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THE EFFECT OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT ON WOMENâ€™S POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

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by

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ABSTRACT

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WOMEN'S POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT
IN THE UNITED STATES

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As of 2016, the United States of America ranks 99th in the world --out of 193-- for women in legislature despite a long history of women's rights movements. I compared the timeline of the feminist movement in the U.S. to the history of women's political gains to determine what effect, if any, the women's rights movement had on political engagement. With the chronology compared, it is easy to see if there were any specific points in the feminist movement that motivated women to become more politically active. Women's political involvement increased after the 19th amendment was ratified, following World War II, and during the Sexual Revolution of the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, only 20% of Congress is female, and a lack of young women entering the political arena now gives little hope that women's political involvement will drastically increase soon.

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THE FIRST WAVE

The history of the feminist movement in the United States is a long and complicated one, with no distinct start. While many know of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, that is not the true origin of the women's rights movement. Women have been working towards equal rights since before the birth of this nation and certainly well before Seneca Falls. Political activity has never been limited to just men even though women were legally prohibited from most political participation. Since then, women's involvement in politics has only increased. The women's suffrage movement is considered part of the first wave of feminism. Feminism is defined as the social, political, and economic equality of women. This thesis will be examining the effect of the feminist movement on women's political involvement.

Aristotle believed that women were only capable of work within the home. Their identities were tied to their relation to men--wives, mothers, and daughters. Western civilization further developed this concept by not allowing women to own property or do anything other than marry, have children, and maintain a household. Even in the time of the American Revolution, women were left out of the founding of the nation. The Declaration of Independence states "All men were created equal," solidifying the idea that women have no place outside of the domestic sphere. Abigail Adams urged her husband to "remember the ladies" in March 1776, yet there was no mention of them in the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, or the Constitution. In fact, in 1777, every

state passed laws to formally revoke a woman's right to vote (National Women's History Project). American colonies were influenced by English common laws and women were "legally dead" once they were married. The Blackstone Commentary stated that "the very being and legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage" (National Women's History Project). However, Blackstone Commentaries did not stop all women from being politically active. Eliza Hamilton helped raise money for the Washington Monument following her husband's death, and many Northern women organized to abolish slavery. Women were excluded from the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention, but that did not discourage them from continuing to be involved. While Lucretia Mott never made a distinct connection between the Anti-Slavery Convention and the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, it is believed that the exclusion women from the convention may have motivated many women to action (Tetrault). Lisa Tetrault, author of "The Myth of Seneca Falls," believes that Stanton and Mott carefully crafted the origin story knowing that it would give the women's rights movement a solid and celebrated foundation.

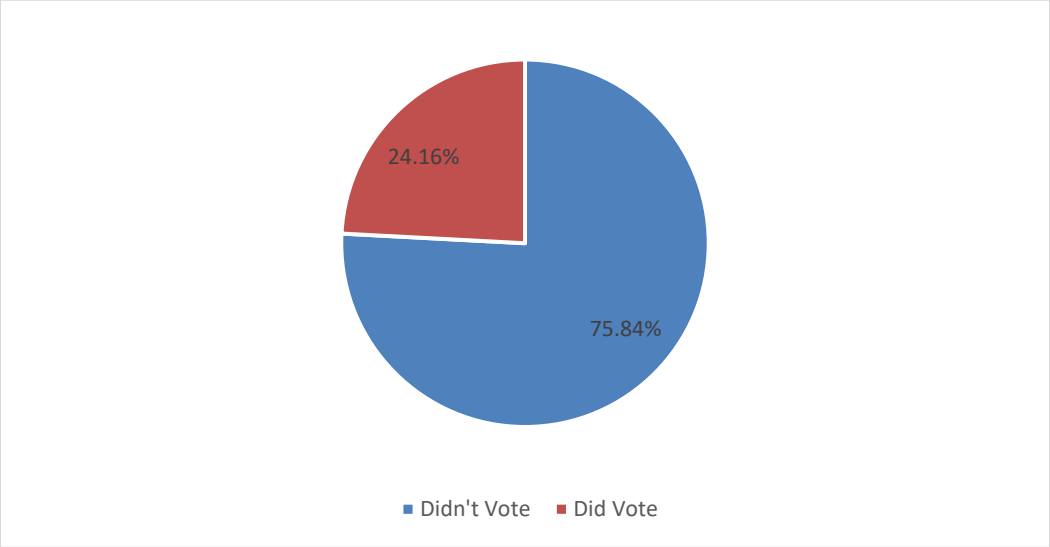
Following Seneca Falls, Women's Conventions were held annually until the start of the Civil War (National Women's History Project). Seneca Falls attendees addressed a wide range of issues, but around 40 years after the Seneca Falls Convention, suffrage became the central issue, "since the vote would provide the means to achieve the other reforms" (National Women's History Project). There was so much opposition to granting women suffrage that it took 72 years of campaigning, lobbying, and protesting for the 19th amendment to be ratified and added to the constitution. Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton spent 40 years traveling the nation to give speeches, attend conventions, and motivate women to be active in their communities

