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Britské a americké ženy v politice

British and American Women in Politics

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ANOTACE

Název práce: **Britské a americké ženy v politice**

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Práce je rozdělena do čtyř částí. Úvod stručně shrnuje dané téma a jeho volbu. Druhá část se podrobněji zaměřuje na postavení žen v oblasti politiky v Americe a ve Velké Británii v minulosti, stěžejním oddílem je pak průběh boje za získání volebního práva. Třetí, nejobsáhlejší část, je věnována ženám v politice v současnosti, vyzdvihnutí nejvýraznějších osobností spolu s detailnějším rozбором jejich politické kariéry. Čtvrtá závěrečná část se pokouší zhodnotit působení žen v politice, rozdíly mezi politiky a političkami a zastoupení žen ve vládách daných zemí.

ABSTRACT

Title: **British and American Women in Politics**

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The introduction briefly summarizes the chosen topic. The second part focuses on the women's position on the field of politics in the United States and Great Britain in the past with the crucial part being the fight for suffrage. The third and the most extensive part is dedicated to female politicians at present, describing the most influential female political leaders and their career. The last part concentrates on summing up the effects of female leaders on politics and describes the differences between male and female politicians and their positions in the governments at present.

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1 Introduction

Women play a central role in all aspects of life in America and Britain and they are taking an increasingly active part in public life, whilst still remaining the mainstay of their families and communities. The struggle for women to gain acceptance, recognition and veneration in society has been a long and lengthy process that has only begun to be appreciated in the last century. The majority of women are undoubtedly living more fulfilled lives than women of previous centuries would have thought possible. Through legislation against discrimination and campaigns to promote equality of opportunity, the position of women is slowly improving. There are hundreds of organisations dealing with women's issues and helping women enforce their claims. All this wouldn't be possible without women taking active part in politics.

The issue of women in politics is a particularly topical problem which concerns the whole society. In this work I tried to describe the role of women in politics throughout the centuries with its main struggles and achievements. A special attention was paid to famous female politicians of present describing their political career and achievements.

The main problem arose with collecting material, as there is a lack of books dealing with this topic in the available libraries. There is a vast amount of information on the Internet where I acquired the most current materials for this work.

2 Women and Politics in the Past

2.1 The History of British Women in Politics

At the beginning of the twentieth century, women in Britain could not vote, stand for public office, enter any of the professions or most well-paid jobs, be awarded a university degree, control their fertility or share guardianship of their children. The brave women who campaigned for these rights were ridiculed and accused of being “unwomanly”, and those who took violent action were imprisoned.

The campaigns of these determined women (and the enlightened men who supported them) over many decades eventually won them equal rights. They were fighting not only the prejudices of their own times, but a legacy of thought which had for centuries defined women as inherently inferior to men and sought to control them by making them the virtual property of their fathers and husbands.

2.1.1 Women’s Suffrage

Women's suffrage did not become a political issue in the United Kingdom until 1832, when the 1832 Reform Act¹ specifically disenfranchised women. From this point the suffrage movement campaigned for voting rights for women.

In the 19th century women had no place in national politics. They could not stand as candidates for Parliament. They were not even allowed to vote. It was assumed that women did not need the vote because their husbands would take

¹ The Representation of the People Act 1832, commonly known as the Reform Act 1832, was an Act of Parliament that introduced wide-ranging changes to the electoral system of Great Britain. The act granted seats in the House of Commons to large cities that sprang up during the Industrial Revolution, and took away seats from towns that had become depopulated during the preceding centuries. Furthermore, the act expanded the number of individuals entitled to vote, doubling the size of the electorate. However, even after the passage of the law, the vast majority of citizens were unable to vote. The Act also specifically disfranchised women, sparking the British suffrage movement.

responsibility in political matters. A woman's role was seen to be child-rearing and taking care of the home.

As a result of the industrial revolution, however, many women were in full-time employment, which meant they had opportunities to meet in large organized groups to discuss political and social issues.

Organized campaigns for women's suffrage began to appear in 1866 and from 1888 women could vote in many local council elections. When parliamentary reform was being debated in 1867, John Stuart Mill proposed an amendment that would have given the vote to women on the same terms as men but it was rejected by 194 votes to 73.

2.1.2 Suffragist and Suffragettes

The movement to gain votes for women had two wings, the *suffragists* and the *suffragettes*. The suffragists had their origins in the mid 19th century, while the suffragettes came into being in 1903.

The Suffragists

In 1897, various local women's suffrage societies formed the **National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies** (NUWSS), under the leadership of *Millicent Fawcett*. The NUWSS wanted the vote for middle class property-owning women. They believed they would achieve their end using peaceful tactics - non-violent demonstrations, petitions and the lobbying of MPs. Fawcett believed that if the organization were seen to be intelligent, polite and law-abiding then women would prove themselves responsible enough to participate fully in politics.

The leadership of the suffragists was exclusively middle class but some of the more radical members recognized early on that the movement needed the support of working class women. The issue of the franchise was drawing women of various sections of society together and giving them an identity, which they had lacked until that time.

By 1900 there was already evidence that many Members of Parliament had been won over, with several Bills in favour of women's suffrage gaining considerable support in Parliament, though not enough to pass. Some believed it was only a matter of time until women would gain the vote.

The Suffragettes

The suffragette movement in the United Kingdom, born out of the suffragist movement, was particularly militant, with some of its members committing vandalism and assault.

Emmeline Pankhurst, who had been a member of the Manchester suffragist group, had grown impatient with the middle class, respectable, gradualist tactics of the NUWSS. In 1903 she decided to break with the NUWSS and set up a separate society. This became known as the **Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)**.

Mrs Pankhurst believed it would take an active organization, with young working class women, to draw attention to the cause. The motto of the suffragettes was '*deeds not words*' and from 1912 onwards they became more militant and violent in their methods of campaign. Law breaking, violence and hunger strikes all became part of this society's campaign tactics.

Some Liberal MPs who had supported women's suffrage moved away from the movement due to the violence.

By 1909 the WSPU had branches all over the country and published a newspaper called 'Votes for Women' which sold 20,000 copies each week. The NUWSS was also flourishing, with a rising membership and an efficient nationwide organisation.

The First World War brought a halt to the public campaign.

2.1.3 Gaining the Vote

Women had to overcome many obstacles and face many challenges to gain the vote. Like middle and working class men before them, they had to convince Parliament to extend the franchise to them. People who have privileges are always reluctant to give them up, and this was an even bigger gamble for MPs than giving votes to some extra men - after all, giving women the vote on the same terms as men meant more than doubling the electorate. Politicians in both of the main parties were worried that the women might vote for their opponents.

Although the First World War brought the public campaign for suffrage to a halt, the contribution women made during the war had an impact on attitudes to women. Politicians and the general public alike recognized that women deserved greater political rights. But it was not the only, and may not even have been the main, reason why women received the vote. It's also true that the various women's political movements had prepared the ground for political recognition.

2.1.4 The Representation of People Act

In June 1917 the House of Commons passed the Representation of People Act. The following year the Act was approved by the House of Lords and became law. Women over 30 (men could vote at 21) who occupied property, or were married to the occupier, were entitled to vote. Although the Act still excluded many women, the fact that it was passed serves as proof of a change in political opinion towards women.

