

Note

Gender and Political Activity in Canada, 1965-1984*

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The political involvement of Canadian women has been receiving increased attention from social scientists, reflecting the enhanced prominence of the women's movement. Much of the focus of this interest has been upon different rates of participation by gender, and whether women's lesser activity has been affected by the changing economic, political and social conditions of recent years. Questions that have been raised in this connection include whether there has been a diminution of sex-based differences over time and what are the specific obstacles to women's political involvement.

Participation Differences by Gender

The historic pattern of gender-based differentials in varying forms of political participation has been documented in a variety of discussions of

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political activity, both Canadian and American.¹ The explanation for past differentials has been attributed to such varied factors as cultural socialization, individual role constraints, intervening structural demographic factors, and the absence of mobilizing issues. The substance of these various theoretical approaches has been repeated regularly in previous articles on the subject. Nevertheless, a brief review is in order.

Those suggesting that cultural socialization contributes to the relative passivity of women politically believe that it is the result of societal norms, transmitted since childhood, which define politics as a male preserve.² They cite evidence showing greater political interest and involvement among male children dating from the early years of grade school.³ Others, however, point out that gender-based political differences in childhood are usually small, inconsistent and frequently insignificant.⁴ A corollary to this argument holds that the impact of cultural socialization, however valid it may once have been, is in decline as younger adults socialized in a more sexually egalitarian era increase as a proportion of the electorate.⁵ Moreover, the socialization process does not end when one leaves school, and older adults are also culturally influenced by egalitarian values.⁶

The hypothesis that role constraints confine women's opportunities for political involvement suggests that women's unique responsibilities preclude activity at a level equal to that of men. Typically cited amongst these responsibilities have been the running of the home and other family obligations. The argument does not rest solely with the time demands placed upon housewives, but also with the lessened opportunities for political stimulation and discussion, events that are thought more likely to occur outside the home.⁷ Andersen's research is

- 1 William Mishler, *Political Participation in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), 102-04; Rick Van Loon, "Political Participation in Canada: The 1965 Election," this JOURNAL 3 (1970), 308; Robert Lane, *Political Life* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959), 209-15; Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley, 1960), 483-93; Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, *Participation in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 95-102; Lester Milbrath, *Political Participation* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), 133-37.
- 2 Dean Jaros, *Socialization to Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 44-45; Robert Hess and Judith Torney, *The Development of Political Attitudes in Children* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967), 199-222; Lane, *Political Life*, 120-22; Fred Greenstein, *Children and Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 107-27.
- 3 Hess and Torney, *The Development of Political Attitudes in Children*, 214.
- 4 David Easton and Jack Dennis, *Children in the Political System* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), 342-43; Anthony Orum, Roberta Cohen, Sheri Grassmuck, and Amy Orum, "Sex, Socialization and Politics," *American Sociological Review* 39 (1974), 197-209.
- 5 Campbell et al., *The American Voter*, 484-85.
- 6 Kristi Andersen, "Working Women and Political Participation, 1952-1972," *American Journal of Political Science* 19 (1975), 439-53.
- 7 Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965), 333-34.

Abstract. This note addresses questions relating to the level of women's political activity and specific obstacles that restrict it. The work of Black and McGlen, showing a decrease in the traditional participation differences between Canadian men and women, is replicated over an expanded series of six national election studies. The results challenge the suggestion that there has been a decline in difference over time, and there is an attempt to account for this lingering distinction between the genders. Data are presented which indicate that the presence of children in the home has a much more constraining impact upon women's political activity than upon that of men.

Résumé. Cette note traite de questions liées à l'activité politique des femmes et aux obstacles qui la restreignent. On a repris, dans une série élargie de six études portant sur les élections nationales, les travaux de Black et McGlen qui indiquent que les écarts traditionnels entre la participation politique des hommes et des femmes au Canada tendent à s'amenuiser. Or les résultats de ces études remettent en question l'idée que la différence entre les sexes diminue avec le temps et les auteurs essaient d'expliquer pourquoi l'écart tend à se perpétuer. Les données indiquent aussi que la présence d'enfants au foyer a des conséquences beaucoup plus contraignantes pour l'activité politique des femmes que pour celle des hommes.

