candidates and officeholders identified a number of key differences between male and female officeholders and candidates that are potentially relevant to congressional advancement. The main objective of this study was to consider whether the “pipeline” that brings state legislators to Congress works differently for men and women. My analysis of patterns of congressional office seeking in five states between 1993 and 2002 indicates that men and women in state legislatures are *not* equally likely to move through the pipeline to Congress. While few state legislators of either sex run for Congress, female state legislators are less than half as likely to run for Congress as their male colleagues. Women accounted for 25.3% of the overall sample of individual legislators, but just 13.7% of the state legislators who sought congressional office.

Why are female state legislators less likely than male state legislators to advance to Congress? In this study, I assessed the impact of a number of individual, cultural and structural factors on the likelihood that men and women ran for congressional office and I

concluded that men and women differ in a number of ways that are relevant to congressional office seeking. In particular, I found that male and female state legislators differ significantly in both age and occupation, two variables that have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood that state legislators seek congressional office.

Age Differences

In comparison to male state legislators, female state legislators were older in age when first elected to serve in the state legislature. The average female state legislator entered the legislature at the age of 47, six years later in life than the average male legislator (who began state legislative service at the age of 41). This age difference is significant because the later in life an individual begins serving in the state legislature, the less likely they are to run for Congress.

The finding that women entered state legislative service later in life than men is consistent with earlier studies which found that women are more likely to delay seeking higher level political offices until their children are grown. Running for office at an older age enables female state legislators to minimize conflict between their family lives and political careers. As a consequence of the decision to delay the pursuit of a state legislative career, however, female legislators are poorly positioned to advance to higher-level elective offices.

Given that women enter the legislature at an older age, it is not surprising that female state legislators serve fewer years in office, on average, than their male colleagues.²⁷⁵ Of the 492 legislators in the sample who left office through death, retirement, defeat, or advancement, female legislators served an average of 8.3 years, three years fewer than the

²⁷⁵ It should be noted that there is some evidence that women partially compensated for their late start by remaining in the legislature to an older age than men. Male legislators in the sample left the legislature at 51.6 years of age, on average, while female legislators served until age 54.9. Nevertheless, the key fact remains that women served fewer years in the legislature, resulting in fewer opportunities for them to take advantage of their status as state legislative incumbents to run for Congress.

11.3 years of state legislative service for men.²⁷⁶ As noted above, state legislative offices provide important financial and institutional resources useful in a congressional campaign. Because women have shorter state legislative careers, they have fewer opportunities to take advantage of their position as state legislative incumbents in a congressional race.²⁷⁷

Age differences may also affect the way male and female legislators perceive the costs and benefits of a congressional campaign. Because they are older, female legislators may believe that they have more to lose and less to gain by running for Congress. Older legislators are closer to retirement age, and the potential of losing state-paid health care or retirement benefits is more likely to be a factor which would discourage them from giving up the relative security that incumbent state legislators enjoy. All things being equal, older legislators also have fewer years of political service ahead of them, and may therefore conclude that the continued accumulation of seniority in the state legislature is a better way to achieve their individual public policy goals than starting over as a first-term member of Congress.

The patterns of congressional office seeking observed in this study suggest that female state legislators are more risk-averse than male legislators. In five state legislatures over a ten year period, only *two* female state legislators gave up their state legislative seats to run for Congress; one ran against an incumbent and the other for an open seat. In contrast, 30 male state legislators gave up their state legislative seats to run for Congress; of those, 16

²⁷⁶ Note that $p < .001$. These figures reflect those who served their last terms in the legislature between 1993 and 2000. Legislators serving in the final term were excluded, as no data was collected on their future service beyond that term.

²⁷⁷ Furthermore, the best opportunities for state legislators of either sex to advance to Congress are limited primarily to open seat races in which no incumbent is running for office and a relatively small number of races in which an incumbent from the opposite party appears particularly vulnerable. As a result, state legislators who wish to advance to Congress must play a bit of a waiting game – waiting and watching congressional seats for the right opportunity to run while keeping an eye on other potential candidates as well. Given the average length of service in the state legislature, female legislators may have few – if any – real opportunities to advance to Congress while serving in the state legislature.

ran against incumbents and 14 for open seats (see Table 6.1).²⁷⁸ As a percentage of their respective numbers in the overall population, male state legislators were nearly 5 times more likely than female state legislators to give up their seats to run for Congress (2.9% of male state legislators, compared to just 0.5% of female state legislators).

