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NUMBER 2

THE CHANGING ROLES OF **WOMEN** IN THE **UNITED STATES**



The title features the word "WOMEN" in large, bold, dark gray letters. Below it, the words "IN THE" and "UNITED STATES" are also in large, bold, dark gray letters. A row of six silhouettes of women in professional attire (nurse, teacher, police officer, etc.) is positioned between "WOMEN" and "UNITED STATES". A large female symbol is integrated into the letter "O" of "WOMEN".

FROM THE EDITORS

THE CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES



Although American women won the right to vote in 1920, broader economic and social change has been a longer time coming, and the pace of progress often has been uneven. In the United States during the 1960s, there began a period of substantial social change; in women's issues, the result was a phenomenon known as the women's movement.

Influenced by the success of the civil rights movement for racial equality and other progressive currents sweeping the nation during the 1960s and 1970s, a wide array of organizations and lobbying groups urged full equality for American women as well. The call was not only for a fundamental revision of American institutions, customs and values, but also for a revolution in consciousness — in the minds of women as well as men — and especially in the way women thought about themselves.

Not everyone welcomed the resulting changes, as evidenced by the formation of a number of organizations intent on countering what they viewed as unrestrained feminism. But whatever the perspective, there can be no doubt the changes have been telling. American women are living very different lives in the 1990s than they did in the 1950s and earlier.

This journal focuses on the years since 1960, and how political and legal developments of the period have shaped women's issues. In keeping with a nation governed by the rule of law, America saw political action produce legislation which responded to and shaped the times — increasing opportunities for women in various U.S. institutions, workplaces and marketplaces — frequently for the first time. More recently, in the 1980s and 1990s, it has become common for many families to have two wage earners to afford a house, to pay for their children's education, or simply to maintain a comfortable life style. This journal focuses predominantly on that 75 percent of the American population generally identifiable as the middle class — neither in poverty nor part of the very rich. We reflect on the laws and the political changes since 1960 that have brought most women closer to parity in the workplace, and on the consequences of that continuing evolution.

Readers will see that some of the issues addressed in this journal generate great passion and disagreement. We have tried to present a wide range of views fairly, and hope that the exploration will inform and enlighten. ■

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THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT

President Bill Clinton has made women's issues an important part of his agenda. He has placed women in high office in his Administration, sought equal opportunity for women throughout the labor force and encouraged greater participation of women in business. The President has often stated his concern regarding women's health issues and the prevention of violence against women, and he has promoted the Platform for Action agreed upon by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women which met in Beijing in 1995.

The President's Interagency Council on Women

On August 26, 1995, prior to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, President Clinton announced the formation of an Interagency Council on Women. The President said:

"The (Women's) Conference is going to talk about education and domestic violence and grass roots economics, employment, health care, political participation ... And we don't intend to walk away from it when it's over. I'm going to establish an interagency council on women to make sure that all the effort and good ideas actually get implemented when we get back home."

This intragovernmental body is charged with coordinating the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at Beijing, including the U.S. commitments announced at the Conference. The Council is also charged with developing related

initiatives to further women's progress and with engaging in outreach and public education to support the successful implementation of the Conference agreements.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton serves as Honorary Chair of the Council. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala chaired the Council from its inception through March, 1997. On March 8, 1997, the President announced that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had agreed to serve as Chair of the Council, following the strong leadership provided by Secretary Shalala. The Council consists of high-level representatives from Executive Branch agencies.

The Council welcomes inquiries and comments from all parts of the globe, at the following addresses:

President's Interagency Council on Women
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW, Room 2906
Washington, DC 20520
Phone: (202) 647-6227
Fax: (202) 647-5337

Web site:
<http://secretary.state.gov/www/iacw/index.html>
(This web site will be active soon)



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 1997

It is time for us to recognize a simple but profound truth: by improving the lives of American women, we are making a vital investment in America's future. By investing in women, we enable them to reach their fullest potential as individuals and as members of our society. When women thrive, their families thrive. When families thrive, communities flourish, and our nation reaps the benefits.

We must value the contributions women make in every aspect of life: in the home, on the job, in their communities, as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, learners, caregivers, workers, citizens, and leaders. Today, 60 million American women are in the work force, comprising 46 percent of all U.S. workers. Almost every woman will work for pay sometime during her life. It isn't easy. Women still make only 73 percent of what men make in comparable jobs. Each day, women working outside the home must balance job responsibilities with family responsibilities. They struggle to arrange and pay for quality child care. They must be effective on the job and still find time to help their children with homework, to attend parent-teacher meetings, to take their children to doctors' appointments and school events. We must pursue policies that help women to be successful in the workplace and in the home.

My Administration is committed to helping women achieve that success. We have initiated strong, practical measures to improve women's economic and educational opportunities, to provide quality health and child care, to prevent violence on the streets and at home, and to make sure that women's voices are heard at every level of our government. The unprecedented number of women I have appointed to my Cabinet and to positions of leadership throughout the federal government reflects my belief that women should be full partners in decisionmaking.

But we must do more. We have a historic opportunity -- and a solemn responsibility -- to lead the world in our efforts to better the lives of women. In 1995, at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, the First Lady joined tens of thousands of women from around the globe in addressing issues vital to American women and families -- personal and economic security, access to education, health care, jobs, and credit, and the chance for every boy and girl to live up to his or her potential. My Administration is working hard to address these concerns.

I ask you to join me in our work to improve the lives of women and families in our nation and around the world. The challenges are great, but the rewards are even greater for us all.

Bill Clinton

AMERICA'S COMMITMENT: The United Nations Women's Conference One Year Later

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton has been active in promoting women's issues in the United States and abroad. In her capacity as Honorary Chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, she spoke on September 28, 1996, at a national conference sponsored by the Council to report on progress since the Beijing Conference, to share what is working in local communities, and to hear from participants about their ideas to improve the lives of women and their families. The First Lady made the following observations:

... Whether we are working on domestic violence, or reproductive rights, or job security, or pay equity, or workplace discrimination or on any other issue affecting women and girls, our actions are founded on the knowledge that women's rights and human rights really are one and the same thing. Here in America, we are committed to build on the progress that is being made on behalf of women and girls. As soon as the Beijing conference ended, the President established the Interagency Council on Women, which brings together representatives from each federal agency to develop policies that support the advancement of women and girls in the United States.

Let me give you a few examples of what our government and our nongovernmental groups, working together, have accomplished in a short time.

The United States has an office at the Justice Department devoted to ending violence against women through tougher laws, better enforcement, and prevention. A nationwide 24-hour violence hotline that went into effect earlier this year provides immediate crisis intervention for those in need. In its first six months, that hotline received more than 44,000 calls.

The Department of the Treasury has established a Presidential Awards Program to honor individuals and institutions who are making significant efforts to promote microenterprise in communities across our country. For those of you who have not heard of microenterprise, it's a fancy word for a modest

program of providing loans to women who might not otherwise have access to credit. The women use these loans to start small businesses and help support themselves and their families.

In the field of health, Secretary Shalala and her department continue to make women's health a top priority, encouraging public-private partnerships to improve research in breast cancer and other women's diseases and establishing a National Women's Health Information Center.

The Department of Education has taken new steps to promote equity for girls and women and the Department of Housing and Urban Development has launched a home ownership initiative for women.

And importantly, the Environmental Protection Agency will now assess the special impact of environmental health risks on women.

We see in these examples that the United States is not just paying lip service to the Beijing platform, but is acting on it ...

OTHER WOMEN'S COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Members of the Women's Council continue to work in their own agencies to promote the President's commitment to women's concerns. At the State Department, the Senior Coordinator for Women's Issues, in a position created by Congress to promote the human rights of women within American foreign policy, works to integrate issues affecting the lives of women in the everyday work of the Department's bureaus and embassies. The State Department strongly supports the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

One of the most shared concerns voiced at the Beijing Conference was violence against women. At the Justice Department, Ms. Bonnie Campbell, whom President Clinton named Director of the Violence

Against Women Office in March 1995, leads a comprehensive national effort to combine tough new federal laws with assistance to states and localities to fight domestic violence and other crimes against women. Ms. Campbell's office, an outgrowth of the Violence Against Women Act passed as part of the 1994 Crime Act, includes a Violence Hotline for women across the nation that averages more than 6,000 calls a month.

Under the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women grant program, each state and territory has received \$426,000 in grant funding to assist police, prosecutors, and victim service providers in combating domestic violence and sexual assault. Further, an interim rule published by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in May 1996 allows battered spouses and children of citizens or of legal permanent residents to self-petition to become legal permanent residents themselves. This renders it unnecessary for family members eligible for permanent residency to rely on an abuser to remain in the United States. The Department of Health and Human Services also offers programs under the Violence Against Women Act, which include grants for battered women's shelters; education and prevention grants to reduce sexual assaults against women; and grants to develop educational curricula on the topic of violence against women.

The work of Bonnie Campbell's office reflects the determination of the President's Interagency Council to respond aggressively to all acts of violence against women while at the same time encouraging the kind of education and advocacy that will reduce the level of violence against women in the United States and eventually produce a more civil society.

Concerned with women and their employment status, the Department of Labor works on a variety of issues related to women in the work force. These include protecting women from wage abuses in certain low-wage industries; helping women plan for retirement, and informing women of their legal rights as employees.

SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

Secretary Albright has also been actively engaged in championing the advancement of women as a foreign policy objective. On March 12 of this year the Secretary spoke before an audience at the State Department celebration of International Women's Day. Her remarks included the following:

Let me begin this morning with one very simple statement. Advancing the status of women is not only a moral imperative; it is being actively integrated into the foreign policy of the United States. It is our mission. It is the right thing to do, and frankly, it is the smart thing to do

Today, women are engaged in every facet of international affairs, from policymaking to dealmaking, from arms control to trade, from a courtroom of the War Crimes Tribunal to the far-flung operations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the top floor of the State Department.

So we have much to celebrate. We also have much further to go

Whether one is bumping against a glass ceiling or standing on a dirt floor, equality remains — for most — more aspiration than reality.

It is in America's interest to change this. Advancing the status of women is directly related to our foreign policy goals. We want to build peace and expand the circle of democracy. We want to sustain a growing global economy that creates jobs for Americans. And we want to see a future in which the values we cherish are more widely shared

In the effort to advance the status of women, the United States is a leader; but a leader cannot — and we are not—standing still. At President Clinton's initiative, we are incorporating concerns related to women into the mainstream of American foreign policy

The integration of women into our foreign policy is an active, ongoing, worldwide process. It requires working not only with other governments, but also with non-governmental organizations and other agents of progress. It affects everything from the design of AID programs, to policy decisions made by our bureaus here in Washington, to Embassy

activities around the globe.

And it reflects our understanding that progress requires not simply opening doors, but a vigorous effort to reach out and spread the word that the old era of injustice and repression must end so that a new era of opportunity and full participation may dawn

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Another notable Administration activity to promote the advancement of women has been undertaken by the United States Agency for International Development. USAID has begun a Women's Political Participation and Legal Rights Initiative overseas to overcome limitations on women's legal rights. AID-sponsored programs include Political Leadership Training, Civic and Voter Education, Technical Training and Leadership Services, and Non-Government Organization Capacity Building. All of these efforts are designed to give women greater access to government and to governing, and to show women around the world ways in which they can determine their destiny.

Thus, both in domestic policy and foreign policy, the Clinton Administration has stressed the importance of women's causes and of improving conditions at work and at home for women everywhere. As the roles of women evolve in our society and in other societies, it is clear that the beginning of the next millennium will see far more opportunities for women than they have known in modern history. The United States expects to be in the vanguard of ushering in these opportunities. ■

FROM THE HOME TO THE HOUSE:
**THE
CHANGING
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OF
WOMEN IN
AMERICAN
SOCIETY**

by Cynthia Harrison

This article shows women's transition from traditional roles of daughter, wife and mother to full participation in American society. It traces their emergence from the fight for the right to vote, to the workplace during World War II, to passage of antidiscrimination laws in the 1960s and 1970s, to the wide range of opportunities available to women in the 1990s.

In 1920, when the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution finally guaranteed American women the right to vote, it marked the culmination of a movement begun more than 70 years earlier. Many had argued that women voters would generate a sea change in politics. Carrie Chapman Catt, who led the final fight, declared: "In the adjustment of the new order of things, we women demand an equal voice; we shall accept nothing less." The prospect made many a politician nervous, particularly after the establishment in 1920 of the Women's Joint Congressional Committee, a coalition of women's organizations representing 10 million members. Early in the decade, Congress made sure that new legislation addressed the issues important to this new constituency, including a law that eliminated pay discrimination between men and women in the federal civil service. Presidents Wilson and Harding named women to a variety of appointive positions in the courts and on federal commissions.

But by the end of the first decade after suffrage, the anticipated "women's vote" had not appeared, nor had a transformation in women's political roles

emerged. By 1930, only 13 women had gained seats in Congress, seven of them filling mid-term vacancies. In the state legislatures, the showing was little better: In 1925, women won almost 150 seats out of approximately 7,500. Democratic national committeewoman Emily Newell Blair observed, "I know of no politician who is afraid of the woman vote on any question under the sun."

The women's reform community in the 1920s had not united around a common agenda after suffrage. Post-war conservatism and a split over the question of whether women most needed legal equality or legal protection thwarted unified action. During the 1930s, the economic emergency worked against a renewed interest in women's rights — unemployment and poverty took precedence over any other problem. But both the 1920s and the 1930s still witnessed important changes in women's roles, driven not by politics but by economics.

No change had a greater impact on women's roles than the transition from primarily an agricultural economy to a corporate, commercial, industrial one, a change that took place slowly over decades. Through the 1920s, 25 percent of Americans still lived on farms. Women in farm families worked ceaselessly as partners in the family business, combining economically essential work with child rearing and homemaking. In urban families, however, the middle-class ideal relied on a single wage earner — the husband and father of the family — working outside the home. Urban working-class mothers, especially African-Americans, themselves engaged in industrial production or domestic work for pay; by 1920, about 9 percent of married women worked outside the home for wages. But though many women worked while single, once they married, if it was economically feasible they stayed at home.

The Great Depression, with unemployment rates rising to 25 percent, created competing pressures. On the one hand, there was widespread demand that working wives step aside so that men could have their jobs; on the other, with husbands and fathers out of work, wives and mothers needed their own paychecks more than ever. But in fact most women worked only at jobs that men did not do and so, by the start of World War II, almost 15 percent of wives were working, up from 12 percent at the beginning of

the 1930s.

After the privations of the Depression, women eagerly responded to wartime expansion. Jobs once reserved for male workers opened to women as the men went into the military.

“Rosie the Riveter” became the symbol for patriotic American women, and millions of women gained access to government and non-military factory jobs. The percentage of women in the workforce went from a pre-war figure of 25 percent to a wartime peak of 38 percent. But, as with the Depression, World War II had a mixed impact on women’s lives. Higher-paying positions proved temporary, as returning soldiers replaced women workers. After the war, employment and educational benefits for veterans widened the gap between men and women in these areas.

Women left the labor force and many turned their full attention to raising families, but not all and not for long. Both the business and public sectors quickly began to expand in just those areas that traditionally offered employment to women: office work, teaching, and nursing. With so many jobs available, employers gave up their preference for single women and hired married women and mothers. By 1960, almost a third of American wives worked for wages at least part time, twice the proportion in 1940, and the number grew higher every year. The money they earned paid for houses, cars, and college educations for their children.

Despite the fact that women workers contributed about a quarter of the family’s income, they routinely met with discrimination on the job. Employers advertised in newspaper columns headed “Help Wanted — Male,” and “Help Wanted — Female,” medical and law schools established quotas for women students, even the federal government permitted its executives to request applicants from the civil service register by sex. Employers justified their practices by pointing to women’s family responsibilities, which they said took too much time away from work. With one-third of the labor force female and the United States engaged in a global contest with the Soviet Union requiring the most effective use of all its resources, it had become clear to policy-makers that the nation had to address the tension between women’s roles as mothers and as workers.

Thus, in 1961, President John F. Kennedy took the advice of an assistant secretary of labor, Esther Peterson, and established a commission on the status of women to create a plan to help women fill their dual public and private roles. The President’s Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, made proposals for a wide variety of measures, both governmental and private, to assist women. Virtually every one of the 50 states established similar bodies to deal with discrimination on the local level. In 1963, Congress enacted legislation prohibiting differentials by sex in wage rates in private industry, the first such employment discrimination law. The publication earlier that year of *The Feminine Mystique*, by a writer named Betty Friedan, brought to public attention the ways in which women’s capacities had been disparaged, and it fueled support for new initiatives to end unfair treatment of women. A provision of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited sex discrimination in employment, and to enforce it, a national network of activists, prepared by their work on state and federal commissions, soon realized they needed an independent feminist organization. In 1966, they created the National Organization for Women (NOW).

NOW adopted the unfinished agendas of the government groups and quickly forged a new set of goals aiming at complete equality for men and women in American society. A more radical women’s movement almost immediately sprang up alongside, born of the struggle of women within the civil rights movement in the South, the anti-war movement on college campuses and the movement for social justice in American cities. The combination of perspectives challenged every standard idea about the relationship of men and women to each other, to children, and to the state. The infusion of feminist energy soon made women the epicenter of a social reformation. Political power for women ranked high on the list of feminist objectives and starting in 1972, women began to run for office in record numbers. Results have been uneven. The proportion of women in state legislatures went from 4.5 percent in 1971 to 21 percent in 1993, but then stalled. In 1961, a record twenty women sat in both houses of Congress, a record that held for another 20 years. In the 1980s,

the roster of women started slowly to increase but by 1997, the number of women members had risen only to sixty, still less than 12 percent of the total. Nevertheless, as a result of the new women's movement and its own new members, Congress has produced many pieces of legislation to accompany the earlier bans against sex discrimination in employment, including laws that prohibited unequal treatment in credit and in educational programs. A 1974 law gave domestic workers minimum wage protection; a law passed in 1978 barred discrimination in employment against pregnant women; in 1984, Congress strengthened child support laws and pension rights of widows and divorced women. In 1990, Congress passed a law to provide federal funds for child care, the first such law since World War II, and in 1993, newly-elected President Bill Clinton signed the Family and Medical Leave Act, for the first time requiring employers to offer some accommodation to workers' need to meet family responsibilities as well as those of the workplace.