It ought to be borne in mind, though, that this was limited female franchise. Full adult suffrage was not achieved until Stanley Baldwin's Conservative government passed the Equal Franchise Bill in 1928. From that date, all adults regardless of gender were entitled to the vote once they reached 21 years of age. Women were given the vote on the same conditions as men in 1928.

2.2 The History of American Women in Politics

In the history of the United States of America, women are relative newcomers among state elected and appointed officials. Women first entered state-level offices in the 1920s following passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which granted women suffrage. However, significant growth in the number of women in office occurred only after the emergence of the contemporary women's movement during the late-1960s and early-1970s. Since the mid-1970s, as data collected by the Center for American Women and Politics² show, women have greatly increased their number among elected and appointed officials in state government. In recent years, however, progress seems to have slowed, and nationwide statistics show a levelling off in the number of women serving in certain state-level offices.

2.2.1 Early Feminism

The American Revolution³ had a deep effect on American society. One aspect that was drastically changed by the democratic ideals of the Revolution was the role of woman. Whatever gains they had made, however, women still found themselves subordinated, legally and socially, to their husbands, disenfranchised and with only the role of mother open to them. The desire of women to have a place in the new republic was most famously expressed by Abigail Adams⁴ to her husband:

²The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life.

³ The American Revolution refers to the period during the last half of the 18th century in which the Thirteen Colonies that became the United States of America gained independence from the British Empire. In this period, the Colonies rebelled against the British Empire and entered into the American Revolutionary War, also referred to as the American War of Independence, between 1775 and 1783. This culminated in an American declaration of independence in 1776.

⁴ Born in 1744 at Weymouth, Massachusetts, in 1764 married to John Adams, circuit judge, delegate to the Continental Congress, the first Vice President, finally the President. Died in 1818.

I desire you would remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands.

During the 1830s and 1840s, many of the changes in the status of women that occurred in the post-Revolutionary period continued at an accelerated pace.

2.2.2 Seneca Falls Convention

The Seneca Falls Convention held in Seneca Falls, New York on July 19 to July 20, 1848, was the first women's rights convention in the United States and is viewed by many individuals as the beginning of the women's movement in America. However, the idea for the convention was born at another protest meeting: the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London where the female delegates were not allowed to participate in the debates because of their sex. In the time between the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention and the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, Elizabeth Cady Stanton composed the *Declaration of Sentiments*, a document declaring the rights of women modelled on the Declaration of Independence⁵. The Declaration of Sentiments contained several resolutions, including that a man should not withhold woman's rights, take her property or refuse to allow her to vote. Men were said to be in the position of a tyrannical government over women. This separation of the sexes into two warring camps was to become increasingly popular in feminist thought. It was signed by sixty-eight women and thirty-two men.

⁵ The Declaration of Independence, written chiefly by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted on July 4, 1776. The Declaration declared that the Thirteen Colonies were independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain. It is considered to be the founding document of the United States of America, where July 4th is celebrated as Independence Day.

2.2.3 Women's Suffrage Movement

The Women's suffrage movement was formally set into motion in 1848 with the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. The movement, led by suffragists (peaceful protestors) and suffragettes (violent protestors), was a social, economic and political reform movement aimed at extending the suffrage (the right to vote) to women, advocating *equal suffrage* (abolition of graded votes) rather than universal suffrage (abolition of all discrimination, for example due to race), which was considered too radical.

The founders of the women's suffrage movement were two women, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

2.2.4 Elisabeth Cady Stanton

This leading figure of the early women's rights movement in the United States was born in Johnstown, New York on November 12, 1815.

Stanton and a feminist Lucretia Mott were the primary organizers of the 1848 Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. It was her who drafted the Declaration of Sentiments and she went on to write many of the more important documents and speeches of the women's rights movement.

After meeting Susan B. Anthony, in 1869, they founded the *National Woman's Suffrage Association*⁶; an organization dedicated to gaining women the right to vote. After the merger with the American Woman Suffrage Association, which created a National American Woman Suffrage Association, Stanton became its first president (largely due to Susan B. Anthony's support), however she was never popular among more conservative elements of the 'National American'.

⁶a 19th-century women's suffrage organization. It was formed on May 15, 1869 in New York, by noted civil rights activists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Stanton was its first President and Anthony was the first Vice President, until 1892 when she became President. The Association was active in acquiring the right to vote for women, this being the consistent focus of the organization's attention.

Stanton was also active internationally, spending a great deal of time in Europe in her later years, and in 1888 she helped prepare for the founding of the International Council of Women⁷.

2.2.5 Susan B. Anthony – “The Mother of us all”

Susan Brownell Anthony, born on February 15, 1820, was a prominent American civil rights leader who, along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, led the effort to secure Women's suffrage in the United States.

Anthony was independent and educated and held a position that had traditionally been reserved for young men. Before the outbreak of the American Civil War, Anthony was active in the anti-slavery and temperance movement in New York. In 1856 she became the agent for New York State of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

After 1854, Anthony devoted herself almost exclusively to the agitation for women's rights, and became recognized as one of the ablest and most zealous advocates of complete legal equality, and as a public speaker and writer.

After founding the National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA) along with Stanton, she became its vice-president and she held this office until 1892 when she became president.

In 1890, Anthony prepared the merger of the NWSA with the American Woman Suffrage Association, creating the *National American Woman Suffrage Association*. Anthony's strategy for suffrage was to unite the suffrage movement where possible, and to focus on the goal of gaining the vote, leaving aside other women's rights issues. Stanton criticized this attitude, writing that Anthony and

⁷ International Council of Women (ICW-CIF) was founded in 1888 and it is represented in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Rome, Paris, Nairobi in all UN Agencies. The ICW promotes equal rights and responsibilities for women and men, peace and understanding through international co-operation, negotiation and reconciliation, the fuller integration of women as decision-makers in peace making and peace building, human rights for all people, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, sustainable development, communication and networking worldwide.

Lucy Stone, leader in the more conservative American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), "*see suffrage only. They do not see woman's religious and social bondage.*" Anthony argued to Stanton, "*We number over 10,000 women and each one has opinions...we can only hold them together to work for the ballot by letting alone their whims and prejudices on other subjects.*"

Anthony died at Rochester, New York, on March 13, 1906 and is buried there in Mount Hope Cemetery. Anthony is known as "The Mother of us all."

2.2.6 National Woman's Party

A more radical group, which became known as the National Woman's Party, split from the NWSA over the issue of mobilizing for a constitutional amendment and calling for the defeat of politicians, Democrat as well as Republican, who did not support votes for women.

The NWP was founded in 1913 and fought for women's rights during the early 20th century in the United States, particularly for the right to vote on the same terms as men and against employment discrimination. In contrast to other organizations, such as the National American Women Suffrage Association, the NWP put its priority on the passage of a constitutional amendment ensuring women's suffrage.

Alice Paul and Lucy Burns founded the organization under the name the *Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage*. The organization did not allow men to join it. During the group's first meeting, Paul clarified that the party would not be a political party and therefore would not name a candidate for United States president during elections.