Table 6.1
State Legislators who Ran for Open Seats in Congress, by Sex

	Ran against Incumbent		Ran for open seat	
Men	20 (45.5%)		24 (54.5%)	
	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>
	4	16	7	17
Women	2 (28.6%)		5 (71.4%)	
	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>
	1	1	1	4
All	22 (43.1%)		29 (56.9%)	
	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>
	5	17	8	21

In 1966, Joseph Schlesinger noted that the age cycle plays a critically important role in shaping the political opportunities available to potential office seekers:

[T]he age cycle restricts a man's political chances. A man's reasonable expectations at one period of his life are unreasonable at another time. A man can fail to advance in politics as much because he is the wrong age at the wrong time as because he is in the wrong office.²⁷⁹

According to Schlesinger, the “manifest age” for seeking congressional office was between age 35 and 50. A review of the career patterns of members of Congress serving in the first three election cycles of the 1990s suggests that this “manifest age” period remains a good

²⁷⁸ Of the 44 male state legislators who ran for Congress, 20 ran against an incumbent – 4 of whom were in the off-cycle of a four-year term (all were regularly scheduled elections). 24 male state legislators ran for open seats, 2 in an off-cycle of a four year term and 8 for special elections. Of the 7 female state legislators who ran for Congress, 2 ran against incumbents (1 in an off-cycle of a four-year term, both in regularly scheduled election). 5 female legislators ran for open seats, 1 in an off-year cycle of a four year term and 1 in a special election.

²⁷⁹ Schlesinger, *Ambition and Politics*, 174.

rule of thumb and a fairly accurate description of the age at which most members of Congress start their congressional careers. Only 16.6% of members serving in the 102nd Congress, 19.7% of the 103rd Congress and 19.3% of the 104th Congress were first elected to Congress after the age of 50. The problem that female state legislators face is that, using Schlesinger's standard, the average female legislator has only three years to accumulate political experience and resources for a congressional race before moving beyond the manifest age for congressional office seeking.²⁸⁰

Because women enter state legislatures at an older age, they have to approach opportunities to congressional service differently than men. One surprising finding is that female state legislators who ran for Congress served fewer years in the state legislature prior to seeking congressional office than did the men. This was contrary to my hypothesis that the women who ran for Congress would serve longer in office than the men who ran, an expectation that was based on a previous study that found that female legislators were more likely than male legislators to see increases in their levels of political ambition over the course of their time in office.²⁸¹

In hindsight, the finding that women served fewer years in the legislature than men before running for Congress is entirely consistent with the finding that women begin state legislative service later in life. If they are to advance to Congress, ambitious female state legislators must be quick to take advantage of a reasonable opportunity for congressional advancement. Unlike their relatively younger male colleagues, female legislators cannot afford to wait for other opportunities to present themselves.

²⁸⁰ See Schlesinger, *Politics and Ambition*, 1966.

²⁸¹ Given that my study doesn't measure ambition, it doesn't necessarily contradict the finding that women were more likely to develop ambition over time. If anything, this may reveal the distinction that must be made between having political ambition and acting on it.

By virtue of the offices they hold, female state legislators may be in the “right place” from which to advance to Congress. Unfortunately, the evidence presented here suggests that female legislators often find themselves at the “wrong time” to run for higher office. In comparison to male state legislators, women enter the state legislature later in life and serve fewer years in office. As a result, they have a smaller window of opportunity to accumulate the resources, experience, and political support needed to run successfully for Congress. Furthermore, the female legislators who are in the best position to run for Congress are often beyond the manifest age for seeking congressional office. In comparison to their relatively younger male colleagues, female legislators are more risk-averse, possibly because they are less willing or less able than men (due to occupational background, economic status, cultural reasons, and so on) to bear the personal, financial, and political costs of a congressional race.

Occupational Differences

As a group, women did not take the same personal and professional routes to state legislatures as men; rather, women forged their own paths to state legislatures through professions not traditionally associated with legislative service. The female state legislators examined in this study are nearly twice as likely as male state legislators to have occupational backgrounds in the fields of education and community service. 37.6% of female state legislators had a primary occupation in the field of education, politics, government or community service, compared to just 19.5% of men. The law and business fields dominate the list of occupational backgrounds of male state legislators, with 56.8% of male state legislators listing one or the other as their primary occupation. In contrast, only 33.2% of female state legislators have a primary occupation in the law or business field.

Though a significant number of female state legislators have primary occupations in law and business, as a group women are more diverse in their occupational backgrounds. The ability of women from the fields of education and community service to advance to state legislatures in large numbers suggests that women are finding ways to take advantage of *their* experiences to win election to state legislatures and finding their own routes to legislative office. It may also indicate that women in fields not traditionally associated with legislative service are able to use their experience in these fields to demonstrate competence in public policy areas that are important to state and local constituencies. Because these occupational backgrounds are not traditionally associated with political service, female state legislators may be able to successfully distinguish themselves as non-typical politicians; this is an appealing campaign narrative given the disdain that voters often express toward politicians and “politics as usual.”