The Supreme Court, the interpreter of the Constitution, also reconsidered its view of women under the law in the wake of new understandings about women's roles. Until 1971, the Court had accepted as constitutional most laws that differentiated between men and women. In 1971, in a case called *Reed v. Reed*, for the first time the Supreme Court struck down a state law that favored men, deeming the classification by sex to be "arbitrary." Afterwards, the Court expanded its interpretation to cover most areas of legal jurisdiction (although it continued to permit differential treatment in the military). The Court's new stance took on greater significance in 1982, when the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution failed to be ratified. In addition, the Supreme Court held in *Roe v. Wade*, a 1973 case, that state laws which prevented women from terminating an early pregnancy violated their right to privacy. The ruling gave women substantial control over their reproductive lives but it also incited a powerful opposing movement in support of traditional values.

In 1997, the persistence of sex roles at home means that most women who work full time for wages also shoulder the major part of home and family care responsibilities. At the same time,

barriers remain in the work place, especially for women of color and gay women. The many single mothers working at low wage jobs have difficulty providing adequate child care or medical treatment for their children, and the repeal of New Deal legislation providing aid to poor families may contribute to their difficulties.

Nevertheless, the change in women's status in the decades since World War II has been dramatic. The right of a married woman to work outside the home is no longer in question, especially because most families with two parents depend on a second income. Some 60 percent of wives now work for wages. With her own income, the American woman today is in the position to exercise more authority within her home or to end an unhappy marriage. Although the movement into formal political office has been gradual since women won the vote in 1920, women have become visible and central political actors. Women's issues—sex discrimination, reproductive rights, care of children, economic equity across sex and racial lines—get full attention from policy-makers. Federal law has established a woman's right to equal treatment in schools and in the workplace and women have taken advantage of these opportunities. In 1991, women received 54 percent of bachelor's and master's degrees and 38 percent of doctorates. In the workplace, women are about one-fifth of lawyers (up from 3.5 percent in 1950), more than 40 percent of college teachers (up from 23 percent in 1950), and about 20 percent of physicians (up from 6 percent in 1950). However, 70 percent of working women still earn their living as clerical, service, or sales workers.

If the transformation to a society of complete equality is not yet fully realized, we should not be surprised. The change in the relationship between men and women is one of the most profound a society can undergo; every nation on the globe continues to negotiate this evolution. ■

Cynthia Harrison is an Associate Professor of History and of Women's Studies at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

(The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.)

POLITICKING ON 'WOMEN'S ISSUES': THE **WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FUND**

An interview with Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky

Prepared by Charlotte Astor and Helen Sebsow

The Women's Campaign Fund (WCF) is the nation's oldest non-partisan political action committee (PAC) dedicated to supporting progressive women candidates for local, state and national office. Founded in 1974, it specializes in early contributions — donations to a campaign in its first stages that are often crucial to a candidate's survival and ability to solicit more contributions. Since its founding, WCF has assisted more than 1,300 candidates for public office — Democrats, Republicans and Independents.

PACs, such as the Women's Campaign Fund, are regulated by the Federal Election Commission. Individual and corporate contributions are limited to \$1,000 per candidate per election. PACs can contribute up to \$5,000 per candidate per election, and can contribute to an unlimited number of candidates. In addition to support for women running for office, PACs like the WCF also provide education — a vital contribution to the future success of women's political leadership. Thousands of PACs, mostly based in Washington, now work to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for candidates.

* * *

Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky has been president of WCF since March 1, 1996. She is also president of the Women's Campaign Research Fund (WCRF), a nonprofit organization focusing on education and training of women elected officials. Margolies-Mezvinsky, a former Democratic representative from Pennsylvania, was elected to the 103rd Congress in the historic "Year of the Woman" — when women doubled their numbers. (She served from 1993 to 1995.) This increase resulted from a confluence of factors including a large number of vacant seats following congressional redistricting, and high levels

of voter discontent with incumbents and government in general. In the next congressional election, a Republican landslide swept a number of Democratic women, such as Margolies-Mezvinsky, out of office. In 1995, she served as director of the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

In May 1997, Margolies-Mezvinsky reflected on the state of U.S. women and the political process.

Q. How would you characterize the status of the women's movement today?

A. I think there are a lot of very exciting things on the horizon. And yet I think there are some enormous frustrations that I'm not sure we'll be able to get over as quickly as I would like. I think we're moving very slowly; I think it's very frustrating for women.

We have to keep our eye on the year 2002. I think we've reached a flat line with regard to congressional representation until 2002, when there will be another redistricting following the census. Perhaps there will be more vacant congressional seats, such as in 1992. In '92, of the 24 women who won, 20 were elected to vacant seats. In 1996, of the 27 women we backed, only six ran to fill vacant seats and only seven won. You can see how important the open-seat part of the equation is.

The Women's Campaign Fund is working all the way down to the school board level to make sure that women are in the equation. Groups like ours are out there trying to make sure that women are represented. And so I think that there's hope.

I just think we need more women at the table, and that means women at all the tables — more women who are making decisions in the boardrooms with regard to broadcasting, more women at the financial tables, more women at the judicial tables, more

women at the legislative tables. More women are running [for elected office]; I think more qualified women are running. But folks still have a tough time giving money. I think we're changing, but it's just very challenging. And if you look at the candidates who win, it's usually the ones who have the most money or the most compelling story.

And when there are more women out there internationally, things happen quite differently.

Q. What's your opinion of the President's Interagency Council on Women? [The Council was founded in August 1995, prior to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women. The Council is charged with coordinating the implementation of the action platform adopted at Beijing, and developing related initiatives to further women's progress.]

A. I think it's a good follow-up to Beijing. It's a good way of following some tough issues.

Q. Where does the WCF get its funding?

A. We have some corporate funding, but it's mostly from private contributions.

Q. How do you differ, for example, from the League of Women Voters?

A. They're not a PAC — that's the primary difference. We're a PAC; we give money to candidates. The League has panels and events where you come in, listen and learn. The League is apolitical. But we have an issue, which is choice. [Choice, or the pro-choice movement, seeks to keep abortion legal in the United States — as it has been since the *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973. Opposing choice is the right-to-life or "pro-life" movement, which seeks to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.]

Q. Is choice your main issue?

A. Yes, but it's a window on a lot of other issues.

If you look at the pro-choice women who are in Congress, they will likely be in support of an expansion in education, for some kind of creative health care. Many, although not most, are for gun control, tobacco control, those kinds of things. So if you look at women who are pro-choice, you also get a snapshot on some other issues. But we don't ask them about those issues at all. Our issue is choice.

In our WCRF training programs, we do not [have an issue]. WCRF trains women to run for office, and we have no issue there. We train because we have a non-profit arm.

Q. What are some other issues that are generally supported by pro-choice women?

A. It's very clear that we come together easily on gun control, although not all of us do. Day care is something that we care about. Day care is an enormous issue for women. Health care is something that we care a lot about.

Q. Health care for everybody — not just for women?

A. Right — improving the kind and quality of health care for everyone is important. These are things that women have to deal with more often than men. I think the Family and Medical Leave Act never would have passed had we not been there. It had been seven years in the making, and it passed. I think that the Brady bill [which tightens the requirements for handgun ownership] wouldn't have passed if we had not been there. There are lots of things like that.

Q. Is Congress paying sufficient attention to women's issues?

A. I feel that Congress can't possibly pay enough attention, so the answer would be no. But I think it's getting better, and I think we're moving in the right direction.

Q. How does the WCRF choose the women for its training programs?

A. They're invited or recommended by other prominent elected women officials. Most of the training is paid for by us. They have to pay a small registration fee, and that's all. We have three regional trainings a year. In off-election years, we also have something called Leadership 2000, where the women get together and talk about movement, and about women running [for office], what some of the pitfalls are. And the people who talk are top in

their field — they want to let the women know how they can run, and why it's going to be so challenging.

Q. Is this training held exclusively to prepare women to run for political office?

A. It's really for public service in general, but most of the participants are women who want to run.

Q. What kind of training is useful for running for Congress?

A. I think life experience is really important, and I think that's what a lot of us bring here. But we've got to learn to talk to the media. We've got to learn how to raise funds. We've got to learn how to craft a message — not just the message for this month or next month — but for the rest of our lives.

We've got to know how to pick a staff. We've got to know, once you get [to Congress], how to run around Capitol Hill and through the halls — those are the kinds of things that we all have to learn.

We've got to figure out how to make it work, which is really a challenge. I was on a radio talk show, and state representative Jean Cryor from Maryland called. She said, "What made the most difference to me when I was running was that my friends would come over and just cook a meal." That means a huge amount: Having people there to fill in the holes and having your day work a little better. And if we can help other women do that when they're running. (Women sometimes are not very nice to other women.)

Q. You don't think we're past that?

A. Sometimes I think we are, and sometimes I think we're not. We haven't been brought up in the team spirit enough, and I think we've got to move on and say, "Okay, we're going to vote for Qualified women, and until we get critical mass, we're going to vote for them and we're going to support them." But I think there are many women out there still, who feel that a woman's place is in the home. We've got to move up from that, and I think it's got to start with women. We've got to leave some of the jealousies behind — the "Why does she have more than I do?" type of thing, and move on and understand the richness of having a sister there.

Q. Why are there so many more Democratic women in Congress than Republican women?

A. I think the Democratic party is a [more receptive] place for women. It's harder for a pro-choice woman to win in a Republican primary than it is for a pro-choice woman to win in a Democratic primary.

We had wonderful Republican women candidates out there who are pro-choice. They didn't win their primaries. Carolyn McCarthy is a perfect example. [McCarthy, whose husband was killed in a random shooting in 1993, was elected to Congress in 1996. She had campaigned strongly for gun control and defeated Republican incumbent Dan Frisa, who opposed gun control.] She had been a lifelong Republican. She didn't even attempt to enter the Republican primary. She became a Democrat. As an organization, we would prefer that she be a Republican, because we know that we can't cede this issue to any party.