(National Women's History Project). Esther Morris led the women's suffrage movement in Wyoming, and it became the first state to allow women to vote in 1869; she then became the first woman to hold a judicial position in the United States (National Women's History Project). Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Mary Church Terrell both organized thousands of African-American women to work for women's suffrage to include women of all races; they were some of the first to fight for what is today called intersectional feminism--the intersection of gender and race (National Women's History Project). Finally, Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt led the National American Women Suffrage Association in the early 1900s and pushed the women's suffrage movement to success in 1920 (National Women's History Project). Catt could convince President Woodrow Wilson to switch his position on women's suffrage by tying the proposal to the U.S. involvement in World War I (History.com Staff). Women were playing a vital role in the war effort, taking up work that many men had left behind when they went into combat. Although various states had already granted women the right to vote, the first attempt at amending the Constitution in 1918 failed by two votes; however, the amendment passed in 1920 (History.com Staff).

Women did not immediately begin to flood the voting polls and take over the legislature after 1920. While 8 million women voted on November 2 of that year, approximately 53,230,000 women lived in the United States at that time (Census 1920). About 20.4 million women were too young to vote, but approximately 33,123,00 women were eligible (Census 1920). Figure 1.1 explains these numbers more clearly, when only calculating the women who were eligible to vote. These numbers may not be exact due to estimates in the census data. While women could vote, they had very few other rights and

still belonged to their husbands or fathers; many women did not want to participate in politics without the permission of those men, or they did not believe women should be involved in politics. The amendment was barely ratified by the states to begin with, with almost all the Southern states immediately rejecting the amendment. The ratification came down to one representative, a 23-year-old man from Tennessee named Harry Burns (History.com Staff). The amendment was not very popular with the South, and therefore the women there felt little inclination to vote.

Figure 1.1: Eligible Female Voters in the U.S., 1920



This data is also a little skewed because only white women were guaranteed the right to vote by the 19th amendment in 1920, and women of color were only allowed to vote in a few progressive states and were not always counted. It would not be until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that all women were guaranteed the right to vote nationwide. The numbers above display a massive difference in female voting patterns compared to today. While fewer than a quarter of eligible female voters cast a ballot in 1920, 2012 exit polls show that 53% of voters were women (VoteRunLead). Women have become

significantly more involved in politics since the passing of the 19th amendment, but not without the force of the feminist movement.

Once women won suffrage, the leaders of the women's rights movement knew they needed to become more organized and keep lobbying for other needs and rights. The National American Women Suffrage Association became the League of Women Voters, an organization that is still active today (National Women's History Project). The League was founded by Carrie Chapman Catt and "began as a 'mighty political experiment' designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voter" (The League of Women Voters). The League was focused on public policy that benefited women and encouraged women to take the right to vote seriously by utilizing it to shape the laws of the nation.

The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor was also created in 1920 to gather information about working women and their needs (National Women's History Project). Suffragists began to lobby for protections for women against abuse, harassment, and unsafe conditions in the workplace (National Women's History Project).

In 1923, Alice Paul drafted an Equal Rights Amendment for the U.S. Constitution (National Women's History Project). She was the leader of the National Women's Party and lobbied heavily for such an amendment to protect women's rights no matter what state they were in. While the Equal Rights Amendment was never passed, feminists lobbied it in Congress for decades.

After the right to vote was won, feminists began utilizing this right to gain elected positions and push for other rights, such as labor protections, birth control, and the right to

own property nationwide. Feminism is usually discussed in “waves” and the first wave was coming to an end in the 1920s. The second wave would begin in the early 1960s.

CHAPTER 2

THE SECOND WAVE

During World War II, women took to the factories and began to work, doing their part to help the nation with the war effort. The men were off in combat throughout the world, and women needed to earn money for their homes as well as help with supplying the war. Weapons, bullets, and planes were all made by women during this time.

Once the war ended and the men came home, they wanted their old jobs back and women were expected to return to their homes as housewives. Most women did return home because they were forced out of their position, but also because they probably got pregnant. The birth rate soared after World War II and the average age for marriage dropped significantly (Foley). Public policies such as the G.I. Bill allowed veterans to put down payments on homes for as low as $1, obtain free higher educations, and be eligible for low-interest rates on loans; these benefits made starting a family fairly easy and affordable (Foley). With small children came the expectation that women would stay home full time, and if they needed to work, they could only be secretaries, waitresses, or work in another clerical, “pink collar” position (Foley).

The image of a nuclear family--married husband and wife, a strong man who could provide for the family and a devoted mother who could raise upstanding citizens, loving children with strong morals, usually white homeowners--became the ideal vision of American life. The fear of communism during the Cold War further stressed the importance of heterosexual, morally upright, God-fearing Americans who embraced their gender roles

(Foley). Women were even more confined to the home by societal values at the time.