Ironically, the non-traditional routes that women have taken to state legislative office may also make it more difficult for them to advance to higher-level political offices. Occupations in the fields of business or law are positively associated with congressional office seeking. Though just 9.9% of female state legislators listed a primary occupation in the field of law, 42.9% of the female legislators that ran for Congress came from this one field. Furthermore, with just two exceptions, female state legislators from the fields of education and community service did not run for Congress. In fact, the legislators with backgrounds in education and community service who ran for Congress were disproportionately likely to be men (10 of the 12).

These findings are consistent with previous studies that suggest women have more success in state legislative races because women’s occupational backgrounds are more relevant to the salient issues that emerge in campaigns for state legislatures than in

campaigns for Congress. It is also possible that, despite their success at the state legislative level, female legislators from less lucrative fields like education and community service find it more difficult to overcome the personal, financial and fundraising burdens of a congressional race.

An (Incomplete) Model of Congressional Advancement

Age and occupation have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood that a state legislator will seek congressional office. A binomial logistic regression equation was used to assess the strength of these variables in relation to congressional office seeking, and to gauge the predictive power of these variables.

The dependent variable in the equation was whether or not an individual state legislator ran for Congress during the time period examined in this study. This variable was coded “0” for legislators that did not run for Congress and “1” for the legislators that ran. There were three independent variables included in the model. Two of the variables were dichotomous: sex, which was coded as “0” for men and “1” for women; occupation in the field of law, which was coded “0” for no and “1” for yes. The third variable, age first elected to the legislature, was a scale variable.

Table 6.2
Binomial Logistic Regression, Classification Table

Observed	Predicted		Percentage Correct
	Would Not Run	Would Run	
Did Not Run	653	495	56.9%
Did Run	13	38	74.5%

Variables/Coefficients: Age first elected to the legislature ($p < .001$); Sex ($p = .505$); Occupation in field of law ($p = .144$). Model: Nagelkerke R Square = .058.

As Table 6.2 indicates, the model does not predict much of the variance in the dependent variable (Nagelkerke R Square=.058).²⁸² What is interesting, however, is that the model was relatively accurate in its predictions for the group of 51 legislators who did run for Congress. For these 51 state legislators, the model predicted (correctly) they would run 74.5% of the time. In contrast, the model did a poor job predicting state legislators that did not run, correctly predicting only 56.9% of the cases. This model is weak because, on 495 occasions, the model incorrectly predicted that a state legislator would run for Congress.

The biggest problem with the model is that it over-predicts the number of state legislators who will run for Congress. From the perspective of the model, these 495 state legislators who did not run shared traits in common with the group that did run for Congress. Why did some state legislators with these traits run for Congress while a much larger group of similarly situated state legislators decide not to run? I believe that this finding is the result of the failure of the model to account for the key variable of opportunity. As noted above, congressional elections are highly competitive and state legislators often find their path to congressional office blocked by a difficult-to-defeat congressional incumbent. The best opportunities for congressional advancement are relatively infrequently occurring open seat opportunities; unfortunately, open seat opportunities are not accounted for in this model.

Though my database does not include a variable accounting for congressional open seats for all state legislators, a variable for open seats is included as part of the congressional election data collected on the group of 51 state legislators in the sample that ran for Congress. Of the 51 legislators who ran for Congress, 29 ran for open seats (56.9%). The

²⁸² To be more specific, in binary logistic regression, the logistic regression equation assesses changes in the log odds of the dependent variable. Source: Garson, "Logistic Regression: Key Terms and Concepts, Logistic Coefficients," ><http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/logistic.htm><.

female state legislators that ran for Congress were more likely than the men who ran for Congress to run for an open seat. 71.4% of the women who ran for Congress (5/7) ran for an open seat, compared to only 54.5% of men (22/44).

These statistics suggest that female state legislators are more reliant on open seat opportunities. This is certainly consistent with arguments that female state legislators are more risk-averse than male state legislators. As noted previously, this pattern of risk-aversion may be related to the age and occupational differences between men and women legislators. Because they are older than men, on average, and more likely to come from occupational backgrounds that are not as financially secure, women may be less willing to accept the potential personal, financial, and political costs associated with a congressional race.

As noted earlier, in addition to understanding the factors associated with congressional advancement, it is equally important to understand why some state legislators choose not to seek congressional office. Though open seats were not included in this database, the uneven success of the model in predicting congressional office seeking suggests that adding open seats would be a useful addition in future research on this subject.²⁸³ The presence or absence of open seat opportunities could help explain why some state legislators that were predicted to run for Congress did run and others that were predicted to run did not.

