NEWS & NOTES
ABOUT WOMEN PUBLIC OFFICIALS

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ELECTION 1988: TODAY'S BRIGHT SPOTS AND TOMORROW'S HOPES

Katherine E. Kleeman, Senior Program Associate, CAWP

This statement is based on remarks made at the Women's Election Central press briefing held in Washington, D.C. on November 10, 1988. Panelists included: Irene Natividad, National Women's Political Caucus; Jane Danowitz, Women's Campaign Fund; Ellen Malcolm, EMILY's List; Congresswoman Connie Morella (R-MD); and Congresswoman-Elect Nita Lowey (D-NY).

For women, the 1988 elections fit into a pattern that we at CAWP have watched developing over almost two decades -- a pattern of slow but steady evolutionary advances. Among this year's highlights must be counted the inroads women made into campaign inner circles in both parties and the two new congresswomen who bring the total to an all-time high of 27 (2 in the Senate, and 25 in the House). In 1989, 45 women will hold statewide elective executive offices, up from 41 in 1988. There is also good news in the record 1859 women who sought state legislative seats around the country. We are intrigued by savvy choices women are making about building political careers. Disappointment comes in noting that the numbers of women in elective office remain discouragingly small after so many years and so many changes in women's lives. The key to sparking more highlights in years to come, we believe, lies in finding ways to inspire more women -- especially young women -- to participate.

The newly-elected women who will join the 101st Congress are political professionals with strong experience and impressive credentials. Following in the pattern of the four women in the congressional class of 1986, Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Jolene Unsoeld (D-WA) have been active on behalf of women in their state governments. Lowey, who served as assistant secretary of state of New York from 1985-1987 and is a founder of the New York Association of Women Officeholders, was one of 6 challengers in House races across the country to defeat incumbents. She overcame two-term incumbent Representative Joseph DioGuardi (R) to win her seat in New York's 20th Congressional District. Out of a total of 203,263 votes cast, Lowey's margin of victory was 5770 votes. Unsoeld, a long-time activist and state representative for the past four years, won an extremely close race in Washington's 3rd Congressional District. There were 27 House races in 1988 involving open seats; Unsoeld was the only one of the four women running in such races to win. With 218,153 votes cast, she defeated Republican Bill Wight by 627 votes. Based on Lowey's and Unsoeld's records to date, we are confident that they will bring with them to Washington the distinctive sensitivity to women's concerns and needs that our research has shown to characterize so many elected women.

This was also the year of women as insiders -- as valued campaign strategists and fundraisers, organizers and issue advisors. The list is topped by Dukakis campaign manager Susan Estrich, but it extends through both presidential campaigns and into the top party hierarchies. Women formulated foreign and domestic policy positions, represented the candidates to the press, wrote major speeches, directed campaign finances, and coordinated critical scheduling decisions -- providing fresh evidence daily that women in politics are here to stay.

We watched with special interest this year the choices several women made about taking risks and building political careers. Sixteen women state representatives sought state senate seats -- and thirteen of those races involved open

seats, the most "winnable" kind of race. Two women state representatives ran for statewide offices and three women state senators, all of them holdovers who did not have to give up their current positions to run, sought higher office. Win or lose, these skillful politicians are doing what is necessary -- and smart -- to move up.

Even as we cheer some victories, we are deeply concerned about the level of citizen participation in politics. The record low turnout for this year's election, coupled with the continuing evidence of declining interest in politics and government among young people and young women in particular, draw a stark picture. Only when young people feel committed to the candidates and issues, only when they see clearly their own stake in the outcome, will they become today's and tomorrow's steady voters, activists and candidates.

And that is why we're especially pleased to welcome new political women to the national scene. Our research and our observations suggest to us that the way to get young women excited and inspired about politics is to provide them with opportunities to watch today's women leaders in action, and to show them why and how women are making a difference. We're convinced that the key to broader participation -- and ultimately, the key to bringing more women into public office -- is making those connections. In the coming years, CAWP will work to forge links between women leaders and young women because we know that every hard-fought woman's campaign, successful or not, teaches those young women about taking risks and making commitments. Every woman who becomes an "insider" shoves the door open a little wider. We are seeing progress and we will see more; today's small steps can set a pattern for tomorrow's great strides.

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WOMEN STATE LEGISLATORS WHO RAN FOR HIGHER OFFICE IN 1988

Current State Senators Who Ran for Higher Office*

State	Office Sought	Candidate	Seat	Result
WI	U.S. Senator	Susan S. Engeleiter (R)	Open	Lost
MI	U.S. Representative	Lana Pollack (D)	Chall.	Lost
ND	Lt. Governor	Donna Nalewaja (R)	Chall.	Lost

*All of the state senators who ran for higher office were not up for re-election in 1988 and therefore retain their senate seats.

Current State Representatives Who Ran for Higher Office

State	Office Sought	Candidate	Seat	Result
ID	U.S. Representative	Jeanne Givens (D)	Chall.	Lost
WA	U.S. Representative	Jolene Unsoeld (D)	Open	Won
MO	Governor	Betty Cooper Hearnes (D)	Chall.	Lost
MT	Superintendent of Public Instruction	Nancy A. Keenan (D)	Open	Won
AK	State Senator	Drue Pearce (R)	Open	Won
CO	State Senator	Bonnie J. Allison (R)	Open	Won
CO	State Senator	Mary Anne Tebedo (R)	Open	Won
FL	State Senator	Helen Gordon Davis (D)	Open	Won
KS	State Senator	Denise C. Apt (R)	Open	Lost
ME	State Senator	Muriel D. Holloway (R)	Open	Won
NC	State Senator	Betsy L. Cochrane (R)	Open	Won