I feel strongly about the two-party system, but also about the need for good women who are pro-choice to stay as Republicans.

We're much richer if we have people on both sides of the aisle [in both parties]. If you talk to any woman who has tried to get a piece of legislation passed, she will tell you that she needed her female colleagues on the other side of the aisle to get it through. She will tell you that the bonds are very strong.

Q. What can we expect for women candidates in 1997?

A. Nineteen-ninety-seven is an "off"-election year, which means that there are no federal elections except in special circumstances, but there are plenty of exciting state and local races taking place this fall. Gov. Christie Todd Whitman (R-NJ), a pro-choice stalwart and one of only two women governors in the country, is up for re-election this fall. If she wins, Gov. Whitman will be only the third woman incumbent governor and the first Republican woman ever elected to a second term. New Jersey and Virginia possess two of the lowest percentages of women in their state legislatures, and WCF will be working hard this year not only to help re-elect incumbent women, but to elect more women to these legislative bodies.

We are also looking forward to 1997 as the year we elect women mayors of major cities across the country. In New York City, Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger (D) is running a strong campaign in her bid to defeat incumbent Mayor Rudy Giuliani. And while races are still developing in

many cities across the country, we currently have women running for mayor in Houston and San Antonio, Texas and St. Paul, Minnesota.

Q. Do you see any viable presidential or vice presidential candidates coming up?

A. I think we have more people in the pipeline. We have more people than we've ever had. We have nine women senators. I think in the next 10 years we'll see a woman vice president, and I think in our lifetime we'll see a woman president.

Q. Can you make any predictions? Are there any people who are viable candidates?

A. I think we have a lot of richness out there. We have Nita Lowey (D-NY), who is just wonderful; a terrific leader. We have a lot of folks out there who are just blossoming. I think Barbara Kennelly (D-CT) is terrific. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) is a great leader.

There's a real richness out there that we can count on. ■

(The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.)

THE ROADS TAKEN: CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S VOICES

By Michael J. Bandler

Changes in the law, politics and society have had significant impact on women's lives today, including their choices of careers. Not all of the battles for parity, equal opportunity and enlightened attitudes have yet been won. Still, identifiable progress has occurred, with the expectation of more to follow.

In the following reflections, three women in diverse fields offer insights into their own journeys.

DONNA AUGUSTE

(Ms. Auguste is cofounder, chairman and chief executive officer of Freshwater Software, a computer firm in Boulder, Colorado.)

My minority status is both gender- and ethnic-related. As a female from both African American and Native American roots, I became involved, in high [secondary] school, in a San Francisco-area program called MESA — Math, Engineering and Science Achievement. It was instrumental in that participants became introduced, on a practical level, to careers in science and engineering, which had been my dream.

Until that point, and even afterwards, I had experienced various forms of gender and ethnic bias. I can't separate the two. Primary school teachers discouraged me from participating in science fairs, and university professors told me they didn't want me in their engineering program for fear I'd contribute to diluting the quality of education — even though I had come out of high school with a 4.0 [A] grade-point average. But I just dealt with it, on a case-by-case basis.

I sense the picture is changing these days, on all levels of education. Certainly there are more women in science and technology. It helps to have women on faculties, on admission boards, on employment

review panels. Let me give an example of one professional experience I had at a company at which I was employed which underscores this.

I was meeting with a group of my fellow senior executives, reviewing the performances of the senior managers of our division, one by one. For the first time in the company's history, women — there were two of us — were part of that discussion. When we came to consider one female manager, a senior executive suggested that she shouldn't be evaluated for promotion at that time because she was about to go on maternity leave, and that it would be better to review her case on her return. "When women have babies, sometimes they don't come back with the same commitment they had before," he said. I immediately pointed out the bias — the fact that there had never been any discussion as to whether impending fatherhood would affect the commitment of any male executive up for promotion. To their credit, everyone at the table — including the person who'd made the suggestion — agreed with me, and proceeded with the evaluation. What had changed? In the past, no woman had been part of the discussion to question anything. Now, our point of view had been incorporated.

Although I've experienced bias, I think the situation is evolving. As chief executive officer of my own company, my leadership role influences our corporate culture. But I also feel that a young girl growing up today has a better chance of avoiding bias, even though it still exists. And where it does, networking helps. I'm working with an organization called Girls, Inc., a national group here in the United States. They have one program, for example, called SMART — Science, Math and Related Technology. I

spent some time at their Denver [Colorado] chapter, speaking about creating science and technology programs for girls in that community — letting them get their hands on soldering irons and oscilloscopes and the like at a very young age. I want young girls who are interested in these subjects to be able to maintain that interest, even when they're discouraged from it. I want every child who has passion about something — technology, or math, or science, or art, or music — to be encouraged to develop their passion, without restraint, without barriers, without biases.

I have had the chance to see the advantages enjoyed by the upcoming generation through my youngest sister, Gaberial, who's 17. There are three others besides us — one is a nurse, another is a postal employee, and the third is in marketing and communications. Gabby is interested in architecture, but in any event, she has been around professional women all her life. She's visited our work environments and has heard us talk about our jobs. She's never had a question unanswered, because of all the resources at her disposal. She's experienced bias — as early as the sixth grade, classmates discouraged her from taking an interest in math and science. But she deals with it through our experiences — through her family history.

Recently, public television was preparing a miniseries on people of color in entrepreneurial technical roles. I was included. As part of following me around for a couple of weeks, the production crew visited my parents. While they were there, they saw Gabby repair a broken robotics arm that was part of a science kit of hers. She operated the soldering iron as I coached her along. Afterwards, Gabby told me that what interested her the most was the fact that the interviewers thought that what she was doing was exceptional. In her mind, when something breaks at home, she fixes it, sometimes checking with me how to do it. That's the routine. That's the norm. But it definitely wasn't the norm for me, when I was her age.

DR. SHEILA E. WIDNALL

(Dr. Widnall is Secretary of the U.S. Air Force.)

My childhood home in Tacoma, Washington, sat right under the approach to a U.S. Air Force base. As a youngster, I looked up from my back yard as planes flew over and, in awe, I felt the power of the engines and the fascination of flight.

I really think I've been the most fortunate of people. Back in high school, I remember having participated in a science fair, and showing up at the college recruitment night when the alumni regional scholarship to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was to be awarded. I couldn't help noticing that I was the only girl among 20 guys. But then I won. I still didn't think it was too uncommon, but when I arrived at MIT, I realized that I was one of 20 women in a freshman [first-year] class of about a thousand students.

I didn't think much about bias and discrimination, though, because MIT was a very supportive institution. Others were not that encouraging. I interviewed at one prominent university and was asked, 'why should we admit you? You'll just get married, have children and quit.' I was insulted. At the time, another school I might have liked to attend, the California Institute of Technology, wasn't even accepting women, so it wasn't an option.

MIT was enlightened. It admitted its first women in the mid-19th century. The faculty I encountered urged me on, encouraging me to shoot higher than I might have without that support. The timing was perfect, too. Engineering was booming as a profession, and those in the field were looking for new recruits among students. There was particular receptivity to women, since they weren't normally expected to enter the field. I was in my second year at MIT when the Russians launched Sputnik into

orbit. Right away, educators and the government began emphasizing the math-science-engineering disciplines in high school and college. They saw it as the engine of economic growth and extremely important to national security.

By the late 1960s, when I was already on the faculty, the affirmative action executive order applying to universities who were federal contractors had been issued. It was enormously beneficial to women, and MIT responded vigorously in a positive way, with a substantial institutional commitment and a no-nonsense pragmatic approach towards backing the goals of the mandate.

When I was appointed a teaching assistant as a post-doctoral candidate in 1964, I don't believe men saw women as potential permanent faculty members. But then, the two professors who had been my advisers on my thesis and in professional guidance departed the school, leaving a gaping hole in the faculty. I was asked to stay. Out of that came the building of a career, and becoming part of the fabric of the senior faculty. I was the first woman chair of the faculty — and probably the youngest.

During my years at MIT, I was one of those who, in a very pragmatic sense, was helping the school bring women into the student body and onto the faculty — mentoring them so they'd maintain MIT's traditionally high standards. We had an active group of women on the faculty and the administration viewed us very favorably, because we were out to solve whatever problems the school encountered.

While I was at MIT, I kept in touch with what was happening in the aerospace industry through attendance at conferences. The numbers of women began increasing dramatically in the mid-1970s, when women represented 20 percent of those in the field. It was no longer surprising to participate in an industry meeting and find a number of young women there. It's an appealing and challenging field for women — information-based and leading-edge. Change has always been a way of life in the aerospace industry, so it has meshed well with

change as far as gender politics is concerned.

Now I'm part of government, and dramatic changes exist here as well. The current Department of Defense, for instance, has more women in senior positions than ever before. It wasn't mandated by law, but by individuals. President Clinton, and Defense Secretaries Les Aspin, William Perry and John Deutch said, 'this is the way we're going to do it.' And the women who've come in are extraordinarily qualified.

At this point, about 25 percent of our new Air Force recruits are women. They have career opportunities in virtually everything the Air Force does. Less than one percent of our career fields are restricted — ground combat is an example. Women are flying F-15s and F-16s and C-17s, big airplanes and small ones. They're repairing jet engines, flying satellites and sitting watch in missile silos. There's even a woman astronaut — an Air Force colonel — in space today. Our personnel exemplify the ability of women to perform the most demanding jobs, and serve as role models for what it means to be part of an organization — any organization — that allows you to excel.

