1995

Women's representation in municipal government.

Susan Stella. Ross

University of Windsor

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WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

by

Susan S. Ross

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of Political Science
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1995

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ABSTRACT

Three major questions are asked in this research regarding women's representation in municipal government in Ontario: Why are there fewer women than men involved in Canadian politics? What factors contribute to this? Do the motivations for running for political office differ between males and females?

These questions were answered by first providing a literature review on the relevant literature on women in Canadian politics. Underrepresentation of women has been attributed to a number of general factors including socialization, gender role constraints and media representation of women.

A historical look was then taken at women's representation in municipal government in Ontario to decipher if this had an effect on why fewer women run for municipal office in Ontario. Through their long hard struggle, women achieved the vote but political equality was not a result.

Women's representation in municipal government in Ontario was then observed through analyzing statistics provided for the 1980-1988 municipal elections in Ontario. Generally women's representation increased during the 1980-1988 period, although at the end of the period, there was not a high percentage of women's representation.
Interviews were then conducted with people had been involved in politics at the municipal level in Essex County in the past or were currently involved. The information obtained from those interviews was to supplement the statistics provided in the previous chapter.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this research. Women had a later start becoming involved in politics in Ontario and thus their representation in politics has been delayed. Once females had the opportunity to vote and run for elections they had few female colleagues, which acted as an inhibiting factor for women running for politics. A lot of negative imagery surrounded women in the political arena from the media and society. Women were seen as electoral liabilities and not seen as serious politicians. The way in which women were socialized also acted as a deterrent for women to become involved in politics. Women were often fully in charge of child rearing responsibilities which did not allow them any extra time to become involved in politics.
DEDICATION

It has been said that giving love, giving insight, giving warmth, giving understanding and giving God's touch are just a few of the many gifts that women bring to our lives. One woman has brought all of these gifts to my life and for those reasons I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my Grandmother:

Isabella Nimo Bulloch Ross
February 28, 1914 - October 15, 1993
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their advice, understanding and wisdom, I would like to thank the members of the committee for this paper: Professor Heather MacIvor, Dr. Trevor Price and Dr. Kai Hildebrandt.

I would like to thank the people who were kind enough to allow me to interview them to gain insight into politics at the municipal level in Windsor and Essex County.

This paper would not have been possible without the help and support that I received by some very important people in my life.

I would like to thank my mother, Nancy Ross, for the unending support and kindness that she’s offered me throughout my University career, especially through the writing of this paper.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The questions being asked in this thesis are: Why are there fewer women than men involved in Canadian politics? What factors contribute to this? Do the motivations for running for political office differ between males and females? To gain more of an understanding of these questions a number of steps will be taken.

Step One

The Literature Review

The first step involved in finding answers to the questions posed will involve conducting a literature review. The relevant theories concerning the under-representation of women will be summarized in chapter two.

The number of women elected in Canada is related to a number of factors including the political system, the electoral laws, the status of women in society, media images of female politicians and the accessibility of human and financial resources.
Chapter two will also take a close look at the theories which explain effects of socialization on women's representation in politics; the effects of gender role constraints on women's representation in politics; the effects of the media on the representation of women in politics; and women's representation in municipal government.

**Step Two**

**The Progress of Women's Representation**

**In Ontario**

The second step involves taking an in-depth look at women's representation in politics in Ontario, to discern whether the history of women's representation had an impact on their representation in politics today.

Chapter three will begin by studying the status of women in the late nineteenth century concentrating on the limited rights that women had at this time and the effects this may have had on females becoming involved in politics. The role of suffragist associations in Ontario will be analyzed along with the opposing view points presented by the anti-suffragists. A detailed examination of the suffragist struggle in Ontario will then be undertaken.
Step Three

Women's Representation on Municipal Councils

In Ontario 1980-1988

The third step in this thesis involves analyzing data gathered on the municipal elections in Ontario for the 1980-1988 period. For analysis purposes the data will be presented for a number of different indicators including the percentage of women represented on municipal councils and as heads of council in Ontario, women's representation by the type of municipality and women's representation by the method of election.

A number of statistical tests will be performed in chapter four through the use of the data analysis program SPSS/PC+. The tests will consist of running frequencies and crosstabulations to show the differences that existed in female and male representation during the 1980-1988 period.

Step Four

The Interviews

To supplement the statistics provided in step three and to gain more of an understanding of the impact of people's ambitions in the political realm, personal interviews will be conducted with eight key people involved in politics in Essex County. Both
men and women will be interviewed to discern whether motivations for running for political office differ between males and females. People who are currently involved in politics as well as those who have been involved in the past will be interviewed and the interviews will be analyzed in chapter five.

**Step Five**

**Conclusion**

Step five ties all of the information presented in the previous four steps together to form answers to the questions previously posed: why fewer women than men are involved in Canadian politics, what factors contribute to this, and do the motivations for running for political office differ between males and females?
Chapter Two

Factors Affecting

The Underrepresentation of Women in Politics

Canadian women have had the right to vote and run for federal office for the past 77 years.1 However, their representation in the House of Commons and in provincial legislatures does not reflect the fact that women comprise more than half of the adult population in Canada.2 During the last 20 years the percentage of women members of parliament has only risen from 2 percent in 1972 to 18.3 percent in 1993 for women MPs.3

Questions arise from this underrepresentation of women in Canadian politics. Why are there fewer women than men involved in Canadian politics? What factors contribute to this? Do the


2 Chantal Maille, Primed for Power: Women in Canadian Politics (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Committee on The Status of Women, 1990) 3.

motivations for running for political office differ between males and females? To find answers to these questions we must look at the representation of women in politics.

The configuration of the Canadian Parliament does not reflect the make-up of the current national mosaic. The House of Commons does not adequately represent the votes of political parties in elections, the regions of Canada, women, poor Canadians or aboriginal Canadians. The House of Commons is an elite operated, elite dominated institution.¹

The question may be asked: "Does it matter whether we are represented by males or females?" The argument for female representation is that when women are greater in number on representative bodies, they are more likely to support issues important for their future. Women have a better chance of changing these institutions from within than from outside, provided that they are present in larger numbers.⁶ Female public officials can represent women by their mere presence in, or

¹ This study concentrates on the municipal level of government in Ontario. Since this area hasn't been thoroughly studied, there is not much published material regarding this subject matter. Much of the information in this literature review refers to provincial and federal politics but can be related to the municipal level of government.


⁶ Chantal Maillé, Primed for Power: Women in Canadian Politics (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Committee on The Status of Women, 1990) 2.
occurrence of, that office. In this descriptive sense, only women can represent women. To represent women substantively, a public official, male or female, must somehow act for women and their interests. This distinction acknowledges the possibility that representation means different things to different people. Some people are more concerned with who the representatives are (male or female, black or white, rich or poor) and some are concerned with what the representatives do.⁷

It has been suggested that having few female colleagues is one factor that may inhibit female legislators' ability and desire to organize collectively.⁸ With so few other women present, a female legislator's difficulties in dealing with the "man's world" of the legislature may not be recognized as anything but personal.⁹

There is no single factor which determines the number of women elected in Canada. A number of factors -- including the political system, the electoral laws, the status of women in society, media images of female politicians, political party


⁹ Chantal Maillé, Primed for Power: Women in Canadian Politics (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, 1990) 1.
attitudes and policies, the lack of access to financial, human, and other resources, and the time at which political institutions were created -- contribute to the persistent underrepresentation of women in politics.\textsuperscript{10} Political institutions were created at a time when women were not considered citizens. The fact that these institutions were not later modified to integrate the female viewpoint when women did acquire the right to hold office has hampered females' chances of becoming involved in politics according to Rebick.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{The Effects of Socialization On Women's Representation in Politics}

The dissimilar socialization of males and females seems to have contributed to an absence of political participation by females, and has added to the interest that males have in politics. Socialization is important in explaining the political behaviour of women because it instills the norms, values and role definitions that men and women carry with them into adulthood. Most women are socialized by their peers, schools, and religious institutions to believe that there are appropriate roles for


women and different ones for men. These orientations are the bases on which people support or challenge the structures of society which continue to channel women and men into the social roles they play.

The "socialization explanation" contends that women do not seek elected office because they are socialized to be apolitical. Male dominance is, to a large extent, culturally determined. The role of socialization is important, especially the manner in which children assimilate sex roles through the process of imitation and identification. In this respect, the family is a crucial site of socialization. If children view their parents as performing only certain roles, they will believe this to be true for the rest of society and believe that due to their gender they will only be able to perform certain roles themselves. The second most important socializing devices are schools. Sexism is inherent in educational policy, in the range of subjects open to girls, the content of the textbooks, and the

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male-dominated staff hierarchy within the education system.¹⁵

A research study on the aspirations of adolescent women was conducted in 1985 by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. When adolescents were asked to name a person they admired, most of the girls listed women and most of the boys listed men. The boys were more likely than the girls to list professional men such as scientists, politicians and doctors. The explanation given by the researchers for this difference is that there are fewer women than men who have accomplished relevant goals in the eyes of the public.¹⁶

In another survey of young women in Canada, politics and government emerge as the topics about which young women find it most difficult to obtain information.¹⁷ The mere desire to obtain such information relays the fact that young women are interested in current political and social issues.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women conducted a survey on the competence of women to play an important role in

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¹⁷ Janelle Holmes and Elaine Leslay Silverman, We're Here, Listen to Us: A Survey of Young Women in Canada (Ottawa: The Canadian Council on The Status of Women, 1992) 78.
politics. It asked, "Why do fewer women than men become candidates for election?" The majority of the responses implied that women were unsuitable candidates for political positions. Many respondents stated that female candidates do not have the necessary backgrounds to become candidates. A majority of the respondents stated that a woman's chief role is to care for her family, with the premise that family life and public life are not compatible. There is a belief in our society that "good" wives or mothers do not abandon their homes, husbands and children to choose a career in politics.

Women are still seen as a novelty in the political arena. There are barriers to women achieving positions of political power; the greatest barrier is the attitude apparently shared by men and women which questions women's rights to full participation in political life.\(^{19}\)

Women are often granted the opportunity to compete for political office when their chances of winning are small. The traditional response of party officials to this dilemma has been that there is a shortage of qualified women to nominate in winnable ridings, or that women are an electoral liability who would lose the party votes. Women are primarily nominated by


minor parties or as "sacrifice candidates"."\textsuperscript{20} Female nominees at both the federal and provincial levels tend to run in ridings where their parties are not in a competitive position. The tendency for parties to nominate women in constituencies held by the leader of another party, or in other presumably marginal seats, has been viewed as evidence that women face considerable hurdles at the élite level.\textsuperscript{21}

Party politics is not a popular method of electing municipal councillors in Canadian politics. People seeking election in municipalities do not need to get nominated to a position or to support the philosophies of a certain political party. People running for municipal election often become involved by being concerned by one issue. This issue usually becomes a large part of the platform for their campaign. In this arena, women can bring forth more of their own views and ideas as opposed to running for provincial or federal government where party politics dominate.


The Effects of Gender Role Constraints On Women's Representation in Politics

The "gender-role explanation" is closely related to the "socialization paradigm", but it concentrates on the situations imposed on women as they perform traditional gender roles that have been prescribed by dominant cultural norms.22

The gender-role explanation asserts that women do not abstain from politics as much as they are inhibited from participating by the constraints of female gender roles, especially those of wife and mother. All modern societies have more or less rigid gendered divisions of labour. The relegation of women to the "private sphere", to attend to the tasks of child rearing and homemaking, undermines a woman's abilities to enter a full-time political career.23

Homemaking, which is not financially remunerated, isolates women from the public sphere, and does not provide them with the social skills and social contacts that are necessary for a political career. Female gender roles also put women at a disadvantage in the realm of politics due to their time-consuming nature. Since full-time child rearing is often assumed by

23 ibid. 7.
females alone, women must wait to enter politics until their children are grown. 24

Popular ideology and practical experience continue to reinforce the notion that politics is a masculine, as opposed to a feminine, activity. Sapiro states that women embody certain personality traits that are seen as inappropriate for the public sphere. According to psychological studies, women have a tendency to underestimate their own competence, especially in tasks and areas of expertise traditionally labelled as "male." 25

A fundamental requirement for running for office is access to socio-economic networks. In this respect, women are at a disadvantage because very few of them belong to the powerful financial circles that provide an advantage for anyone entering politics. Women, who generally earn less money than men, are less able to pay large sums of money to gain their crucial first foothold in politics: a party nomination. Women working in the home are seldom able to contribute large sums of money for a party nomination, because work in the home is neither recognized nor compensated. 26 Many males have the ability to tap

24 ibid. 8.


supportive financial networks for the funds required for their campaigns. It has been suggested that as long as the "rules of the game remain the same" women will continue to be at a disadvantage in the world of politics.²⁷

The gender roles that exist in Canadian society have placed constraints on women's participation in politics. Many important aspects of a woman's life, such as homemaking, child rearing and caring for her family, make political activism more difficult. Many of these tasks are full time in nature, and thus do not give women access to the social and financial contacts that are needed for a political career.