NH	State Senator	Roma A. Spaulding (R)	Chall.	Lost
OK	State Senator	Penny Williams (D)	Open	Won
OR	State Senator	Shirley Gold (D)	Open	Won
RI	State Senator	Norma B. Willis (R)	Chall.	Lost
SD	State Senator	Pam Nelson (D)	Chall.	Won
SD	State Senator	Mary K. Wagner (R)	Open	Won
TN	State Senator	Ruth Montgomery (R)	Open	Won
WY	State Senator	Harriett E. Byrd (D)	Open	Won
WV	State Senator	Charlotte Jean Pritt (D)	Open	Won

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NATIONAL WOMEN'S PACS AND THE 1988 ELECTIONS

Women's PACs were busy during the 1988 election cycle, providing cash and technical assistance to candidates around the country. The following is a rundown of information available at press time about contributions from several of the major national groups raising money from women and/or for women:

EMILY's List, which supports only Democratic women running for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, made available $500,000 in "bundled" contributions (contributions made to the candidates by individuals through EMILY). Another $100,000 went to candidates from EMILY's own funds or from EMILY supporters giving directly to the candidates in addition to their bundled contributions. Eleven women -- including two candidates in Democratic Senate primaries -- received support.

GOPAL (the Republican Women's Political Action League) provided approximately $40,000 in support to 36 Republican women in 25 states; funding went to women running for both state and federal offices.

The **Hollywood Women's PAC** (which supports both women and men) raised more than $1,000,000 with two major fund-raising events. Its congressional support went to candidates in seven Senate races and approximately two dozen House races; among the latter were three women to whom the PAC gave the maximum amount allowed by law.

The **National Organization for Women** has several affiliated PACs -- the NOW PAC, the NOW Equality PAC, and state NOW PACs -- which together provided about $250,000 in cash and in-kind contributions to approximately 550 women candidates around the country.

The bipartisan **Women's Campaign Fund** provided more than $500,000 in cash and technical assistance to 131 candidates in 39 states during the 1988 election cycle. Among those receiving WCF support were candidates for Congress, statewide offices, and state legislatures in several states, particularly Florida, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington.

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THE GENDER GAP IN PRESIDENTIAL VOTING: 1980-1988

There was a gender gap in presidential voting in the 1988 election, and it was of approximately the same magnitude as in the 1980 and 1984 presidential elections. In all three elections, election day voter polls conducted by the major networks showed 6-9% fewer women than men voting for the Republican candidate. In 1988,

women split their votes about evenly between Bush and Dukakis while men showed a clear and decisive preference for Bush.

Presidential Candidates	ABC News		CBS News/NYT		NBC News	
1980	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Ronald Reagan	47%	53%	46%	54%	47%	56%
Jimmy Carter	42%	35%	45%	37%	45%	36%
John Anderson	9%	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%
1984						
Ronald Reagan	54%	62%	56%	62%	55%	64%
Walter Mondale	46%	38%	44%	37%	45%	36%
1988						
George Bush	50%	57%	50%	57%	51%	57%
Michael Dukakis	49%	42%	49%	41%	49%	43%

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THE GENDER GAP: CONTEXTS AND PROSPECTS

Susan J. Carroll, Senior Research Associate, CAWP

The following pre-election remarks were made at the Women's Research and Education Institute Capitol Hill briefing on the Gender Gap held September 29, 1988. The other panelists included: Kenneth John, Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalis, Inc.; Celinda Lake, Analysis Group; Irene Natividad, National Women's Political Caucus; Peggy Simpson, Ms. Magazine.

In anticipation of what I think the other panelists will have to say, I thought I'd use my time to establish a context for examining the gender gap in the 1988 elections, to talk in a broad way about how and why the gender gap has developed and what its significance is for American politics.

There are two points I want to make, both of which are relevant for talking about the role the gender gap is likely to play both in 1988 and beyond 1988. The first point is that the gender gap is the product of long-term demographic and attitudinal trends. While journalists and social scientists first noticed and started paying attention to the gender gap in the context of the 1980 presidential election, the gender gap did not suddenly appear mysteriously out of the head of Zeus nor out of the politics of Ronald Reagan. Rather, the groundwork for its appearance was already laid and in place prior to 1980.

The second point I want to make is that the gender gap is primarily issue-based. Those of us who have worked with data and tried to isolate the single factor or combination of factors which leads women in the aggregate to vote differently than men do, to identify more often with the Democratic party, and to differentially evaluate political leaders such as Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and Michael Dukakis, have come to very different conclusions about which issues are most important to the gender gap. Nevertheless, there is a pretty clear consensus that the gender gap is rooted in women's differing preferences on public policy issues, not in their reactions to political personalities or to symbolic gestures on the part of candidates and officeholders.

Let me talk about each of these two points in somewhat more detail. First, the fact that the gender gap is the product of long-term demographic and attitudinal trends.... I see women's increasing economic independence from men and the changes that have come about in women's attitudes about their own abilities, as the two most critical trends contributing to the gender gap. The past two decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of women who are for one reason or another economically independent of men. These economically independent women are a part of the explanation for gender differences in voting.

Women who are college-educated and employed as managers or professionals are economically independent because their education and experience in relatively high-status occupations enable them to provide for themselves financially. The number of such women, while still small as an overall proportion of the female population, has grown substantially during the past two decades. In fact, between 1970 and the early 1980s the number of women employed as professionals and managers almost doubled.