DEBORAH YOW

(Ms. Yow is director of athletics of the University of Maryland, and an important voice on the national level in intercollegiate athletics.)

I come from a family steeped in the tradition of participation in sports — the women as well as the men — as players and coaches. My older sister Kay, who's headed the women's basketball program at North Carolina State University for 23 years, coached the Olympic women's basketball team to a gold medal in Seoul in 1988. Susan, my younger

sister, has been a collegiate head coach at three institutions and now is assistant coach of a women's basketball team in a new professional league. My brother played football in college.

I was midway through college, playing varsity basketball, when Title IX [the section of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibiting discrimination based on gender in educational programs, including athletics, receiving U.S. Government funds] was passed. Susan, an extraordinary talent, a bit later was one of the first students to receive an athletic scholarship. Pragmatically, then, her college career was paid for, while I paid my own way — through student loans and working the second shift at a supermarket. I finished paying off that debt when I was 28.

I coached women's basketball at three universities before going into athletic administration. I've been blessed in my career, as coach and director of athletics. But the fact is that when you are a member of a gender or racial minority, you live that life every day. Did I experience bias? Do I experience it? Yes. Do I pay much attention to it? No, I do not. It's so much a part of the fabric of the world that when you're a gender minority in an historically male culture, specifically athletics, that you just don't focus on it. Yes, an incident of bias registers mentally, but the way to survive, in part, and to excel is just to accept the fact that it's there, and go forward. You just learn to live that way.

When I was preparing to be interviewed for the position of athletic director (AD) at Saint Louis University in 1990, USA Today ran a short item on the four finalists — the other three of whom were men. It happened I was at a conference at the time, and everyone there had read the article. Walking down the hallway to a business meeting, I was stopped on three separate occasions by men who were AD's at the time — all friends of mine. Each delivered the same message: 'I saw your name on the list of finalists. I care about you. Do not go for the interview. You're the token female in the pool. Don't let it be you. There's no way you're going to be hired.' They thought they were helping me, protecting me. When I told my husband about it, he got angry and said, 'Have you ever considered yourself a token?' I said I hadn't. 'Then why would you start today?' he asked. I got the job. Last year, after I'd moved to the University of Maryland, I saw one of the three men who'd advised me to pull out of the competition. He said, 'You're doing a great job, Debbie, everywhere you go!' I felt good about that. It was his way of expiation for the attitude he'd conveyed years before.

I should mention what happened at the Saint Louis University interview itself. I came into the room, where a group of 14 grim-faced men sat in a semi-circle facing the door. There seemed to be no chair for me, so I thought I would do something to break the ice. I said, 'Where's the hot seat?' I thought it would be a cute remark. One of them said, without cracking a smile, 'Anywhere you sit.' They were dead serious. But an hour-and-a-half later, longer than they'd planned for the interview, they voted for me over the three men.

I'm pretty realistic. Once I'm in a job or situation, I determine that I will work harder and smarter, doing whatever it takes to insure that I will be able to meet or exceed the standards that are set for me in terms of performance, accountability and productivity. I am willing to do whatever it takes — and if that means 12-hour days, that's what will happen. Now, if I ever reached the point where I say I can't deal with that, I would literally continue to meet the standard while looking for another job. But I will never fail.

Title IX has changed the way in which those of us in the business of athletics look at female participation in intercollegiate sports. Overall, the impact has been positive. We would not have made the progress we've made in terms of participation without it. It has been extremely valuable. I would add, though, that I am not a proponent of strict proportionality as defined by the percentage of men and women attending a particular institution — which is one of the law's mandates. There's very little flexibility in that. I base things on logic. I'd like someone to explain to me the logic of saying that if 48 percent of our students at Maryland are female, then 48 percent of our student athletes should be female, and 48 percent of our athletic scholarships should go to women. I believe more in what I would call substantial proportionality — that is, if you come within plus or minus seven percentage points, you'd be in compliance.

In general, though, Title IX has changed our culture. We have Mia Hamm, for example, who played soccer at the University of North Carolina, making national commercials for a shampoo. The law has changed society's perspective. It's that simple, and it's that significant. Traits that normally are attributed to women that are not necessarily positive — weakness, frailness — are going by the wayside. And they need to, because most women I know are operating successfully either as individuals — responsible for their own well-being — or as part of a couple, perhaps with children, where both adults are working.

The single most important benefit I've received from sports is the opportunity to learn leadership skills. It's vital for women to have that opportunity. Leadership is not a gender issue. ■

(The opinions expressed in the statements above do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.)

THE LAW IN ACTION

By Michael J. Bandler

Legislation enacted by the U.S Congress and signed into law by several presidents over the past generation has addressed issues of gender discrimination. Following is an example of such legislation, and an indication of its impact, on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

PUBLIC LAW 92-318, TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 (EXCERPT)

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal assistance."

IMPACT

□ Gender discrimination is required to be eliminated from educational institutions on all levels that receive federal funds, in such areas as admissions decisions, access to courses, athletic participation, athletic and general scholarships and counseling.

- Educational institutions are required to advise everyone within their jurisdiction that sexual harassment is illegal, and to confront and address it where it does occur.
- Under the law, pregnant students are granted maternity leave without jeopardizing the continuation of their education.
- Today, females are slightly more likely than their male counterparts — 88 to 87 percent — to complete high school. In the 1970s, the reverse was true.
- The average score of females on the mathematics section of the nationwide Scholastic Aptitude Test increased 19 points between 1982 and 1996. During the same period, the average score of male students rose 11 points.
- A balance has been reached between young men and women earning college and university degrees. In 1970, about 13 percent of the nation's women and 20 percent of the male population had attained that level. By 1995, a similar proportion of young men and women — about 25 percent had gained at least a bachelor's degree.
- The United States has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of women entering traditionally male-dominated professional fields. In 1972, the year Title IX was enacted, nine percent of professional degrees in medicine went to women. By 1994, the figure had risen to 38 percent. In dentistry, one percent of the total number of degrees in 1972 were awarded to women. In 1994, the figure was 38 percent. Comparable figures in law show that seven percent of the degrees awarded in 1972 and 43 percent in 1994 went to women.
- The number of females participating in high school sports has increased from less than 300,000 in 1971 to about 2.4 million a quarter-century later. More than 100,000 women participate in intercollegiate athletics today — a fourfold gain since 1971, when less than 32,000 women were on intercollegiate fields, rinks and courts. Today, women constitute 37 percent of all college student athletes, a rise from 15 percent in 1972. ■

(The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.)

A CONSERVATIVE PERSPECTIVE

by the Independent Women's Forum

The materials below, provided by the Independent Women's Forum, reflect the conservative voice among women, and examine areas of disagreement between liberal and conservative positions. This selection concludes with a May 23, 1997 interview by John A. Quintus with Anita Blair, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of the Independent Women's Forum.

The Independent Women's Forum (IWF) is a non-profit, non-partisan, Washington-based group which seeks "to raise a voice of common sense and reason" on issues of concern to women. Begun in 1992 by a group of women in Washington, D.C., the IWF founders said they were disappointed with the portrayal of women as one large monolithic "liberal" interest group. Rather, they wanted to provide another voice of women to show that not all women think alike, and that women are concerned about more than so-called "women's issues."

The IWF does not take a position for or against abortion, but rather focuses on other topics that interest women. The organization publishes a journal entitled *The Women's Quarterly* and a newsletter called *Ex Femina*. IWF also becomes engaged in landmark court cases, filing briefs for example in the Virginia Military Institute case (the Supreme Court ordered VMI, formerly a men's military academy, to enroll women) and a Brown University case involving the allocation of financial resources between men's and women's college sports programs under Title IX of the Civil Rights Act. IWF argued that single-sex colleges, such as VMI, should be permitted to exist, and that it is counterproductive to require proportional representation on college athletic teams without considering interest and demand. In all its legal appearances, IWF tries to define a position it considers "best for society as a whole, not only 'women.'"

The Independent Women's Forum, like the President's Interagency Council on Women, also has a website and welcomes opinions and queries. The following addresses are offered for the reader's use:

Independent Women's Forum
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Arlington, VA 22201-3057
Phone (703) 243-8989
Fax (703) 243-9230
<http://www.iwf.org>

Two examples from the December, 1996 issue of *Ex Femina* give evidence of the IWF's position on subjects of concern to a wide variety of organizations devoted to women's issues.

JUST THE FACTS, MA'AM

The Independent Women's Forum asked Diana Furchtgott-Roth, economist at the American Enterprise Institute, and Christine Stolba, a women's history specialist at Emory University, to produce a handy, readable, reliable source of facts about the economic status of women (in the United States). The result was *Women's Figures: The Economic Progress of Women in America*.

The authors brought together voluminous data from authoritative sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Labor. Evaluating popular claims of systematic discrimination against women in the workplace, they uncovered some surprising information. Many well-known "facts" about women in the American economy turn out not to be true at all.

Take the "Wage Gap," for example. For years we have heard that women are only paid 59 cents, or 72 cents, on the dollar compared to men. In fact, the so-called Wage Gap all but disappears if you compare "apples and apples." Among women and men, aged 27 to 33, who do not have children, the ratio of women's-to-men's earnings is actually 98 cents on the dollar.