frequently cited to support the role constraints hypothesis as it found that working women had records of political participation much more similar to those of men than housewives.⁸ Still, if this role constraints argument has been appropriate in the past, it would seem to be less valid today when circumstances have placed greater numbers of women in the work force and thus out of the supposedly isolating atmosphere of the home.⁹

The effects of socio-demographic factors upon the relationship between gender and political activity have been documented in a number of studies. These show that variables such as education and income account for much of men's higher level of political participation.¹⁰ Women are less likely to be found in the most advantaged educational and economic categories, a factor which accounts for much of the difference in political activity.¹¹ On the other hand, such distinctions by gender do not have a consistent effect and other factors such as age and region can also influence the relationship.¹²

Another possible explanation for gender imbalance in political involvement that has been raised but not extensively explored has been the past absence of direct issue appeals to women.¹³ Although some might feel that a gender-based issue appeal to women was patronizing, there is ample precedent for such an approach in the mobilizing of ethnic

8 Andersen, "Working Women and Political Participation, 1952-1972," 447-50.

9 Susan Welch, "Women as Political Animals? A Test of Some Explanations for Male-Female Political Participation Differences," *American Journal of Political Science* 21 (1977), 715.

10 Gerald Pomper, *Voter's Choice* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1975), 69-76.

11 Verba and Nie, *Participation in America*, 101.

12 Marjorie Lansing, "The American Woman: Voter and Activist," in Jane S. Jaquette (ed.), *Women in Politics* (New York: John Wiley, 1974), 5-24.

13 Jerome H. Black and Nancy E. McGlen, "Male-Female Political Involvement Differentials in Canada, 1965-1974," this JOURNAL 12 (1979), 472.

and other political minorities.¹⁴ The development of a women's political agenda—including day care services, pay equity, and the election of more women—would involve the kinds of appeals that might be thought to increase women's political activity.

The impact of gender upon mass political participation has received only limited attention in Canada and has been frustrated by severe data restrictions. For example, Vickers and Brodie in their review article on women's activity confined their comments at the mass level to voter turnout.¹⁵ Until recently the most prominent empirical study on this theme was provided by Black and McGlen whose findings suggested that the traditional imbalance in participation rates between the sexes was in decline, at least between 1965 and 1974, the period they investigated.¹⁶ They suggested that this phenomenon might be a product of the women's movement and that it was particularly evident among French-Canadian voters and those who fit a more traditional demographic profile.¹⁷ While the time interval studied in that piece certainly overlapped with the rise of the women's movement, 1974 was by no means a terminus for feminist activism. Accordingly, it can be argued that if the women's movement was a prime instigator of such gender-based changes in participation rates then the trend should continue beyond 1974.

Black and McGlen point out the data limitations of their own investigation, not the least of which is a dissimilarity between the 1965 and the 1974 national election studies in the wording of certain questions and the coding of some response categories.¹⁸ It therefore seems desirable to review their findings in the light of election studies over the subsequent 10 years. This is accomplished by an analysis of data provided by the 1968, 1979, 1980 and 1984 national election studies.¹⁹

A replication of the Black and McGlen analysis is presented in Table 1. This table shows mean differences by gender for the same six categories of political involvement that were used in their study. It should be acknowledged that Black and McGlen were constrained in the use of categories by the more limited array of participation questions

14 Michael Parenti, "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification," *American Political Science Review* 61 (1967), 717-26.

15 Jill Vickers and Janine Brodie, "Canada," in Joni Lovenduski and Jill Hills (eds.), *The Politics of the Second Electorate* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 52-82.

16 Black and McGlen, "Male-Female Political Involvement Differentials in Canada, 1965-1974," 478.

17 *Ibid.*, 487-89.

18 *Ibid.*, 473-75.

19 The 1965 National Election Study was co-ordinated by John Meisel, Maurice Pinard, Peter Regenstreif and Mildred Schwartz. The 1968 study was conducted by John Meisel, and the 1974, 1979 and 1980 studies were undertaken by Harold Clarke, Jane Jensen, Lawrence LeDuc and Jon Pammett.

available in the 1965 study. The table reproduces the statistics calculated by Black and McGlen for 1965 and 1974 and also presents the comparable figures computed in a similar manner taken from the 1968, 1979, 1980, and 1984 studies.²⁰ The data from the six election studies examined together provide a somewhat different portrait than that seen when information from only the 1965 and 1974 elections was available. Rather than a decline in gender differences as noted by Black and McGlen, the expanded picture presented here suggests a similarity over time for most of the indicators.