²⁸³ The task of assessing the association between state legislative office seeking and congressional open seats is complicated by the fact that the congressional and state legislative districts are not required to follow similar lines. In all cases, congressional districts are larger than state legislative districts and they therefore encompass multiple state legislative districts. Likewise, the boundaries of state legislative districts do not follow congressional boundaries; as a result, state legislative districts sometimes overlap two or more congressional seats.

A Gendered Pipeline?

The pipeline is gendered in the sense that male and female state legislators differ in ways that are relevant to the likelihood they will advance to Congress. Men and women don't arrive at the pipeline in the same fashion – the women are older than the men and come from different occupational backgrounds. Further, once in the pipeline, men are more likely than women to have the characteristics associated with congressional advancement (i.e., youth, an occupational background in business or law).

The analogy of a pipeline is itself a bit misleading. It is not so much a pipeline, which delivers something from one point to another, as much as a very short and narrow funnel. Few legislators make it through the funnel and most, to strain the analogy further, spill over the side. Those individuals that do make it through the funnel are younger, on average, and more likely to come from occupations in law and business. Furthermore, both age and occupation are gendered factors in that they vary as a result of cultural and social circumstances related to whether a person is a man and a woman. As a result, though few state legislators will make it to Congress, men are more likely to do so than women.

Clearly, we need to refine the pipeline theory as it relates to women's representation. I believe that the pipeline theory is descriptively useful; state legislatures are an important (and perhaps the most important) route to Congress. Yet, in terms of its predictive value, the pipeline theory has been poorly, and incompletely used. There is a wide literature acknowledging the important differences between male and candidates and officeholders. Given that scholars studying female representation are aware of these differences, it is surprising that they have not been more careful about using aggregate data to project long-term trends that are based on the district-based advancement of individuals. Though the pipeline theory helps to explain patterns in a simple way, it has obscured important

distinctions between male and female officeholders that are relevant to the likelihood that they will advance to Congress. Women have made gains at the local, state and federal levels and the quality of female officeholders is higher than ever before. Nonetheless, in terms of congressional advancement, all state legislators are not created equal. As this study shows, female state legislators are not as likely to advance to Congress as male state legislators. In order to confidently predict future levels of female representation in Congress, additional research is needed that not only accounts for the differences between male and female officeholders, but also takes into consideration the effect that these differences have on congressional advancement.

Improving our understanding of how the pipeline works has a practical value as well as a scholarly and theoretical one. Women's organizations, for example, use the pipeline theory as the basis of their strategies to increase the number of women elected to higher-level offices. As Marie Wilson, founder of the White House Project, noted:

The pipeline theory of women's ascendancy is definitely the means to an end: insert enough women at all levels and their promotion to higher business ranks or election to higher office is statistically inevitable.²⁸⁴

Clearly, this study calls into question the assumption that electing women to state legislatures will inevitably lead to their promotion to higher-level offices.

This is not to say that state legislatures will not be an important route to Congress for women. Rather, it is to emphasize that we need to do a better job taking into account the multiple factors that are relevant to congressional advancement. Likewise, I am not suggesting that women's organizations should abandon their efforts to elect women to lower-level legislatures. As noted above, the pipeline theory is useful in the sense that many women have advanced from lower to higher-level legislatures. However, this study suggests

²⁸⁴ Alex Massie, "Barbie for President," *The Scotsman*, June 24, 2004.

that women's groups concerned about increasing the number of women in Congress should also focus their attention on the characteristics of the women being elected to lower level legislatures. It is not sufficient to simply elect more women to the state legislature and assume that increasing numbers will "inevitably" be promoted to higher office. If the goal is to increase the number of women in higher-level offices such as Congress, then women's groups may want to focus their recruitment and support efforts on the group of women who are most likely to advance to congressional offices: relatively young female attorneys and businesswomen.²⁸⁵

Of course, there are many who would argue that the goal should be to elect women who reflect the diversity of backgrounds that women have – whether they are attorneys or educators, businesspeople or community volunteers. In that case, the most effective solutions may be institutional changes that would facilitate the election of increased numbers of women by making elections more competitive.