Women associated with the party became the first women to picket for women's rights in front of the White House; they also staged a suffrage parade on March 3, 1913, the day before Wilson's inauguration that was broken up by the police. Many of the NWP's members, upon arrest, went on hunger strikes. The resulting scandal and its negative impact on the country's international reputation at a time

when Wilson was trying to build a reputation for himself and the nation as an international leader in human rights may have contributed to Wilson's decision to publicly call for Congress to pass the Suffrage Amendment.

After the ratification of the Nineteenth amendment in 1920, the NWP turned its attention to eliminating other forms of gender discrimination, principally by advocating passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which Paul drafted. The organization regrouped and began to publish a magazine entitled *Equal Rights* directed mostly towards women, but, as Paul would say, also meant to educate men about the benefits of women's suffrage, women's rights and other issues concerning American women.

Other suffragist groups had disagreed with the NWP's tactics before passage of the Nineteenth Amendment; "social feminists" such as Florence Kelley, Rose Schneiderman, and Jane Addams likewise disapproved of the individualistic, "equal rights feminism" of the National Woman's Party. As the 1920s progressed, the NWP was eclipsed by other feminist groups and was defunct by 1930.

2.2.7 Winning the Vote

The struggle to win the vote was slow and frustrating. Wyoming Territory in 1869, Utah Territory in 1870, and the states of Colorado in 1893 and Idaho in 1896 granted women the vote but the Eastern states resisted. A woman-suffrage amendment to the Federal Constitution, presented to every Congress since 1878, repeatedly failed to pass.

However, with the formation of numerous groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) and, the Women's Trade Union League, the women's movement gained a full head of steam during the 1890's and early 1900's. The U.S. involvement in World War I in 1918 slowed down the suffrage campaign as women pitched in for the war effort. However, in 1919, after years of petitioning, picketing, and protest

parades, the Nineteenth Amendment was passed by both houses of Congress and in 1920 it became ratified under the presidency of Woodrow Wilson.

Amendment XIX

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this Article by appropriate legislation.

Ratified August 26, 1920

3 Women and Politics at Present

3.1 British Women in Politics

Recent years have seen remarkable progress in the representation of women in British politics. By the end of the twentieth century the British political elite has started to reflect the diversity of British society. From 1918 (when women were first allowed to stand for election to the House of Commons) to 1983, less than 5% of MPs were women. The situation started to change in 1987, when the proportion of women grew to 6.3%, rising to 9.2% in 1992. Following Labour's landslide victory on 1st May 1997, the line rocketed up the chart from 60 to 120 women MPs, or 18.2%, including 101 in the Labour party. To summarize developments in another way, half of all the women who have ever been elected to the British House of Commons are currently in parliament.

Many factors have contributed towards this development in Britain. This includes long-term developments, like general cultural shifts associated with more egalitarian gender roles in the workforce and society, and by socio-economic trends shrinking the size of the traditional manufacturing working class, and expanding the size of the service economy, and the role of women in the professional and managerial workforce, higher education and within the trade union movement.

The Labour Party and its attempt to widen its electoral base by becoming a 'catch-all' party courting women voters also played an important role.

Whereas during the post-war decade women leant strongly towards the Conservatives, while men gave greater support to Labour, the situation gradually changed during the 1960s and 1970s.

3.2 “Iron Lady” - Margaret Thatcher

“In politics if you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman.”

Margaret Hilda Thatcher, born on October 13, 1925 in Grantham, England, was Europe’s first woman prime minister (1979 – 1990). The only British prime minister in the 20th century to win three consecutive terms and, at the time of her resignation, Britain's longest continuously serving prime minister since 1827, she accelerated the evolution of the British economy from statism to liberalism and became, by personality as much as achievement, the most renowned British political leader since Winston Churchill.

3.2.1 Early Years

Thatcher formed an early desire to be a politician. Her intellectual ability led her to the University of Oxford, where she studied chemistry and was immediately active in politics, becoming one of the first woman presidents of the Oxford University Conservative Association. After graduating in 1946 she worked for four years as a research chemist. From 1954 she practiced as a barrister, specializing in tax law. In 1951 she married a wealthy industrialist, Denis Thatcher (b. 1915—d. 2003), who supported her political ambition.

3.2.2 The Way to Parliament

Thatcher first ran for Parliament in 1950 but was unsuccessful; despite increasing the local Conservative vote by 50 percent. In 1959 she entered the House of Commons winning the “safe” Conservative seat of Finchley in northern London. She rose steadily within the party, serving as a parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance (1961–64), as chief opposition spokesman on education (1969–70), and as secretary of state for education and science (1970–74) in the Conservative government of Edward Heath.

After Heath lost two successive elections in 1974, Thatcher, though low in the party hierarchy, was the only minister prepared to challenge him for the party leadership. With the backing of the Conservative right wing, she was elected leader in February 1975 and thus began a 15-year ascendancy that would change the face of Britain.

3.2.3 Prime Minister

Thatcher led the Conservatives to a decisive electoral victory in 1979 following a series of major strikes during the previous winter (the so-called “Winter of Discontent”) under the Labour Party government of James Callaghan.

As a prime minister representing the newly energetic right wing of the Conservative Party, Thatcher advocated greater independence of the individual from the state; an end to allegedly excessive government interference in the economy, including privatisation of state-owned enterprises and the sale of public housing to tenants; reductions in expenditures on social services such as health care, education, and housing and legal restrictions on trade unions.

The main impact of her first term was economic. Inheriting a weak economy, she reduced or eliminated some governmental regulations and subsidies to businesses, thereby purging the manufacturing industry of many inefficient - but also some blameless - firms. The result was a dramatic increase in unemployment, from 1.3 million in 1979 to more than double that figure two years later. At the same time, inflation doubled in just 14 months, to more than 20 percent, and manufacturing output fell sharply. Although inflation decreased and output rose before the end of her first term, unemployment continued to increase, reaching more than three million in 1986.

Thatcher embarked on an ambitious program of privatisation of state-owned industries and public services, including aerospace, television and radio, gas and electricity, water, the state airline, and British Steel. By the end of the 1980s, the number of individual stockholders had tripled, and the government had sold 1.5 million publicly owned housing units to their tenants.

Nonetheless, rising unemployment and social tensions during her first term made her deeply unpopular. Her unpopularity would have ensured her defeat in the general election of 1983 were it not for two factors: the Falkland Islands War (1982) between Britain and Argentina, over possession of a remote British dependency in the South Atlantic, and the deep divisions within the Labour Party, which contested the election on a radical manifesto that critics dubbed the “longest suicide note in history.” Thatcher won election to a second term in a landslide - the biggest victory since Labour's great success in 1945 - gaining a parliamentary majority of 144 with just over 42 percent of the vote.