The past two decades have also witnessed a substantial growth in the number of women who have never married or who are divorced. Many of these women are heads of households. In fact, between 1970 and 1986 the proportion of households headed by women increased from 21% to 31%. We all are well aware of the increasing feminization of poverty in this country and know that many of these women who are living on their own or heading households are not well-off economically. However, these women, even though they are often poor, are nevertheless economically independent of individual men.

If you examine the way these two very different groups of economically independent women vote, one group of which is relatively well-off financially and the other of which includes many poor women, what you find is that both groups have voted much more heavily Democratic in recent presidential elections than have men. They also have voted much more Democratic than the group of women who are perhaps most economically dependent on men, and whose numbers have been rapidly declining, and that is full-time homemakers. In contrast to economically independent women, full-time homemakers differ very little from men in their voting preferences.

The second long-term trend, in addition to women's increasing economic independence, that is important in explaining the gender gap is the attitudinal change that has come about as a result of the women's movement. One of the most dramatic changes over the past two decades has been the change in women's self-perceptions of their own abilities, a change that is at least an indirect effect, if not a direct effect, of the women's movement. If you examine the voting choices of women who are economically independent and who have also undergone attitudinal change so that they now believe in equal roles for women and men, what you find is an even larger difference between the way they vote and the way men vote.

The women who are economically independent and who also believe in equality between the sexes are making different political choices than men for two reasons: (1) because they have views on several important issues that are different from the views of men and (2) because they have the independence necessary to express those views. Although analysts have disagreed about which issue is most central to the gender gap, they have generally agreed that <u>issues</u>

are central. In fact, there is even general agreement that three issue areas are most important -- first, issues of war and peace, particularly as they relate to military intervention and government spending; second, economic issues, especially those related to the role the federal government should play in the provision of social services, the so-called "compassion issues"; and third, feminist issues.

We first saw the emergence of the gender gap in the 1980 election because for the first time in recent political history the two parties and the presidential candidates presented voters with a clear and distinct choice. Ronald Reagan campaigned on building up the military and pursuing a more aggressive foreign policy than had Jimmy Carter; he also advocated major cutbacks in government spending for social services. Reagan and the Republican party adopted a very different posture toward attempts to change women's status than had the Republican party during the 1970s. In contrast to Carter and the Democratic party, the Republican party platform in 1980 and Ronald Reagan himself chose not to support the ERA and took a strong position against abortion. Even if most voters didn't know the difference between the parties on a specific issue such as abortion or the ERA, differences between the candidates and the parties in their general posture toward feminism and efforts to change women's status were more apparent in 1980 than ever before. Voters were presented with a fairly clear choice on the issues and while a large majority of men seemed to respond positively to Ronald Reagan's views, women -- especially those who were economically independent and believed in equality between the sexes -- responded to Reagan's policy proposals with less enthusiasm.

Let me conclude with a few observations about what these two points -- that the gender gap is the product of long-term societal trends and that it is issue-based -- suggest about the role the gender gap will play in 1988 and subsequent elections. Many people, including many of my political science colleagues, thought that the gender gap was a short-term fluke when it first appeared in 1980; what they once saw as a short-term fluke has managed to last for almost a decade. If the gender gap is in fact the product of long-term trends toward greater economic independence for women and more egalitarian sex role attitudes, then it is clear that the gender gap as a phenomenon is not likely to go away, even though many wish it would; rather, the gender gap is likely to be an enduring feature of American politics.

While the phenomenon of the gender gap is not likely to disappear from American politics, it is possible for a candidate to counter or deal with the gender gap in the context of a specific race. Candidates can employ strategies that will minimize, or alternatively magnify, the gender gap in a given race. However, the fact that the gender gap is issue-based, rooted in differences in issue preferences between women and men, suggests that the only truly successful way for a candidate to deal with the gender gap is through issue appeals. Some of the strategies we've seen thus far in the 1988 presidential election, such as appointing more women to high-level positions on campaign staffs, or showcasing women in prime-time at the conventions, or selecting good-looking running mates, might have some marginal effect but they aren't likely to eliminate the gender gap.

Let me end by saying that the fact that the gender gap is issue-based also means that it is not always the case that Democratic candidates can count on winning a disproportionate share of their votes from women. The women's vote is

an issue vote, not a partisan vote. While it is true that Democrats far more often than Republicans have benefited from the gender gap in recent elections, there have been a few cases where a majority of women have cast their votes for the Republican candidate while a majority of men voted for the Democrat. Two examples from the 1986 election were Republican Governor George Mickelson of South Dakota who was elected because of the votes of women and Republican gubernatorial candidate Norma Paulus who won a majority of women's votes even though she lost the general election. These Republican candidates did well among women precisely because they paid attention to women's policy preferences and targeted their campaign messages to appeal to women voters.

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THE GENDER GAP IN THE 1988 ELECTIONS

Celinda Lake

Celinda Lake is senior associate with the Analysis Group, Inc., a public opinion research firm. She has long been active in the women's political community and was candidate services director for the Women's Campaign Fund.

The Historical Perspective

While there had been a small feminist vote during the 1970s, the gender gap -- that is, the difference in men's and women's voting behavior -- first emerged in 1980 with women 9 points less supportive of Ronald Reagan than men. Throughout the 1980s the gender gap continued, spreading to lower level races and generalizing to party identification. In 1982 the gender gap emerged in Congressional and statewide races; in 1984 we saw a smaller 6 point presidential gender gap; and in 1986 women determined the partisan control of the Senate, producing the winners in 6 key races. Ronald Reagan has been the greatest catalyst for gender differences in candidate and party preferences. On election eve in 1988, 62 percent of men, but only 50 percent of women approved of Reagan's job performance. Still one wondered if a Bush candidacy would produce the same gender gap.