The Effects of the Media On The Representation of Women in Politics

The media play an important role in relaying information to the public. Any biases that are present in the media are passed on to the public. Communications theorists have generally pointed out that media personnel, who are short of time and have restricted reportorial space, focus and condense social complexity into a series of colourful characterizations.²⁸


general public then sees these stereotypes as the truth. Women in politics have been no exception to this type of treatment in the media.

The first generation of female politicians were viewed as playing conflicting roles. Females, usually associated with motherhood and being housewives, were now entering into the masculine world of politics. Four media-generated stereotypes became common explanations for the presence of women in politics. The first, and most common, stereotypes were the "wife of" and "family relationship" designations.\(^{29}\) From this stereotype women politician's "femaleness" became neutered. Women who were elected to parliament were represented as wives or widows of politicians, and thus became appendages of the powerful husband whose seat was inherited. This implied that the women had not gained political power on their own but only due to someone else's name.

The second set of stereotypes ("spinster", "femme fatale" and "club woman") all focus negatively on female politician's capabilities.\(^{30}\) The "spinster" stereotype dates back to the suffragist movement of the turn of the 20th century. It related to women of a certain age, who were single, liberal, and free of

\(^{29}\) ibid. 136.

\(^{30}\) ibid. 137.
the obligations usually expected of a wife. In the eyes of the media, these women could run for political positions considering the lack of household obligations expected of them at this time.

The "femme fatale" label was attached to women politicians who did not play by the "traditional social rules". Female politicians who attempted to do things that were unconventional had this label applied to them. This stereotype tended to highlight a woman's gender and appearance rather than her competence as a politician.

The "club woman" label was applied to female politicians who were opposed to those of the male establishment or who breached the traditional separations between public and private activities. This label suggested that women were amateurs in the public realm and that their opinions should be disregarded.

New stereotypes have been created in the media to describe the political women of the 1970s and 1980s. The first is that of "superwoman", which is applied to a young intelligent active and ambitious woman who succeeds on "all levels" in her life and "has

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32 ibid. 139.
it all". The traditional characteristics of having a family and children and the modern traits of the business woman are combined in the superwoman stereotype.

The second of the new stereotypes is the "champion". This tends to be applied to a female who has entered politics after she has proven herself in another domain: business, sports or a charitable organization.

The third label, "one of the boy's" is applied to female politicians who have been accepted into the ranks by the male political establishment which allows women to be included as "part of their gang".

The fourth label, the "wife/widow/daughter" designation, still maintains that women gain political status merely through name recognition and through no skills of their own.

The media have come to rely on portraying female politicians in a number stereotypical categories which often shed an unfavourable light on women's interests or their representation in politics, whereas the media tend to portray male candidates as the only viable ones, failing to focus on women as viable contenders in the political sphere. These biases are passed on

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33 ibid. 143.
34 ibid. 143.
to the general public which then perceives women in politics in the unfavourable manner that has been described to them by the media. Women, may then be deterred from running for politics due to the negative imagery present in the media.

Women's Representation in Local Government

Political activity takes many forms, and there are a wide variety of contributions that women can make. Not all female politicians live in the constant glare of the media or in large cities. Women have had a strong presence on the boards of childcare facilities and on parent committees in schools. They have participated in various forms of community action and they are the heart and soul of volunteer organizations. The presence of women in positions that are less official, less hierarchical or structured, is an integral part of the existing political culture, given their poor representation at higher levels of the political process.³⁵

Political skills can be acquired by women with the commitment and interest to become involved.³⁶ Political skills, such as understanding, motivating and organizing the people of a

³⁵ Chantal Maillé, Primed for Power: Women in Canadian Politics (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Committee on The Status of Women, 1990) 3.

community, are very adaptable. In Canada's smaller communities, involvement in neighbourhoods and with families provides excellent motivation and a context for political participation."

A seat on city or municipal council is the first step for many women into the orthodox political arena. The laws which shape our lives are enacted at the various levels of government and the municipal level is the most accessible to many women. There are several obvious reasons for this. Councillors can work flexible hours and can represent their communities without moving to a provincial capital or the national capital. For women with commitments to careers, homes and families, these are considerable advantages. Experience as a councillor can provide women with the kind of track record which can build support for moving to other levels of government.\(^\text{36}\)

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women, in 1970, found that at the municipal level, the proportion of women holding office appeared to be somewhat higher than at provincial or federal levels. This was attributed to women's apparent closeness to local political issues vis-a-vis provincial and federal issues.\(^\text{39}\) It has been argued that women are able to make

\(^{37}\) ibid. 12.


more political progress at the municipal level because men are less interested in politics at this level. Men are more interested in federal and provincial politics, where the stakes and opportunities for success are greater. The lack of political party dominance at the local level has also aided women in gaining political representation at this level. With the absence of partisan politics, women can more easily achieve office because they are not tied to party lines and can run according to their own platform.⁴⁰

Women have often been involved in their communities by being members of parent-teacher organizations and child care organizations. Municipal government, with its accessibility, closeness to the home and community based agenda has attracted more women than the other two levels of government in Canada.

**Conclusion**

It can be concluded from this review of the literature on women's representation in politics that women are underrepresented in the House of Commons, provincial legislatures and local government bodies. Women comprise more than half of the adult population in Canada, yet fewer than one in five MPs in the House of Commons is a woman.

This underrepresentation has been attributed to a number of general factors, including socialization, gender role constraints and media representations of women. Males and females are socialized differently. Each group believes that they have mutually exclusive roles to perform in society. Gender role constraints contribute to the underrepresentation of women in the political sphere. Generally, women are less assertive than males and have been traditionally more family and home oriented than men. The media have used stereotypes to describe female politicians, many of which indicate women do not use their own skills to gain political power.

The local level of government, because of its accessibility, has been the entry level for many female politicians. Women can gain much of the experience needed for representation on a municipal council through their involvement in the community. In the next chapter we will discuss the historical basis of local politics in Ontario with a special emphasis on women's involvement at this level of government. The chapter will look at the nature of local politics and the factors that contribute to making it a different experience for men and for women.
Chapter Three

The Progress of Women's Representation in Politics in Ontario

This chapter examines the progress of women's involvement in politics in Ontario to determine whether this had an effect on why fewer women than men are involved in municipal politics in Ontario.

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, women in Ontario had few rights concerning property, education, their children and the vote. Becoming frustrated with these inequalities, and being at a disadvantage in society as compared to men who held all the power, women began to involve themselves in causes outside of the home and joined suffragist associations.

Many of these associations were temperance organizations, designed to prevent the sale and drinking of alcohol. Other suffragist associations were concerned with health-related issues, issues relating to children, reforms on women's issues, and the improvement of the state of the communities where these women lived.¹ The importance of these issues provoked women to

become involved in politics. They realized that the only way to make the drastic changes that were necessary for their well-being, and that of their children and their communities, was to achieve the vote.

The suffragists faced great opposition. The consensus of the anti-suffragists was that women were inferior to men. They believed that women would not understand political matters, and due to the hypothesized smaller cranial capacity of women, they would be physically unable to be involved in political matters.² Because women were in contact with men who could vote in their interests, like fathers, brothers and husbands, there was no need for them to actually hold the vote themselves.

In Canada in the middle of the nineteenth century a married woman's only basic right was to the provision of the necessities

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of life from her husband according to his means.\textsuperscript{3} Canadian women were not legally regarded as "persons" under the British North America Act, nor were they treated as such under the laws of the time. Women had no vote in federal, provincial or municipal elections, had no property rights, had no rights to a formal post-secondary education and no rights to decide matters for their own children.\textsuperscript{4}

A married woman had only limited control over her own actions. She could not own property, and any property she brought into her marriage belonged to her husband. Any wealth she acquired while in the marriage also became the property of her husband. A mother had no rights whatsoever concerning her children. The father was the sole guardian of his children until they reached the age of twenty-one. He could educate them how and when he pleased. He could give them up for adoption or bind them out as apprentices and he was also entitled to all their earnings.\textsuperscript{5}

Under the Naturalization Act of 1914, a Canadian woman lost her status as a British subject if she married a man of another


country. She did not regain it if her husband died. A Canadian man, however, did not suffer the same penalty by marrying a woman of another country. His wife automatically became a British subject. The children of any marriage obtained their citizenship from their father so a Canadian woman's children could end up being citizens of another country.

Some women became increasingly aware of their unjust position in society. They realized that if there were to be any improvements in the status of women and of society in general, laws would have to be changed. Laws are made by governing bodies and women had no say in government decisions. Women were not allowed to be elected to federal, provincial and municipal governing bodies, and they could not vote. Women did not even have the opportunity to elect politicians who were in favour of women's rights. ¹

As early as 1883, Sir John A. Macdonald had tried to include married women with the necessary property qualifications in a uniform federal franchise, under which all property owners would have the right to vote in elections. Each time similar efforts were made, the clause including women was dropped from the bill. ²

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² ibid, 16.

Suffragists in Ontario: Their Cause

The suffrage movement began as a movement for social reform. Women's domestic roles made them aware of and concerned with issues that directly affected them, their husbands, their families and their communities. Women became concerned about the rising use of alcohol among men, a number of issues relating to health, concerns for the well being of their children, the need for employment standards and the importance of the conditions of the city. These women believed they had a responsibility to preserve the sanctity of the Canadian family. They hoped that when women were organized, they would improve men and their actions in the public sphere and bring society back to its virtuous roots in the family.9

The women perceived their activities as an attempt to inject the virtues and high standards of morality assigned to women who were confined to the home by the "Victorian cult of domesticity"10, into the larger urban community. They hoped that this would change the character of the community in the interests of women, children and family life. They intended, by domesticating the city, to make the urban, physical and social


environment conform to the demands of an ideal home environment. They believed that such activities were in the interests of all women.

Many suffragists were optimists and idealists. They had a very clear vision of how society should operate and they were not hesitant to impose their blueprint on all of society.¹¹ Women involved in the prohibition movement, belonging to such groups as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, believed that alcohol was the root of all of society's evils. They believed that drinking alcohol increased crime, poverty and sexual immorality. Suffragists asserted that alcohol use invaded the nation's homes and destroyed the lives of innocent women and children.¹²

In 1885, the Women's Christian Temperance Union was the first organization to throw its support to the cause of political equality.¹³ This was especially important because husbands had absolute power over the wages and lives of their wives and children.¹⁴ Under the influence of alcohol, a husband could

¹¹ Carol Bacchi, Liberation Deferred The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists 1877-1918 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) 51.


easily squander away his wife's and children's livelihood.