Thatcher entered office promising to restrain the power of the unions, which had shown their ability to bring the country to a standstill during six weeks of strikes in the winter of 1978–79. Her government enacted a series of measures designed to undermine the unions' ability to organize and stage strikes, including laws that banned the closed shop, required unions to poll their members before ordering a strike, forbade sympathy strikes, and rendered unions responsible for damages caused by their members. In 1984 the National Union of Mineworkers began a nationwide strike to prevent the closing of 20 coalmines that the government claimed were unproductive. The walkout, which lasted nearly a year, soon became emblematic of the struggle for power between the Conservative government and the trade union movement. Thatcher steadfastly refused to meet the union's demands, and in the end she won; the miners returned to work without winning a single concession.

In foreign affairs, the Falklands War illuminated her most significant international relationship, with Ronald Reagan, president of the United States (1981–89). Thatcher and Reagan, who together made the 1980s the decade of conservatism, shared a vision of the world in which the Soviet Union was an evil enemy deserving of no compromise, and their partnership ensured that the Cold War continued in all its frigidity until the rise to power of the reform-minded Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985. In keeping with her strong anticommunism - a 1976 speech condemning communism earned her the nickname “Iron Lady” in the Soviet press - Thatcher strongly supported the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Britain's independent nuclear deterrent, a stance that proved popular with the electorate, given the Labour

Party's repudiation of Britain's traditional nuclear and defence policies. In Africa, Thatcher presided over the orderly establishment of an independent Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) in 1980 after 15 years of illegal separation from British colonial rule under a white minority. However, she encountered considerable criticism both at home and abroad for her opposition to international sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa.

The second half of Thatcher's tenure was marked by an inextinguishable controversy over Britain's relationship with the European Community (EC). In 1984 she succeeded, amid fierce opposition, in drastically reducing Britain's contribution to the EC budget. After her third electoral victory in 1987, she adopted a steadily more hostile attitude toward European integration. She resisted "federalist" continental trends toward both a single currency and a deeper political union. Her traditionally pro-European party became divided, and a string of senior ministers left the Cabinet over the issue.

The implementation of a poll tax in 1989 produced outbreaks of street violence and alarmed the Conservative rank-and-file, who feared that Thatcher could not lead the party to a fourth consecutive term. Spurred by public disapproval of the poll tax and Thatcher's increasingly strident tone, Conservative members of Parliament moved against her in November 1990. Although she defeated her most senior opponent, former defense minister Michael Heseltine, by 204 votes to Heseltine's 152, her total fell four votes short of the necessary majority plus 15 percent, and she decided not to contest the election in a second ballot. On November 22 she announced her resignation as Conservative Party leader and prime minister, paving the way for her replacement by John Major six days later.

3.2.4 Later Years

In retirement, Margaret Thatcher remained a political force. She continued to influence internal Conservative Party politics (often to the dismay of Major), and Thatcherism shaped the priorities of the Labour Party, which she had kept out of office for more than a decade. She remained a Member of Parliament until the 1992 election and was subsequently elevated, as a peeress for life, to the

House of Lords. She continued to speak and lecture, notably in the United States and Asia, and established the Thatcher Foundation to support free enterprise and democracy, particularly in the newly liberated countries of central and Eastern Europe. In 1995 she became a member of the Order of the Garter. Following a series of minor strokes, Thatcher retired from public speaking in 2002.

3.3 American Women in Politics

Women have significantly increased their numbers among state government officials over the past several decades. However, despite a recent increase in the number of women governors, women's progress, especially at the statewide elective and state legislative levels, has slowed. The future for women in state government would seem to depend, at least in part, upon the strength of efforts to actively recruit women for elective and appointive positions.

3.3.1 Governors

Since the founding of the country, only 26 women (17 Democrats, 9 Republicans) have served as state governors, and only one woman has served as governor of a U.S. territory (Puerto Rico). A majority of the states, 29, have never had a woman chief executive. Arizona is the only state to have had three women governors as well as the only state where a woman succeeded another as governor.

The first woman governor, Nellie T. Ross of Wyoming, was selected in a special election to succeed her deceased husband in 1925. Fifteen days later a second woman, Miriam "Ma" Ferguson, was inaugurated as governor of Texas, having been elected as a surrogate for her husband, a former governor who had been impeached and consequently was barred constitutionally from running again. Ferguson's campaign slogan was "Two governors for the price of one."

The first woman elected in her own right (without following her husband) into the governorship was Ella Grasso, who presided over the state of Connecticut from 1975 to 1980.

Seventeen of the women governors (including Grasso) who have served since the mid-1970s were elected in their own right. The other six became governor through constitutional succession; only one of these six was subsequently elected to a full term.

3.3.2 Other Statewide Elected and Appointed Officials

The states vary greatly in their numbers of statewide elected and appointed officials.

The first woman to ever hold a major statewide office was Soledad C. Chacon (New Mexico) who was secretary of state in New Mexico from 1923-26. The first woman treasurer, Grace B. Urbahns (Indiana), served during this same time period, from 1926-32.

Several more years passed before a woman became lieutenant governor. Matilda R. Wilson (Michigan) served briefly as lieutenant governor of Michigan in 1940 when she was appointed to fill an expiring term. However, the first woman elected as a lieutenant governor was Consuelo N. Bailey (Vermont) who served from 1955-56. An additional three decades passed before a woman became attorney general of a state; the first was Arlene Violet (Rhode Island) who served from 1985-87.

3.3.3 Legislators

Even before 1920 when women won the right to vote across the country, a few women had been elected to legislatures in states that had granted the franchise to women. By 1971 the proportion of women serving in state legislatures across the

country had grown to 4.5 percent, and by 2004 this proportion has increased almost fivetimes to 22.4 percent.

Great variation exists across the states in the proportion of legislators who are women. Washington with 36.7 percent has the largest proportion of women in its legislature, followed by Colorado (34.0 percent), Maryland (33.5 percent), Vermont (31.1 percent), Oregon (30.0 percent) and California (30.0 percent). There seems to be no easy explanation for why these states have risen to the top, and indeed scholars who have statistically examined the variation among the states in the representation of women in their legislatures have found no simple patterns.

At the other extreme, South Carolina with only 9.4 percent ranks last among the 50 states in the representation of women among its legislators. Accompanying South Carolina in the bottom five states are Alabama with 10.0 percent women, Kentucky with 10.9 percent, Mississippi with 12.6 percent and Oklahoma with 12.8 percent. All of these are southern or border states, suggesting that the south lags behind the rest of the country in the representation of women within its legislatures.

In early 2004, women held 410, or 20.8 percent, of all state senate seats and 1245, or 23.0 percent, of all state house seats across the country.

3.3.4 Legislative Leaders

Women made significant inroads into leadership positions within state legislatures in the 1990s and early 2000s. The first woman to hold a major leadership position was Minnie Davenport Craig, a Republican and the only woman in her legislature, who was elected speaker of the house in North Dakota in 1933. Two decades later in 1953, Consuelo Northrop Bailey, a Republican who later became Vermont's and the nation's first lieutenant governor, became speaker of the house in her state. While another woman, Marion West Higgins, served briefly as a speaker in New Jersey in the mid-1960s, it was not until two decades later that women began to ascend to speakerships with any frequency,

with Patricia “Tish” Kelly (North Dakota), Vera Katz (Oregon), Debra Anderson (South Dakota), and Jane Hull (Arizona) all becoming speakers in the 1980s.