The 1988 Election

The gender gap appeared early in the 1988 election primary season. For example, younger, college-educated working women made up a key and early constituency for Dukakis in the southern primaries. The gender gap between the party nominees early on reached a whopping 20 points in the spring when women questioned whether George Bush cared about or understood their lives. However, effective targeting by the Bush campaign during the Republican convention and the fall, along with improving economic indicators, quickly narrowed the gender gap, particularly among working women. By October women, especially younger working women, though still more pessimistic than their male counterparts, had shifted between 10 and 20 points on thinking the country was going in the right direction, and the gender gap had narrowed to 5 points (49 percent of men for Bush and 44 percent of women in the October 8, CBS/New York Times survey).

In the last weeks of the campaign, women constituted almost two thirds of the undecided voters and provided the final momentum for the Dukakis campaign. For example, from October 18 to November 3 in California, support for Dukakis among working women moved from 39 percent to 57 percent, according to the campaign's tracking surveys. In addition, 27 percent of working women who voted

for Bush reported they had seriously considered voting for another candidate versus 22 percent of men.

On election eve an 8 point gap remained, and for the first time in history a majority of women voted for a different presidential candidate than did a majority of men. According to ABC exit polls, 52 percent of women voted for Dukakis and 54 percent of men voted for Bush. In a number of states the majority of women supported a different presidential candidate than did the majority of men; examples include: California (9 point gap), Connecticut (7 point gap), Illinois (7 points), New Jersey (13 points), Iowa (11 points), Maryland (9 points), Missouri (4 points), Vermont (4 points), Washington (7 points), Wisconsin (10 points), New York (14 points), Ohio (8 points), Oregon (9 points).

Women continued to make a difference in a number of key Senate campaigns. According to CBS/New York Times exit polls, Bryan in Nevada, Lautenberg in New Jersey, and Kohl in Wisconsin all won a majority of women's votes and lost a majority of men's votes. Lieberman in Connecticut, Metzenbaum in Ohio, and Lowry in Washington also had significant gender gaps. Women began and ended the 1988 election cycle identifying with the Democratic party significantly more than men (8 points), while men remained more independent and leaning Republican (41 percent versus 33 percent Democratic and 32 percent Republican versus 38 percent Republican: CBS/New York Times exit poll).

In the past the difference between working, non-married women and married men had fueled the overall gender gap. In 1988, working women and non-married women remained the most desirous of change, economically marginal, and favorable toward Dukakis; but substantial gaps had also emerged between married women and married men for the first time. For example, in the California CBS/New York Times exit poll, 56 percent of working women voted for Dukakis, 50 percent of married women, and only 43 percent of married men.

Roots of the Gender Gap

Issues, particularly the economy, provide the roots of the gender gap. Women and men do not have different issue agendas, but they do see the world and their own economic lives through different lenses. Women also have different priorities for government action than men and want a more active role for government in domestic and family policies.

In 1988, as in other years, the gender gap was largely produced by women's more pessimistic view of the economy and desire for change. Women have traditionally felt more economically marginal than men and less well served by the status quo. On election day, a majority of men (52 percent) thought their economic situation would get better and were hopeful for the future. At the same time, a majority of women (56 percent) thought their economic situation would get worse or stay the same and a majority (51 percent) had concerns about the future. According to Lou Harris's pre-election poll, men split on whether they wanted the status quo or change, while almost two thirds of women wanted change.

Differing perspectives produce different policy priorities for men and women. A national election eve survey by the Analysis Group, Inc. showed that women put higher priority on health care, education spending, helping the poor and homeless, and protecting American jobs as goals for the next president; while men valued more than women investing in "Star Wars" and keeping America's defenses strong. Working women also value much more than men investment in day

care and other policies which help working families, even if it means increases in taxes.

Views of the Candidates

Throughout the campaign these differences in policy preferences produced differences in perceptions about the candidates. Men thought Bush shared their values and concerns more than Dukakis, while women leaned toward Dukakis. Similarly, men favored Bush to produce the kind of change they wanted, while women split or favored Dukakis. Throughout the campaign, women were weaker in their support for Bush, had more reservations about and negative feelings toward him, and had fewer doubts about Dukakis than men. For example, in the September CBS/New York Times survey, 39 percent of men had unfavorable views of Dukakis, while only 25 percent of women did. At the same time, 47 percent of men but only 35 percent of women felt favorable toward Bush.

These differences in perceptions of the candidates and policy preferences provided a challenge for the Bush campaign and opportunity for the Dukakis campaign. The Bush campaign effectively narrowed the gender gap with initiatives in day care and health care, symbolic politics around the family, and a focus on kids and a "kinder and gentler nation." Though women at the end of the campaign responded to the Dukakis ads about abortion, family, and domestic policy priorities, in many ways this targeting was too unfocused and too little, too late to turn the election around.

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FEMINIST ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Jo Freeman

Jo Freeman, an attorney and long time feminist activist, is writing a book entitled Quest for Equality: A Concise History of Feminist Political Activity Since 1920. Below, in these pre-election articles written after attending both party conventions in 1988, are some of her reflections.

The 1988 Republican National Convention

A feminist presence re-emerged at the 1988 Republican convention after an eight year hibernation. It was primarily focused on abortion, which still divides the party despite the fact that the far right continues to write the platform on all issues directly affecting women; it also involved the Equal Rights Amendment, child care and women's political involvement. However, since delegate polls indicated that those going to New Orleans last August distributed themselves on the political spectrum pretty much the way the 1984 delegates did, there was no consensus on what this means for the future of a party headed by George Bush.