Being a "career homemaker" was promoted by schools and advertising. Women were not just mothers who stayed home all day. They were managing their home, making important purchases and raising the future leaders of the world. Being a stay-at-home mom was marketed as being like a career. Schools had domestic science courses to teach girls about managing a home, cooking, sewing, and interior design (Foley). During the 1950s, Radcliffe's president "'routinely greeted incoming freshmen by telling them that their education would prepare them to be splendid wives and mothers, and their reward might be to marry Harvard men'" (Woods 13). Of course, not every family could afford for one parent to stay home full time if they wanted to maintain a middle-class lifestyle, so the number of women taking part time jobs increased; selling Tupperware became a lucrative option for many middle-class ladies (Foley). While women may not have taken up full time STEM careers after World War II, they still stayed active in their communities. Most volunteered in their communities and helped keep schools, libraries, and churches open and operating smoothly (Foley). In the United States, society often does not count volunteering as "real work," but women played a vital role in maintaining their communities.

Professor Elaine Tyler May, author of *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, has done extensive research on gender roles and women's place in society following World War II.

She believes that although Madison Avenue advertisements showed women as happily domesticated, there was much more to the history of women and families following the Second World War. She writes:

> It was also a strain, and caused huge anxiety. Men and women believe in this dream, and struggle to make it come true. After ten or 20 years, they realize the dream was legitimate and promising, but it didn't fully live up to expectations. Many parents gave mixed signals to their children: "we did what we thought we had to do after World War II, and it didn't all work out as we had hoped. You children need to find your own way.
>
> We sometimes lose sight of the fact that the generation of the 60s weren't all rebelling against their parents. They were taking cues from their parents. You see this very strikingly in the letters ordinary housewives wrote to Betty Friedan after the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*. They say, 'We embraced the feminine mystique because we thought it would provide happiness for our families.' But there were dreams I never fulfilled. My children grew up, graduated from high school and went away, and now I don't have what I dreamt about way back. (Foley)

This attitude, combined with the civil unrest of the era, stirred the second wave of feminism and new political activism. The Second Wave of feminism was "fueled by several seemingly independent events of that turbulent decade" (National Women's History Project). The Civil Rights movement, Sexual Revolution, and labor law changes were all happening during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1961, Esther Peterson directed the

Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor and believed that the government had an active role in addressing discrimination against women in the workplace (National Women's History Project). President Kennedy convened the Commission of the Status of Women and Eleanor Roosevelt was made the chairwoman (National Women's History Project). In 1963, the report from that commission documented "discrimination against women in virtually every area of American life" (National Women's History Project). Many women needed to work because their families could not live on one income alone. Companies began to discard the family wage--"the male head of household would be paid [a family wage], sufficient to support children and a wife and mother, who performed domestic labor without pay"--which pushed women into the workplace, where they faced discrimination and harassment (Fraser).

In 1963, just two years after the commission found extreme discrimination against women in the workplace, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*. The bestseller was based on a survey Friedan created at her 20-year college reunion that detailed middle class women's dissatisfaction and "intellectual oppression" with being homemakers (National Women's History Project). Middle class women who could afford to stay home considered it emotionally and intellectually draining to do nothing but clean the house, cook, and watch children. The women Friedan described had gone to college for an MRS or they had goals that quickly faded once they met a man. These women worked part time to support him through college before disappearing from the labor market to raise children and maintain a household. But some women were unhappy, especially once the children were out of the house for school.

Women were becoming more politically active, especially these discontent homemakers. But from this discontent grew motivated women with ample amounts of free time. Harriett Woods details her journey from hopeful reporter to housewife to political activist and eventually a politician herself in her book *Stepping Up to Power*. In 1965, "41% of the population were under twenty, products of the post-World War II baby boom" (Woods 29). These young Americans--especially women and minorities--were ready to embrace the change of the 1960s and move the nation forward. The passage of the Civil Rights Act gave the decade a promising start that encouraged revolutionary waves and resistance to the social norms of the past generations.

Most of this change came from the Deep South, when young black college students began to protest segregation with diner sit-ins and bus boycotts. These peaceful protests changed the face of the nation, and led to the complete flip of the Democratic and Republican parties. The South, which had been heavily Democratic before the Civil Rights Act, began to vote Republican in response to LBJ signing the Act. As a result, the party values shifted. But they were successful, and women became leaders within their communities. Unita Blackwell was a grassroots activist who became the first black woman elected mayor in 1976 in Mississippi (Woods). She said that "women became civil rights leaders because they were accustomed providers of services in the community" (Woods 32). Women had aided in registering black voters in the South and would continue to coordinate protests and demonstrate for other hot button issues, such air pollution (Woods).

Despite the community action, women were not politically visible; there were just 234 women legislators in the entire United States and most of them were appointed after the incumbent, usually their husband, died (Woods). The original Civil Rights Act did not

protect women from discrimination; women's protections were only added in hope that the Act would not pass if women were included. Of course, the Civil Rights Act did pass, and with it came protections for women that had not been seen before. For so long, women were focused on campaigning for other issues, like the environment, and never worked on behalf of themselves. The passing of the Civil Rights Act and the social changes of the era would motivate women to focus on themselves as the Sexual Revolution began.