In 2003, women held a total of 46, or 13.6 percent, of all top legislative leadership positions across the country. 10 Women held 17.9 percent of all Democratic leadership positions but only 9.8 percent of Republican leadership positions across all the states. Women held a majority of the leadership positions (senate and house combined) in three states – Washington, Oregon and Colorado. At the other extreme, half of the states, 25, had no women serving in leadership positions in either chamber of the legislature.

3.4 “Madam Secretary” - Madeleine Korbelt Albright

Madeleine Korbelt Albright, sworn in as the 64th United States Secretary of State in 1997 after unanimous confirmation by the U.S. Senate, became the first female Secretary of State and the highest-ranking woman in the United States government. As Secretary of State and as U.S. representative to the United Nations before that, she has created policies and institutions to help guide the world into a new century of peace and prosperity. Concentrating on a bipartisan approach to U.S. foreign policy, she has attempted to create a consensus on the need for U.S. leadership and engagement in the world.

Madeleine Albright was born Marie Jana Korbeltová in Prague, the Czech republic, on May 15, 1937. In 1939 the Korbelt family fled to London after Bohemia and Moravia were annexed by Germany. She and her parents fled again when the Communists gained power over Czechoslovakia, moving to the United States of America in 1948. Once settled there, Madeleine’s father became the founding dean of the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver. Korbelt later taught future Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Albright became a U.S. citizen in 1957.

3.4.1 Academic and Public Career

Albright has dedicated her life to international study. After receiving her B.A. (political science) at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, she studied international relations at Johns Hopkins University before earning her M.A. and Ph.D. in Public Law and Government at Columbia University.

Before her appointment as Secretary of State, she had a diverse career. From 1976 to 1978, Albright was U.S. Senator Edward Muskie's Chief Legislative Assistant. From 1981 to 1982, Secretary Albright was awarded a fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at the Smithsonian Institution. In 1981 she co-founded the Center for National Policy, where she served as President.

In 1982, Albright was appointed Research Professor of International Affairs and Director of Women in Foreign Service Program at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. She taught undergraduate and graduate courses in international affairs, U.S. foreign policy, Russian foreign policy, and Central and Eastern European politics, and was responsible for developing and implementing programs designed to enhance women's professional opportunities in international affairs. She was voted "best teacher" four times. Before becoming Secretary of State, Albright served as a member of President Clinton's Cabinet. Today, Secretary Albright is once again a professor at Georgetown.

3.4.2 Ambassador to the UN

Albright was appointed ambassador to the UN, her first diplomatic post, shortly after Clinton was inaugurated, presenting her credentials on February 9, 1993. At the UN she gained a reputation for tough-mindedness as a fierce advocate for American interests, and she promoted an increased role for the United States in UN operations, particularly those with a military component.

3.4.3 U.S. Secretary of State

When Madeleine Albright was confirmed as the 64th Secretary of State of the United States, she became the first female Secretary of State and the highest-ranking woman in the history of the United States government. As Secretary, Dr. Albright reinforced America's alliances, advocated democracy and human rights, and promoted American trade and business, labour and environmental standards abroad. Promoting the administration's "assertive multilateralism," Albright was a strong supporter of an expanded NATO and an advocate of an active U.S. foreign policy, including the use of U.S. forces to protect American interests and prevent genocide in foreign countries.

During her tenure, Albright considerably influenced American policy in Bosnia and the Middle East. Her personal anti-Serb position and her role in participating in the formulation of U.S. policy during the Kosovo war and Bosnian war as well as the rest of the Balkans caused the wrath of a number of Serbs in the former Yugoslavia. According to Colin Powell's memoirs, Albright once argued for the use of military force by asking, "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about, if we can't use it?"

In 1998, at the 50th anniversary NATO summit, Albright articulated what would become known as the "three Ds" of NATO, "which is no diminution of NATO, no discrimination and no duplication -- because I think that we don't need any of those three "D's" to happen."⁸

As a refugee whose family fled Czechoslovakia, first from the Nazis and later from the Communists, Albright represents the highest ideals and aspirations of immigrants who come to America seeking to make major contributions to the American society. As a leader in international relations, she has helped change the course of history and, in doing so, has also set a new standard for American women and for women around the world.

⁸ http://www.fas.org/man/nato/news/1998/98120904_tlt.html

3.5 “First Lady of the USA” - Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Rodham Clinton, the first First Lady to be elected to the United States Senate and the first woman U.S. Senator from New York State, born on October 26, 1947, was raised in Park Ridge, Illinois.

An outstanding student, she was class president, student council member, member of the debating team, member of the National Honour Society, and received her high school’s first social science award. She entered Wellesley College in 1965. Graduating with high honours, she moved on to Yale Law School, where she served on the Board of Editors of the Yale Review of Law and Social Action. While at Yale, she developed a strong interest in family law and issues affecting children under the influence of Marian Wright Edelman, a lawyer and children's rights advocate. She received her law degree in 1973, and became staff attorney at the Children’s Defence Fund.

In 1974, Hillary participated in the Watergate inquiry into the possible impeachment of President Richard M. Nixon.

3.5.1 First Lady of Arkansas

Hillary Rodham met her husband, former U.S. president Bill Clinton, while studying at Yale. When her assignment ended with Nixon's resignation in August 1974, she moved to Arkansas, marrying Bill Clinton in 1975. She taught at the University of Arkansas School of Law, and after the marriage she joined the prominent Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, Arkansas, where she later became a partner.

After Bill was elected governor of Arkansas in 1978, she continued to pursue her career. The National Law Journal twice named her one of the 100 most influential attorneys in America. As Arkansas’ First Lady, she chaired the Arkansas Educational Standards Commission, the Rural Health Advisory Committee, and was named Arkansas Woman of the Year in 1983, and Arkansas Mother of the Year in 1984. She co-founded Arkansas Advocates for

Children and Families, served on the boards of the Arkansas Children's Legal Services, the Children's Defense Fund, TCBY, and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

3.5.2 The Wife of the U.S. President

Hillary Clinton was First Lady of the United States from 1993 to January 2001. In Bill's 1992 presidential campaign, Hillary played a crucial role by greeting voters, giving speeches, and serving as one of her husband's chief advisers. With a professional career unequalled by any previous presidential candidate's wife, Hillary was heavily scrutinized. Conservatives complained that she had her own agenda, because she had worked for some liberal causes.

During the 1992 campaign, Bill Clinton sometimes spoke of a "twofer" ("two for the price of one") presidency, implying that Hillary would play an important role in his administration. She appointed an experienced staff and set up her own office in the West Wing, an unprecedented move. Her husband appointed her to head the Task Force on National Health Care, a centerpiece of his legislative agenda, which recommended the "Clinton health care plan," which was defeated in 1994. The controversy over her public role in leading health care policy reform was intense, but she continued as a staunch advocate of health care reform, women's and children's issues, arts, culture, and heritage promotion, throughout the Clinton Presidency.