TABLE 1

MEAN GENDER DIFFERENCES FOR VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT, 1965-1984*

	1965	1968	1974	1979	1980	1984
Vote turnout	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.00	0.02	0.02
Campaign activism	0.09	—	0.08	0.07	—	0.07
Vote proselytizing	0.16	—	0.11	0.10	—	0.13
Internal efficacy	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.12	—	0.12
External efficacy	0.16	0.02	-0.03	0.01	—	-0.01
Political interest	0.23	—	0.13	0.24	0.24	0.21

* The 1965 and 1974 statistics are taken from Jerome H. Black and Nancy E. McGlen, "Male-Female Political Involvement Differentials in Canada," this JOURNAL 12 (1979), 478. In that work, male-female differences in mean scale scores are presented for these scales of political involvement: vote turnout (0-2), campaign activism (0-3), vote proselytizing (0-1), internal efficacy (0-1), external efficacy (0-2), and political interest (0-2). The statistics shown here are the differences between the mean for men and the mean for women on each scale. Thus a positive score implies that on average men outperformed women on the scale in question; a negative score implies the opposite. The statistics other than for 1965 and 1974 are based on a replication of Black and McGlen's method.

To be sure, there are some results that stand out as deviating from the general pattern of little change. Most notably, these include the findings for the measure of external efficacy in 1965, which show substantially greater differences than in subsequent years, and those for political interest which are lower in 1974 than they are in preceding or following years.

The fact that the data from the later elections do not reflect a continuation of the decline in gender-based differences reported by Black and McGlen for 1965 to 1974 does raise some questions about the

20 This table uses the 1965 questionnaire as a base, and replicates only those items from other surveys that are similarly worded.

explanation of their findings. If the decline is itself in doubt, then interpretations pertaining to it must also be seen as somewhat dubious.²¹ Black and McGlen emphasized the role of the women's movement in accounting for the decline in differences they found, but there is little evidence to suggest that the impact of feminism was arrested following the 1974 election, even though the data indicate scant decline in gender differences subsequent to that time.

To shed further light upon this discrepancy, it is useful to look at correlation coefficients for all participation variables crosstabulated by gender over the full set of six national election studies. Although "vote" is the only item included throughout all studies during the 20-year period, from 1968 onward the participation questions asked have been similarly worded.²² Table 2 summarizes the association of gender with different participation variables; it indicates little decline in gender-based differences for any activity over time. One activity in which women do register a modest relative increase is "working for a party," but during a similar period men's advantage compared to women increases even more substantially for such acts as "discussing politics." If pairs of consecutive elections are examined in isolation from the others, certain idiosyncratic trends might be detected. However, taken as a whole, the data in Table 2 provide little support for the view that there has been a general diminution in gender differences in political participation. It might be added that apart from gender differences, there was no general pattern of absolute change in participation rates.

The relationships addressed in Table 2 were also examined with a series of demographic controls to determine if gender-based political activity might not be an artifact of some socio-economic or generationally-related factors. This was undertaken lest the statistical findings related to male-female participation be influenced by some intervening variable such as education or income, both of which are well established correlates of political activity. In fact, over the six national election studies dating back to 1965, there is little consistent evidence that gender-related differences are attributable to socio-economic factors. One of the few exceptions to this general finding showed that women's greater commitment to campaign work occurred largely among the higher income groups. The possible effect of age was also

- 21 One possible interpretation which can probably be put aside is that the discrepancies were due to differences in question wording, since that would not explain the largest deviations.
- 22 Even where there is similarity in content, the 1965 questions tend to be worded differently from those in subsequent years. Given this and the small number of participation items used in 1968, the most useful comparisons to be made occur in the 1974-1984 period, except for 1980 when the scope of the study was scaled down substantially. It should also be noted that in the 1974 study the battery of participation items was half-sampled.

monitored in order to address the contention that women's lesser activity might be the result of an older generation socialized in a more politically traditional era. The data however do not support this notion as there is little consistent change in male-female differences over various age cohorts. In fact, it is actually among the older groups of respondents that the relative male advantage is less.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN GENDER AND MEASURES OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY, 1965-1984*