Wilma Rule, for instance, argued that low turnover and incumbency are the biggest obstacles hindering women's electoral success. Rule argued that the solution is to do away with a "winner take all" single member district system that disadvantages women and other underrepresented groups. By instituting structural reforms such as term limits or multi-member districts, reform proponents hope to expand the number of open seat opportunities

²⁸⁵ This, of course, is only an initial finding. Further study may indicate that in some contexts, other characteristics are equally (or more strongly) associated with congressional advancement. Note also that, despite Wilson's characterization of the election of lower-level legislators as a "means" to an end, electing more women to lower level legislatures may itself be considered a valuable goal. In looking at higher-level offices as an end, and lower level offices as a means, the danger is that opportunities for advancement to higher-level offices could come at the expense of female representation at lower levels. Given the increasing responsibilities at higher-level offices, a one for one trade might be considered a success, but the fact is, advancing from one level to another frequently carries with it some degree of risk.

in the House of Representatives, thereby increasing the likelihood that more women will be elected to Congress.²⁸⁶

In multi-member district systems, two or more individuals represent a single geographically defined district.²⁸⁷ Some researchers have found that multi-member districts have higher levels of turnover and greater levels of female representation.²⁸⁸ At least one study, however, suggests that the impact of multi-member districts on female representation is, in fact, slight and varies considerably depending on the political and institutional context in that state.²⁸⁹

Though age and occupation are limiting factors for legislators, the big issue is risk. Despite the widespread ambition for political ambition, very few state legislators run for Congress.²⁹⁰ The reason so few run is that they have too much to lose. This is particularly true for women, who are older and have fewer public and private opportunities available to them if they give up their seat for a failed congressional race. One solution may be for state legislatures to enact legislation to hold state legislative elections in the off year of the two-

²⁸⁶ Wilma Rule, "Women's Under-representation and Electoral Systems," 689-692; Joseph F. Zimmerman and Wilma Rule, "A More Representative United States House of Representatives?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 31 (March 1998): 5-10; Susan Welch and Donley T. Studlar, "Multi-Member Districts and the Representation of Women, Evidence from Britain and the United States," *Journal of Politics* 52, No. 2 (May 1990): 391-412; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*.

²⁸⁷ There are at least five different types of multi-member districts. See, for example: Lilliard E. Richardson and Christopher A. Cooper, "The Consequences of Multi-Member Districts in the State Legislature," paper presented at the 3rd annual conference on State Politics and Policy, Tuscan, AZ (2003). Note also that Richardson and Cooper argue that Multi-member Districts with distinct seats should be considered more like Single Member Districts than Multi-Member districts.

²⁸⁸ Rule, "Why More Women are State Legislators"; Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation*; Richard E. Matland and Deborah Dwight Brown. "District Magnitude's Effect on Female Representation in U.S. State Legislatures," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17, No. 4 (November 1992): 469-492; Gary F. Moncrief and Joel A. Thompson, "Electoral Structure and State Legislative Representation: A Research Note," *Journal of Politics* 54, No. 1: 246-256; Norrander and Wilcox, "The Geography of Gender Power." See also James D. King, "Single Member Districts and the Representation of Women in American State Legislatures: The Effects of Electoral System Change," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2 (Summer 2002): 161-175.

²⁸⁹ Welch and Studlar, "Multi-Member Districts and the Representation of Women,"

²⁹⁰ David Rohde once argued that all members of the House of Representatives, if given the opportunity to become a Senator without risk or cost, would take it; see Rohde, *Risk Bearing and Progressive Ambition*. Likewise, I believe that virtually every state legislator, if given the opportunity without risk or cost, would accept a promotion to the House of Representatives.

year congressional election cycle; this would enable state legislators to run for Congress without giving up their seats. This would make congressional elections more competitive in general and would benefit women in particular because, for a variety of reasons, women legislators are more risk-averse than their male colleagues.²⁹¹

Opportunities for Further Study

This study raises a number of questions about the pipeline theory as it is applied to the subject of female representation. The men and women serving in legislatures differ from one another in ways that are relevant to congressional office seeking. Clearly, additional research is needed to examine these differences closely and to assess their short-term and long-term impact on the political careers of the men and women serving in state legislatures.

One limitation of this study is that it examines patterns of congressional advancement in just five state legislatures. Though these legislatures vary in their levels of professionalism and in advancement opportunity (as measured by the ratio of state legislative seats to congressional seats), increasing the number of states would increase the likelihood that the sample of state legislators is representative of the overall population. Increasing the number of states would also make it easier to assess the impact of state-level variables, such as term limits, legislative professionalism and district size, on male and female state legislators' opportunities for congressional advancement.²⁹²

Though the database included 1369 individual state legislators, only 51 ran for Congress during the time period examined here. Of the 51 legislators who ran, only 7 were

²⁹¹ One concern is that off-year elections would result in reduced turnover at the state legislative level. I doubt that this would be the case. Though state legislators would not have to leave their seats to run for Congress, this happens only rarely. I believe that the number of state legislators that would win a congressional election in the risk-free environment of off-year congressional elections would equal or exceed the number that gave up their seats to run.

