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978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

Edited by Christina Wolbrecht, Karen Beckwith and Lisa Baldez

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Political Women and American Democracy

What do we know about women, politics, and democracy in the United States? The past thirty years have witnessed a dramatic increase in women's participation in American politics and an explosion of research on women, and the transformations effected by them, during the same period. *Political Women and American Democracy* provides a critical synthesis of scholarly research by leading experts in the field. The collected chapters examine women as citizens, voters, participants, movement activists, partisans, candidates, and legislators. They provide frameworks for understanding and organizing existing scholarship; focus on theoretical, methodological, and empirical debates; and map out productive directions for future research. As the only book to focus specifically on women and gender in U.S. politics, *Political Women and American Democracy* will be an invaluable resource for scholars and students studying and conducting women and politics research.

Christina Wolbrecht is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Director of the Program in American Democracy at the University of Notre Dame. Her book *The Politics of Women's Rights: Parties, Positions, and Change* (2000) was recipient of the 2001 Leon Epstein Outstanding Book Award from the American Political Science Association (Political Organizations and Parties Section). She has published articles in many journals, including the *American Journal of Political Science* and the *Journal of Politics*.

Karen Beckwith is Flora Stone Mather Professor of Political Science at Case Western Reserve University. She teaches mass politics, political parties and political movements, and women and politics; her research focuses on comparative women, gender, and politics. She is the founding editor, with Lisa Baldez, of *Politics & Gender*. Her books include *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State* (2003; with Lee Ann Banaszak and Dieter Rucht) and *American Women and Political Participation* (1986). Her work on women's movements and gender has been published in the *European Journal of Political Research*, *Politics & Society*, *Signs*, and *West European Politics*, among other journals. She is a former president of the American Political Science Association's Women and Politics Research Section.

Lisa Baldez is Associate Professor in the Government and Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies departments at Dartmouth College. She is the founding editor, with Karen Beckwith, of *Politics & Gender*. She is the author of *Why Women Protest: Women's Movements in Chile* (2002) and numerous journal articles. She is currently writing a book about gender quotas in Latin America.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For Our Children

Ella and Jane Doppke

Fitz Beckwith Collings and Piper Beckwith-Collings

Joe and Sam Carey

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy
Edited by Christina Wolbrecht, Karen Beckwith and Lisa Baldez
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xi
1. Introduction: What We Saw at the Revolution: Women in American Politics and Political Science <i>Christina Wolbrecht</i>	i
2. Gender as a Category of Analysis in American Political Development <i>Gretchen Ritter</i>	12
3. Gender, Public Opinion, and Political Reasoning <i>Leonie Huddy, Erin Cassese, and Mary-Kate Lizotte</i>	31
4. Gender in the Aggregate, Gender in the Individual, Gender and Political Action <i>Nancy Burns</i>	50
5. What Revolution? Incorporating Intersectionality in Women and Politics <i>Jane Junn and Nadia Brown</i>	64
6. Women’s Movements and Women in Movements: Influencing American Democracy from the “Outside”? <i>Lee Ann Banaszak</i>	79
7. Representation by Gender and Parties <i>Kira Sanbonmatsu</i>	96
8. Women as Candidates in American Politics: The Continuing Impact of Sex and Gender <i>Kathleen Dolan</i>	110
9. Women as Officeholders: Linking Descriptive and Substantive Representation <i>Beth Reingold</i>	128
	vii

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy
Edited by Christina Wolbrecht, Karen Beckwith and Lisa Baldez
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii	<i>Contents</i>
10. Theorizing Women’s Representation in the United States <i>Suzanne Dovi</i>	148
11. Political Women in Comparative Democracies: A Primer for Americanists <i>Lisa Baldez</i>	167
12. Conclusion: Between Participation and Representation: Political Women and Democracy in the United States <i>Karen Beckwith</i>	181
<i>References</i>	199
<i>Index</i>	251

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

Edited by Christina Wolbrecht, Karen Beckwith and Lisa Baldez

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

What do we know about women, politics, and democracy in the United States? The past thirty years have witnessed an explosion of research on women in American politics alongside the dramatic increase in women's political participation and the transformations that women have effected in the American political system during this same period. As women take on new roles and face changing political (and social and economic) climates, their experiences and contributions to American democracy continue to evolve. Our scholarship has evolved as well. Understanding the contributions and experiences of half of the population provides fundamental insight into how American democracy works. Thus each chapter in this volume asks: What does existing research tell us about political women in the United States, and what do we need to understand better? What does and should our scholarship reveal about the opportunities and challenges women face as political actors in the American political system? What do we know, and what more do we need to know, about how American democracy is affected by the presence – and absence – of political women? Overall, this volume provides a critical synthesis of more than three decades of scholarly literature on women, gender, and American politics within political science.