	1965	1968	1974	1979	1980	1984
Interest in election	—	.08 ^b	.05 ^a	.12 ^b	.10 ^b	.10 ^b
Attention to politics	.16 ^b	—	.14 ^b	.19 ^b	.19 ^b	.16 ^b
Vote	.04 ^a	.04 ^a	.03	.03	.02	.03 ^a
Knowledge	—	—	—	—	—	.22 ^b
Read papers	—	—	.11 ^b	.15 ^b	—	.14 ^b
Watch television	—	—	—	—	—	.12 ^b
Discuss politics	—	—	.07 ^a	.16 ^b	—	.15 ^b
Convince others	.18 ^b	—	.11 ^b	.10 ^b	—	.14 ^b
Attend meetings	.04 ^b	—	.04	.10 ^b	—	.02
Contact officials	—	—	.12 ^b	.16 ^b	—	.08 ^b
Campaign work	.04 ^a	—	.00	-.02	—	-.01
Give money	.05 ^b	—	—	.05 ^b	—	.05 ^b

* Data represent tau b or c correlations. Positive figures indicate that men score higher.

a $p \leq .05$.

b $p \leq .01$.

The Effect of Employment and Children

Apart from the impact of time upon gender-related differences in participation, there has also been controversy as to the roots of lesser political activity by women. With a limited availability of pertinent Canadian data, Black and McGlen found that professional employment boosted the level of women's political involvement.²³ In the United States, Andersen reported that since 1960 women employed outside the home maintained a pattern of political activity much more similar to men than to housewives, a pattern similar to one found by Welch.²⁴

23 Black and McGlen, "Male-Female Political Involvement Differentials in Canada, 1965-1974," 494.

24 Andersen, "Working Women and Political Participation, 1952-1972," 442-43; Welch, "Women as Political Animals? A Test of Some Explanations for Male-Female Political Participation Differences," 720-21.

Interestingly, a male advantage is generally more persistent among political activities of a "spectator" nature than among those which involve a more "gladiatorial" campaign commitment.²⁵ Like Andersen, Welch found that work outside the home has a positive effect upon women's participation over time, but marriage and the presence of children have little impact.²⁶

In another article using American data, McGlen shows that, contrary to Welch's evidence, the presence of children has a significant negative effect upon women's political activity. She suggests that the findings of Lee and Kirkpatrick concerning the constraint of child-rearing responsibilities upon the candidacies of women seeking public office also extends to mass-level political involvement.²⁷ The evidence cited points to women, particularly the college-educated, being restricted from political participation because of their maternal obligations. McGlen suggests that this role constraint explanation is much more useful than the cultural socialization model. Further, she states that the absence of school-age children more strongly affects women's political activity than paid employment outside the home.²⁸

A much more extensive study by Sapiro reports that motherhood is negatively correlated with a number of political activities including interest, knowledge, efficacy, vote and campaign activity. These findings were particularly applicable to single mothers.²⁹ In the area of community participation, children seemed to be less of a handicap for women except among college-educated mothers. This was explained in terms of Lynn and Flora's notion that motherhood oriented women into a child-centred network which encompassed a minimum of political activity.³⁰ Community activity had the capacity to link responsibility for children with the political world, but it was the less educated mothers whose previous behaviour was most likely to be altered and politicized. It was hypothesized that better educated women were more likely to be dislocated politically by the arrival of children.³¹

Literature that addresses the constraining role of children upon women's political participation has been further developed in elite-level

25 Ibid., 722-23.

26 Ibid., 724-25.

27 Marcia Lee, "Why Few Women Hold Public Office: Democracy and Sexual Roles," *Political Science Quarterly* 91 (1976), 297-314; and Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Political Women* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 234-37.

28 Nancy E. McGlen, "The Impact of Parenthood on Political Participation," *Western Political Quarterly* 33 (1980), 297-313.

29 Virginia Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women: Roles, Socialization and Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 84-139.

30 Naomi Lynn and Cornelia Flora, "Motherhood and Political Participation: The Changing Sense of Self," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 1 (1973), 91-103.