Our authors also examined the ubiquitous "Glass Ceiling," that invisible barrier to women's advancement in corporate America, and discovered that it has equally invisible factual support. *Women's Figures* shows that the sources of this myth, the federal Glass Ceiling Commission, and similar studies, have ignored the reality that not all women are qualified to be senior managers.

Typically, a man competing for a senior management slot needs to have a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree and about 20-25 years of business experience. Yet previous Glass Ceiling studies do not take qualification into

account and treat business advancement as a matter of pure luck.

The truth is that during the past decade, the number of female executive vice-presidents more than doubled, and the number of female senior vice-presidents increased by a staggering 75 percent. These trends indicate that women will take their places in executive suites and boardrooms as their experience in the workplace qualifies them.

Besides puncturing these unsupported myths, *Women's Figures* provides encouraging facts about women's progress that we seldom hear. For example, did you know that 8 million American women are already CEOs—of their own companies? Women-owned businesses employ one of every four American workers, and account for \$1.4 trillion in annual sales. And did you know that women today earn 55 percent of all bachelor's and master's degrees, and 40 percent of all first professional degrees?

Women's Figures has certainly attracted welcome attention. We think it is high time to engage in a new national conversation about how women can help America prosper, while America encourages women and families to pursue their dreams.

Still another piece from the December 1996 issue of *Ex Femina* deals with a poll of 1,200 adults in America. Its findings are summarized in the following:

A POLL OF OUR OWN: WOMEN'S WORK CHOICES

What explains the differences between women's and men's status in the economy and in the workplace? Women earn more college and graduate degrees than men, and have proven themselves capable of performing the same work. It turns out the factor reducing women's pay and advancement seems not to be the patriarchy but the "pediarchy"—in other words, children rule!

We at the Independent Women's Forum wanted to learn more about what men and women prefer, if given the opportunity to work or raise a family or both. We found first of all that most people believe educational opportunities are equal for men and women in America (62 percent felt this way, while only 26 percent thought there was an educational

bias against women). Further, we learned that most people would rather start their own business than work for a company (64 percent favoring personal ownership while 30 percent favored working for a company), and that the polled population overwhelmingly favored a hiring policy which would neither discriminate against nor grant preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.

American women and men favor flexibility and independence. Many would like to own their own business, even if it means additional risk. Many want the option of part or full-time work, from home or office, as a way to balance the demands of work and family. A majority of people, especially younger people, and most especially younger women (81 percent), are willing to trade seniority or pay at work in exchange for more personal time.

Americans also regard themselves as individuals, not tied to group interests. And a large majority, given the facts about women's educational progress, do not believe that girls are "short-changed" in school... Americans have a strong sense of what is fair: They insist that opportunities should be available to all, but think quotas and preferences for some are discriminatory to others.

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANITA BLAIR

Q. Tell me something about the Forum's constituency — what

kind of people are members and active in your organization?

A. Our members and subscribers include men and women of all ages; all situations in life; professional, mom-at-home, businesswomen, lady truck drivers. We have one deputy sheriff that I know of. They are bound by a devotion to common sense. The people who are interested in what the IWF has to say have an interest in seeing that our public policies reflect intelligent positions based on facts and common sense. One thing that we are very interested in is eliminating the notion that women, as such, are an interest group in favor of women. We think that the proper role of women in society is to improve society, which includes men and children.

Q. What current issues is IWF focusing on?

A. We have a continuing interest in the status and progress of women in the economy. And associated with that is an interest in making sure that women have choices in the way they will spend their lives —

that they have access to education, but that a woman who wishes to be home with her children has an effective choice to be able to do that; that she is not forced into the workforce by reason of high taxes or the high cost of living.

And likewise, that women who wish to enter business or have a career have that opportunity, but it is not a necessity for them.

Another issue we've been very active in is the issue that started in California as the California Civil Rights Initiative. We're interested in the issue of civil rights generally; we believe that people should be judged on merit and character, not on skin color and, in our case particularly, gender. And we have been active in promoting the idea that preferences and goals and quotas are a perversion of the original goals of Affirmative Action. Affirmative Action ought to be understood as increasing opportunities and as giving people access to the tools they need to succeed.

Q. How do you feel, then, about President Clinton's remarks when he says affirmative action needs to be fixed but not eliminated?

A. "Now mend it, don't end it." Well, unfortunately, the world has become so politicized that a slogan like that simply says to me that he wants to continue to engage in group-identity politics. And we believe very strongly that we need to get away from group-identity politics and into politics based on ideas instead. And we need to have our economy and our country based on principles of merit, hard work. We need to bring back a sense of morality into the country. And when you identify people purely by extraneous characteristics or purely by skin color, purely by sex, then you are not looking at the importance of ideas and the importance of thinking good, better, best — as opposed to pretending that everything is morally neutral. He simply doesn't have a lot of credibility to me when he says "mend it, don't end it." I still hear that group-identity politics is going to be the basis of whatever kind of mending he has in mind. What I have in mind for affirmative action is to go back to the original aims of Dr. Martin Luther King and the people who were involved in the Civil Rights Act of 1964: to permit individuals to thrive and succeed based on hard work, merit, good character.

Q. Does the Forum have a special relationship with the Women's Caucus on the Hill [Congressional Women's Caucus], and, what role do you play in terms of legislation, in terms of influencing legislation?

A. We don't have any particular, special relationships with anybody on the Hill. There are a few Members whom we happen to know, mainly because they've contacted us and said they're interested in the work that we do. We're a nonpartisan organization. We direct our efforts at educating the public about policies that should be of interest to them. Our jurisdiction is anything that concerns women which, generally speaking, means anything. We don't limit ourselves to so-called women's issues and we do try to provide a voice to be heard in the general media of intelligent women saying sensible things. We're not lobbyists but we try to get the facts out so that people who are making decisions, whether they be voters, or legislators, or anybody else can make good decisions.

Q. Could you tell me what you think will be the dominant issues concerning women a few years from now?

A. I think that the notion of choices in life for women is going to become increasingly important. I think that we will see substantial changes in our tax and labor laws to enable people — we are not limited to women — to live and work in ways that are more satisfactory to them individually. I think that Bill Gates, with the personal computer, has made an incredible contribution to civilization. The PC enables us to have our own businesses, work from home, if that's the choice, say, of a mother with small children, couples who want to have a small business. Computers are important because they free people to live the kind of life that they want, to make that kind of choice whether they want to be part of a large corporation or work on their own.

We find that women like to be able to move in and out of the workforce, depending on what the needs of their children are. I think that the desire to be with one's children is kind of hard-wired into women's brains and I don't think that we're ever going to reach a society in which women just routinely drop the kid; place them in daycare and send them off to school for 18 years, and then marvel at what a great adult it became. I think that basic desire of women and families to be together with one another is going to overcome the type of the philosophy in which there seems to be a big push among the people that

favor big government and lots of publicly-financed programs to simply eliminate the need for child care by mothers.

We think that all of the economic pushes — the economy which reflects the desires of the people in the marketplace — are moving in the opposite direction. That instead, people just want to have flexibility. They want to be able to be with little children. They want to have flexibility to run their own business, not be at the mercy of restructurings and downsizings and big corporations. And that will be the wave of the future, in our view.

Q. Will it become increasingly easy, with the personal computer and other inventions, for women to balance agendas between work and family? And given new company or corporate policies that allow flextime and that sort of thing?

A. Most of the inhibitions on companies from giving their employees flextime derive from our tax and labor laws. Most of what prevents people from doing the things that they say they want to do are laws, not ugly, overbearing employers. It's very disingenuous of the big-government crowd to say that we need more government. What we really need is less government to permit people to make the choices that they want to be able to make.

I don't think there's a single employer who is eager to have unhappy employees. But they are forced into it by virtue of antiquated labor laws and a tax system that is so immensely complicated, that tries to push people into large corporations where the I.R.S. [Internal Revenue Service] can keep better tabs on them. The I.R.S. doesn't want us to work at home because it's more difficult for them to get their piece of our income. When they have to track down a whole lot of little people, they'd rather track down a few big people. I think people will wake up to the fact that government is the thing that's tripping us up. It is not going to be a solution, but it's really part of the problem.

Q. Do you think that issues like Wage Gap and Glass Ceiling are fading?

A. I do, because I believe that with experience we are learning that it really is not possible to have it all at one time. Back in the late 70s and early 80s, the rallying cry of feminists was "You can have it all; you can be a superwoman." We have a generation of young women coming up now whose mothers tried that. And it's really remarkable, if you go into a high school or a college setting you will see that the girls have a very clear-eyed idea of what is possible to accomplish. And they understand that if they want to be a captain of industry, that takes a certain set of choices. To be a mom at home, that's another set of choices. And if they want to combine the two, that's still a third. And they want to have those choices, but they are very realistic about what's involved in each of them, because they watched their mothers struggle with trying to be all things to all people.

Q. The high cost of education, when middle class families are sending kids to school and facing costs of \$25,000 a year....

A. Education to me is like the tulip bubble; it's got to burst because you just don't get that kind of value out of an education. That's another area in which the "information society" is obviating the need to go to college. And indeed we have a lot of virtual classrooms; out, for example, in the West, in places like Montana, you can sit in your classroom at home and take college courses for credit.

Q. Distance learning?

A. Yes, all that kind of stuff is going to push out the notion of the extremely expensive college education. And there are a lot of women who are forced into the workplace in part because that's the only way the family is ever going to be able to get the kids in college. That extra income. And those women resent that. They resent the fact that college is so expensive. And that when you get out, all you can get is a burger-flipping job anyway. It's one of the little-noticed undercurrents of society that's driving a lot of people and creating a lot of resentment.