An increasing number of health issues became important to the suffragists. From simply observing their surroundings in their homes and in the community at large, the suffragists realized there were some common health problems that should be controlled by the government. Contamination and disease were rampant in both homes and in the community. Suffragists pushed for better hospital conditions to aid in the prevention of disease. Vaccinations, they felt, should be provided by the state, to help guard against the spread of disease. To teach women about the contaminations that could occur in their homes, the suffragists pushed for the government to provide domestic science courses.15

A growing concern was care for the aged. Suffragists wanted the government to provide retirement homes for the aged. They felt that the state should also assume responsibility for orphans, mentally disabled persons and crippled people. This would free women of the obligation of having the difficult chore of constantly caring for these people. Suffragists also felt that they should be entitled to reproductive freedoms, an entitlement which would allow them to take some control over

their own lives.\textsuperscript{16}

The children of the day were not treated fairly in a number of respects, which led the suffragists to fight for their cause. Many children were involved in hard labour in factories, working many long hours without proper pay or nutrition. The suffragists sought to put an end to this by proposing to abolish child labour. As opposed to children slaving away in "sweat shops" all day, the suffragists felt that Canadian youth should be subject to a mandatory, formal education system. The suffragists felt that there should be a separate legal process for juveniles so they would not be sentenced to the same harsh penalties as adults.\textsuperscript{17}

With many women employed in the work force, a number of issues for reform arose. Women felt that because of their gender they had limited occupational opportunities and they wanted this to change. Suffragists felt that there should be improvements in the workplace, starting with the protection of women. Women also felt that since they were often employed in the same occupations


\textsuperscript{17} ibid
as men and performing the same laborious tasks, they should receive equal pay and be subject to equality in the workplace.¹⁸ Suffragists also pushed for family allowances which would help support their children, and mother's pensions to help compensate them in their later years.¹⁹

Suffragists were involved in a quest for a solution to the problems of the cities in which they lived.²⁰ They pushed for many changes, the first that cities should be a place where one could raise a family, go to work, and perform leisure activities without being in danger. With the reduction of crime high on their list, the suffragists started volunteer street patrols to ensure that their communities would be a safe place for them and their families.

Along the same lines as the argument for a formal education system, the suffragists felt that the municipal governments should provide free kindergartens for school-aged children. The municipal governments should also build urban parks and playgrounds to provide safe places for their children to play. This would add green spaces to cities that had become blackened

¹⁸ ibid


by the factories and pollution of the industrial revolution.
Suffragists wanted to see better housing provided for the poor.

Suffragists were originally interested in reforming alcohol legislation, providing protection for their children and themselves and improving their neighbourhoods. They eventually saw that campaigning for female suffrage would help their cause. Since women were not eligible for election or even to nominate a candidate, and it was very doubtful that men would initiate these reforms, women felt that to make the necessary changes they would have to achieve the vote. Women were taxed without being represented and had to obey laws equally with men, so they felt they ought to have a voice in deciding what those laws should be.21

The Anti-Suffragists' Philosophy

While many women who belonged to suffragist associations were trying to get their voices heard, and obtain the necessary reforms to help cure the ailments of society, there were many men and women who were against the ideals associated with the suffrage movement.

Opponents of the suffrage movement used a formidable array

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21 Carol Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English Canadian Suffragists 1877-1918 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) 1.

32
of arguments, most of which seem nonsensical today. Suffrage opponents argued that women were organically too weak to participate in the excitement of elections. It was asserted that it was unwomanly to vote and that, if given the opportunity, only "bad women" would vote. Some women thought that it would be considered an insult to ask their husbands for the vote.\textsuperscript{22} Since women would vote exactly the same as their husbands wished, the vote would not be materially changed anyway.

It was believed, although not scientifically proven, that the female brain is not as large as the male's. Due to the difference in the size of the brain it was thought that brain work was more exhausting for females as opposed to males. Since females were more nervous than males, in general, the excitement of elections would tend to "unbalance" them; thus, they shouldn't be involved in political matters.\textsuperscript{23} Anti-suffragists believed that women did not want to vote, and even if they were granted the opportunity, they would not choose to vote. It was also believed that wifehood, motherhood and politics could not be combined with satisfactory results. Finally, opponents to the suffrage movement believed that if women were allowed to vote

\textsuperscript{22} Isabel Bassett, \textit{The Parlour Rebellion: Profiles in the Struggle for Women's Rights} (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975) 134.

there would be too many voters. 

Those who attacked woman suffrage attacked much more than the idea of women being allowed to enter the polling booth. There was a fear that the effects women might have as voters challenged the idea of motherhood and wifedom. The anti-suffragists believed that nature had assigned every man and woman their duties in life. Man had been given the task of supporting the woman, of sustaining the home, of fighting the battles and of governing the family, clan or nation. Woman had been "committed" to the charge of the home and the duty of exercising a moderating influence over all of its occupants. Anti-suffragists explained that the suffragist movement was at war with nature, and the changes it sought would allow women to become too much like men. Anti-suffragists were resistant to change of any kind, and they were especially antagonistic towards women who "meddled" in affairs outside the home.

In 1915 Sir William Hearst, Ontario's Premier at the time, claimed that women did not want the vote and even if they had the vote, their influence would not make a difference to society. Suffragists countered that all men presently did not use their

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24 ibid, 49.


26 ibid, 40
vote, yet no one asserted that men should be disenfranchised. Hearst remarked that Conservative and Liberal women were working side by side [in the war effort] and thought it would be a serious mistake to introduce any measure which might sow discord between them. He did not, however, take into account the strange phenomenon of Liberal and Conservative men fighting side by side in Britain and France.27

Stephen Leacock believed that if women were granted the right to vote, female independence would be encouraged and marriage would become discouraged. He raised the cry of racial suicide, arguing that to maintain the population, the average woman would have to produce approximately 3.5 children in her lifetime. If this level was not achieved, he believed the population would come to an end. If women were distracted from their household duties, and allowed to participate in politics, they would become less interested in becoming mothers and carrying out their nurturing and caring roles.28

Suffragists could not understand why the anti-suffragists believed enfranchisement would create career-minded women and take them away from their household duties. They were fighting

27 ibid, 40.
for the vote so they could become more efficient mothers.\(^{29}\)

Suffragists met with opposition from men and women alike. Women opposed to suffragism felt that the suffragists were radical and it was best to leave alone the reformation of alcohol legislation, providing protection for their children and improving themselves and their neighbourhoods. There were many women who had to work so hard to simply keep their families alive that they did not have the time or physical energy to fight for rights that would possibly improve their life or that of their children. It was close to impossible for a woman working twelve to sixteen hours per day, for meagre wages, to get out and rally for the vote. The struggle to end discrimination against women and obtain legal rights for women was thus a long hard battle.\(^{30}\)

The Suffrage Struggle in Ontario

The backgrounds of the female suffragists were similar in several ways. Almost sixty percent worked, most were middle class, a majority of them were educated, and almost all of them had some type of reform connection. Each of these factors could and did encourage women to become politically active. Some women

\(^{29}\) ibid 49.

became suffragists because of anger at discrimination in their pay or restrictions on their career ambitions.31

Some women were in favour of obtaining the vote because of the ideology that no race, class or sex could have its interests properly safeguarded in the legislatures of a country unless it was represented by direct suffrage. Women's special care was the home and they found that questions intimately affecting the home were being settled in parliament where they were not represented.

Men and women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries participated in separate male and female political cultures. Women were denied the opportunity to participate directly in the life of the city. Middle class women began to use the voluntary associations as a channel for their interests and ambitions.32

In 1876 Dr. Emily Howard Stowe and a small energetic group of women from Ontario launched what they chose to call the


Toronto Literary Club. The club was a suffrage association but, due to the harsh opposition that existed, they chose to camouflage the name under the pretences of a "literary club". The founder did not come by the title Doctor easily. Entering the medical field in Ontario was not an easy task. Because of their gender, women were simply not admitted to medical schools. Stowe eventually went to New York and obtained her medical degree there. When she returned to Canada and began practising medicine, she became a great advocate and a strong force in favour of women's rights. Allowing women to become educated became one of the suffragists' important causes. Largely owing to Dr. Stowe's efforts, the University of Toronto opened its doors to women in 1886. Subsequently, women were allowed to enter the field of law, with Clara Brett Martin becoming the first woman to be called to the bar in Ontario in 1895.  

The Young Women's Christian Association originated in Britain in 1855. Within five years it had spread to the United States and by the 1870's this organization was prominent in Canada. The YWCA buildings became central meeting places for women in Canadian cities. Attendance in these buildings was

34 ibid, 22.
primarily due to the provision of a cafeteria where working women could peacefully eat their lunches. Libraries were provided along with reading rooms so women could familiarize themselves with the current issues of the day. Classes were taught to augment women's education and many women used these classes to upgrade their job qualifications. Many of the classes taught at the YWCA were of better quality than the public education system that existed in Ontario at the time.\textsuperscript{36} The YWCA buildings served as information bureaus on women's issues and provided recreational activities such as swimming and team sports that women could enjoy in their spare time.

In 1881, the suffragists gained support from the Canada Citizen,\textsuperscript{37} a Toronto weekly which devoted a column to the prohibition cause. The column was at the disposal of the Toronto Literary Club with one of the club's members becoming the associate editor. The Citizen has the distinction of being the first Canadian paper to support women suffrage.

In 1889, the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association (the new name for the Toronto Literary Society) in association with the Women's Christian Temperance Union sent a petition to

\footnote{\textsuperscript{36} ibid, 227.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{37} Catherine Cleverdon, \textit{The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada} 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) 21.}

39
the Ontario Legislature urging the passage of the Waters Bill.\textsuperscript{38} The bill was named after a Liberal member of the House, John Waters. He introduced the first proposal to grant women the provincial franchise, stating that he would introduce a suffrage bill in every session until it passed, or as long as he sat in the House. The bill did not receive a fair response, or much debate on the issue of women's voting privileges, and was defeated during second reading.

In 1905 John Smith, a Liberal Member of Parliament, requested municipal voting privileges for married women. The debate lasted about one full minute and was described as being "intensely silly".\textsuperscript{39} In 1907 the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association changed its name to the Canadian Suffrage Association with Flora McDonald Dennison as the president. She was the editor of \textit{Sunday World}, providing a great source of propaganda for the suffragists. In 1909, the Canadian Suffrage Association appeared before an annual conference of the Dominion Alliance, a national temperance organization composed mainly of men, and urged the endorsement of woman suffrage.

In 1910, Alan Studholme, a Labour member of the Ontario Legislature, made his first attempt to introduce a woman's

\textsuperscript{38} ibid, 23.

\textsuperscript{39} ibid, 35.
suffrage bill. This motion never passed the preliminary stages because of the absence of a seconder to his motion.

In 1913, Dr. Margaret Gordon, president of the Toronto Association, persuaded the Toronto Council to hold a referendum on the subject of women being allowed the municipal vote. Women won the referendum in a landslide victory, 26516 in favour to 12606 against.\(^{40}\) Gordon wrote to approximately 850 town and city councils throughout Ontario, announcing the score of the referendum in Toronto, urging municipalities to afford their voters a similar means of public opinion. In all, thirty-three referenda were held and all were favourable. One hundred and sixty councils then petitioned the legislature, and yet the legislature remained unmoved in its position on women obtaining the right to vote.\(^{41}\)

In 1917, some women were eligible to vote at the federal level, not because the franchise had been secured, but due to the \textit{Military Voters Act}. This Act granted the vote to all British subjects, both male and female, who were actively participating in the Canadian Armed Services. The intent of this partial enfranchisement was to ensure that the views of men in the service could be heard, if only through their next of kin (even if that happened to be a woman). There was certainly no

\(^{40}\) ibid, 36.

\(^{41}\) ibid, 36.
assumption by the government that women had a natural right to participate in political affairs.\footnote{42}

In 1916, suffragists in the West were victorious in obtaining the provincial franchise in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan.\footnote{43} In the Ontario legislature, in 1917, the leader of the opposition moved to introduce a suffrage bill. This bill met with opposition at first, but within one week Premier Hearst changed his mind and allowed the bill to continue through the proceedings of the legislature.

Even with the passage of the suffrage bill, Premier Hearst reiterated that women still didn't really want the vote. He claimed that by allowing women to vote he was merely paying tribute to those women who played such a valuable role in the war effort.