The Sexual Revolution is a term for late 1960s and 1970s changes towards reproductive health, morality, values, and behavior. In 1960, marketing for the first birth control pill began; Envoid creation is credited to Margaret Sanger and Gregory Pincus (PBS). For feminists, birth control was a form of equality and female sexual empowerment. But social conservatives believed the birth control pill was an invitation for promiscuity and the destruction of the family. In 1966, the *U.S. News and World Report* released the question "Is the Pill regarded as a license for promiscuity? Can its availability to all women of childbearing age lead to sexual anarchy" (PBS). It is argued that the birth control pill was the beginning of the Sexual Revolution, and during the 1960s, many state laws barring women from using contraceptives were overturned. *Griswold v. Connecticut* struck down laws banning married women from using birth control in 1965. The Supreme Court argued that birth control usage fell under "right to privacy" protections in the Constitution. In 1972, *Eisenstadt v Baird* made it legal for unmarried women to use birth control because they were also protected by the "zone of privacy" established by *Griswold* (FindLaw). Finally, in 1973, *Roe v. Wade* was decided by the Supreme Court, and a woman's right to an abortion was legalized throughout the United States. Reproductive freedom allows

women to plan their careers and family around what is convenient or best for them and is vital to women's promotions in the workplace.

Reproductive freedoms continue to inspire women to remain politically active. Within the recent political cycle, threats of defunding Planned Parenthood were met with donations and lobbying on state and federal levels. Wendy Davis led a now-famous filibuster against Texas' HB2 in 2013, which would have restricted abortion access to thousands of Texas women. While the state still passed the restrictive anti-abortion bill, the Supreme Court struck the law down in June 2016. Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America are two of the leading powers for reproductive rights lobbying and activism.

The feminists who fought for reproductive rights during the Sexual Revolution knew that choice and sexual empowerment were vital to the success of women in the workplace and political arena. Nancy Cohen, author of *Delirium: How the Sexual Counterrevolution is Polarizing America*, believes that "if the Pill had not been invented, American politics would be very different today" (Cohen 9). Two economists, Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz, stated that the "surge in women's professional education occurred at the exact moment the Pill became legally available to all college-aged women" (Cohen 12). Women began to delay marriage and motherhood now that they had more options and say in the matter. Early in the 1970s, the choice of entering the workforce soon became a necessity as incomes stagnated after the 1973 oil shock, and women needed to earn an income to help support their families (Cohen).

Another factor that made it easier for women to join the workforce was Title IX, passed in 1972, which prohibits discrimination in education on the basis of sex. Schools

and universities could no longer give less funding to women's sports teams or refuse to recruit women or deny them financial assistance for college; schools also could not refuse to hire women because they were pregnant or parenting. Laws like Title IX made education more accessible to women, in turn creating more job opportunities.

The National Organization for Women, also known as NOW, was one of the leading forces in lobbying and promoting legislation like Title IX and attempting to ratify to Equal Rights Amendment.

> Between 1966 and 1976, NOW and its allies won campaigns to enforce the laws against wage and employment discrimination; to outlaw discrimination against pregnant women; to end discrimination against women in education; to provide equal funding for women in public education; to reform divorce law; and to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. (Cohen 18)

Women were making gains in politics, but it was still very much a man's world. While a few women had made it to Congress in the past, the numbers were nowhere close to equal. On both the state and federal levels, women were a rare sight as legislators. Harriett Woods wrote that in 1977, "a standard quip at the time was that women around the capitol belonged behind the typewriter or in bed" (Woods 67). Woods was one of two women in the Missouri Legislature when ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment was on the table; the other woman was "an avowed antifeminist" who offered no support to Woods or the ERA (Woods 68). The ERA was divisive and those who opposed it saw it as an attack on family values and even God (Woods). Woods was unable to convince enough Missouri Senators to ratify the ERA and it failed miserably on the floor--22 to 12; the religious right and

conservative ideologues wanted to use the large margin to discourage future equal rights movements from popping up; “they truly wanted to teach uppity women a lesson” (Woods 73).

Woods can list many negative aspects of being nearly alone in a male-dominated legislature, but she said the positives outweighed the negatives. The opportunity to give women a voice in the political arena and act as a role model for young women was a huge responsibility, but also carved a path for more women to follow. In the beginning of the 1980s, women were becoming more respected in the office (Woods). In 1971, there were only 344 women in state legislatures, but by 1981, that number tripled to 908 across the nation (Woods). The women who were involved in local politics were moving up to state government.

While more women were involved in state legislatures, it still was not close to equal representation, and the federal government was even bleaker in terms of gender equality among Representatives and Senators. Harriett Woods was approached in 1980 to run for Congress in 1982, but she would be the first Democratic woman to ever be in Congress if she won (Woods). In 1980, very few women had ever served in the U.S. Senate, and most of those that had only did so to succeed deceased husbands until the next election; there had never been more than two women at a time (Woods). Woods was incredibly interested in running, but Senator Tom Eagleton, the Democratic Missouri Senator who was not running, and Louis Susman, that top Democratic fundraiser, called her to a private meeting with her campaign manager to tell Woods that they would not be backing her candidacy (Woods). They wanted to back Burleigh Arnold--a lobbyist, banker, and the Democratic national committeeman; he had never been elected to any position, but Eagleton and

Susman believed he could raise more money than a "suburban housewife" (Woods 83). Despite Woods' 20 years in public life, working her way up the ranks and paying her political dues, these men believed her to be nothing more than a housewife who could not win and favored a less qualified man. Woods decided to run anyway, and when word of Eagleton's dismissal was leaked, a network of women went to work on her behalf (Woods).