3.5.3 Senator Clinton

In 1999 Hillary Rodham Clinton made history of a different sort when she launched her candidacy for the U.S. Senate seat from New York. In November 2000, the people of New York State elected Hillary Rodham Clinton United States Senator. Along with Eleanor Roosevelt, Senator Clinton is credited with substantively redefining the role of First Lady and opening new pathways for women in political leadership. She is the first First Lady of the United States elected to public office and the first woman elected independently statewide in New York State.

As a senator Hillary continues to push for health care reform, and she remains an advocate for children. She served on several senatorial committees (Health, Education, Labour, and Pensions Committee), including the Committee for Armed Services. Following the September 11 attacks in 2001, she supported the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan but grew highly critical of President George W. Bush's handling of the Iraq War.

3.5.4 On the Women's Issues

“Since my time as a student leader at a women’s college, I have believed in the importance of equal rights for women, in America and abroad. As First Lady, I delivered a speech called “Women’s Rights are Human Rights” at the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Today, in the U.S. Senate, I continue to press for equal rights for girls and women by fighting to protect Title IX, which provides equal opportunities for girls and women in sports, championing legislation that would ensure that women earn the same amount as men for equal work, and more. I have strongly opposed President Bush’s move to deny critical health care services to women in developing countries and am continuing the work I began as First Lady to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, especially teen pregnancies.”⁹

3.6 Condoleezza Rice

The current Secretary of State was born on November 14, 1954 in Birmingham, Alabama. At the age of 15 Rice entered the University of Denver. Although she had earlier considered a career as a concert pianist, she turned to the study of international relations, earning a bachelor's degree in the field in 1974. She obtained a master's degree (1975) in economics from the University of Notre Dame and a doctorate (1981) in international studies from the University of Denver, where she specialised in eastern and central Europe and the Soviet Union, including military and security affairs.

⁹ <http://clinton.senate.gov/issues/women/>

As professor of political science, Dr. Rice has been on the Stanford faculty since 1981 and has won two of the highest teaching honours - the 1984 Walter J. Gores Award for Excellence in Teaching and the 1993 School of Humanities and Sciences Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching.

3.6.1 Political Career

From 1989 through March 1991¹⁰ she served in President George H.W. Bush's administration as Director, and then Senior Director, of Soviet and East European Affairs in the *National Security Council*¹¹, and a Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. In this position, Rice helped develop Bush's and Secretary of State James Baker's policies in favour of German reunification.

In 1989 she served as director for Soviet and East European Affairs at the National Security Council and reported directly to National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft. In 1990 she became George H. W. Bush's principal advisor on the Soviet Union and was named a special assistant to the president for national security affairs. At that time she was the highest-ranking black woman in the administration.

3.6.2 National Security Adviser (2001 – 2005)

On December 17, 2000, Rice was chosen to serve as National Security Advisor, the first woman to hold this position.

Following the September 11 attacks in 2001, she proved to be an important and influential adviser to Bush. She supported the U.S.-led attacks on terrorist and Taliban targets in Afghanistan and aligned herself with hard-liners who advocated the overthrow of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. When the

¹⁰the period of the fall of Berlin Wall and the final days of the Soviet Union

¹¹ The National Security Council was established by the National Security Act of 1947. The National Security Council is the President's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters with his senior national security advisors and cabinet officials. Since its inception under President Truman, the function of the Council has been to advise and assist the President on national security and foreign policies. The Council also serves as the President's principal arm for coordinating these policies among various government agencies.

administration drew criticism for the Iraq War (2003) and the handling of terrorist threats prior to September 11, 2001, Rice vigorously defended the president's policy.

3.6.3 Secretary of State (2005 – present)

In 2005 she succeeded Colin Powell as Secretary of State, becoming the first African American woman to hold the post.

On January 26, 2005, the Senate confirmed her nomination by a vote of 85 - 13. All negative votes came from either Democratic or independent senators. Their reasoning was that Rice had acted irresponsibly in equating Hussein's regime with Islamic terrorism and some could not accept her previous record.

Since Rice took office as Secretary of State in January 2005, she has undertaken several major initiatives to reform and restructure the department, as well as U.S. diplomacy as a whole. Arguably her most substantial initiative has been dubbed "Transformational Diplomacy," a goal which Rice describes as "work[ing] with our many partners around the world ... [and] build[ing] and sustain[ing] democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system."¹²

Rice helped negotiate an end to Israel's occupation of the Gaza Strip. She also persuaded North Korea to return to talks aimed at dismantling that country's nuclear weapons program. Rice led an intense effort to promote democracy and broker a U.S.-friendly peace in the Middle East. After fighting broke out in July 2006 between Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah forces, Rice initially defended the decision by the United States not to seek an immediate cease-fire, but the following month she urged the United Nations Security Council to adopt such a resolution. She also joined European foreign ministers in calling for sanctions against Iran, after that country failed to halt its nuclear program or allow inspections of its nuclear facilities.

¹² Office of the Spokesman. Transformational Diplomacy. January 18, 2006. Georgetown University address. January 18, 2006.

4 The Consequences of Women in Politics

4.1 Women at Westminster

What have been the more general consequences of this development? In particular, has the new intake of women into public office ‘made a difference’ in terms of the substantive policy agenda?

The research on women in the 1992 election found that there was a significant, although modest, difference between women and men politicians within each party. In particular, compared with men, within each party women tended to be more supportive of left-wing and feminist values, to give higher priority to social policy issues like education, pensions and the health service, and to devote more time to constituency service.

Nevertheless the overall size of the gender gap was small, and in general party provided a stronger predictor of these factors.

4.1.1 The British Representation Study

Another survey - the 1997 British Representation Study¹³ - confirmed the pattern found in 1992, namely that across most policy issues it is party rather than gender that proves the strongest predictor of attitudes.

Across all the issue scales, women consistently tend to place themselves slightly to the left of men within their party with the exception of the left-right ideology scale, where women see themselves as slightly more rightwing than their male

¹³ The British Representation Study was conducted under the direction of Pippa Norris (Harvard University) in collaboration with Joni Lovenduski (Southampton University), Anthony Heath (Nuffield College/ CREST), Roger Jowell (Social and Community Planning Research/CREST), and John Curtice (Strathclyde University/ CREST). The research was distributed and administered from the School of Economic and Social Studies at the University of East Anglia and funded by the Nuffield Foundation. The 1997 BRS survey used a mail survey sent out to all candidates selected by the main British parties (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, SNP, Plaid Cymru, and Green) by 1st June 1996. Fieldwork was from 18th June to 3rd July 1996. In total 1,628 questionnaires were distributed, producing 999 replies, representing a response rate of 61.4 percent. The survey includes 179 MPs elected in 1992 and 277 MPs elected in 1997. The response rate produced a fairly even balance between parties although the rate of return was higher among candidates than incumbent MPs.

counterparts. The gender differences within the Labour and Conservative party are modest and rarely statistically significant.

On the issue of gender roles in the labour force and home, within each major party women are more significantly more egalitarian than men. Despite expectations surrounding the new Labour cohort of women MPs, in fact the gap on this issue is strongest within the Conservative party, where women and men present very different positions. Moreover within the other major parties, Liberal Democratic women proved more egalitarian on this scale not just than Liberal Democrat men, but also than Labour men.