The suffragists had achieved a great feat. They now could vote in provincial elections. They were not about to stop here. They wanted to be eligible to hold office at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government in Canada. By the 1920's women's presence was visible on school boards, a political forum where their presence was readily accepted because of their


\footnote{43} See Appendix 3.1.
involvement in local education as both parents and teachers. Barbara M. Hanley served on the school board of the town of Webbwood for twelve years. In 1935 she was the first woman elected to council. "The following term, she successfully ran for mayor against a male incumbent who had served for four terms. Hanley was quoted as saying: "Running a town is just like running a home only on a larger scale. I don't see any difference between a lady mayor and any other kind of mayor— it's the office that counts, not the officeholder." 45

Until the 1929 ruling in the Persons' Case, women did not have the right to sit as judges or have a seat in the Senate because, under the law, the definition of "person" did not include women. The British North America Act described Senators as male because when the Act was written women did not have legal rights as "persons". The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that women were not persons. The case went to the Judicial Committee of The Privy Council, the highest court of law at that time, located in Britain, which ruled in favour of women and that the word "person" did indeed include both men and women. Women then gained eligibility for Senate appointments and were able to sit as judges.

The triumph of Canadian women in gaining full political rights did not bring equality. The exercise of the female franchise did not initiate revolutionary changes in the political process. Getting the vote and being recognized in law as equal participants in the political affairs of the nation were significant and necessary victories, but they did little to change the place of women in the home and in the workplace or to alter community attitudes about the "other sex".  

Conclusion

It can be seen from the description in this chapter that regarding politics in Ontario, the motivations of women have differed from those of men. First of all, men never had to fight for the right to be politically involved. Their right was something that was taken for granted something that should belong to men since they were the natural leaders of the country. Women were sentenced to domestic duty with no opportunities to be involved in the outside world around them. Women had very few rights concerning their lives, their income and the lives of their children; in general, women were treated poorly.

Women became formally involved in politics much later than men, and even after they did, it took a lot of persuading to

convince the public that women could indeed undertake the same
tasks as men in the political sphere.

Women are still not represented equally in the political
sphere in Ontario. In the next chapter we will examine data
concerning Ontario municipal elections between 1980 and 1990 to
report on the representation of women in municipal elections
during this decade.
Chapter Four

Women's Representation on Municipal Councils
In Ontario 1980-1988

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss women's political representation in Ontario municipalities for the period 1980-1988. Data concerning the 1980, 1982, 1985 and 1988\(^1\) municipal elections in Ontario were analyzed to make observations about the reality of women's political participation in Ontario. Analyzing this data shows the quantitative differences in municipal representation between males and females, answering some of the previously posed questions.

The Data

The Local Government Organization Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs sent questionnaires, as part of its regular data gathering routine, to all municipalities in the Province of Ontario following the 1980, 1982, 1985 and 1988

\(^1\) Municipal elections in Ontario were held every two years until 1982 when this was changed to every three years.
municipal elections. Municipal Clerks were to fill out these questionnaires, providing information on various aspects of municipal government, and return them to the Ministry. Of particular interest to this research were a series of questions relating to women's involvement in municipal elections. These included the number of candidates for election, the number of women elected to councils, the type of municipality, the method of election, and whether council positions were contested or acclaimed. The data was provided by the Ministry initially as separate data for each of the four elections. The data was then merged with some additional information so that the dataset now contains information for all four elections for all municipalities in Ontario.

The Analysis

For analysis purposes, several different indicators were examined: the percentage of women represented on municipal councils in Ontario, women's representation by the type of municipality, by the method of election, incumbency, and by the position of head of council.

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3 Ibid, 6.

4 Note: Not all data was available for every election due to questionnaire changes between the election years.
A number of statistical tests were performed on the data using the data analysis program SPSS/PC+. These tests consisted of running frequencies and crosstabulations between the number of women elected and the indicators previously mentioned. A frequency distribution is a table that shows the number of observations for each of the values of a variable. The process of crosstabulating involves taking each case in a set of observations and displaying the value of that case for both of the variables in table form. This data was then analyzed and is presented in graph form in this chapter.

Municipal Government: An Overview

There are over 4,000 municipalities in Canada and 840 in Ontario alone. Municipalities are incorporated bodies. Incorporation is a legal device which allows residents of a specific geographic area to provide services of a common interest.

The incorporation of a municipality is granted by the Provincial government upon application from the local

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6 Ibid. 295.

7 Association of Municipalities of Ontario Municipal Administration Program Unit 1 (Mississauga: A.M.C.T) Chapter 1 p. 2.
inhabitants and subject to minimum population requirements. As a corporate body the municipality is limited to the powers vested in it by its creator, the Provincial Government.

Municipalities vary considerably in their size and population, their internal organization and their range of responsibilities. Ontario's 840 municipalities are classified as improvement districts, towns, villages, police villages, towns, separated towns, cities and boroughs. In addition there are the upper-tier municipalities: county, metropolitan and region.

The composition of the council itself is determined by the classification of the municipality. A number of specific features, including the extent to which council's representatives are delegated to standing committees of council or to some form of chief administrative officer are largely determined by the municipality itself subject to Provincial guidelines and requirements.

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8 Ibid. 2.
9 Note: Improvement districts are located only in Northern Ontario where a board of trustees is appointed by the province to govern these districts.
10 Ibid. 5.
11 Ibid. 6.
Generally, women's representation on municipal councils in Ontario increased during the 1980-1988 period. In 1980 over half the councils (51.5%) did not include any women (see figure 4.1). This percentage declined at an average rate of 5.1%; by 1988, 36.1% of councils in Ontario still had no women on council. Although, by 1988 almost two thirds of councils included at least one woman, there were still large numbers of councils without any women at the end of the decade.

In 1980, 31% of councils in Ontario included one woman. This percentage gradually increased at an average rate of 3.8% until 1985 when 38.5% of councils had the representation of one woman. This rate then declined by 1% to reach 37.5% in 1988. As women are better represented on councils, the number of councils with only one woman or no women should decrease.

The number of municipalities with two women on council, increased substantially. In 1980, 12.3% of councils had two women represented on them. This increased at an average rate of 2.2% to reach 19% in 1988. In 1980, 3.6% of the councils in Ontario had the representation of three women. This rate increased to 5% in 1988. During the 1980-1988 period women's representation increased on municipal councils in Ontario; still just one quarter of all councils included two or more women in 1988.
Figure 4.1 Percentage of Councils with Varying Degrees of Female Representation 1980-1988
In 1988 women's representation on municipal councils in Ontario was less than 20% (see figure 4.2). There were only 807 women elected to councils compared to 4046 men. Over the decade, women made up just 13.7% of all councils.

While the percentage of women's representation increased between 1980 and 1988, other factors must be considered. Throughout this time period, councils with five or six members were the most common. Of all councils in Ontario, an average of 68.7% had five member councils. Only 9% of these councils had women's representation in 1980 (see chart 4.3). It can be concluded that the most common councils had a very low percentage of women's representation, averaging 11.9% for the four elections. Larger councils generally had slightly more women on council but the differences were not dramatic. In 1980, the entire percentage of women on councils in Ontario was 9.5% meaning 90.5% of councillors were men.

During the 1980-1988 period 5-6 member councils were the most frequent. Women's representation, however was quite low on these councils. In 1980, only 9.2% of councillors on 4-5 member councils were women. This rate rose slightly throughout the election years to 15.5% of members on 4-5 member councils being women. In this sense women were not represented very well on the most frequently occurring councils in Ontario.

Generally, women's representation was greater on the larger
Figure 4.2 Males & Females on Ontario Councils*
1980-1988
councils. On councils with 7-8 members 12.5% were women in 1980 and 18.3% were women in 1988. On councils with 9-10 members 12.3% were women in 1980. This number increased to 17.3% female councillors on 9-10 member councils 1988. Councils with 11-12 members had 13.2% female councillors in 1980 which rose to 18.5% in 1988. While large councils represented very small percentages of councils, they represent a large percentage of the population.

One might argue that one woman elected to a five member council would have more influence on that council than one or even two women elected to a larger council of ten or more members, since one woman on a five member council would constitute 20% of the total council whereas one woman on a on a larger council would constitute only 6% or less of the total council and even two women account for only 12% of the total council. However, since the larger councils are also more likely to include more than one woman, the possible creation of a "critical mass" may outweigh the purely proportionate weight on smaller councils.

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12 Note: Upper tier councils were not included in the tables. Overall there seemed to be higher female representation on these councils.
### Chart 4.3 Number and Percentage of Women on Municipal Councils 1980-1988

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<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>79</td>
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<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 12*</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL n</td>
<td>467</td>
<td></td>
<td>618</td>
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*Note lower tier councils were included only.*
Women's Representation with Respect To
Type of Municipality

Ontario has approximately 840 municipalities within its boundaries. Municipalities are designated on the basis of population size. The most frequently occurring type of municipality in Ontario is the township. Ontario has 478 townships, comprising 56.9% of all municipalities in Ontario and containing 15.4% of Ontario's population (see chart 4.4). A township is the only specific rural unit in Ontario having a minimum population of 1000 people for incorporation.\(^{13}\)

Villages are the smallest category of urban municipalities having a minimum population of 500 people. Ontario has 119 villages which comprise 14.1% of all the municipalities in Ontario and hold 1.5% of the population.

Towns, which must have a minimum population of 2000 people, are the middle category of the three types of urban municipalities.\(^{14}\) Ontario has 142 towns, comprising 16.2% of all municipalities and containing 16.9% of the population.

Cities are the largest category of municipalities, having a


<table>
<thead>
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<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Population Requirement</th>
<th>% Of Municipalities</th>
<th>% Of Population</th>
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<td>478 Townships</td>
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<td>119 Villages</td>
<td>500-2,000</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>142 Towns</td>
<td>2,000-15,000</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>16.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 Cities</td>
<td>15,000+</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>66.6</td>
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</tbody>
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heavily concentrated population with a minimum population requirement of 15,000. Ontario has 50 cities, comprising 5.9% of all municipalities and containing 66.6% of the population.

There were more women elected to city councils than any other types of councils throughout the 1980-1988 period (see figure 4.5). Cities had the lowest percentages of councils without women on them. In 1980 only 14% of city councils did not have women's representation. This rate was reduced to 9% in 1988. City councils also had the highest percentages of councils with two or more women on them. In 1980 33% of councils had two or more women on them compared with 8% of villages and 11% of townships for the same time period. This rate increased in cities dramatically to 63% in 1982 whereas the rate did not increase much in the rural municipalities. The rate for cities with two or more women was 65% in 1988 whereas villages had 21% and townships had 11%.

Towns did not have as high a representation of women as did cities but they did represent more women than villages and townships. In 1980 29% of town councils had the representation of no women. This rate decreased to 20% in 1988. In 1982 town councils had the highest percentage (65%) of councils with one woman on, out of all the municipality types over all the years.

Villages and townships had the highest percentage of councils without women. In 1980 61% of township councils had no
Figure 4.5 Percentage of Councils With No, One, Two or More Women by Municipal Type 1980-1988
females representation. This rate decreased to 48% in 1988.
In 1980 56% of village councils did not have the representation
of women. This rate decreased to 35% in 1988.

Women were represented most frequently on city councils
where in 1980 17% of city councils were women (see figure 4.6).
This rate increased to 19% in 1988. Town councils in 1980 had
14% women on their councils. This rate increased to 17% in 1988.
Villages in 1980 had 13% women on their councils. This rate
increased 3% over the 1980-1988 period to 16% in 1988. Townships
had the lowest representation of women on municipal councils. In
1980 women comprised 9% of township councils. This rate
increased to 15% in 1988.

Throughout the 1980-1988 period women were more frequently
represented on city councils than on any other type of municipal
council. Cities had higher percentages of women's representation
on their councils while representing two thirds of the population
of Ontario. However, even in cities the percentage of women
councillors did not break 20% representation. It can be
concluded that as the rural areas of Ontario become urbanized
women's representation on municipal councils may increase.
Figure 4.6 Percentage of Female Councillors For Municipal Type 1980-1988
Two different methods of election, at-large elections and ward elections, were analyzed from the data provided.\textsuperscript{15} In at-large or general elections, candidates campaign over the entire municipality. The candidates receiving the most votes cast throughout the municipality are then elected to council.\textsuperscript{16}

The ward method of election divides the municipality into a smaller number of geographic areas with a number of members, usually an equal number, to be elected from each ward. In this system candidates do not campaign over the whole municipality but only in their specific ward. Voters are limited to choosing the candidates in the ward in which they exercise their franchise.\textsuperscript{17}

Councils elected by the at-large method of election had a greater percentage of councils without female representation than did councils elected by the ward method of election. In 1980 51.7\% of councils elected by the at-large method did not have any women elected to councils compared to councils elected by the

\textsuperscript{15} Note: Data for the method of election includes 1980, 1982 and 1986 elections. The data was not available for the 1985 election. Analyzing these three election years, however, does indicate the general trend of the percentage of women's representation with regards to the method of election.