Woods' campaign did not have the backing of the Democratic Party or many large donors. Like Barbara Boxer and Ann Richards' campaigns, most of the larger donations came from working women (Woods). She experienced sexism on the campaign trail, as well as anti-Semitism (Woods' maiden name is Friedman, and an ultra-conservative rural newspaper began referring to her a Harriett Friedman Woods), and a fairly full primary with nine other candidates running against her (Woods). Her prospects were not awful, though; three months before the August primaries, polls showed Woods ahead of Burleigh almost 3 to 1. Woods won the primary, but just barely lost the general election. She won 49% of the vote, and while she lost the race, her struggles led to the creation of EMILY's List and other early money initiatives, and spurred a belief in women as candidates and voters that did not exist before. Harriett Woods puts it best herself: "I lost, but women didn't" (Woods 93).

CHAPTER 3

POLITICAL WOMEN

The 1982 elections did not end well for women; every woman who ran for a governorship or Senator position lost their races (Woods). It was a pretty grim political landscape, but there was hope for women as voters. Over the years, the number of women voting had been rising, and in 1982 4.3 million more women had voted than men (Woods). Women also tended to vote more Democratically than men and their votes "were credited with electing several new Democratic governors" (Woods 96). Women were being taken more seriously as voters and as candidates. In the spring of 1983, "170 prominent women from forty-five states signed a letter to all Democratic presidential candidates warning them they could not count on women's votes unless they gave high priority to issues important to women" (Woods 96); these issues included equal rights, equal pay for equal work, and policies that aided children and families. The "woman vote" was suddenly considered vital to win an election.

While women voters were being taken more seriously, women candidates were not. Most of the women who ran were mothers, so they were attacked for leaving children at home. It was not until 1992 when Patty Murray and Carol Moseley-Braun were elected that a woman with children who still lived at home had ever made it to the U.S. Senate (Mikulsi, et al). One of the issues for female candidates was that they lacked massive donations early on in their races, which meant missing out on tracking polls, paying for pamphlets, billboards, yard signs, and other campaign necessities. There were some PACs

that donated to women, but they required a lengthy approval process (Woods). In 1984, Ellen Malcolm founded EMILY's List, which means "early money is like yeast; it makes the dough rise" (Woods). When candidates can raise money early in their campaign, they gain the trust of future donors with deeper pockets. EMILY's List funds campaigns for pro-choice Democratic women and continues to provide important funds for major races. In 1986, Barbara Mikulski became the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right--she was one of the first two candidates funded by EMILY's List (EMILY's List). Mikulski would go on to be the longest-serving woman in the history of the U.S. Congress (EMILY's List).

More women were inspired to donate early and often, as well as volunteer on the campaigns for female candidates. 1992 was known as the "Year of the Woman," when EMILY's List aided in the election of 20 new congresswomen and four new female senators (EMILY's List). Over $10.2 million was raised by over 23,000 members, a membership list which had grown over 600% within the year (EMILY's List). A year later they would also help with the election of Carol Moseley Braun, the first African-American female Senator and first woman to represent Illinois in the Senate (EMILY's List). Women would keep making strides politically; in 1998, Tammy Baldwin became the first openly gay woman to serve in Congress and a record-setting number of 43 Democratic women were serving (EMILY's List). It looked like things were looking up for women at the time.

Nine and Counting chronicles the stories of the nine women in the U.S. Senate in 2000: Barbara Mikulski, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Olympia Snowe, Susan Collins, Mary Landrieu, and Blanche L. Lincoln. These women came from different backgrounds, political parties, and states, but they regularly

met for dinner monthly to share experiences, discuss issues that were important to them, and take time away from the demands of their jobs (Mikulski et al). However, they never thought of themselves as "women senators," merely senators who happened to be women (Mikulski et al. 3). Their positions varied based on issues that were important to their constituents and parties; "each senator [had] her own agenda for what she wants to accomplish in office. There is no singular *women's* agenda" (Mikulski et al. 3). These senators did share the experiences of dealing with people who did not believe in them because they were women, and being "forced to make choices not often required of male candidates," such as defending their roles as wives, mothers, *and* politicians (Mikulski et al. 4). Although these women had made history by making it to the Senate, they still had a long way to go.

The success stories of female legislators kept making headlines and Nancy Pelosi became the first female party leader in 2002 and in 2006 and would become the first female Speaker of the House. Feminists who had been volunteering on these campaigns and donating money could count these wins as successes. Following the Sexual Revolution, feminists had coined the phrase "the personal is political," and aimed to take social issues into the political arena. Personal matters, such as violence against women, no longer "belonged" in the home. In 1994, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was passed, making it illegal nationwide to rape your wife and establishing protections for victims of rape and domestic violence. While it was then-Senator Joe Biden who is credited with VAWA's passage, it took constant lobbying from women's organizations such as NOW and the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) (The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund). The Women's Health Initiative was only enacted because women in

Congress did the work to convince the General Accounting Office to fund the research (Lawless and Fox). For legislation like the Violence Against Women Act and Women's Health Initiative to continue being passed, women need to continue being political active and running for office.