²⁹² As of 2006, there were 16 states with state legislative term limits. None of those 16 states is included in this study.

female and only 11 of the 51 were successfully elected to Congress. Expanding the number of states would increase the sample of state legislators who ran for Congress, providing a clearer picture of the circumstances in which female state legislators run and making it easier to focus attention on legislators who *win* congressional office, rather than those who *run*.

Similar benefits would result from the expansion of the time period of this study. Expanding the timeline would increase the number of legislators who ran for Congress and make it easier to state with confidence that the sample is representative of the overall population. Updating the database to include the 2004 elections (and beyond) would also make it possible to assess the impact of redistricting on the likelihood that state legislators seek congressional office. The 1990s redistricting, for example, is often cited as a contributing factor in the success of female candidates in the 1992 election cycle.

In this study, I argued that male and female legislators differ in a number of ways that are potentially relevant to congressional office seeking. In the five states examined here, two of those differences (age and occupation) were found to have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood that legislators seek congressional office. Expanding the study to include additional states and election years would make it possible to assess whether similar differences exist in a variety of structural and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, there are a number of differences between men and women that were observed in this study that do not have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood that members of either group would seek congressional office. Women are less likely than men to be married; more likely to be Democrats, and they serve fewer years, on average, in the legislature. Though these differences are not statistically associated with congressional office seeking, additional study is needed to determine whether these variables affect patterns of congressional advancement in a broader group of states.

In addition to the collection and analysis of additional quantitative data, the questions raised in this research should also be studied from a qualitative perspective. First-person interviews would be a useful way to study the way that male and female legislators perceive their advancement opportunities and the effect that differing circumstances have on their political ambitions and the way they react to congressional office seeking opportunities. First-person interviews and survey research would also make it possible to gather more detailed data on family circumstances, occupational experiences, and political resources.

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Appendix

Codebook: Individual, Cultural and Structural Characteristics of State Legislative Districts in Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin; 1993-2002

Edition 1.1
March, 2006

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Introduction

This dataset contains information describing the individual, cultural and structural variables associated with state legislative districts in five states: Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin. This edition of the dataset covers state legislative districts for each legislative session from January 1993 through December 2002. It includes information on individuals elected in regularly scheduled general elections in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000, as well as special elections and appointments occurring from January 1993 through December of 2002. Incidental state legislative service for legislators serving from the previous cycle (1991-1992) prior to the official start of the new legislative sessions in January 1993 is not included in this database.

Individual/Biographical data was obtained from the following sources: Connecticut State Register and Manual (1992-1993 through 2001-2002); *The New York Red Book* (1991-1992 through 2001-2002); Texas State Directory (1993 through 2002); *Washington State Yearbook: A Guide to Government in the Evergreen State* (1992 through 2002), *State of Wisconsin Blue Book* (1993-1994 through 2001-2002). This data was supplemented by a review of each state legislator's biography as it appeared in *Who's Who in American Politics* (various editions, 1992 through 2002) and, in the case of legislators still serving in 2002, a review of the official biographies appearing on the web sites of the respective state legislatures. In order to address the problem of missing or conflicting data, additional information was obtained from phone calls to legislative offices of state legislators still active in 2003.

State legislative election data was obtained either from the state yearbooks referenced above or from official returns published by the respective state Secretaries of State or Boards of Elections.

Congressional election data was obtained from *America Votes: A Handbook of Contemporary American Election Statistics* (1992 through 2003), supplemented by additional information from state yearbooks and official returns of Secretary of State or Boards of Election.

Structural and cultural data was obtained from *The Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley, DeFranco, and Diefenderfer, 1994); *State Legislative Elections: Voting Patterns and Demographics* (Barone, Lilley, and DeFranco, 1998); *The Almanac of State Legislatures: Changing Patterns, 1990-1997* (Lilley, DeFranco and Bernstein, 1998); *The Book of the States*, (1992/1993-2002); and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The data is organized by two-year legislative sessions, with a separate record for each district in each 2-year session. For example, New York's 1st Assembly District will have at minimum five separate records associated with it, one each for the 1993-94 session, 1995-96 session, 1997-98 session, 1999-00 session, and 2001-02 session.²⁹³

When more than one individual represents a district during the course of a single session, multiple records are created. A separate variable, **V#06 - Order of Service**, identifies the order of service in that district during that particular session.

²⁹³ Users of the database may find it most easily readable after sorting the database by V#01 through V#06 (in that order).