The most logical conclusion is that, although there are modest differences on the classic economic cleavages that have always divided Westminster parties, *the gender of politicians matters most substantively on gender-related issues*. If these findings can be extended further, it suggests that where parliament debates issues where women and men have different interests - whether protective measures preventing domestic violence against women, equal opportunities in the paid labour force, or childcare provision in nursery schools – then potentially the attitudes and values which women bring into the parliamentary arena have the potential to make a difference to the outcome, especially within the Conservative party where men proved the most traditional group of all politicians on the gender equality scale.

4.1.2 Conclusions

The last few years have witnessed substantial developments in the representation of women in Britain. Gender equality in public life is far from established but nevertheless, after decades where there were fewer than 30 women at Westminster, the 1997 general election and subsequent contests in Scotland, Wales and for the European Parliament have seen unprecedented progress in Britain.

The main reasons for this development lie in strategies of positive discrimination within the Labour party parliamentary recruitment process which led to the

selection of many women in key target marginals, before the 1997 landslide swept Labour into power. This development has increased the pressures on the opposition parties to bring more women into office although so far the doctrine and ethos of the Conservative party means they have been reluctant to adopt gender quotas.

The growth of women in office has certainly altered the symbolic face of the British political elite. But has it had a significant impact upon the policy agenda or ethos of parliamentary life? The more optimistic hopes have proved to be exaggerated, as British party politics have followed essentially familiar tracks. Nevertheless any fundamental change to the British political culture cannot be expected to occur overnight. According to the results of several survey (such as the 1997 British Representation Study) the gender of politicians does not seem to matter on everything, but it does seem to matter most on gender-related values, which have significant implications for sex equality policy in the labour force and home. The idea that gender matters most on gender-related issues may, perhaps, seem unsurprising, perhaps even commonsense. But it does provide a strong argument to counter exaggerated popular claims by both sceptical critics, who argue that nothing has changed, and more optimistic advocates, who hope that all will be transformed overnight.

4.2 The Development in the USA

There are 98 million women in America today. More than one-half of them work. More than 12 percent head their own households. More than 68 percent raise children by themselves. And more than 63 million of them are registered voters. They are independent, competent and knowledgeable. Through experience women are natural problem-solvers; through cultural adaptation, they have learned to be people-oriented, consensus builders who approach situations in less confrontational ways than many men.

Yet for all their resources, attributes and strengths in 2007, only 87 women serve in the U.S. Congress. 16 women serve in the Senate, and 71 women serve in the House. The number of women in statewide elective executive posts is 76, while

the proportion of women in state legislatures is at 23.5 percent. Although the figures are higher than in recent years and the numbers have been increasing, the overall percentages are hardly indicative of the power, numbers or resources women have.

Over the years women active in American politics have helped to improve the national situation and participated in looking for and finding solutions to some troubling issues on the American political scene. One would assume that the main and only concern of the female politicians would just be the so called “women’s” issues and that they would be interested in and strictly work on topics related to granting more power for them. However, as the history shows, the American female politicians not only fulfilled the hopes of getting into higher politics, they went even further. Facing the discouragement and scepticism they have not only managed to deal with issues on the field of domestic policy but have also broken into the international politics.

With more women moving into power, the chances for parity between the sexes are becoming higher. Female state lawmakers are moving into leadership roles in unprecedented numbers, overseeing their legislatures' daily business, shaping states' political agendas and, advocates say, laying the groundwork to get more women elected.

This year, 58 women lawmakers were chosen as legislative leaders – senate presidents, house speakers, presidents pro tem – a 20 percent gain over last year's 48 and more than double the female leaders in 2000, according to a count by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

At just 17 percent of all state legislative leaders, that's still barely one out of six, and far from reflecting the general population; women make up slightly more than half of all Americans.

Still, the gains come at a pivotal moment for female politicians, with Hillary Rodham Clinton running for president and Nancy Pelosi the first female speaker of the U.S. House.

Having female legislative leaders will influence the public and fellow lawmakers, changing attitudes so more women seek public office and more voters choose to support them.

Women legislative leaders numbered only four in the nearly all-male political world of the late 1970s. That figure rose in the 1990s to between 20 and 28 – still 8 percent or less of all legislative leaders. But after 2000, the numbers began to climb: to 30 in 2001; 42 in 2003; 48 in 2006, and now 58.

Credit goes to the women who broke ground and paid their dues, winning chairmanships and building coalitions, said Debbie Walsh, director of the Centre for American Women and Politics at New Jersey's Rutgers University. “Part of it is they've been in there and they've earned their spots,” she said.

“It isn't just about individuals,” said Marie Wilson, president of the White House Project, a nonprofit group that aims to encourage women to lead in business and politics. “There has been a change in the country and the culture. The culture matters. ... You start to see women as leaders. You get comfortable with women, whether you like their policies or not.”

5 Conclusion

Throughout the long history of politics, women have always been inferior to men, having to fight for even the basic rights (such as the right to vote). Even though the situation has been improving in recent years, there are still a lot of women's issues waiting to be improved or changed.

The perhaps biggest fight in the past - the fight for women's suffrage - proved that women are courageous, strong and capable of participating in political life as well as men do. The long fight, ended in their favour, brought all women in the world closer to the life reserved just for men. It gave them the opportunity to show that their skills and intelligence may prove as vital while deciding about the political, economic and cultural development of the countries.

Despite the fact that there have been several really influential and skilled women in politics, it is still hard to wipe out the deep-rooted and long prevailing belief that politics is better done by men than women.

The difference in the numbers of women and men actively participating in politics shows that we still haven't completed the way to equality.

The situation nowadays is in many respects easier than it used to be in the past. However, the comparison seems somewhat inadequate as the problems and difficulties the women in politics face at present greatly vary from the ones they had to handle in the past. Getting into politics and reaching the equality is a long lasting and gradual process with its ups and downs, its gains and losses.

The issues women deal with nowadays are not only issues concerning women themselves but also problems concerning society as a whole. They arise with the change and evolution of the society. Among subjects of direct concern to women taken up in recent years, the most important have been e.g. partnership between men and women in politics, women in national Parliaments, women in political parties, women's political and electoral training, financing women's electoral campaigns, women in the electoral process, women's impact on the democratic

process, women's participation in political life, women's contribution to development, women in economic life and the working world etc.

Describing the situation of women in the United Kingdom as "where the power is, women are not," Elizabeth Vallance has aptly summed up the traditional fate of women in democratic politics.

The staggering changes for women that have come about throughout history in religion, in government, in employment, in education, and in politics did not just happen spontaneously. Women themselves made these changes happen, very deliberately. Women have not been the passive recipients of miraculous changes in laws and human nature. Generations of women have come together to affect these changes through meetings, petition drives, lobbying, and public speaking. They have worked very diligently to create a better world for themselves, and they have succeeded hugely.

As we have seen throughout this work, the role of women in politics is changing: women are running for office in record numbers and many of them are winning, assuming a prominent role in the political life of their cities, states, and nations.

On such examples as Madeleine Albright, Margaret Thatcher and others, this study proved that there are no reasons for regarding women as unsuccessful and not capable of doing politics. The women in American as well as Great Britain's political life are competent and of the same importance as the male politicians.