Despite the gains women were making, the United States Government had come nowhere close to achieving gender equality. The issue lay less in that people were not voting for women and more in that women were not running for positions in the first place. Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox found that most women consistently believe themselves to be unqualified to run for any office and lack the political ambition to try (Lawless and Fox). Many men lack this uncertainty and even the most unqualified men will run for political positions at any level. Most women do not run because they feel they are the best for the job, but because they felt compelled to run for local issues. Patty Murray went to her state capital in Washington to attempt to keep a preschool program hosted by a local community college (Mikulski et al). While there, a legislator told Murray that she could not make a different because she was "just a mom in tennis shoes" (Mikulski et al. 41). This spurred Murray into action, but not all women are as motivated.

Lawless and Fox break down women's lack of political ambition into three manifestations of traditional gender socialization. The first is "traditional family role orientations" (Lawless and Fox 9). Most women bear the brunt of the responsibility for childrearing and household tasks. Because of this, it is often harder for women to balance their professional and personal lives than it is for men; the trend of highly successful professional women "'opting out' of their careers to fulfill traditional gender roles" is on the rise (Lawless and Fox 10). A political career would put even more work on the plate of

women who are most likely already juggling motherhood, a household, and possibly another job already. The second manifestation is "masculinized ethos." In order to lead a successful political career, candidates rely on various political institutions for funding and endorsements (Lawless and Fox 10). These institutions are almost entirely male-dominated and therefore favor men and masculine qualities. Feminist scholar Cynthia Enloe explains:

> Patriarchy is the structural and ideological system that perpetuates the privileging of masculinity...legislatures, political parties, museums, newspapers, theater companies, television networks, religious organizations, corporations, and courts...derive from the presumption that what is masculine is most deserving of reward, promotion, admiration, [and] emulation. (Lawless and Fox 10)

People listen to, hire, and support whoever looks like them: when men lead all the major networks and political institutions, it adds another barrier for women looking to break any glass ceilings. The *National Journal* asked a panel of "congressional and political insiders' to name columnists, bloggers, and television or radio commentators who most shape their own opinions" in early 2010; the top five responses were men (Lawless and Fox 11). The government was created by men, for men, and continues to be controlled by men, so even when they attempt to be inclusive of women, "they often do not know how to do so" (Lawless and Fox 12). The political systems unintentionally suppress the political ambition of women. The final manifestation is "gendered psyche." Society has certain expectations for men and women in regards to how they act, speak, and present themselves. The patriarchy makes women feel "secure, protected, and valued," leading women to shy away from the public sphere (Lawless and Fox 12). Beyond this, women feel uncomfortable

outside of what they are raised to think is an "appropriate" realm (Lawless and Fox 2010). Women do not like asking for donations, self-promoting, being assertive-- all the traits necessary to be a successful politician. Girls are not socialized to express these traits at a young age, and can in fact be admonished for it, and when they become women, it is harder to break out of the gendered psyche and express more masculine traits. When women do participate in "historically masculine environments," they usually do even more work than the men they are working with, believing they must compensate for being a woman. (Lawless and Fox 13) Congresswoman Grace Napolitano summarized this by saying, "women are doing a better job because they have to work twice as hard" (Lawless and Fox 13). Due to these three manifestations, women are less likely than men to consider candidacy and enter an actual race.

These manifestations are exactly what feminists had been fighting against for the past few decades. Legislation was important, but so was representation and changing the attitudes of young women. Lawless and Fox argue that symbolic representation is vital for encouraging young girls to believe they can be active in politics. Geraldine Ferrero became the first female Vice Presidential nominee from a major political party in 1984. It was unfortunate that her ticket lost, but she still inspired young women across the nation (Woods). The manifestations Lawless and Fox discuss are what third wave feminists have been fighting to overcome.

CHAPTER 4

THE THIRD WAVE

Third wave feminism "aims for gender equality within a currently patriarchal society" (Lueptow). The third wave is believed to have begun in the mid-1990s and continues today. Third wave feminism focuses on dispersing knowledge, changing culturally constructed language, listening to negative cultural messages, intersectionality, and equality of opportunity (Lueptow). These ideals are directly tied to promoting women politically by overcoming traditional gender roles, masculinized ethos, and the gendered psyche.

Feminism is not very popular today; it has never been popular. But today, many men and women believe that feminism's goal has already been accomplished. Some people also believe feminists are man hating, angry, ugly, and any other negative image that can be conjured up. Part of dispersing knowledge (by writing articles, making videos, et cetera) is reminding the public about political, social, and economic inequalities that still exist. For example, white women still make around 80% of what a man will make for the same work; the numbers are even worse for women of color. Black women only make 64% and Latinas only make 55% of what men make for equal work (Patten). This is where intersectionality comes in. While intersectionality had become more popular during the second wave of feminism, third wave feminism has further embraced it. Intersectionality is the concept that people have many different social classifications, like gender, race, and age; in this context,

these different social classifications also create overlapping systems of disadvantage or discrimination.