I'm on the board of the Virginia Military Institute [VMI], so I know not only about bringing women into a military setting but also about the financial constraints on colleges. And a lot of that, too, is due to just excessive regulation. A large percentage of our employees at VMI spend just their whole day filling out forms, various government-mandated information requirements. If the government would just step back from that, I think we could be more efficient in delivering education.

Q. Is there anything more you would like to say about the Forum?

A. We've also been quite active in the issue of women in the military. And that issue to us is a great example of the disconnect between elite women and "normal" women. You've got a lot of elite careerist women in the officer corps who have a certain set of desires usually related to their career. Then you've got enlisted women, who are far more numerous. They're looking to get a different thing out of their military service and unfortunately, the whole thing is driven by the needs of the career officer women. And we're overlooking the enlisted women who are not able to speak out. So the Forum has tried to be a voice for the other women. Just as in many cases we try to be a voice for the ordinary working woman, not so much the professional with the nanny and everything, but other people who just want to have a normal life.

Q. Do you feel there's still a place for single-sex education, such as at VMI?

A. Yes, absolutely. What most people don't realize about the VMI case that went to the Supreme Court is that there was abundant testimony from educational experts about the value of single-sex education. But the Court did not consider that testimony. Single-sex isn't for everybody, but for a significant number of both boys and girls, it's the best way for them to be able to concentrate on their education, by having the absence of the opposite sex that enables them to focus on what they're supposed to be doing. It also allows the educators to work on what one sex or the other might be a little more deficient in. So for example, at VMI, you can walk into an English class and hear boys talking in a very heartfelt way about poetry. Which they would probably be reluctant to do if the class were half women.

Likewise, I went to an all-girls high school and we did everything for ourselves. When we put on a play we did the scenery as well as the makeup. So we learned a lot more self-reliance. And so I'm a very strong proponent of keeping the option for single-sex education. ■

(The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.)

BALANCING AGENDAS: WORK, FAMILY AND THE LAW

By Suzanne Falter-Barns

Women who want to have a family and a career in modern-day America struggle with conflicting agendas of home and workplace. Fortunately, business, government and even families are becoming increasingly responsive to resolving the conflicts brought about by the changing roles of women in the United States.

To appreciate fully the issues surrounding working mothers, consider what happens when Mommy attempts to head off to work on a typical day. First, the two-year-old attaches himself like a barnacle to your leg and begins howling, ignorant of the fact that he's smearing his breakfast cereal all over your power suit. Then, with heartbreakingly simplicity, your older child gives a wan little smile and says, "We're having a class trip, but don't worry, Mom. I already told them you can't go." These are the little moments that have propelled women and the companies that hire them into a new, slightly awkward pas de deux centered on work and family issues.

The news is mostly good; transformation in the workplace is occurring, albeit slowly. The steady rise of women in the workplace — combined with their growing refusal to neglect their families — has given birth to a raft of new company policies. Those corporations that do take on employee-friendly initiatives are finding that productivity is up, and the bottom line is steadily improving. For a handful of the savviest (smartest) corporations, integrating work and family has become another way to stay competitive in the marketplace. For many others,

however, flexible work schedules (commonly referred to as flexitime) and other such options remain vaguely suspicious, widely seen as "a woman's thing" not pertinent to corporate life.

Today, almost three quarters of married women with dependent children work in the paid labor force in America. Of that figure, 38 percent work full-time and year-round. A 1995 Whirlpool study¹ labels these women the "new providers" with 55 percent providing half or more of the household income. Yet the motivation is not strictly financial. The Whirlpool study also finds that these women see themselves as playing important roles in and outside the home, in both kinds of work. So women's work has come to take on a new, more holistic meaning, defeating old notions that women who take paying jobs do so at the expense of their families. Findings indicate that full-time homemakers actually feel less valued at home than women who are employed in the marketplace full-time.

Yet, while gratified, working women still feel the pinch. Even though a U.S. Department of Labor survey found 79 percent of women "love" or "like" their jobs, another study found more than four in 10 "worry a great deal" about balancing family and work responsibilities. Dubbed "the tired class," these working mothers are logging more hours at paid jobs than their predecessors ever did, and they are more likely than ever to have a small child for whom to care. This said, how exactly does the working mother juggle career ambitions with the ever-present drain of family needs? The answer lies in a variety of creative options.

As a married, working mother of two children ages two and seven in New York City, I fall into the category most working women want to be in: part-time employee. By choice I am also self-employed in that capacity, which is another growing preference for women in the workplace. This allows me to pick up my kids from school and day care two afternoons a week, a chore I share with my self-employed husband. In the summer, when we move up to our summer house in the mountains, I can commute to my job every other week for four days. If I were not self-employed, I would not have this flexibility. But in turn, I receive no benefits from the company I work for; I am excluded from most important meetings and company functions, and any kind of actual job

advancement is strictly out of the question. Job security is also not great, but I reason that is the case with any job these days, and as far as job benefits go, I have my own health insurance policy and retirement account. Like working women everywhere, my need to mother my children at least part of the time has put me at a disadvantage when it comes to riding the fast track. Yet, it's a trade I gladly make.

A different story is that of my niece, Jennifer Liebowitz of North Wales, Pennsylvania. A vice president and lending officer of a large urban bank, Jennifer handles a three-hour commute four days a week. On those days, she and her 18-month-old son leave the house at 6:30 a.m.; he is in day care from 7:00 a.m. until 6 p.m. On the fifth day she stays home and telecommutes (works via computer) while her mother comes over and cares for her son. The reasoning is this: It provides her with six additional hours of quality time per week with him, plus a much needed break from the constant interruptions of the office so she can actually get something done. An added advantage is her clients' responses. "Clients call me at home, and they love it because they reach me on the first ring," she explains. Needless to say, the arrangement works and her own career path remains intact.

The unseen benefits of this kind of work arrangement are being discovered by more and more companies nationwide. A survey by *Business Week* and Boston University's Center for Work & Family² rated work-family policies and benefits at 37 publicly-traded companies in the *Business Week* 1,000. Their findings reported that 48 percent of 8,000 employees said they could "have a good family life and still get ahead" in the company, while 60 percent reported that management either ignored or took people only "somewhat" into account when making decisions. The most enlightened of these companies, such as First Tennessee National Corporation, operate on the premise that family life directly affects business results. By getting rid of many of the company's policies and permitting employees to create their own schedules, they found

that productivity soared and customer satisfaction rose.

The *Business Week* study noted that those First Tennessee supervisors who were rated as supportive of work-family balance retain employees twice as long as the bank average, which in turn allows them to keep seven percent more customers. This has contributed to a 55 percent profit gain over two years. When managers at Xerox's Dallas, Texas, customer administration center handed over responsibility for scheduling shifts to workers, they reaped an overnight drop in absenteeism, as well as higher productivity. Their Webster, New York, production-development team banned early morning and late night meetings, with a result of the first on-time launch of a new product in the business's history.

The May 1997 issue of *Parenting*³ singled out Patagonia and Lucasfilm Ltd. as parent-friendly companies because of their well-subsidized, on-site day care centers. Not only do parents get to stop in several times a day to visit their children, but Patagonia's child care center even provides an after school program complete with transportation from nearby schools. First Tennessee, which also appeared in *Parenting*'s Top 10 list, runs a special child care center called Sniffles and Snuggles specifically for kids who would ordinarily have to stay home sick. Tom's, a toothpaste company in Maine, offers employees compressed work weeks with four 10-hour shifts and one day off instead of the traditional five-day work week. And at computer-maker Hewlett-Packard, where flextime began back in 1972, 85 per cent of its employees participate in some sort of flexible work schedule. A popular alternative there is job-sharing, in which two employees share one job equally. For Hewlett-Packard, job sharing has the benefit of offering two employees with their unique perspectives and talents for the price of one. These new approaches appear to be the beginning of a critical and much-needed shift in how American companies do business.

Still, for many companies, the movement has not happened yet, and not solely because of management. In my niece Jennifer's office, there tends to be a male-female divide about flextime and other arrangements, such as telecommuting. Men view it as a women's issue. Women say they'd

support the men if the men wanted to adjust their schedules. More prevalent, however, is a creeping, general fear of the policies. People who do make flexible work arrangements try to keep them quiet, in case some supervisor should notice and remove the privilege. And many are afraid to ask for alternative arrangements out of a fear of being seen as uncommitted to their work. "It's as if they're thinking no one would ever grant them flextime — as if they don't deserve it," Jennifer says. And yet, flextime is a company policy.

Also noteworthy is the phenomenon discussed in a new book by Arlie Russell Hochschild, recently excerpted in *The New York Times Magazine*⁴. In "The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work," the author describes the phenomenon of parents who escape to the sanctity of their offices and stay there, in order to avoid the pressures and hard work of family life. Hochschild cites a Bureau of Labor study of 188 companies in which 35 per cent offer flexible work arrangements, but fewer than three percent of employees take advantage of them. Her premise prompted *Boston Herald* columnist Suzanne Fields⁵ to suggest that the Ms. Foundation replace the annual "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" with "Let Our Daughters (and Sons) Stay Home with their Mothers Day."