31 Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women*, 138.

studies. Lynn and Flora suggest the distinctiveness of female activists by finding that women delegates at national conventions were much less likely to have responsibility for children at home than were members of the general population.³² Brodie documents the substantial hindrance that children present to Canadian women seeking political office for the first time.³³ Wilson and Bashevkin have also suggested in more theoretical works that women's responsibility for child care contributes to their lessened political role.³⁴

Previous Canadian national election studies have not included items relating to family composition and have not, therefore, permitted an investigation of the impact of children upon the political behaviour of parents. The 1984 post-election study did, however, include questions relating to the number and age of children in the household. These data provide an opportunity for the first time to examine in detail the degree of constraint that children place upon Canadians. It is a working assumption, of course, that such responsibilities fall inordinately upon the shoulders of women. In the process the relative importance of the motherhood role as a barrier to participation can be compared to the more generalized role of homemaker absent from paid employment.

In determining an appropriate classification scheme to assess the impact of children upon political activity, it initially seemed that the parents of preschoolers would be most likely to exhibit the constraining effect. This expectation was suggested by McGlen's work. However, the data showed little difference in the political behaviour of the parents of primary-school children as opposed to children of preschool age, a finding also reported by Sapiro. Hence the category was expanded to include all those with children under 13, thereby almost doubling the size of the group under investigation.³⁵

Table 3 presents data providing Kendall tau b or c correlation coefficients for crosstabulations relating various measures of participation to gender, controlling for the presence of pre-teenage children. In almost every case, the presence of children extends the male participation advantage witnessed for the overall sample. The particular

32 Naomi Lynn and Cornelia B. Flora, "Societal Punishment and Aspects of Female Political Participation: 1972 National Convention Delegates," in Marianne Githens and Jewel Prestage (eds.), *A Portrait of Marginality: The Political Behavior of the American Woman* (New York: David McKay, 1977), 142-43.

33 Janine Brodie, *Women and Politics in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1985), 85.

34 Susannah J. Wilson, *Women, the Family and the Economy* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1982), 124; and Sylvia B. Bashevkin, *Toeing the Lines: Women and Party Politics in English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 158.

35 This expanded category comprised 32 per cent of the sample, as compared to only 18 per cent when it was limited to the parents of preschoolers. As one might expect, the presence of secondary school-aged children had much less impact upon distinctive behaviour by their parents.

activities that provide exceptions to this trend (attending political meetings and working for a party's campaign) are elite behaviour which are engaged in by very few of either sex and occasion very little differentiation within the overall sample.

TABLE 3

RELATIONSHIP OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY WITH GENDER BY PARENTHOOD AND EMPLOYMENT, 1984*

	Male/Female			Paid employed only
	All respondents	Children present	No children	
Interest in election	.10 ^b	.19 ^b	.06 ^b	.10 ^b
Attention to politics	.16 ^b	.26 ^b	.11 ^b	.16 ^b
Vote	.03 ^a	.08 ^b	.01	.03
Knowledge	.22 ^b	.30 ^b	.18 ^b	.18 ^b
Read newspapers	.14 ^b	.21 ^b	.11 ^b	.13 ^b
Watch television	.12 ^b	.22 ^b	.07 ^b	.13 ^b
Discuss politics	.15 ^b	.24 ^b	.11 ^b	.12 ^b
Convince others	.14 ^b	.18 ^b	.12 ^b	.16 ^b
Attend meeting	.02	.01	.03	.02
Contact officials	.08 ^b	.11 ^b	.06 ^b	.03
Campaign work	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.02
Give money	.05 ^b	.06 ^b	.05 ^b	.04

* Data represent tau b or c correlations. Positive figures indicate that men score higher.

a $p \leq .05$.

b $p \leq .01$.

This pattern of family responsibility being negatively associated with women's political activity is portrayed even more vividly by the data in Table 4 which changes the control variable to gender. The participation figures for men are little altered by the responsibilities of fatherhood, as they reflect generally low correlations of mixed direction. For women, quite the contrary, there is an almost uniformly negative association between political activity and the presence of children, a pattern that is frequently significant. The data provided here are hardly definitive, but one possible explanation may point in the direction of different parental roles for fathers and mothers. Ironically, because of our differentiated sense of parental roles, the presence of children can have a positive association with men for certain activities such as discussing politics, perhaps because it can induce an added sense of community responsibility. At the same time, for women,

children may represent a political constraint. The one activity that seems to defy the trend is that of contacting officials, and it is plausible to think that this behaviour could frequently be undertaken in the children's interest as suggested by Jennings.³⁶