Linguistics was also emphasized during the third wave of feminism in regards to how language "reflects social hierarchies" (Lueptow). Language can influence thought and "has a phenomenal power over internalized ideologies that comprise a culture" (Lueptow). In the United States, some of the worst insults for a man include "bitch," "pussy," and "like a girl." The worst thing a man can be is feminine. There are very few insults based on masculine traits. Insults for women include "cunt," "slut," and other terms meant to demean a woman for her sexuality. The worst thing a woman can be in a sexually active woman. Third wave feminism is about "deconstructing linguistic patterns that undermine equality and empowerment" (Lueptow). Negative cultural messages and linguistics are intricately connected as well. Listening to slut-shaming, victim-blaming, and internalized sexism ("I just do not get along with other women—they are so catty and dramatic!") aids third wave feminists in knowing what they need to fight within society. "You can't fight a battle until you know what it is" (Lueptow). Third wave feminism focuses heavily on listening to what media is teaching children and adults and focuses on adjusting language as necessary.

Finally, equality of opportunity includes job, education, promotion, internship, and equal pay opportunities. The ability to be spoken to with respect, not harassed on the street, express emotion without being labeled "hormonal" or "crazy" or asked if it is "that time of the month" are all tied in with equal opportunity.

Women who may consider running for office could be discouraged when they are dismissed by colleagues or may never consider running if they completely lack the confidence to put themselves out in the public eye. The media does not have a positive

track record when it comes to covering female candidates either. During the 2008 elections, Sarah Palin and Hillary Clinton were ruined by the press.

When Sarah Palin was running as the Vice President on John McCain's ticket, she was painted as too pretty to be smart. Granted, she was not a well-vetted candidate, nor was she prepared for the national spotlight (Kornblut). Articles about Palin covered her time as a pageant queen, modeling in the Alaskan snow, and one of the famous photos of her is a between-the-legs shot as she stands on stage with two young men staring up at her--some pretty sexual imagery for a Vice Presidential candidate (Kornblut).

On the other hand, Hillary Clinton was admonished for being "shrewd" and unlikable. Young women did not like Clinton, spurring a generational gap between them and their mothers (Kornblut). Geraldine Ferraro recalls a fight with her daughter when she admitted to voting for Obama in the primaries; young women believed that Clinton was not the "right" female candidate and that another, better woman would be around soon (Kornblut). Clinton was perceived as "too masculine" until her famous crying moment in New Hampshire, when even then it was perceived as fake (Kornblut 58). After winning the New Hampshire primary, Clinton was then berated for being "too emotional," it seemed that women could not win (Kornblut 58).

During this time, why women do and do not run was called into question by reporters like Anne Kornblut and political scientists like Lawless and Fox. They came to the same conclusions. The issues did not lie in not being able to raise money or votes; by this time women had nearly reached parity in those areas (Kornblut). The issue was that women were not encouraged to run, they were not recruited for office, and they did not feel qualified (Kornblut). Women tend to believe they are less qualified for any position than

they actually are, and this is especially true in politics (Lawless and Fox). Most men tend to believe they are more qualified for any position than they actually are (Lawless and Fox). There is a massive gender gap in political ambition.

Recent political events have also been disheartening for women to watch--"why would any sane woman want to run for higher office after watching what Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and even Caroline Kennedy endured" (Kornblut 231). In other countries, recruiting women for politics is not this difficult. Even less developed countries make gender equality in their governments a priority. Rwanda is the number one country in the world for women in the national legislature--63.8% of their legislature is women (Inter-Parliamentary Union). Afghanistan is 53rd, with 27.7% of their legislature being female, Pakistan is 86th, and Saudi Arabia is 96th (Inter-Parliamentary Union). The United States of America, as of November 1, 2016, is ranked 99th out of 193 for women in the legislature--only 19.4% of our Congress is women (Inter-Parliamentary Union) (Appendix A). American conservatives often attack the Middle East for oppressing women, but many of those countries are closer to gender equality than the United States is.

In the most recent election, a woman was the presidential candidate for a major political party for the first time. Hillary Clinton was the presidential nominee for the Democratic Party during the 2016 election, running against Donald Trump. She was experienced, with over 30 years of public service, she knew the job well, and while she was not very likable and had personal scandals, that was nothing compared to the scandals Trump had.

Donald Trump started his campaign by calling Mexicans rapists and criminals, declaring he would build a wall around the United States (Walker). Throughout his

campaign, he made more outrageous statements, such as wanting to ban Muslims from the United States and set up a database to track them. He was also under investigation for fraud related to Trump University, was being sued in civil court for raping a 13-year-old girl during his campaign, had been accused of sexual assault by more than ten women, and had several lawsuits against him for not paying employees and contractors.

Hillary Clinton was expected to win; every poll listed her as becoming the first female president of the United States. Yet on election night, Americans watched as Trump took Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, winning more than the required 270 electoral votes. Clinton had been torn apart by the media, the FBI, Bernie Bros, and countless Americans, but it was still expected that she would beat Donald Trump.

In Clinton's concession speech, she said all the typical political statements Americans hear after every election--thanking the voters for their support and wishing the winning candidate good luck, but she also took the time to encourage women and young girls to never give up.