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. Chapter 3 p. 7-8.
ward method which had 35.4% of councils without female representation (see figure 4.7). These rates decreased, so that, in 1988, 38.5% of councils elected by the at-large method of election had no female representation and 19.6% of councils elected by the ward method had no female representation.

Councils elected by the at-large method, in 1980, had 35.2% of councils with one female on council. For the same year, councils elected by ward had 18.5% councils with one woman on council. These rates increased in 1988, where 39% of councils elected by the at-large method had one woman on council and 30.4% of councils elected by the ward method had one woman on them.

In 1980 13.1% of councils elected by the at-large method of election had the representation of two or more women whereas 46.1% of councils elected by the ward method had the representation of two or more females. These rates increased over the decade where in 1988, 27.4% of councils elected by the ward method had two or more females represented on them and 50% of councils elected by the at-large method of election had the representation of two or more females.

At-large elections produced a higher percentage of councils without women on them than councils elected by the ward method of election. At-large elections had a higher percentage of councils with one woman present on them than ward elections. Councils elected by the ward method of election, however, had a much
higher percentage of councils with the representation of two and more women than did councils elected by the at-large method of election.

A possible reason for these differences are is that at-large elections generally have higher campaign costs than ward elections. A candidate campaigning in an at-large election must campaign throughout the entire municipality, which can become expensive where signs and literature are involved. Wards cover a smaller territory than at-large elections which cover the entire municipality, thus resulting in lower campaign costs.

Another reason is that in ward elections, it is easier for a candidate to personally get involved with and be aware of the particular needs and concerns of the local populace18 rather than in at-large elections. During at-large elections candidates must try to familiarize themselves with the current issues of the entire municipality. Voters are more aware of the limited number of candidates running in a ward as opposed to the larger number of candidates that run in at-large elections. Ward elections, then, provide women more of a chance to become recognized amongst a limited pool of candidates than in at-large elections.

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Women on Council

- At Large
- Ward

Figure 4.7 Women's Representation on Municipal Councils

By Method of Election
Women
As Incumbents

An incumbent\textsuperscript{19} is a person who has already served at least one term in public office and in the following election he/she resumes his/her position by being re-elected. The level of incumbency is not only an indicator of past success. Incumbents generally enjoy a higher rate of electoral success than their challengers. Incumbency reveals voter faith in electing the same candidate for another term in office.

In 1980, 50.3\% of councils in Ontario had no women incumbents. In 1985, this number decreased by 10.9\% to 39.4\% of councils in Ontario with no female incumbents. In 1980, 32.4\% of councils in Ontario had one woman incumbent. This increased by a rate of 6.1\% to 38.5\% of Ontario councils with one woman incumbent in 1985. In 1980, 12.8\% of councils had two female incumbents. This increased by 1.2\% to 14\% of councils in 1985 with two female incumbents. In 1980, 3.4\% of councils had three women incumbents. This increased by 1.5\% to 4.9\% of councils with three female incumbents in 1985.

\textsuperscript{19} Note: Data concerning female incumbency was only available for the 1980 and 1985 municipal elections due to different forms for different years. While this is not completely thorough, some generalizations can be drawn concerning female incumbency in municipal elections in Ontario.
Women
As Head of Council

The head of a municipal council can have quite a strong influence over the rest of the council where he/she acts as a presiding officer at council meetings and has an opportunity to shape and direct the debate. The head of council has the authority to call a special meeting at any time and in determining the agenda times for all meetings. Heads of council are ex-officio members of all committees of council, including a number of special purpose bodies. Heads of council act as the social and ceremonial leader in their communities and they enjoy a status and public stature which does not apply to other councillors. They are normally the ones contacted by the media for comments on topical local issues. The duties and privileges of being the head of a municipal council gives the head of council a broad overview of local government activities and public visibility that are not available to any other councillor, and their expanse of knowledge adds to their stature.

In 1980, 94.6% of council heads in Ontario were male. This

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21 Ibid. 14.

22 Ibid. 14.

23 Ibid. 14.

24 Ibid. 14.
Figure 4.8 Percentage of Gender of Head of Council 1980-1988
decreased by .2% to 94.4% in 1982, 91.1% in 1985 and dropped to 89.1% in 1988 (see figure 4.8). In contrast, females as heads of council more than doubled over the decade, but the rate of female heads of council still remains low. In 1980, female heads of council accounted for 4.8% of all heads, in 1985 for 6.8% and in 1988 10.9% of all heads of council in Ontario were women.

Very low percentages of acclaimed heads of council were female during the 1980-1988 period. In 1980, 94.7% of acclaimed heads of council were male compared to 4.7% females (see figure 4.9). In 1988 the rate for acclaimed males was reduced to 89.8% while 10.2% of the acclaimed heads were female. During the 1980-1988 period women accounted for 5% to 11% of representation on heads of council which means that almost the same percentage of women that were elected to head of council were elected again by being acclaimed. Between 1980-1988 men represented 95%-89% of heads of council. Again, almost the same percentage of men that were elected to head of council were re-elected by being acclaimed.

**Conclusion**

The following broad, general conclusions can be drawn from the data analyzed for the 1980-1988 Ontario municipal elections. Generally, women's representation increased during the 1980-1988 period. The number of councils without women's representation decreased while the number of councils with one to three female
Figure 4.9 Percentage of Head of Council Acclaimed 1980, 1988
members increased. While councils with five members were the most frequent, women's representation on these small councils was low. Women's representation was more common on larger councils which govern over 2/3 of the population of Ontario.

During the 1980-1988 period cities were the least common type of municipality in Ontario, representing a large percentage of the population. Women's representation was higher in cities than in any other type of municipality. Townships are the most common type of municipality in Ontario representing a small percentage of Ontario's population. Women's representation was lower on township councils than on any other municipality type.

More women were represented on councils elected by the ward method of election than the at-large method of election. It is more expensive to campaign in at-large elections, and since women generally have a lower income than their male counterparts, it would be more expensive for women to campaign in at-large elections. It is also easier for the electorate to become familiar with the limited number of candidates competing in a ward election than the large number of candidates in an at-large election.

In general, there were many more male incumbents on councils than females. The number of councils with no female incumbents dropped somewhat during the period of the study, while the number of councils with female incumbents increased slightly. Even
though the number of female incumbents remained low in 1988, the percentage of women that were elected to be the head of a municipal council are acclaimed in the next election. This proves that when women are elected to the head of a municipal council, the electorate has enough confidence in them to re-elect them.

Overall, women made some gains with regards to their representation on municipal councils in Ontario during the 1980-1988 period. Yet, in 1988 (the last election year analyzed in this research) there were still 36.1% of councils that did not have any women's representation whatsoever, which points to the fact that women's position in municipal politics is still far from being equal.
Chapter Five

The Interviews

To supplement the statistics provided in Chapter four, and to fully understand the impact of people's ambitions in the political realm, personal interviews were conducted with eight key people involved in politics in Essex County. The involvement of the people interviewed varied from people who were recently elected to their positions, to people who have been heads of council for a number of years. Both women and men were interviewed to discern whether motivations for running for political office differ between males and females.

Methodology

Letters were mailed (see appendix 5.1) to 15 people who had either been involved in politics at the municipal level in Essex County in the past or were currently a member of a municipal council. The letters were followed up by a supplementary phone call to set up interview dates. I was able to interview six people in person and conducted two telephone interviews, due to

1 Note: the interviews were conducted between March 26 and April 11, 1995. Approval was obtained from the Department of Political Science Ethics Committee.
the heavy schedules of these respondents. The other seven people were not interviewed due to unavailability.

Most of the interviews lasted approximately half an hour, with some extending to an hour. The personal interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewees. The interviewees were reminded at the beginning of the interview that the recording device would be turned off at any time at their request. The telephone interviews, however, were not tape recorded. All of the people that were interviewed were extremely co-operative and very willing to participate.

The first section\(^2\) of the interview involved questions pertaining to the interviewee's involvement in politics. The main interest in this section was to determine how and why the interviewee became involved in municipal politics.

The second section of the interview involved questions pertaining to the distinctiveness of the interviewee's political experience. The questions asked in this section were intended to determine what elected positions the interviewee had held, how long the positions were held, and the interviewee's career before and during politics.

\(^2\) See appendix 4.2 for a list of the questions used during the interviews.
The third set of questions referred to the interviewee's position on the impact of women on local government. In this section the interviewees were asked how they felt about the representation of women in Canadian politics.

The final portion of the interview obtained the demographics of the interviewees, including the interviewee's age, marital and family status, and the highest level of education they have obtained.

The Results

For reference purposes all of the "interviewees" have been assigned a number. These numbers do not imply a rank in any form, but are simply the order in which the interviews were conducted.

Since statistics concerning women's representation in municipal politics were analyzed in Chapter 4, this chapter will focus on the anecdotal, personal experiences of those interviewed rather than combining the results into statistics. The questions asked relate to the theories included in the literature review in Chapter 1, providing possible reasons why there are fewer women involved in politics at the municipal level than men.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) Note: Although both men and women with municipal careers of differing lengths from different municipalities were interviewed, the results of these interviews are not to be construed as a
Involvement in Municipal Politics

In the interviews the first question was "How did you become involved in politics?" The purpose of this question was to discern if there were any differences in the reasons for becoming involved in politics between men and women.

Reasons Men Became Involved in Politics

Interviewee 1 stated that "he had always been involved in the community." "Some people who were involved in politics at the time approached me and asked me if I'd be interested in running for council. There wasn't one particular issue that motivated me to become involved in politics. I just wanted to do something more for my community."

Interviewee 2 had been interested in politics for a long time and he stated that the possibility of running for politics had been in the back of his mind for a long time. His interest was really sparked when he served as executive assistant to a mayor.

The interest that Interviewee 6 held concerning politics seemed to stem from a belief that the City Manager had too much

scientific sample. The purpose of these interviews is to provide information about women in municipal politics in Ontario that was not provided by the statistics in Chapter 4 of this paper.
power and the city councillors of the day were not strong enough. "I was angered to look in the newspaper and learn that the City Manager was talking as if he was going to make certain things happen in the City. I was always interested in politics and I had the idea in the back of my mind that some day I would run."

Interviewee 7 was helping out on someone else's campaign when he became interested in running for politics. "There was an opening on council, so I decided to run."

**Reasons Women Became Involved in Politics**

Interviewee 3 remembers becoming interested in politics when she was only thirteen. "My father had taken me to a Social Credit Convention where I met Robert Thompson. When we were young we always knew who the mayor was." Later in life interviewee 3, who worked for a city supported institution, was concerning that City Council was making important decisions concerning that institution. "There was also the possibility that there would be an all male council - so I decided to run. I had previous experience helping other candidates with their campaigns."

Interviewee 4 stated that her original interest stemmed from the fact that she was interested enough in politics to receive a combined bachelor's degree in Political Science/Economics. "I hadn't really thought about running until one day my husband
suggested that one of us should run for council. He didn't want to go out and get signatures, so I did."

Interviewee 5 stated that she had always been interested in politics. Her career of 29 years was closely related to municipal politics. "I thought to myself that I didn't want some of the people who were running to represent me, so I decided to run."

Upon looking back, Interviewee 8 described herself as being very shy and timid and did not envision herself running for politics. A particular issue concerning turning Péché Island, in the Windsor area into an amusement park made her think that possibly there was something she could do to make a difference. "I had always followed the newspapers and the local news on television. I started going to every single council meeting for two years straight. I helped form the Save Péché Island Committee, and people were telling me I was what they wanted in a politician."