Nancy Thompson of the District of Columbia was one of several moderates who said they had made a particular effort to get on the Platform Committee in 1988. Thompson had led the Republican Women's Task Force (RWTF) of the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) at the 1980 convention. That year, as in 1976, the RWTF's sole concern was keeping the ERA in the Republican platform. The RWTF did not want abortion and the ERA "to be confused" and felt they had the resources only for one. The decision to stick with the ERA reflected a delicate balancing act Republican feminists went through in the seventies as the party shifted to the right.

The party has always looked with suspicion on any kind of organized interest group within it in much the same way that labor unions have been hostile to anything approaching "dual unionism." As feminism became identified with the Democratic party in the 1980s, feminist organizations, such as NOW and the NWPC, were denounced as Democratic party front groups. Because affiliation with the NWPC gave RWTF members the image of disloyalty to the Republican party, they sought autonomy within the NWPC. When this proved unattainable, Thompson said, the RWTF "became defunct." She explained the NWPC's absence from the 1988 platform hearings as an acknowledgement that it "has become identified with the Democratic party" despite its preference for bipartisanship. "[NWPC chair] Irene Natividad felt her presence at the GOP Platform Committee was not appropriate," Thompson said. "She knew there were several people who would carry the water within the party."

Moderates operated as an informal network rather than through a coordinated effort in 1988. Indeed, the activities of Republican feminists and other moderates at the Platform Committee closely resembled the "structurelessness" favored by radical feminists when the women's liberation movement began in the late sixties and early seventies. There was no agreed-upon program and no one assumed leadership. Spontaneity was the preferred mode of approach in promoting their positions.

Despite their willingness to speak out on abortion and some other issues, the moderates were Republicans first and Bush supporters first of all. Both the Family Subcommittee and the full Platform Committee quickly voted down a motion to support the ERA. A minority report on a defeated proposal which would have softened the right-to-life position somewhat was drawn up but withdrawn from circulation after only a few signatures were obtained because Bush operatives made it clear that they didn't want <u>any</u> minority reports or floor debates. Instead of a minority report, eleven moderates held a press conference on the final day of platform deliberations to express their pleasure at the completed document and their support for George Bush. This is a "progressive platform," they said, although abortion remained an issue on which they differed.

Nancy Thompson dismissed the willingness of the Bush campaign to concede the platform to the right as any indication of its power within the campaign. "The Bush campaign is riddled with good women," she said. "While there is no longer an organized Republican feminist group, there is a network of good women." She felt these would be the people who influenced a Bush administration on women's issues, not the far right.

Of all the planks in the "Family" section of the platform, the least controversial was the one which in fact was most revolutionary. The final draft of the platform devoted roughly two percent of its space to child care. Although the topic had received brief mention in previous platforms, it was one of the few new issues in 1988. Recognition of the importance of child care marked a significant departure from the past. In 1971, President Nixon had vetoed a child care bill because of its "family weakening implications." Presidents Ford and Carter also expressed disapproval of bills in Congress during their terms. Both the extent of the testimony and the amount of attention to child care in the 1988 platform indicate that it has finally been accepted as a legitimate policy arena. The issue is no longer whether the government should have any role in helping families care for their children, but what kind.

As expected, the platform's child care planks were not politically neutral. A delegate who monitored the Family Subcommittee proceedings for Schlafly said the "battle had been won before the committee meeting." The Bush proposal of a "toddler tax credit" for "families of modest means" was favored, and the proposed "Act for Better Child Care" sponsored by Congressional Democrats was denounced as "a new federal program that negates parental choice and disdains religious participation."

The impact of the women's movement could be seen throughout the section. The Republican party asked that "public policy...acknowledge the full range of family situations. Mothers or fathers who stay at home...should all receive the same respect...." "Parental care" was deemed the best. The world "maternal" was not used. "Individual empowerment" was lauded. Employers were encouraged to "use more flexible work schedules and job sharing to recognize the household demands upon their work force." All of this was passed without debate. The one amendment made in the subcommittee by a Schlafly lieutenant was to add "establishment of a plan that does not discriminate against single-earner families with one parent in the home."

The only new proposal by feminists that did make it into the platform was an idea introduced by Nancy Thompson, an idea that had originated with Eleanor Smeal and NOW and paralleled a new plank in the Democratic platform. When she proposed to the full committee that "the Republican party strongly supports the efforts of women to achieve parity in government, and is committed to the vigorous recruitment, training and funding of women candidates at all levels," she caught the Bush campaign by surprise. Deborah Steelman, director of domestic policy for Bush, decided to signal support, but not before there was an erratic debate that fractured all other factional lines. No one wanted to be against women candidates in a committee that was almost half women, but <u>parity</u> for women candidates supported by <u>funding</u> didn't sit well with conservatives.

Thompson, determined to see the plank adopted, accepted every proposed amendment as friendly. "Qualified" was inserted before "women candidates," then taken out when a woman on the committee argued that if "qualified" wasn't necessary for men to be candidates, it certainly wasn't necessary for women. Another delegate repeatedly objected to "funding" even after it was pointed out that the three national Republican committees have been funding women candidates for years. Thompson agreed to replace "funding" with "campaign support." "Parity" was changed to "seeking an equal role."

A week before the convention started, the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW) released figures showing that only 28 percent of the delegates were female. Neither NFRW President Judy Hughes nor any other convention spokesperson would comment on the fall-off from the 48 percent claimed in 1984. A few days later a fact sheet released by the Media Operations Center stated that women were 40 percent of all delegates and alternates. This release was based on an RNC survey with an 80 percent response rate.