What began as an “ill-formed idea” (the subject heading of the October 2004 e-mail in which Wolbrecht first proposed the idea of a conference to Beckwith and Baldez) has resulted in a collection of critical essays that we hope will make a major contribution to scholarship on political women in American politics. We envision this book as contributing to the production of knowledge in several ways: as a central text in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on women, gender, and American politics; as a useful, “scope of the field” synthesis of existing studies for scholars conducting research in this field; and as a source of inspiration for future projects for scholars at all levels.

In the spring of 2005, we three editors invited some of the most interesting and expert scholars in the field to write essays that critically engaged the

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

state of the discipline on a particular aspect of political women in American politics and that mapped out their vision for where this research might most productively move in the future. The authors first presented their chapters at a lively and productive three-day conference, “Political Women and American Democracy,” which was held on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, May 25–27, 2006. The conference was sponsored by Notre Dame’s Program in American Democracy (<http://americandemocracy.nd.edu>) and supported by a major grant from the Annenberg Foundation. We are most grateful. Lisa Baldez, Kim Fridkin, Jane Junn, Jane Mansbridge, Eileen McDonagh, Suzanne Mettler, and Susan Welch graciously served as discussants at the conference; their insights contributed significantly to the quality of the essays contained in this volume.

A number of people helped us shepherd the essays in this volume from conference papers to polished chapters. We are particularly grateful to Alex Holzman and Ed Parsons. The anonymous reviewers gave our collection a careful and expert reading, which greatly improved the final product. Anne Baker provided exemplary editorial assistance. Most of all, we thank the contributors, whose responses to our invitation far exceeded our expectations, and whose professionalism, friendship, and good humor have made this process a pleasure. Our own collaboration as editors has been characterized by fierce but friendly intellectual debate, constant communication on all matters large and small (some even related to this project), and lots of laughter. We thank each other as well.

In the course of our work and our editorial conversations, we came across abundant evidence that the experiences of both political women and political scientists are gendered in regard to children. Our own children confronted several different kinds of challenges while we were working on this book: mastering how to walk and talk, learning to speak Spanish, getting into college, and starting a business (see www.fitzfiber.com!). At the same time, they dealt with mothers who traveled to meetings, talked endlessly on the phone while wearing headsets, and spent hours at the computer to meet conference and press deadlines. Thus it is only right and appropriate that we dedicate this book to our children: Karen’s Fitz and Piper, Lisa’s Joe and Sam, and Christina’s Ella and Jane, who arrived along with the page proofs.

Christina Wolbrecht
South Bend, Indiana

Karen Beckwith
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30 June 2007

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Christina Wolbrecht (Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Program in American Democracy, University of Notre Dame) is the author of *The Politics of Women's Rights: Parties, Positions, and Change* (2000), which received the 2001 Leon Epstein Outstanding Book Award from the American Political Science Association (Political Organizations and Parties Section). She has published articles in many journals, including the *American Journal of Political Science* and the *Journal of Politics*.

Karen Beckwith (Flora Stone Mather Professor of Political Science, Case Western Reserve University) teaches mass politics, political parties and political movements, and women and politics; her research focuses on comparative women, gender, and politics. She is the founding editor, with Lisa Baldez, of *Politics & Gender*. Her books include *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State* (2003; with Lee Ann Banaszak and Dieter Rucht) and *American Women and Political Participation* (1986). Her work on women's movements and gender has been published in the *European Journal of Political Research*, *Politics & Society*, *Signs*, and *West European Politics*, among other journals. She is a former president of the American Political Science Association's Women and Politics Research Section.

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

Contributors

AUTHORS

Lee Ann Banaszak (Associate Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies, Pennsylvania State University) writes on comparative women's movements and the determinants of feminist attitudes among the mass public in the United States and Europe. She is the author of *Why Movements Succeed or Fail: Opportunity, Culture and the Struggle for Woman Suffrage* (1996) and editor of two books, including *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State* with Karen Beckwith and Dieter Rucht (2003). Her current research examines movement activists within government and their effect on the U.S. women's movement.

Nadia Brown (Ph.D. candidate, Department of Political Science, Rutgers University) is writing a dissertation on women and politics, specializing in African American political women.