In the case of Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, the upper houses of the legislature serve four year terms that overlap two successive legislative sessions.²⁹⁴ These districts, like the others, will have one district for each individual legislative session. A separate variable, **V#07 - Election Year** has been created to distinguish the year of election from the first year of service in the legislative session, which is represented in **V#05 - Legislative Cycle**.

With the exception of the lower House of the Washington State Legislature, all of the districts in this database are single-member districts. The Washington State Assembly has two members in each legislative district that are elected in separate head-to-head elections. For the purposes of this database, the districts are considered separate - - with two separate records for each legislative session. The individual seats are assigned a separate code (a or b) and distinguished from one another by **V#04 - Multiple District ID** in this database.

There are a total of 4,447 records in the database. This includes five cases for each of 858 individual legislative districts (one for each of the two year legislative cycles between 1993 and 2002) and an additional 157 records for cases where a district was represented by more than one legislator in a single two year legislative cycle. There are a total of 1,371 individual legislators in this database. **V#08 - Individual Sort** identifies the most recent record of service for each individual legislator in the database.

The author wishes to acknowledge Carrol McKibbin's *Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996* (ICPSR #7803), which served as a useful model for the organization and presentation of the data in this database.

File Structure

Individual, Cultural and Structural Characteristics of State Legislative Districts in Connecticut, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin; 1993-2002 is available in SPSS format. The data file comprises 82 variables and 4,447 records.

Codebook Information

The Codebook contains the following information regarding the variables appearing in this database:

- *Variable Name (Number)* - designates a specific name and variable number for each variable in the database.
- *Variable Label* - designates the label used for the individual variable in SPSS data runs, output and tables.
- *Description* – provides a more detailed description of the variable and notes the sources from which the data was derived.
- *Values* - describes the specific codes (often “0,” “1,” “2,” ...) that are used to represent data for the purposes of analysis.

²⁹⁴ Elections were held for all Texas State Senate seats in November 1992, with one half of the state senate running in elections for four year terms in November 1994 and 1998 and the other half of the state senate running elections for four year terms in November 1996 and 2000.

Variable List

District/Filtering Variables

1. State
2. House
3. District
4. Multiple District ID
5. Legislative Cycle
6. Order of Service
7. Election Year
8. Individual Sort

Individual Variables

9. First Name
10. Middle Initial
11. Last Name
12. Sex
13. Married
14. Number of Children
15. Year of Birth
16. Age (at beginning of each legislative cycle)
17. Age when First Elected to State Legislature
18. Prior Elected Experience (Coded)
19. Prior Elected Experience (Description)
20. Occupation (Description)
21. Primary Occupation (Coded)
22. Secondary Occupation (Coded)
23. Year First Served in Legislature
24. Year First Elected to State House/Assembly
25. Years of Service in State House/Assembly
26. First Elected to State Senate
27. Years of Service in State Senate
28. Ever Appointed/Elected in Special Election
29. Appointed/Elected in Special Election That Term
30. Party
31. Leadership (Coded)
32. Appointed or Elected Leadership Position
33. Leadership (Description)
34. Chair (Coded)
35. Chairman (Description)

State Legislative Election Variables

36. Election Held for that Seat
37. Members' Percent Total Vote
38. Members' Percent 2 Party Vote
39. Members' Total Votes
40. GOP Candidate's Total Votes
41. Democrat Candidate's Total Votes
42. Other Candidate's Total Votes
43. GOP Candidate's % of the Vote
44. GOP Candidate's % of Vote (competitive races only)

- 45. Unopposed by Major Party Candidate
- 46. Unopposed by Any Candidate

Cultural/District Variables

- 47. Average Household Income
- 48. Pct. Dist. with Household Income Greater Than \$50,000
- 49. Pct. Dist. with Household Income Greater Than \$100,000
- 50. Pct. Dist. College Educated
- 51. Pct. Dist. Employed in Manufacturing Sector
- 52. Pct. Dist. Employed in Service Sector
- 53. Pct. Dist. Employed in Gov't Sector
- 54. Pct. Dist. Employed in Farm Sector
- 55. Percent Seniors
- 56. Percent Receiving Social Security
- 57. Percent Black
- 58. Percent Hispanic
- 59. Percent Asian
- 60. Percent Urban
- 61. Percent Suburban
- 62. Percent Rural

Structural Variables

- 63. Total Members in Chamber
- 64. Total Women in Chamber
- 65. Percent Women in Chamber
- 66. Majority/Minority Party
- 67. Party Division (% GOP in Chamber)
- 68. Legislative Salary
- 69. Legislator Serving first 2 Years of Four Year Term (no election)
- 70. District Population