Rob Fairbank, an RNC delegate tracker, provided raw numbers in a phone interview. These indicated that 36.4 percent of the delegates and 44.2 percent of the alternates were women. Traditionally, women have been more likely to attend the convention as alternates than as delegates, but this was obscured by the numbers in the RNC fact sheet from the Media Operations Center. When asked

about the drop-off from 1984, Fairbank replied that that survey only had a 40 percent response rate and thus was not comparable to one with an 80 percent response rate. He also claimed that the earlier figures provided by the NFRW were based on their own survey and also not comparable to the RNC's.

Delegate surveys by the Los Angeles Times with a 97 percent response rate and CBS News with a 99 percent response rate found that 33 to 34 percent of the 1988 Republican delegates were women. A New York Times survey of 739 delegates selected at random indicated 37 percent were women. The Times quoted RNC chair Frank Fahrenkopf as saying that when the nomination was uncontested in 1984 the party pushed for women delegates. With a contested nomination in 1988, this was not done. In the 1972, 1976 and 1980 conventions, between 29 and 31 percent of the delegates were women.

Unlike the Democrats, the Republican party has no requirement for representation by sex or race among delegations to its quadrennial convention. Indeed, the 1988 platform counsels against "discriminatory quota systems and preferential treatment." It states that "quotas are the most insidious form of reverse discrimination against the innocent." Nonetheless, the rules of the Republican party have traditionally provided for sex quotas in party and convention committees, though these provisions have occasionally been eroded.

The 1988 Democratic National Convention

The activities of feminist and other women's organizations at the 1988 Democratic convention were driven by an overriding desire to elect a Democratic administration in November. There was universal agreement that the Reagan years had been disastrous for women and that four more years of Republican rule would, at the very least, result in a Supreme Court that would limit women's options for decades to come.

This goal, more than anything else, explains the relative quiescence of the fifteen organizations* that formed Women's Central and held the usual women's caucus every day of the convention. Indeed when Eleanor Smeal and Molly Yard, past and current presidents of the National Organization for Women (NOW), expressed some disaffection with the amount of attention feminist issues and representatives received from the Dukakis campaign, it was quickly countered with a press conference by heads of six Women's Central organizations to extol the fact that women were now insiders. And Kate Michelman, executive director of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), lauded vice presidential candidate Lloyd Bentsen's voting record on abortion even though he opposes federal funding.

The sense of unity and common purpose these women expressed was not artificial because, to a greater extent than ever thought possible when contemporary feminists first made demands at the 1972 convention, women were

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*American Association of University Women, American Nurses Association, EMILY's List, Fund for the Feminist Majority, League of Women Voters, National Abortion Rights Action League, National Association of Social Workers, National Organization for Women, National Women's Law Center, National Women's Political Caucus -- Democratic Task Force, Planned Parenthood, Voters for Choice, Women's Campaign Fund, Women's Legal Defense Fund, YWCA of the USA.

insiders. The Dukakis campaign emphasized that women held a large number of top positions -- including campaign manager Susan Estrich. Texas State Treasurer Ann Richards, a member of the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), was a big hit as the keynote speaker. And even Eleanor Smeal, who had earlier expressed concerns, agreed that the platform contained everything feminists had demanded.

Fights over platform language have provided a unifying agenda for feminists at past conventions, particularly in 1980 when the Carter campaign unsuccessfully opposed a feminist plank to deny Democratic Party funds to any candidate who did not support the Equal Rights Amendment. However, in 1984 the Mondale campaign sought the endorsement of NOW early on, and ceded "sign off" authority on all platform language concerning women to Mary Jean Collins, NOW's Action Vice President that year. No single person or organization had that authority in 1988. Instead, a coalition of groups worked with Eleanor Holmes Norton of the Jackson campaign and Michael Barnes of Dukakis' campaign to achieve mutually agreeable language.

Although in 1988 the final result was the same as in 1984, the process was more problematical. Feminists were alarmed last December when Democratic National Committee Chair Paul G. Kirk Jr. stated that he wanted a platform that was short and softpedaled such controversial issues as abortion and the ERA. Twenty women leaders met with Kirk to point out that leaving those issues out would be more controversial at the convention than putting them in. The group included representatives from NOW, NWPC, BPW, AAUW, and women such as Representative Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH) and Ann Lewis, head of the NWPC's Democratic Task Force and former political director of the DNC.

Kirk agreed to meet regularly with a smaller task force chosen by the women leaders; Rep. Oakar also called two major meetings of feminist, union and liberal organizations to talk to select platform committee members about their concerns. After Michigan Governor James J. Blanchard was named chair of the platform committee, he also met with feminist representatives, including Irene Natividad of the NWPC, Kate Michelman of NARAL, and Judith Lichtman of the Women's Legal Defense Fund. According to Michelman, Blanchard was receptive to explicit mention of feminist concerns in the platform.

Nonetheless, the initial draft of the platform written by Theodore Sorenson at the behest of Kirk did not reflect the understandings of that spring when it was presented to the 16 member drafting committee on June 10. Instead of endorsing the ERA and a woman's right to choose abortion, it made casual reference to "equal rights of all men and women" and "freedom of choice regarding childbirth."

The DNC traditionally defers to the desires of the winning candidates in writing the platform, so Jackson's and Dukakis' representatives, Norton and Barnes, had the final say. As proposed by the Platform Committee and passed in Atlanta by the Democratic National Convention, the platform urged adoption of the ERA and demanded that "the fundamental right of reproductive choice should be guaranteed regardless of ability to pay." It also stated that "we honor our multicultural heritage by assuring equal access to government services, employment, housing, business enterprise and education to every citizen regardless of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicapping condition or sexual orientation."