Nancy Burns's (Warren E. Miller Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan) current work focuses on gender, race, public opinion, and political action and on the relationship between states and cities. Her publications include *The Formation of American Local Governments* (1994) and *The Private Roots of Public Action* (2001). Burns served as Principal Investigator of the National Election Studies from 1999 to 2005. She currently serves as Director of the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan. Burns is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Erin Cassese's (Assistant Professor of Political Science, West Virginia University) research interests lie in American politics and political psychology, with an emphasis on political identity, gender identity, and the culture wars. Cassese has collaborated on chapters in volumes such as *Voting the Gender Gap* and *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*.

Kathleen Dolan's (Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) primary research and teaching interests are in the areas of elections, public opinion, and gender politics. She is the author of *Voting for Women: How the Public Evaluates Women Candidates* (2004), as well as numerous book chapters and articles in the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Political Research Quarterly*, and *Political Psychology*, among others. Dolan is currently the coeditor (with Aili Mari Tripp) of *Politics & Gender*.

Suzanne Dovi's (Associate Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, University of Arizona) research interests include democratic theory, representation (especially the representation of historically disadvantaged groups), feminist theory, and normative concepts like hypocrisy and despair. Her work has appeared in the *American Political Science Review*, *Constellations*, *Journal of Politics*, and *Polity*. Her book, *The Good Representative*, has recently been published by Blackwell.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contributors*

xiii

Leonie Huddy (Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Survey Research, Stony Brook University) has written extensively on the political psychology of intergroup relations, with a special emphasis on gender, race, and ethnic relations. She is a coauthor of the *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, which received the APSA's Robert Lane Award, and current coeditor of the journal *Political Psychology*. She is the author of numerous scholarly book chapters and articles in journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and *Political Psychology*, and her recent work has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the Russell Sage Foundation. Her current research includes work on emotional reactions to war and terrorism and the psychological underpinnings of white racial policy views.

Jane Junn's (Associate Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University) primary interests are political participation and elections in the United States, political behavior and attitudes among American minorities and immigrants, theories of democracy, survey research, and social science methodology. Her research has been supported by the Russell Sage Foundation, the Center for Information and Research on Civil Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), the National Science Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the Spencer Foundation, and the Educational Testing Service. She is the author of *New Race Politics: Understanding Minority and Immigrant Politics* (edited with Kerry Haynie, 2008); *Education and Democratic Citizenship in America* (with Norman Nie and Ken Stehlik-Barry, 1996), which won the Woodrow Wilson Foundation Book Award from the American Political Science Association; and *Civic Education: What Makes Students Learn* (with Richard Niemi, 1998), along with articles and chapters on political participation. She is currently at work on a book on race and political participation in the United States, with emphasis on the dynamics of immigration and racial diversity.

Mary-Kate Lizotte's (Ph.D. candidate, Department of Political Science, Stony Brook University) major field of study is political psychology with specific research interests in gender, emotion, and public opinion. Her dissertation addresses the emotional nature of gender differences in support of U.S. foreign policy.

Beth Reingold's (Associate Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies, Emory University) principal research interest is the impact of women, gender, and feminism in American politics. Her book, *Representing Women: Sex, Gender, and Legislative Behavior in Arizona and California* (2000), tests, and often challenges, widespread assumptions that women in public office will "make a difference" for women, as women. She has also written on feminist consciousness and identity politics in such journals as the *Journal of Politics* and *Political Research Quarterly*. Her current collaborative

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-71384-9 - Political Women and American Democracy

Edited by Christina Wolbrecht, Karen Beckwith and Lisa Baldez

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

Contributors

work, supported by the National Science Foundation, examines the impact of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in the American state legislatures.

Gretchen Ritter (Professor of Government, University of Texas at Austin) specializes in studies of American politics and gender politics from a historical and theoretical perspective. She has published articles, reviews, and essays in numerous peer-reviewed journals in law, political science, sociology, and women studies and is the author of *Goldbugs and Greenbacks: The Antimonopoly Tradition and the Politics of Finance in America* (1997) and of *The Constitution as Social Design: Gender and Civic Membership in the American Constitutional Order* (2006). She is Director of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Texas.

Kira Sanbonmatsu (Associate Professor of Political Science and Senior Scholar at the Center for American Women and Politics [CAWP], the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University) is the author of *Where Women Run: Gender and Party in the American States* (2006) and *Democrats, Republicans, and the Politics of Women's Place* (2002). Her articles have appeared in such journals as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Politics & Gender*, and *Party Politics*. Her research interests include gender, race/ethnicity, parties, public opinion, and state politics.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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