Congressional Election Variables

- 71. Ran for U.S. House/Senate Seat
- 72. Won U.S. House/Senate Seat
- 73. Ran for U.S. House Seat (Primary)
- 74. Ran for U.S. House Seat (General)
- 75. Ran for U.S. Senate Seat (Primary)
- 76. Ran for U.S. Senate Seat (General)
- 77. Members' percentage of total vote in House/Senate general election
- 78. Members' percentage of 2 party vote in House/Senate general election
- 79. Identifies whether member ran in open or challenger race for U.S. House/Senate seat.
- 80. U.S. Senate Race that Cycle

Other

- 81. Notes
- 82. Notes 2 – Cong. Election Notes

Primary and Secondary Occupations (V#21 and V#22)

1.0 EDUCATION

- 1.1 College Teacher/Professor
- 1.2 College Administrator
- 1.3 School Teacher
- 1.4 School Administrator
- 1.5 School Counselor
- 1.6 Coach
- 1.8 Adjunct/Lecturer
- 1.9 Library/Museum

2.0 LAW

- 2.1 Attorney
- 2.2 Town/Village/County Attny/Admin. Law Judge/Agency Counsel/workers
comp board judge
- 2.3 Asst. District Attorney/Assistant AG/Prosecutor
- 2.4 District Attorney
- 2.5 Attorney General
- 2.6 Law Clerk
- 2.7 Judge
- 2.8 Mediator

3.0 PROFESSIONAL

- 3.1 Accountant/CPA/Tax Consultant
- 3.2 Advertising/Public Relations/Marketing
- 3.3 Architect
- 3.4 Writer, Publisher, Editor, Journalist, Host
- 3.5 Engineer
- 3.6 Computers, Systems Analyst
- 3.7 Mediator/Arbitrator/Counselor
- 3.8 Researcher
- 3.9 Human Resources/Affirmative Action

4.0 BUSINESS

- 4.1 Vice President/CEO/ Management
- 4.2 Small Business/Self Employed
- 4.3 Banking (Mgt/Consulting/Invest./Trade
- 4.4 Real Estate/Mortgage Broker
- 4.5 Insurance
- 4.6 Energy/Telecommunications/ Utilities
- 4.7 Sales
- 4.8 Contractor/Construction/ Developer
- 4.9 Economic Dev. Officer/ Chamber of Commerce

5.0 AGRICULTURE

6.0 POLITICS, GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY

- 6.1 Elected/Appointed Official; Full Time Legislator
- 6.2 Public Service, Government
- 6.3 Political Staff, Campaign Staff, Judicial Staff, Party Official
- 6.4 Lobbyist, political consultant,
- 6.5 Public Communications, Community Relations
- 6.6 Activist/Advocate/Volunteer/ Party Activist
- 6.7 Law Enforcement/Fire/EMS
- 6.8 Budget or Finance Official
- 6.9 Union official, labor organizer

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE

- 5.1 Secretary
- 5.2 Retail Management
- 5.3 Clerk (including Banking/DMV)
- 5.4 Staff/Project Director
- 5.5 Office manager
- 5.6 Legal Staff
- 5.7 Facilities Manager/
- 5.8 Stenographer
- 5.9 Restaurant

8.0 MEDICAL

- 8.1 Doctor
- 8.2 Dentist/Orthodontist
- 8.3 Veterinarian
- 8.4 Nurse
- 8.5 Administrator
- 8.6 Chiropractor
- 8.7 Optometrist/Optomety
- 8.8 Pharmacist
- 8.9 Researcher (Medical)

9.0 MILITARY**10.0 TRANSPORTATION**

- 10.1 Trucking
- 10.2 Shipping/Maritime
- 10.3 Bus Driver/Taxi
- 10.4 UPS/Delivery
- 10.5 Railroad
- 10.6 Public Transportation Employee
- 10.7 Department of Transportation/ Public Service Employee

11.0 LABOR/UNION WORKER

- 11.1 Construction Worker
- 11.2 Mining
- 11.3 Mechanic/Technician
- 11.4 Postal Worker

12.0 HUMAN SERVICES

- 12.1 Youth
- 12.2 Elderly
- 12.3 Social Services
- 12.4 Non-Profit
- 12.5 Peace Corps/Vista
- 12.6 Volunteer

13.0 SPORTS, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT**14.0 THE ENVIRONMENT****15.0 MISC.**

- 15.1 Consultant, Unspecified
- 15.2 Homemaker
- 15.3 Interpreter
- 15.4 Minister/Priest
- 15.5 Pilot
- 15.6 Funeral Director
- 15.7 Retired, Unspecified
- 15.8 Student