In addition to these traditional planks, the Democratic party is on record in favor of "pay equity for working women" and "family leave policies that no longer force employees to choose between their jobs and their children or ailing parents." Child care is mentioned three times. The section on revitalization of the "country's democratic processes" contains a NOW proposal supporting "the full and equal access of women and minorities to elective office and party endorsement."

Absent from the convention was the antagonism between Black women and the "white women's movement" that had marked the 1984 convention and resulted in a separate, closed caucus of Black women. At that time, Black women, most of whom were Jackson supporters, were angry that Mondale had not interviewed any minority women when searching for a running mate. According to former Brooklyn Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, they asked the Women's Coalition to support the Jackson minority planks with the delegate whip system that had been created to put a woman's name into nomination if Mondale didn't. She said they were angry when the Coalition instead dismantled the whip system.

Shortly after the 1984 Democratic convention, Chisholm, a founder in 1971 of the National Women's Political Caucus, also founded the National Political Congress of Black Women. While in Atlanta for the 1988 convention, she convened an Atlanta chapter and inducted over a hundred local Atlantans into her organization. She urged them to run for office. "If we do this we won't have to go to the table," she told the women. "They will seek us out." In her address to this gathering, C. Delores Tucker, former Secretary of State of Pennsylvania and currently chair of the DNC Black Caucus, was still talking about how "our white sisters disappeared" in 1984. However, she concluded, "we aren't second class citizens any more."

The only time Black and white women were both present in large numbers in Atlanta was at a reception Voters for Choice gave for California Assemblywoman Maxine Waters. Vicki Alexander, chair of the Women's Commission of the Rainbow Coalition, described it as "an incredible coming together of Black, white and Hispanic women." At this event both feminist and Black leaders, including Gloria Steinem, Coretta Scott King, and California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, talked about the need for unity. The platform, they said, speaks to the needs of all women. Assemblywoman Waters pointed out that while women may fight, in the end they work together.

One of those occasions was at the Democratic party's Rules Committee meeting, where the Jackson campaign won the vote to eliminate most elected DNC members as automatic delegates to the next Democratic convention. This will remove approximately 250 superdelegates -- public and party officials not selected through primaries and caucuses -- from the current 646. However, since the Democratic party charter requires that elected DNC members be equally divided by sex, and there is no such requirement for the other superdelegates, this change in the rules will make it harder to achieve 50-50 representation at the 1992 convention.

Equal division has been required since 1980, but the presence of superdelegates still tips the balance in favor of males. In 1988 there were over a hundred more men than women because public officials are overwhelmingly male. Since they are also overwhelmingly white, women were 45% of all white delegates

but 55% of minority delegates. Thirty-three percent of the delegates to the 1988 convention were of Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific or Native American heritage.

Although women comprise between 55 and 60 percent of Democratic voters, there was no interest in demanding that this be reflected in future conventions. Instead, there was a consensus among feminist and other women's organizations that the next step is more women candidates.

Eleanor Smeal, who founded the Fund for the Feminist Majority to increase the number of women candidates and officeholders, said elected women are equally divided between the Republican and Democratic parties and that "the Republican party has done more affirmative action in electing women candidates." However, she added, the candidates of both parties are getting better, and women had more power in Dukakis' campaign than in Mondale's, even though feminists and feminist organizations were getting less attention. As an example of the latter, she pointed out that neither of the candidates in Atlanta spoke to the women's caucus, whereas both Mondale and Jackson had done so in 1984. Instead, said Smeal, "we're back to getting the wife sent." This was a reference to Kitty Dukakis, who addressed the women's caucus on the last day. Despite her spousal status, her talk was enthusiastically received. The day after the convention was over, both Dukakis and Jackson spoke to a meeting of Black and other Jackson delegates. Neither appeared before the women's caucus.

However Dukakis did meet with over a dozen elected women at the request of former New York Congresswoman Bella Abzug and Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski on the third day of the convention. The women told him that it was important to focus on the "gender gap issues" such as the economic well-being of low-income women and war and peace. Kate Michelman of NARAL and Mary Futrell of the National Education Association were the only organization representatives present.

Lack of visibility remains the greatest concern of feminist leaders, even though its presence could threaten their insider status. The day after the convention ended, Jesse Jackson told a mass meeting of his supporters to "keep up the street heat." Bella Abzug privately urged her supporters to "organize inside and outside." Black groups and feminist groups agree that the party has opened up and is finally listening.

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PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' WIVES IN 1988

Ann Grimes

Ann Grimes, a Chicago-based reporter, spent the 1988 election season on the campaign trail. She is completing a book about the presidential candidates' wives and the 1988 campaign for William Morrow & Co.. Below, are some of her impressions.

Behind the headlines of this year's presidential race, another campaign took place. It was a little quieter, but just as intense. This race unfolded alongside the Presidential race in snow-covered farms in Iowa and on baking concrete sidewalks at party conventions this summer; it zig-zagged wildly across America this fall. The key players: Barbara Bush, Kitty Dukakis, Marilyn Quayle, and B.A. Bentsen.

If 1988 was a year that gained notice for its negative advertising and "sound bite" wars, it was also the year when, largely unnoticed, some of the candidates' wives changed the way election-year politics was played and challenged traditional assumptions about who they are and what they do.

In "The Making of the President, 1964" Theodore H. White wrote: "Campaigning in America is done with wives, wives are on public display; the code calls for their participation, however unrealistic this code may be." Political wives, as we have known many of them, are supposed to be deferential. If, as one political reporter recently wrote in a woman's magazine, "they don't maintain outright silence, in the fashion of Bess Truman and Mamie Eisenhower, they speak benignly on safe topics and disavow any strong ideology or strategic expertise."