There seemed to be similar experiences between the men and women who were interviewed. Some became involved in politics due to a single issue. Others felt that they could make a difference in their community. Others had already been involved in the community and felt that politics was the next logical step in helping out members of their community. Some of the interviewees
became interested in politics while helping out other candidates on their campaigns. This gave them the background experience they needed to start their own political careers.

**Municipal Politics as Opposed To Other Levels of Government**

The interviewees were asked why they chose to get involved in municipal politics as opposed to other levels of government. Some of the men stated that their careers had previously involved travelling and at the time they were to become involved in politics they wanted to stay in their own communities. Interviewee 2 stated "I was born in Windsor and I was educated here. I've lived in other cities but I feel committed to Windsor — and I'm here to stay!" Interviewee 6 stated "The municipal level of politics was not the one that interested me the most as I was more interested in the federal and provincial levels of government. I talked to some of the people who were on council at the time and I felt that I could make a difference."

Most of the women stated that their choice to become involved in municipal politics was influenced by the fact that they had small children and needed to stay close to home. Interviewee 3 did run as a candidate for another level of government but she stated "I had small children and I didn't want to move away." Interviewee 4 stated that "Municipal politics is closest to a person's everyday life. With young children it was
hard to even think of moving to Toronto or Ottawa - even spending time on municipal council was hard enough. Even if I wanted to get involved in provincial or federal politics, it's the type of thing that you need a background for - it's not the type of thing you just jump right into."

Interviewee 5 stated that her decision to become involved in municipal politics was based on the amount of time she had to devote to a political career. She had a full time career which would not make involvement in any other level of government feasible. From the point of view of interviewee 8 the thought of politics was one of the furthest thing from her mind. Her involvement in politics stemmed from one issue which got her involved in the greater interest of municipal politics. She also had four children that she was raising by herself. "My four daughters needed their mother around. Being involved in provincial or federal politics would mean being away from home."

With regard to being involved in municipal politics as opposed to other levels of government, most of the men felt they were committed to the communities in which they lived and that they wanted to give back to their community. Most of the women felt that municipal politics was the most logical level of government to become involved in because they had small children that needed to be taken care of and there was a need for them to remain close to home. Municipal politics also gave the women a
base from which to start their political careers. Municipal politics is an easier arena in which to begin a political career than provincial or federal politics.

**Involvement in Community Organizations**

Questions regarding the interviewee's prior involvement in community organizations were asked to determine if there are differences in the community organizations that men and women belong to. These questions were also intended to discern whether involvement in the community made them interested in municipal politics.

The pattern of male involvement is mixed. With regard to community organizations, Interviewee 1 was heavily involved in the community: he coached Little League teams, and had a strong involvement with his church. Interviewee 2 stated that he was involved with the United Way, Crime Stoppers, Little League teams, and the committee in charge of the renovations to a local theatre. Interviewee 6 stated that he was not involved in community organizations at the time that he ran for election. "I had a general interest in politics with a larger interest in the political process." Interviewee 7 was not involved in any community organizations that sparked his interest to become involved in politics.
The women also differed in their involvement. Interviewee 3 helped form and was involved in the Women's Economic Forum and was a union representative at her workplace. Interviewee 4 stated that she was not involved in any community organizations at the time that she sought election. Interviewee 5 was involved in the Windsor and District Personnel Association and the Ontario Municipal Personnel Association. Interviewee 8 helped form the Help Save Péché Island Committee. She was also on the Home and School Association.

Although an equal number of men and women were involved in community organizations, the type of organizations differed between the genders. The men that were involved in community organizations were involved in sports organizations whereas none of the women had involvement in sports organizations. The women interviewed were involved in their communities as union representatives whereas none of the men represented their communities in this capacity.

**Financing of Election Campaigns**

A fundamental requirement for competing in election campaigns is access to socio-economic networks.¹ This theory suggests that women are at a disadvantage in the political field

because very few women belong to the powerful financial circles that provide advantages for people entering politics.

This theory did not seem to apply to the people who were interviewed. Most of the men and women interviewed stated that their municipal campaigns were not very expensive. The representatives from county municipalities noted that their political campaigns were run on a very "low key" basis. Many of the county representatives did not print yard signs that seem to be popular in municipal elections in cities. They merely printed brochures and put advertisements in local newspapers. Many believed that the true way to be successful in a campaign was by knocking on a lot of doors and getting out into the community and meeting as many people as possible.

Of the other respondents who were interviewed, most stated that their campaign was run from household money. Some of the candidates running in the city did accept donations from the community but they did not accept any donation over $100. Some of the candidates stated that they were offered money from certain groups or from individuals but they refused, so they would not have to be indebted to them after they were elected.

Some of the people interviewed were quick to "drag" about

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5 This may have an effect on a female remaining in politics at the municipal level or seeking election at another level of government.
how economical their campaign had been. Interviewee 8, who was first elected in 1967, spent a total of $700 on her political campaign. This was household money, not raised from the community. Interviewee 7 stated that he ran "a very economical campaign": "I spent less than any of the other candidates!"

Interviewee 3 stated that it was necessary for her to spend money beyond just the expenses of an election. She also had to finance a wardrobe, so she would "look the part of a politician". Except for the extra expenses incurred by interviewee 3, there seemed to be little difference in the way the men and women financed their political careers.

There seemed to be little difference between the expenses of men and women for their political campaigns. Women did not seem to have difficulties raising adequate funds to finance their campaigns. Both men and women (even those running large campaigns) stated that they did not accept donations from individuals or organizations for more than a certain amount so as not to feel indebted to them in the future.

The Effects of Family Obligations on Political Careers

Brodie argues that women do not abstain from politics; rather, they are inhibited from participating by the constraints
of traditional gender roles, especially motherhood. The interviewees were asked if they had children and the age of their children at the time they were running for election. All of them had children at the time they were elected. To see if Brodie's theory held true with the people interviewed, the question "How did having a family affect your political career?" was asked.

**Men's Family Obligations**

When Interviewee 1 first became involved in politics his children were six years old and newborn. "My wife took care of the child rearing. I was away a lot, which made it difficult from a family point of view. Having a family did not have a negative impact on my political career."

Interviewee 2 had one child, aged twenty-one when he decided to run for politics. "He was right there with me on the campaign trail."

With regards to family obligations, interviewee 6 stated that having a family did not affect his political career, but the reverse was true, that having a political career affected his family. He had two young children - aged three and newborn when

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he first decided to run for politics. "I would say it was useful to have a family, to put a "nice" picture of them in pamphlets. I took the kids a lot of places with me - they got to eat "different" kinds of food and get balloons. I honestly don't think that if you'd ask my kids that they would say that my being in politics affected them or it was a problem that I was in politics besides incidents where teachers at their school would say 'tell your dad...,' or the odd threatening phone call."

Interviewee 7 had five children at the time he was elected. "They were effective campaigners. They were able to run errands for me. My wife was able to stay home and take care of the children - she was a good coordinator."

**Women's Family Obligations**

Interviewee 3 had four children ranging in age from eighteen months to ten years old when she first ran for the position of councillor. She had to take a leave from her job, since there would be a possible conflict of interest. "I feel I saw my kids as much as other working mothers. I spent time with my kids during the day and went to meetings at night when my husband took care of them. Once the kids got older and they were in school, it made things difficult."

Interviewee 4 had a small child when she was first involved
in politics. Although she doesn't feel it hindered her political career she felt it "was not fair to my child."

When interviewee 5 decided to run for council her children were all married. However, she did have four granddaughters, for which she would always make "family time".

Interviewee 8 had four daughters, who were all in school, that she was raising by herself when she first got elected to politics.

With regards to family obligations, men with small children at the time of their entry into politics did not hesitate to state, in a matter-of-fact fashion, that their wives took care of the child rearing responsibilities. Some did state that they spent more time away from home than they would have liked to due to their political commitments. Some men thought that having a family was beneficial to their political campaigns because it "looked good" in the eyes of the public.

None of the women interviewed felt that having a family hindered their political careers but they did seem to have a more difficult time balancing their careers, their political commitments and their families than did the men.
Education

In general, females are not as well educated as males. As a result they do not have as much income as males and do not have the necessary socio-economic resources when they run for political positions.¹

All of the men interviewed had a formal post-secondary education. All of the men obtained university degrees, ranging from Bachelor's degrees to a Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Of the women interviewed two received post secondary education, two had not finished high school. The women who had post-secondary education degrees ranged from a Bachelor's to a Master's degree.

Occupation

Two of the men interviewed held positions with the Federal Government at the time they were elected into politics and during their political careers. Interviewee 1 stated that "The Federal government encouraged its employees to become involved in other facets of the community." Interviewee 7 was a plant engineer of a factory when he was first elected but in the beginning of his

political career he took summer school courses to obtain his Ontario Teaching Certificate. Interviewee 6 had a teaching career at the time he was elected.

Two of the women interviewed had careers at the time they first entered politics and two did not. Interviewee 3 was a librarian when she was first elected and Interviewee 5 was employed in a Personnel Department. Both interviewee 4 and 8 did not have "professional" careers; they tended to the duties of raising children. Interviewee 8 served one term on council and due to the fact that she had to raise her children by herself she went to work in the media and then later returned for two more terms on council.

Besides the fact that two of the women interviewed did not have careers at the time they were elected, there was not much difference between females and males in the types of careers they were involved in.

Spouse/Parental Involvement in Politics

According to Robinson et al., female politicians used to be stereotyped in the media to have only received political positions due to their husband's or father's involvement in politics. The media presented the notion that women used "name
"recognition" to get elected and not their own political skill.⁶

The interviewees were asked if their spouses and their parents were involved in politics. All stated that their spouses were not involved in politics and most stated that their parents were not formally involved in politics. Some, however, stated that although their parents were not formally involved in politics they helped out on campaigns, were members of political parties and they were always aware of who the local politicians were. Interviewee 6 stated that although his father had not received a formal education, he was a learned man. "My father was an avid newspaper reader and he was always interested in public affairs. He always voted because it was the "right" thing to do."

Interviewee 3 stated that her father was a card carrying member of a provincial party, and "My grandfather was a member of Windsor City council." Interviewee 4 stated that her mother was involved with the Liberal party in an "organizational sort of way." "We were aware of local politics through her involvement." Interviewee 5 stated that her father was on the school board. "Both my parents kept up on what was going on - they kept interested in government." Interviewee 8 stated that when she

was an adolescent her shyness kept her home instead of going out with friends. "I would stay home and talk with my father. I was allowed to express my point of view on politics and other things which was not usual for girls in England at that time."

It seems from the group of people interviewed, that even though their parents were not directly involved in politics, the women experienced more political influence from their families than the men. This is confirmed by Brodie when she states that since cultural norms and experience may continue to discourage political careers among women, it might be expected that female candidates receive abnormally large doses of political exposure at home. Otherwise, Brodie states, women would simply adopt the cultural prescription and become supportive citizens or apolitical women.⁹

Both males and females stated that their spouses were not involved in politics. The women seemed to have more of a connection between what their relatives had achieved politically and their own political careers. Although many of them were not involved in politics in a formal way, it still seemed to have had an impact on why the women entered into political careers.

Opinions on Women's Involvement in Politics

The interviewees were asked a series of questions about their personal opinions on women's involvement in politics. The purpose of these questions was to give insight on how councillors feel about their female colleagues on municipal councils.

The interviewees were asked "Do you feel that having women on council affects how issues are debated?" In response, Interviewee 1\(^\text{10}\) stated that "There is a big difference when women are present on council, especially during in camera meetings." Interviewee 2\(^\text{11}\) never thought of women as making different kinds of decisions than men. "They do, however, bring a different perspective to council because their experience is different."

Interviewee 6\(^\text{12}\) stated that it "definitely depends on the woman. I don't recall any specific 'women's issues' that came forward due the presence of women on the council." Interviewee 7\(^\text{13}\) stated that he felt "Women have absolutely no impact on the

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\(^{10}\) Interviewee 1 is the head of council and has one woman present on his five member council.

\(^{11}\) Interviewee 2 belongs to a ten member council which has three women on it.