> To all the women, especially the young women, who put their faith in this campaign and in me, I want you to know that nothing has made me prouder than to be your champion. Now, I know that we have still not shattered the highest and hardest glass ceiling, but someday someone will and hopefully sooner than we might think right now. And to all the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams. (CNN)

Lawless and Fox end their research with the conclusion that traditional gender socialization is embedded too deeply into American society, making politics a "much less likely path for women than for men" (175). After 2008, the question became "who would the next female candidate be and when would she come along?" (Kornblut 248). There are so many factors that are considered when looking for the "right" female candidate and not enough women in the pool at the moment (Kornblut 248). Women did win some Senate seats during this election cycle, which makes the selection a little larger though.

Many women are pessimistic about seeing a woman president in their lifetime. Hillary Clinton was someone many women believed could win, so when she lost to Donald Trump, it caused instant cynicism. If Clinton could not even beat Donald Trump, what woman could win against any other candidate? Even a man with no political experience, who was blatantly racist, was caught on camera talking about sexually assaulting women in 2005, and had fraud and rape accusations was still able to beat a woman with decades of experience because people did not like her. Clinton was not a perfect candidate, she was unlikable and the media tore her to pieces throughout the entire election while giving Trump free airtime to go over his constant gaffes.

This recent disappointment, coupled with Lawless and Fox's findings that most women lack political ambition because of traditional gender norms, and Kornblut's research on female candidate's portrayal by the media, paints a very bleak future for women in politics. Feminists have been campaigning for over a century on behalf of women and what that means necessarily has evolved through the years. Suffrage, the right to work, equal opportunities in education, healthcare, and employment, were all wins for women because of the feminist movement. Clinton's loss is a setback for women across

the nation, but the first woman president is out there somewhere. She watched this election unfold and is plotting her political career now.

APPENDIX A

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION DATA

WORLD CLASSIFICATION									
Rank	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats*	Women	% W	Elections	Seats*	Women	% W
1	Rwanda	16.09.2013	80	51	63.80%	26.09.2011	26	10	38.50%
2	Bolivia	12.10.2014	130	69	53.10%	12.10.2014	36	17	47.20%
3	Cuba	03.02.2013	612	299	48.90%	---	---	---	---
4	Iceland	29.10.2016	63	30	47.60%	---	---	---	---
5	Sweden	14.09.2014	349	152	43.60%	---	---	---	---
6	Senegal	01.07.2012	150	64	42.70%	---	---	---	---
7	Mexico	07.06.2015	500	212	42.40%	01.07.2012	128	43	33.60%
8	South Africa [1]	07.05.2014	397	166	41.80%	21.05.2014	54	19	35.20%
9	Ecuador	17.02.2013	137	57	41.60%	---	---	---	---
10	Finland	19.04.2015	200	83	41.50%	---	---	---	---
11	Namibia	29.11.2014	104	43	41.30%	08.12.2015	42	10	23.80%
"	Nicaragua	06.11.2011	92	38	41.30%	---	---	---	---
13	Mozambique	15.10.2014	250	99	39.60%	---	---	---	---
"	Norway	09.09.2013	169	67	39.60%	---	---	---	---
15	Belgium	25.05.2014	150	59	39.30%	03.07.2014	60	30	50.00%
16	Spain	26.06.2016	350	137	39.10%	26.06.2016	266	101	38.00%
17	Ethiopia	24.05.2015	547	212	38.80%	05.10.2015	153	49	32.00%
18	Timor-Leste	07.07.2012	65	25	38.50%	---	---	---	---
19	Denmark	18.06.2015	179	67	37.40%	---	---	---	---
20	Netherlands	12.09.2012	150	56	37.30%	26.05.2015	75	26	34.70%
53	Afghanistan	18.09.2010	249	69	27.70%	10.01.2015	68	18	26.50%
96	Saudi Arabia	15.01.2013	151	30	19.90%	---	---	---	---
97	Greece	20.09.2015	300	59	19.70%	---	---	---	---
"	Kenya	04.03.2013	350	69	19.70%	04.03.2013	68	18	26.50%
99	United States of America	04.11.2014	432	84	19.40%	04.11.2014	100	20	20.00%

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Natalie Thomas started her college career early after being admitted to a Collegiate Academy high school at the age of 14. Upon graduation from Lakeview Centennial High School in spring 2014, she completed her Associate of Science degree at 17 and began her first semester at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) as a junior.

As a student at UTA, Ms. Thomas was very involved on campus in various organizations, most prominently as the treasurer of Zeta Tau Alpha and President of Model United Nations. She interned for the Department of Modern Languages and Community Standards, and was also employed by the Relationship Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program and the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs. Within these internships and jobs, she researched topics such as sexual violence on college campuses, healthy relationships, the founding of the "La Raza" political party, and the identity crises many Latino Americans face today. Her interview with Dr. Gutierrez, a former political science professor at UTA, is published in *Cuaderna Vía*--the Modern Languages Spanish literary magazine. In the summer of 2015, she studied abroad in Cuernavaca, Mexico.

In the future, Natalie Thomas wants to continue her education and obtain a Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership, in order to work with the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education and oversee Title IX policies at universities nationwide. She hopes her current research on women in politics will aid her in breaking any and all glass ceilings. One day, she may even run for President of the United States.