Flextime and telecommuting are also simply not options for many workers, particularly those who perform clerical or manual labor. Deborah Marie Peterkin of Hillside, New Jersey, a former executive secretary and mother of four, grew so frustrated by her inability to be a part of her children's school life that she left her office job to work with the ground crew of a nearby urban airport. She gets out on the tarmac from 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. to flag in and refuel airplanes. Upon reaching home, she hustles children off to school, goes on class trips, picks up the kids after school, and spends the afternoon with them. Then she goes to sleep after preparing an extremely early dinner. Despite a decrease in pay, she considers the arrangement an improvement.

For these workers, only such initiatives such as the Family and Medical Leave Act protect their interests as parents. Passed after eight years of bitter debate in Congress, the bill requires employers with 50 or more employees to offer 12 weeks unpaid leave around the birth of a child, or to care for a critically

ill family member.

Nonetheless, we can safely say the winds of change are sweeping the workplace, and such participation is not limited to mothers alone. During the work week in our house, my husband spends twice as much time as I do caring for our children, and I am the primary breadwinner. A casual trip to the playground always reveals at least a handful of Dads on duty. And when I walk in the door at the end of the day, my children come at me screaming "Mommeee!" but more and more my husband is the one they ask for help with homework or cups of juice. This is a positive change, I keep reminding myself, one that makes for a truly integrated family. I do love the fact that their Dad is as important to them as I am. Still, I can't help feeling some jealous twinges in my mothering genes. What it's really all about is achieving that delicate balance — a balance that will hopefully become even more balanced by the time our children grow up. ■

In addition to her part-time job writing promotional copy for The New York Times, Suzanne Falter-Barns is a freelance writer, social commentator, and author of the novel, Doin' the Box Step (Random House, 1992)

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95/75
<http://www.rochester.edu/SBA/95-75/>
Maintained by the Susan B. Anthony University Center at the University of Rochester, "95/75" commemorates the 75th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in America, and celebrates women's history, achievements and future.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
<http://www.aauw.org/>
A "national organization that promotes education and equity for all women and girls." Composed of a 160,000-member association that lobbies and advocates for education and equity; a foundation, which funds research on girls and education, community action projects, and fellowships and grants for women worldwide; and a legal advocacy fund.

CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN WOMAN AND POLITICS (CAWP)
<http://www-rci.rutgers.edu/~walsh/cawpinf.html>
A unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, CAWP's mission is "to promote greater understanding and knowledge about women's relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life." Of particular interest is the National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, a database on current and past women officeholders and candidates, as well as their newsletters and fact sheets.

CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS FOR WOMEN'S ISSUES

<http://www.house.gov/lowey/caucus.htm>

This coalition is "an active bipartisan voice in the House of Representatives on behalf of women." Key issues of interest include women's health, domestic violence, Fourth World Conference on Women, economic rights of women, and education. Information services formerly provided by the caucus are now provided by WOMEN'S POLICY, INC., a non-profit organization.

<http://www.womenconnect.com/wlc/community/organization_list/or31550d.htm>

EMILY'S LIST

<http://www.emilyslist.org/>

An acronym for "Early Money is Like Yeast" (because it makes the dough rise), EMILY's List identifies viable pro-choice Democratic women candidates for key federal and statewide offices and supports them raising campaign contributions, building strong campaigns, and mobilizing women voters." The web site includes a state-by-state list of women in Congress and state legislatures.

FAMILIES AND WORK INSTITUTE

<http://www.familiesandworkinst.org/>

"This national nonprofit research, strategic planning, and consulting organization conducts policy and worksite research on the changing workforce and changing family/personal lives." Home of the FATHERHOOD PROJECT, "a national research and education program that is examining the future of fatherhood and developing ways to support men's involvement in childrearing."

<http://www.fatherhoodproject.org/>

FOREFRONT CONNECT

<http://www.ffconnect.com/>

ForeFront Connect (a service of FOREFRONT: THE MAGAZINE FOR INFLUENTIAL WOMEN) "is your one-stop source for comprehensive, non-partisan information about women, politics, and public affairs."

GLASS CEILING COMMISSION

http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/e_archive/GlassCeiling/

"The Commission works to identify glass ceiling barriers and expand practices and policies which promote employment opportunities for the advancement of minorities and women into positions of responsibility in the private sector." This site includes documents, recommendations, fact-finding

reports, news releases, and other relevant publications.

INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

<http://www.iwf.org/>

"Provides a voice for American women who believe in individual freedom and personal responsibility." Links to the Women's Quarterly, the newsletter ExFemina, and other reports and publications, such as the online Media Directory of Women Experts.

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

<http://www.iwpr.org/>

"An independent, non-profit, scientific research organization founded in 1987 to rectify the limited availability of policy-relevant research on women's lives. . . ." Current emphasis is given to labor market and employment issues, poverty and welfare, family and work, and health care policy.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

<http://lww.org/~lwvus/>

Encourages the "informed and active participation of citizens in government" and influences public policy through its education and advocacy programs. This website covers the activities of the national organization, and the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE (CORNELL UNIVERSITY) — FEMINIST JURISPRUDENCE MATERIALS

http://www.law.cornell.edu/topics/feminist_jurisprudence.html Contains key legal texts, Supreme Court decisions, and links to major Internet sources on feminism and the law, curricular resources, women's studies, and women's rights.

LIBRARIANS' INDEX TO THE INTERNET: WOMEN

http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/searchindex?title=Women&query=women&searchtype=subjetccts&results=0&search_tags=c

A selected list of over 50 of the best Internet resources about women.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS

<http://www.feminist.com/nwpc.htm>

A "national, grassroots organization dedicated to increasing the number of women elected and appointed to office at all levels of government regardless of party affiliation." The caucus provides campaign training, support, a networking forum, and publications, such as the DIRECTORY OF WOMEN ELECTED OFFICIALS and the FACT SHEET ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PROGRESS. Numerous links

to women's resources on the net are provided by FEMINIST.COM
<http://www.feminist.com/>, the caucus's home site.
NAWSA COLLECTION
<http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/rbnawsahml/nawshom.html>

Selections from the National Woman Suffrage Association Collection, 1848-1921, part of the Library of Congress's American Memory Collection, this site "consists of 167 books, pamphlets and other articles documenting the suffrage campaign."

ONE WOMAN, ONE VOTE: A SHORT HISTORY & GUIDE

http://www.pbs.org/onewoman/one_woman.html
"One Woman, One Vote," a two-hour public television program, was originally broadcast on February 15, 1995 as part of PBS's THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE series and highlights moments in 72 years of the suffrage movement, beginning with the first women's rights convention in 1848 and climaxing in passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920."

PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN

<http://secretary.state.gov/www/iacw/index.html>
Charged with coordinating the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, this intragovernmental body also develops related initiatives to further women's progress and engage in outreach and public education to further the platforms' goals.

RESOURCES FOR WOMEN — BEIJING — USIA

<http://www.usia.gov/topical/global/women/woman.htm>
Commemorating the First Anniversary of the United

Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, September 1995, this site addresses each of the twelve issues of the "Platform for Action."

SBA'S OFFICE OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/womeninbusiness>
This office of the Small Business Association "provides a network of training, counseling and mentoring services to help women start and/or expand businesses." Also compiles statistics on business ownership and works with groups such as the National Women's Business Council
<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/womeninbusiness/nwbccov.html> and the White House Office of Women's Initiative and Outreach.
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/Women/OWIO>

U.S. DEPT. OF LABOR. WOMEN'S BUREAU

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/welcome.html>
Emphasizes current initiatives being undertaken by the Women's Bureau, publications, newsletters, notices, and media releases. A good site for publications on women in the workforce.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN OFFICE

<http://www.usdoj.gov/vawo/>
Information about the Violence against Women Act, the National Domestic Violence Hotline telephone number (800-799-SAFE), national and local resources for victims and others, federal grant programs and documents, statistics, and relevant speeches are available on this Department of Justice site.

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE FOR WOMEN'S INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/Women/OWIO/>
Provides information about recent events and the Clinton Administration's accomplishments for women and families. Also develops and maintains a network of leaders in the women's community and serves as a point of contact.

WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN FUND

<http://www.wowfactor.com/>
Organization headed by Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky that helps the election efforts of progressive female candidates, both Republicans and Democrats. The group's training arm, the Women's Campaign Research Fund (WCRF) hosts training sessions in various parts of the country.

WOMEN'S POLICY, INC. (WPI)

http://www.womenconnect.com/wlc/community/organization_list/or315_50d.htm

Formed "specifically to carry on the information services provided by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. . . in January 1995," it provides nonpartisan legislative analysis and information to members of Congress, interested organizations, the press, and the public. Links to resources on women and the arts, business, careers, education, family, finance, gender equity, health, law, politics, trends and history are also accessible through the main site, WOMEN'S CONNECTION ONLINE

<<http://www.womenconnect.com/>>

WOMEN'S WEB (WOM WEB)

<http://www.womweb.com/index.html>

Contains current articles from WORKING WOMEN, WORKING MOTHER, and MS. magazines.

Biographies, organizations, subscription and other information is also provided.

WWWOMEN SEARCH DIRECTORY FOR WOMEN ONLINE

<http://www.wwwomen.com/>

Searchable directory contains links to sites relevant to women, such civil liberties, child rearing, and careers. Also co-produces WOMEN ONLINE <<http://www.women-online.com/>> which distributes news, information and announcements of interest to women worldwide.

THE
CHANGING ROLES OF
WOMEN
IN THE
UNITED STATES

A row of six black silhouettes of women, each in a different professional or academic setting. From left to right: a woman in a business suit, a woman in a military uniform, a woman carrying a briefcase, a woman in a graduation gown, a woman in a tuxedo, and a woman in a business suit.