Political wives also have a "cause." Most often this is a "safe" issue like children and education or the arts. They work on their chosen issues relentlessly, but without pay. Supposedly they view public life with disinterest and assert they have little influence on their husbands' policy-making decisions. They act primarily as helpmates -- supporting their husbands' ambitions but not admitting to any of their own. Publicly, they agree with their husbands always and present a united front. Such are the "rules."

While campaigning for president in America continues "to be done with wives," wives are no longer just on public display. During the 1988 primary campaign, candidates' wives emerged from the wings. To a greater or lesser extent, many were recognized by voters and the press not just as "the wife of" but as individuals with their own identities; some are successful career women, who on the campaign trail often acted as though they were candidates themselves.

Perhaps more than any other spouse, Kitty Dukakis broke the mold, although change didn't follow party lines. Both Elizabeth Dole and Marilyn Quayle also tried and succeeded in doing things differently -- to various degrees.

Early on, Kitty Dukakis decided she would play an active role in the campaign. What the role would be was unclear. Because she had a reputation for being "volatile" and "difficult," some staffers were concerned about just how active she would be. But in what one staff member called "a hell of a turnaround," Kitty Dukakis moved from a woman who initially was unsure of her role in the campaign to her husband's political partner and chief asset. In the waning days of the campaign, it was she who introduced him at huge rallies, touting his "compassion and sensitivity."

Unlike most spouses of the past, Kitty Dukakis rarely went unnoticed, and she drew attention more for what she had to say on the issues than for the bright red outfits she favored on the campaign trail. Also, unlike other members of the sisterhood of wives, she openly contradicted her husband and, in response to repeated press inquiries, admitted they often disagreed, though she was careful to point out that both of them knew who was the elected officeholder. And carefully, but insistently, she pointed out that she gave her husband advice, "even when he didn't ask for it."

Nor was Ms. Dukakis' choice of causes as "safe" as some might have liked. Homelessness, the Holocaust, and reunification of Southeast Asian refugee families are by no means uncontroversial issues. Moreover, as the campaign

progressed, she emerged as a vociferous spokesperson on controversial issues like Israel and AIDS. It was she, not the candidate, who delivered the campaign's major position paper on AIDS before 1,200 people in San Francisco.

When Dukakis chose Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate, it was publicly announced that Kitty had input into the decision, as did other campaign higher ups. Similarly, Elizabeth Hanford Dole, a former Reagan Cabinet member, and Marilyn Quayle reported that they actively influenced their husbands' policy decisions. Both claimed equal stature with their husbands. Dole's name, like that of her husband, was bandied about as a vice-presidential contender. And although Quayle put her legal career on hold while her husband's career and children grew, she describes herself as her husband's key adviser. One of her most-often quoted statements was: "We met as equals and we have continued to treat each other as equals, whether professionally or in our personal life."

Unlike these women, First-Lady-To-Be Barbara Bush campaigned independently, but did not speak out on issues, other than her favorite cause, illiteracy. Politically, she played it safe, sticking to the traditional role of the supportive helpmate. But the plain-spoken Barbara Bush's influence is not to be dismissed. She has been known to round up reporters to increase her husband's news coverage. She denies interviews to those of whose coverage she disapproves. She is known as a "terror with the staff," a description with which she only mildly disagrees. Staffers point to her influence on key personnel decisions such as appointing Sheila Tate as Bush's press secretary when the Vice President was having "gender gap" problems. And when one day on a campaign bus tour of rural Illinois, she told the national press corps "she didn't know much about politics," the bus exploded into disbelieving laughter. She joined in.

Because of Nancy Reagan's well-publicized influence on the Oval Office, and an unprecedented emphasis on character and private lives, the press and the public increasingly look to a spouse to learn more about the "human" side of political leaders. In 1988, voters were not voting for a spouse, but many talked of "electing a team." Few believed a spouse didn't significantly influence a candidate. Given the growing acknowledgement of that influence, many wanted to know more about how spouses affected the candidate and the decisions he made.

LISTS OF ORGANIZATIONS AVAILABLE FROM CAWP

The lists of organizations of women officeholders which used to appear in each issue of News & Notes are published once a year in the spring issue (March / April). Contact CAWP if you would like copies of any of the available lists of organizations (not individuals).

In addition to the 18,000 elected women in CAWP's **National Information Bank on Women in Public Office**, the following lists, which include the name of the organization, contact person, address, and phone number (if available), are available from CAWP:

National Organizations of Women Officeholders

Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (CCWI)
Women Executives in State Government (WESG)
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Women's Network
National Order of Women Legislators (NOWLs)
National Organization of Black Elected Legislators/Women (NOBEL)
National Association of Counties (NACo), Women Officials in NACo
National League of Cities (NLC), Women in Municipal Government (WIMG)
National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ)

Statewide Organizations of Elected Women

States: CA, IL, MD, MN, NV, NJ, NY, OR, PA, SC, TX, WA

Statewide Organizations of Women Legislators

States: AK, CA, CT, IL, IA, KS, MD, MA, NY, NC, VA

Statewide Organizations of Women in Municipal Offices

States: IA, MA, MI, MN, WA

Organizations of Administrative Women in Government

National:
American Planning Association, Planning and Women Division
American Public Works Association, Women in Public Works
American Society for Public Administration, Section for Women in Public Admin.
American Society for Training and Development
Federally Employed Women

States: CA (5) and MI

Women's PACs

Twenty-six women's PACs (national, state, and local) around the country.