\(^{12}\) Interviewee 6 first belonged to an eight member council with one woman elected to it, then he belonged to a ten member council with two women on it.

\(^{13}\) Interviewee 7 was involved in politics for thirty-one years. He was first on a five member council, later the number increased to eight and then to ten. Over the years he was on council, he
way decisions are made in municipal politics."

In contrast, the women were emphatic in stressing the difference. Interviewee 3\textsuperscript{14} felt that through her experience in politics she learned that "a lot of what is important to women is not important to men. Women have a different angle on things, they have different perspectives. If a council is represented by all men, the women in the community are not being represented."

Interviewee 4\textsuperscript{15} stated that "Having a woman on council does make a difference to some degree, but I'm not sure that it makes that big of a difference in the tone of council that any person with common sense wouldn't do. Women seem to be more conscientious and look at detail more closely."

Interviewee 5\textsuperscript{16} stated that "Women have a different point of view that shouldn't be ignored."

served with a total of eight women councillors.

\textsuperscript{14} Interviewee 3 was on a ten member council with one other woman.

\textsuperscript{15} Interviewee 4 was a member of a five member council of which she was the head for six years. There were no other women elected to the council.

\textsuperscript{16} Interviewee 5 was elected to a five member council with no other women present.
Interviewee 8 stated that "Women bring a different dimension to council. Women express concerns that men tend to overlook, for example, mother's allowance and day care. I'm not sure the presence of women on a council affects the way issues are debated. It all depends on the personalities of people."

In general, most of the men and women interviewed seemed to agree that women do present different angles than men on certain issues. Women have different experiences than men and thus they see certain issues in a different light. Some of the men felt that there was not a noticeable difference in the way issues were debated with the presence of women.

**Opinions on the Representation of Women in Canadian Politics**

To conclude the interview, a broad and encompassing question was asked: "In general, how do you feel about the representation of women in Canadian politics". Most of the interviewees responded by stating that there is not enough representation of women in Canadian politics.

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17 Interviewee 8 had been on three councils. The first time she was elected it was to a five member council with no other women on council. The second time she was elected it was to a ten member council with one other woman. The third time she was elected, she became the head of a ten member council with no other women on council.
Men's Views on Women's Representation in Canadian Politics

Interviewee 1 stated that "There is not enough women's representation. At the local level you get into the 'bread and butter' issues such as roads, daycare, education and things affecting everyday life. Men don't necessarily represent men and women don't necessarily represent women. When there are issues that are understood better by either men or women, that expertise is brought to the table."

Interviewee 2 stated that he felt "women's representation has come a long way over the past couple of years. There is some room for balancing the books, if you will."

Interviewee 6 stated that "Women's representation is best at the municipal level. It is getting to the point where gender is almost becoming a non-issue at the municipal level."

Interviewee 7 stated that "Representation varies with the individual. There are good men and good women. There are lousy men and lousy women. A lot of people are in politics to serve their own egos and their own interests over that of the common good."
Women's Views on Women's Representation in Canadian Politics

Interviewee 3 stated that women's representation in Canadian politics is depressed. "I hope women can achieve gender parity. Women now will have the training and experience [through professional careers] to 'make it' in politics."

Interviewee 4 stated that "There is not enough women's representation. I think that people who would like to run can't afford the time or just don't like the idea of politics and the bad reputation that it has received. We need more women running, then more women will have the opportunity to win."

Interviewee 5 stated that "Women are not represented enough. It is good to have a balance. Women make up 51% of the [population] and this should be represented in politics. I think women's representation in politics has a long way to go."

Interviewee 8 stated that "Women's representation in politics is generally good at all levels. I am impressed by many of the women that are in politics today, the quality is very high. People seem to expect more of women. Many people are cynical and expect women to do more with regards to ethical and moral dilemmas."

Most of the men and women interviewed expressed some concern
for the fact that there is not enough female representation in present day Canadian politics. Many agreed that "women have come a long way" in politics, but most felt that they still haven't come far enough.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of conducting the interviews with select, key municipal politicians in the Essex County area was to get more insight into why both men and women decide to venture into the realm of politics. Even from the small sample of politicians who were interviewed, certain similarities and differences emerged in the opinions of the men and women in general.

Men and women had similar experiences in the ways they became involved in municipal politics. For some, one single issue provided the motive motivated them to become involved, with the belief that there was something they could do to become involved in their community. Some gained their experience through helping others with their campaign, gaining some first hand experience and eventually becoming interested enough to run themselves. In general, most of the people interviewed became involved in politics so they could do more for the local communities in which they live. The women interviewed however, seemed to relate to their parents' involvement in politics more than the men.
An equal number of men and women were involved in organizations but the types of organizations that the interviewees belonged to differed between the males and the females. The men belonged to sports-related community organizations whereas the women served their communities as union members.

There seemed to be no difference in the financing of political careers between men and women, with the exception that one woman stated that she had supplementary costs over and above the costs of running her campaign, to purchase a "politician's wardrobe". Most of the politicians interviewed stated that their campaigns were generally low key, and finance was not a major issue.

Of the eight people interviewed, all but two women received post secondary education. The reason why the two women did not receive post secondary education is probably due to the socialization they received when they were younger.

None of the people interviewed had spouses who were involved in politics. The women seemed to relate their own political involvement with the involvement of other family members while the men did not. All of the women mentioned that a relative was involved in politics, even if it was merely in an organizational sense. None of the men correlated any experiences of relatives'
involvement in politics, formal or informal, with their own political careers.

Men and women seemed to have different experiences with regard to family obligations. All of the people interviewed had children at the time they first got involved in politics. The men stated that their wives were responsible for the child rearing responsibilities. The women, on the other hand, faced greater challenges trying to balance time between their families, a political career and an occupation.

Following along the same lines as family obligations, most of the women stated the fact that they had small children was a determining factor in deciding to get involved in municipal politics as opposed to other levels of government. None of the men mentioned their families as deciding factors to become involved in municipal politics, but stated that they were committed to their communities and they wanted to do more to get involved.

Most of the men and women agreed that women see certain issues in a different light than men and due to this they bring up different points of view. All people agreed that there is not enough women's representation in present day Canadian politics.

The interviews illustrated that there are different factors
which contribute to the representation of women in Canadian politics. Women are more often than not in charge of child rearing and family responsibilities which can hamper thoughts of the busy life of politics. Women, more often than men, become involved in politics when another family member has been involved in politics.
Chapter Six

Conclusion

This thesis set out to find answers to a number of questions relating to women's representation in Canadian politics including Why there are more men than women in Canadian politics, The factors contributing to this and do the motivations between men and women running for political office differ. To answer these questions the following steps were taken.

Step One

The first step involved conducting a literature review, which summarized the relevant theories concerning the underrepresentation of women in politics to the posed questions. As stated by Rebick¹, political institutions were created at a time when women were not considered citizens. These institutions were not later modified to integrate the female viewpoint when women did acquire the right to hold office.

Young\textsuperscript{2} states that the number of women elected in Canada is supported by a number of factors which includes the political system, the electoral laws, the status of women in society, media images of female politicians and the accessibility of human and financial resources.

The Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women in its 1988 report stated that males and females have experienced dissimilar socializations.\textsuperscript{3} Socialization provides the norms, values and role definitions that men and women carry with them into adulthood. Most women are socialized by their peers and by institutions such as schools and religious institutions. These different types of socialization that are experienced by males and females teach them to believe that there are appropriate female roles as well as appropriate male roles. This can sometimes prove to be harmful, especially in the political sphere. Many times the only fact denying female recognition in politics is the simple fact that women haven't held positions before.

The interviews which were conducted proved that socialization does play a large role in determining involvement in politics. Women have been socialized to think that the child rearing and care

\textsuperscript{2} Lisa Young, "Legislative Turnover and The Election of Women to The Canadian House of Commons," in Women in Canadian Politics: Toward Equity in Representation, ed. Kathy Mogyery (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991) 81.

\textsuperscript{3} Women in Politics: Becoming Full Partners in the Political Process (Ottawa: The Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, 1988) 6.
giving duties are theirs, and thus political careers are either overlooked or put on hold until families become older and these duties lessen. All of the people interviewed had children when they were first elected into politics. None of the men, however, were in charge of the child rearing responsibilities.

Brodie\textsuperscript{4} states that women are socialized to be apolitical. Again, this is due to the fact that historically not many women were formally involved in politics, and a common belief was that women did not belong in the man's world of politics. Women do not abstain from politics as much as they are prohibited from doing so by the constraints of the "traditional" gender roles. These traditional gender roles are those of "wife" and "mother" which prevent women from being away from their homes and families for extended periods of time which a career in provincial or federal politics would demand. Due to the way in which women are socialized they feel that the domestic duties are theirs to contend with and thus, they are prevented or delayed from becoming involved in politics.

When asked questions about involvement in municipal politics as opposed to other levels of government, women stated that they had child care responsibilities that would not permit travel. Most

of the men, on the other hand, stated that their involvement in municipal politics was driven by wanting to do more in their communities. Some stated that their careers previously involved travel and they would enjoy staying close to their homes, but unlike the women, they did not state that their prime reason for becoming involved in municipal politics as opposed to other levels was due to duties they had in their homes.

A survey completed by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1970 posed the question "Why do fewer women than men become candidates for election?" The majority of responses from both men and women stated that women were unsuitable candidates for political positions. The respondents felt that women did not have the necessary backgrounds to become candidates. The respondents were of the opinion that for women, family life and political life are not compatible.

The common occurrence of the general public not believing that women can be suitable candidates for election can hinder a female's chances of becoming elected, even if she is the best person for the job, simply because of her gender. Because women are still seen as somewhat of a novelty in the political arena, many times their ideas are not taken seriously simply because they are female.

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6 Note: the respondents were both male and female.
In federal and provincial elections in Canada, female candidates are often offered the opportunity to run for office where their chances are minimal. Women are often offered to the electorate as "sacrifice candidates" in ridings where their parties are not in a competitive position.

Municipal politics differs in this respect due to the fact that there are few places in Canada that have party politics at the municipal election. Basically, if women receive enough support, from obtaining signatures, they will be able to run for election municipally.

Even though homemaking duties are not financially remunerated, the women interviewed who were homemakers at the time of election still had the necessary skills and contacts to become elected to a municipal council. At the municipal level, at least concerning the people interviewed in this study, the financing of a municipal election campaign did not differ between males and females.

The media and the stereotypes they have typically associated with female politicians have not helped further the credibility of female politicians in the eyes of society. Four media generated stereotypes became commonplace explanations for the presence of women in politics. The most common of these stereotypes is the "wife of/family designation" stereotypes. These stereotypes assume that the only reason women obtain political positions is through
name recognition of a father or a husband and not that females had the capabilities to become a politician through their own intelligence.  

There were traces of these stereotypes prevalent in the comments from female politicians when questioned. One interviewee stated that her male colleagues had accepted her into their ranks as "one of the guys". This comment is derogatory in itself. It gives the impression that women have not "made it" in politics unless they are behaving just like the male politicians.

With regard to females becoming involved in politics, the municipal level seems to be the most accessible for females. Municipal councillors can work flexible hours and represent their communities without moving to a provincial or national capital.

Some of the women stated that their decision to become involved in municipal politics rested on the fact that it is the first level of politics. They stated that a woman with no political experience couldn't simply "jump" into provincial or federal politics. The municipal level is based on issues that are

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8 Chantal Maillé, Primed for Power: Women in Canadian Politics (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Committee on The Status of Women, 1990) 3.
close to the home and provides a forum to gain experience.

**Step Two**

The second step involved taking an in-depth look at women's representation in politics in Ontario to discern whether the history of women's representation had an impact on their current representation.