TABLE 4

RELATIONSHIP OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY WITH PARENTHOOD AND EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER, 1984*

	Male with/without children	Female with/without children	Female housewife/ paid employed
Interest in election	.03	-.08 ^b	-.03
Attention to politics	-.01	-.13 ^b	.02
Vote	.03	-.04 ^a	-.02
Knowledge	-.02	-.13 ^b	-.07 ^b
Read newspapers	.00	-.09 ^b	-.06 ^a
Watch television	.00	-.12 ^b	.06 ^a
Discuss politics	.06 ^a	-.05 ^a	-.13 ^b
Convince others	.04	-.02	.00
Attend meetings	-.05 ^b	-.03	-.07 ^b
Contact officials	.08 ^b	.03	-.12 ^b
Campaign work	-.03	-.02	-.03
Give money	-.02	-.03	-.05

* Data represent tau b or c correlations. Positive figures indicate that presence of children or housewives score higher.

a $p \leq .05$.

b $p \leq .01$.

Included within Tables 3 and 4 are statistics that provide an opportunity to assess the relative impact of employment upon women's participation as a counterpoint to the motherhood role. In Table 3 the last column showing correlation coefficients among employed men and women only indicates male-female participation differences very similar to those for the entire sample. By contrast, the absence of children brings women's participation rates more closely in line with those of men. These results are much closer to the findings of McGlen and Sapiro than to those of Welch and Andersen. A caveat to this observation can be reported by comparing the adjacent columns pertaining to children and employment among women in Table 4. While the responsibilities of motherhood seem to have a more confining relationship with the less demanding "spectator" activities listed at the top of the table, this is less

36 M. Kent Jennings, "Another Look at the Life Cycle and Political Participation," *American Journal of Political Science* 23 (1979), 755-71.

true of the more demanding “gladiatorial” activities. In the cases of the more onerous acts of discussing politics, attending meetings and contacting officials, freedom from children seems to be less of a stimulus than paid employment. These data suggest that for certain demanding activities, the independence and self-confidence associated with outside employment may confound the importance of freedom from the motherhood constraint.

This complication notwithstanding, preliminary analysis indicates that a negative association of children with women’s participation persisted when single controls for income, education, age, marital status and employment were introduced. As has been found by others previously, there were stronger correlations among the better educated and among those whose personal incomes were higher, suggesting that it is among these higher status women where children may have the most politically dislocating effect.³⁷ The constraining effect of children seems to be less among women, particularly working women, with lower education and lower income, perhaps because these groups were less likely to be politically active in any case. The other categories that seemed to be most adversely affected by the presence of children were housewives and those living without mates, groups which for different reasons would be particularly sensitive to the time constraints represented by children.³⁸

Summary

The original topic addressed here was the question of relative change in participation over time by gender. The hypothesis that women’s participation disadvantage was declining over time has been suggested by Black and McGlen and attributed at least in part to the rise of the women’s movement. The data presented from six separate national election studies failed to demonstrate a decline in gender-based participation differences, and instead indicated that any changes in

37 Cornelia B. Flora and Naomi Lynn, “Women and Political Socialization: Considerations of the Impact of Motherhood,” in Jane S. Jaquette (ed.), *Women in Politics*, 40; and Sapiro, *The Political Integration of Women*, 138.

38 A multivariate technique, Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA), was also applied to the data to permit an assessment of the impact of children and employment upon political activity while simultaneously taking into account the effects of education, income, age, marital status and gender. This analysis indicated the presence of children still tended to have stronger relationships with the participation variables than did employment, but only in limited situations did parenthood stand independently as a significant political constraint. In summary, the effect of other factors, notably education, age and gender, is evident in the crosstabular data relating the parental and employment roles to political participation, and further multivariate analysis is warranted.

political activity that did occur were idiosyncratic and not part of a general trend.

In an attempt to account for possible barriers to women's participation, the constraint of children was examined and found to have a differing effect by gender. While the parenthood of young children had little negative association with political activity for men, a consistent deleterious effect on such activity among women was noted. In fact, children appeared to be more of a hindrance to women's political activity than did absence from the workplace, an alternate constraint suggested by the works of Andersen and Welch.