Women in Ontario had few rights concerning property, their children and the vote. Women became frustrated with these inequalities and at being at a disadvantage in society next to the men who held all the power. Women began to involve themselves in causes outside the home, joining suffragist associations and temperance organizations. Temperance organizations were designed to stop the sale and consumption of alcohol, which they felt was the root of all of society's evils. Suffragist associations were concerned with health related issues, issues relating to children, reforms on women's issues and the improvement of the state of the communities women lived in.9

The anti-suffragists' philosophy was that women were inferior to men. The premise for not believing that women could handle a career in politics was the belief that women's brains could not comprehend political matters and that since women are generally smaller than men, they would not be physically able to handle political matters.\(^1\)

Canadian women had to overcome barriers to simply be allowed to vote in elections. Women were not considered persons under the British North America Act and thus had no right to vote in federal, provincial or municipal elections.\(^1\) Women felt that issues such as the spread of contamination in communities, care for the aged and improvements in the workplace should be dealt with by the government. Women experienced great frustration wanting to present these issues but having no official voice to speak for their causes.

The suffragist associations urged the passage of a bill in the Ontario Legislature to allow women to vote. These types of bills


were presented many times but met little success. In 1917\textsuperscript{12}, due to the \textit{Military Voters Act}, some Canadian women were eligible to vote, but only to ensure that their husbands overseas had a voice. The government did not actually admit that women had a natural right to participate in public affairs.

In 1917 Ontario women were granted the right to vote. Once women were allowed to vote they wanted the right to hold office at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government.

The interviewees did not speak of these theories in regards to the underrepresentation of women in Ontario politics. There is no doubt that the fact that women could not vote or hold office until early this century, has had an effect on the representation of women in politics. Women had a slower start being exposed to politics and since they were considered a novelty in the political arena, they had to overcome many struggles just to "belong" to the institutions that men had the right to belong to for many years before.

\textbf{Step Three}

The third step involved analyzing data gathered on the municipal elections in Ontario for the 1980-1988 period. For

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{12} Jane Errington, "Pioneers and Suffragists" in \textit{Changing Patterns: Women in Canada} ed. Sandra Burt et al. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993) 73.}
analysis purposes a number of different aspects were examined including: the percentage of women represented on municipal councils in Ontario, women's representation by the type of municipality, women's representation by the method of election, women's representation by incumbency and women's representation by the position of head of council.

In general, women's representation increased during the 1980-1988 period. The number of councils not having any women's representation decreased, while the number of councils with between one and three female members increased. Councils with five members are most common, but here women's representation was low. Larger councils had more female representation, but they represented fewer of the councils in Ontario.

During the 1980-1988 period, cities were the least frequent type of municipality, but they represented a large portion of the population of Ontario. Townships were the most frequently occurring type of municipality, although they only represented a small portion of Ontario's population, since they are rural and sparsely populated.

More women were elected by the ward method of election than the at-large method of election. One possible reason for this is that it tends to be more expensive to run for at-large elections. Since women generally have lower incomes than their male
counterparts, it would be more difficult for women to campaign in at-large elections. The electorate seems to become familiar with the limited number of candidates competing in a ward election than the larger number of candidates that compete in at-large elections.

Obviously, there were more male incumbents on municipal councils in Ontario than females. During the eighties, the number of councils that did not have any female incumbents decreased, while the number of councils with 1-3 female incumbents increased slightly.

Men have dominated the position of head of municipal council. Although women's representation more than doubled in the 1980-1988 period, the actual number of female heads of council remained low. The same percentage of women that were elected to the position of head of council were acclaimed in the next election. This proves that once a woman becomes elected the populace has faith in the job they are doing.

Women made some gains in the realm of municipal politics in Ontario in the 1980-1988 period. Fewer councils were exclusively male, more women became heads of council and more females became re-elected as incumbents. By the end of the period 1980-1988 36.1% of councils in Ontario still did not have any female representation.


To supplement the data analyzed in step three, interviews of key members of the political community in Essex County were conducted. The interviews proved to be fruitful, showing differences between male and female politicians that not prevalent in the data analysis. People have certain inherent qualities and motivations that drive them into the political spotlight. Personal aspects of people's lives seemed to play a large part in determining entrance into political careers.

All of the people interviewed had children when they ran for politics. The female interviewees had more ties with the home and child rearing responsibilities than did the males. Some delayed their political careers and some cut their political careers short due to having child care responsibilities. The males on the other hand, did not feel that having a family affected their political career. In fact some men felt that having a family helped their political career because it was nice to portray a "family image" in campaign flyers.

Theorists state that housewives do not have access to the human and financial resources that are required to run a successful
political campaign. Two out of the four women who were interviewed were housewives at the time they entered politics. Their access to human and financial resources did not seem to differ from the people they were campaigning against. Males and females had similar experiences with regards to financing of their political careers. None of the females interviewed stated that they had problems financing their campaigns.

The men and women interviewed had similar experiences in the ways they became involved in politics. Most had a genuine interest in the communities they lived in and they felt that by becoming involved in municipal politics, they could change things in their communities and make a difference. Some of the interviewees became involved in politics on a specific issue basis but the types of reasons did not seem to be divided between the males and females.

An equal number of men and women were involved in community organizations prior to their involvement in politics. Some theorists state that community organizations act as a catalyst to involvement in politics. In some cases, the interviewees became involved in politics as an extension of their involvement in the community organizations. There was one major difference between the involvement of men and women on community organizations. The

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organizations that the men belonged to were sports related and the organizations that the women belonged to were union oriented.

Step Five

Women in Municipal Politics

The Future

To answer the questions previously posed the following conclusions can be drawn. Women had a late start becoming involved in politics due to the obstacles they had to overcome. Women weren't allowed to vote and they had little if any power concerning the rights of them and their children. Once women were allowed to vote and run for election they had few female colleagues which hindered women's political progress. Women were not seen as serious politicians and they were considered a liability by political parties. The media portrayed female politicians in an unfavourable light which prevented women from running for politics. Women had child care responsibilities which did not allow them extra time to think about political careers.

Although women's representation increased during the 1980-1988 period, women were still far from being represented equally on municipal councils. Fewer councils had no representation of women, which is a positive sign for the future. Having the presence of at
least one woman on a council can pave the way for more female councillors in the future.

The key to having more female councillors is for more women to run for election. The more women run, get elected proving that they are not "just one of the guys" and that they have their own viable concerns about their communities, the more the populace will recognize politics as not a strictly male domain.
### APPENDIX 3.1

Reference List of Dates For The Achievement Of Political Equality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Suffrage</th>
<th>Eligibility to Hold Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>March 14, 1916</td>
<td>March 14, 1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>April 19, 1916</td>
<td>April 19, 1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>April 5, 1917</td>
<td>April 5, 1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>April 12, 1917</td>
<td>April 24, 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>April 26, 1918</td>
<td>April 26, 1918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Dominion of Canada  | *September 20, 1917 ** May 24, 1918 | July 17, 1919  
|                     |                | Re-affirmed and made permanent by the Dominion Elections Act 1920 |
| New Brunswick       | April 17, 1919  | March 9, 1934               |
| Prince Edward Island| May 3, 1922     | May 3, 1922                 |
| Newfoundland        | April 13, 1925  | April 13, 1925              |
| Quebec              | April 25, 1940  | April 25, 1940              |

* Relatives of members of armed forces  
** All women

**Source:**  
APPENDIX 5.1

Susan Ross
c/o Department of Political Science
University of Windsor
401 Sunset Avenue
Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4
(519) 253-4232 Ext. 2347

March 2, 1995

Dear (Potential Interviewee):

I am a student studying Political Science at the University of Windsor. For the completion of my Master’s degree, I am writing a thesis on Local Government in Ontario under the supervision of Professor H. Maclvor (Department of Political Science), Dr. T. Price (Department of Political Science) and Dr. K. Hildebrandt (Department of Communication Studies).

To gain first-hand information on this topic, I am planning to conduct interviews of key local government figures in Essex County. Considering your involvement in the political arena, I would appreciate it if you could be available for a short interview. Should you so desire, all responses will be anonymous. The questions that will be asked have been approved by the Department of Political Science Ethics Committee.

If you have any further questions concerning the project you can contact any of the above named professors or the Department of Political Science Ethics Committee at (519) 253-4232 Ext. 2347.

Your participation in this project would be much appreciated. I will be in contact with you by telephone within the next two weeks to determine your interest in this project.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Susan Ross
APPENDIX 5.2
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR RESEARCH REGARDING
WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Introduction: As stated in the letter sent to you I am conducting research regarding local government under the supervision of Professor H. MacIvor (Department of Political Science), Dr. T. Price (Department of Political Science) and Dr. K. Hildebrandt (Department of Communication Studies).

All the questions that I will be asking have been passed through the Department of Political Science Ethics Committee. (The Ethics Committee may be contacted if you have any questions regarding this interview.)

With your permission I would like to use a recording device during the course of this interview. It will be turned off at any time during the interview at your request. I would also like to ask you if you would like your name included in this research or would you prefer to remain anonymous?

QUESTIONS

PART I - REASONS FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

1. How did you become involved in politics?

2. Why did you choose to get involved in municipal politics as opposed to other levels of government?

3. Were you involved in any community organizations that had an impact on your decision to become involved in politics?

PART II - PARTICULARS OF YOUR POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

4. What elected positions have you held?

5. How long did you hold each of these positions?

6. What was your career before you entered politics/while you were involved in politics?

7. What type of election did you compete in (ward/at-large)?

8. How did you finance your political campaign?

9. a) Did you approach any organizations to assist you with your election expenses?
   b) If so, do you mind stating which organizations?

10. Including the head of council, how many members were on the council you were elected to?
11. a) Were there any (other) women on the council that you were elected to?  
b) If so, how many?

PART III - THE IMPACT OF WOMEN ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

12. Do you feel that having women on council has an impact on what decisions are made?

13. Do you feel that having women on council affect how issues are debated?

14. Were there ways in which you feel you represented your constituents differently than male councillors?

15. In general, how do you feel about the representation of women in Canadian politics?

16. In general, how do you feel about the representation of women in municipal politics in Canada?

17. a) Do you have any children?  
b) If applicable, how did having a family affect your political career?

18. a) Were either of your parents involved in politics?  
b) If so, which parent was it?  
c) If so, which level of government were they involved in?  
d) What positions did they hold?  
e) How long did they hold these positions?

19. If applicable, was your spouse involved in politics?  
a) Which level of government were they involved in?  
b) What positions did they hold?  
c) How long did they hold these positions?

PART IV - DEMOGRAPHICS

The following questions will be typed on a card and handed to the interviewee, so they may be answered in private.

20. How old were you when you were first elected?
   a. 18-29  
   b. 30-39  
   c. 40-49  
   d. 50-59  
   e. 60+
21. What is your age now?
   a. 18-29
   b. 30-39
   c. 40-49
   d. 50-59
   e. 60+

22. What is your marital status?
   a. Married
   b. Single
   c. Separated
   d. Divorced
   e. Widowed

23. What is the highest level of education you have attained?
   a. some High School
   b. High School Diploma
   c. some Community College
   d. Community College Diploma
   e. some University
   f. Bachelor Degree
   g. Master Degree
   h. Ph.D.
   i. Other—Please Specify

24. What is the highest level of education your father attained?
   a. some High School
   b. High School Diploma
   c. some Community College
   d. Community College Diploma
   e. some University
   f. Bachelor Degree
   g. Master Degree
   h. Ph.D.
   i. Other—Please Specify

25. What is the highest level of education your mother attained?
   a. some High School
   b. High School Diploma
   c. some Community College
   d. Community College Diploma
   e. some University
   f. Bachelor Degree
   g. Master Degree
   h. Ph.D.
   i. Other—Please Specify
Appendix 5.3  *Key To Municipal Councillors Interviewed*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEWEE NUMBER</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONE</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supervisor- Federal Government</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supervisor-Federal Government</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREE</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree, 2 Master's Degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUR</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Director Personnel Department</td>
<td>Grade 11, some college courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIVE</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>No formal occupation</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIX</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Post Secondary Teaching</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree, Master Degree, Doctor of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Plant Engineer</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIGHT</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>No formal occupation</td>
<td>completed some high school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY


VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Susan Stella Ross

PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, Ontario

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1970

EDUCATION: Walkerville Collegiate Institute, Windsor, Ontario 1984-1989

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario 1989-1993 B.P.A.

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario 1993-1995 M.A.

Recipient of the Walter White Scholarship for Graduate Research