6 Resumé

Cílem práce bylo charakterizovat a popsat situaci žen ve světě politiky a jejich postavení v současném politickém dění ve Velké Británii a ve Spojených státech amerických. Práce je členěna do několika kapitol, z nichž se každá zabývá jednotlivými částmi daného tématu. Situace v daných zemích je vždy popisována jednotlivě v samostatných kapitolách.

První kapitoly jsou zaměřeny na postavení žen ve světě politiky v minulosti, stěžejním oddílem této části se pak stává popis boje za získání volebního práva žen, počátků feminismu, nejdůležitějších jednání a vzniku organizací a stran zabývajících se prosazením volebního práva.

Další část této práce se věnuje postavení žen političek v současnosti. Porovnává současný stav se stavem v minulosti a naznačuje celkový vývoj. Dále vyzdvihuje současné nejvýraznější ženské osobnosti na politické scéně a detailněji rozebírá jejich politickou kariéru.

Závěrečné kapitoly zhodnocují působení žen v politice, stručně nastiňují rozdíly mezi politiky a političkami a také zastoupení žen ve vládách daných zemí s ohledem na situaci v minulosti.

Vzhledem k potížím se shromažďováním materiálu a nedostatku materiálů v originále je výsledkem kompilace dostupných knih a pokus o průřez daným tématem. Nejaktuálnější informace jsou čerpány především z internetových zdrojů.

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8 Appendices

Appendix A: Opinions on Women in Politics and Working Mothers

Appendix B: Percentage of Women in the U.S. Government

Appendix C: Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan

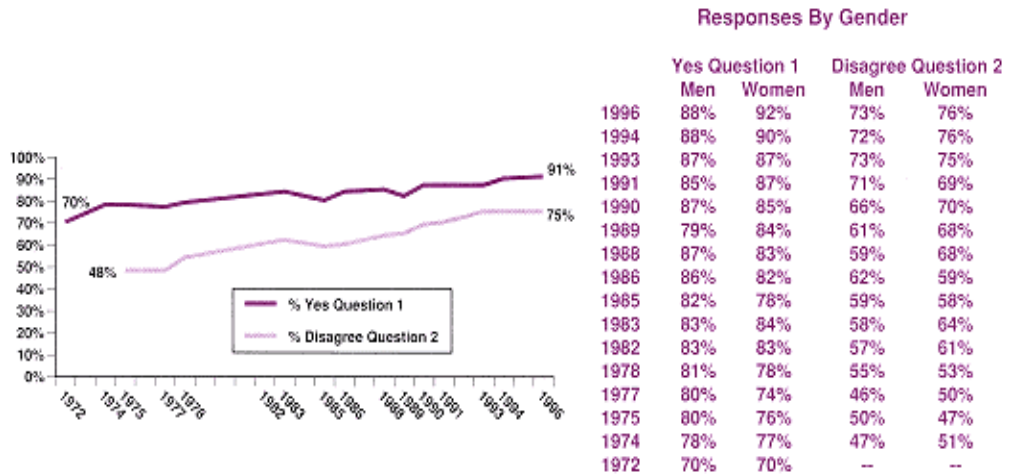
Appendix D: Politicians' Attitudes towards Gender Equality

Appendix A: Opinions on Women in Politics and Working Mothers

Opinions on Women in Politics and Working Mothers

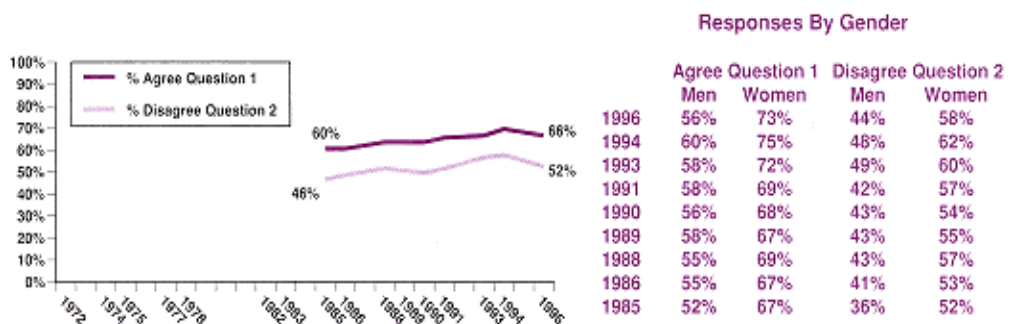
Question 1: If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

Question 2: Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than most women.



Question 1: Do you agree or disagree with this statement? A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

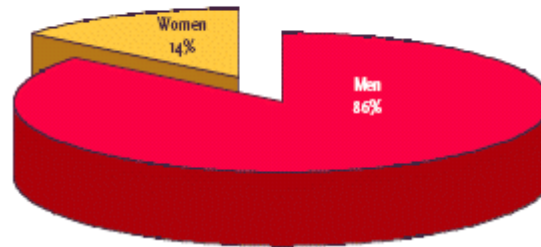
Question 2: Do you agree or disagree with this statement? A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (GSS), latest that of 1996.

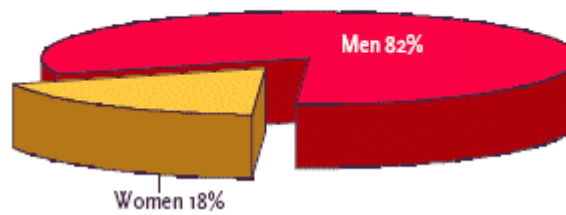
Appendix B: Percentage of Women in the U.S. Government

Percentage of women in the U.S. Senate, 2005



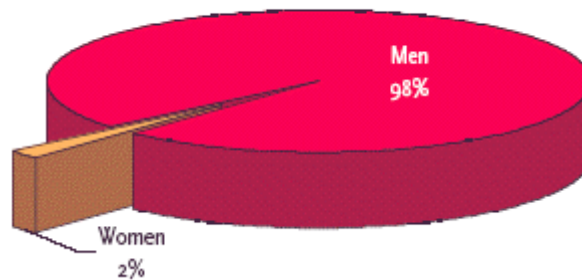
Data courtesy of the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University

Percentage of women in the U.S. House 2005



Data courtesy of the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University

Percentage of Democratic women in Congress since 1789



Data courtesy of the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University

Appendix C: Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan



Appendix D: Politicians' Attitudes towards Gender Equality

% Pro-egalitarian response	Cons				Lab			Lib Dem				
	Men	Women	Diff	Sig.	Men	Women	Diff	Sig.	Men	Women	Diff	Sig.
Government should make sure that women have an equal chance to succeed (Agree)	63	78	+15		97	99	+2		92	97	+5	*
Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than most women (Disagree)	56	93	+37	**	91	94	+3	*	88	97	+9	**
All in all, family life suffers when the wife has a full-time job (Disagree)	32	68	+36	**	69	86	+17	**	62	67	+5	*
Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay (Disagree)	16	37	+21	*	43	51	+7		31	40	+9	
A husband's job is to earn the money; a wife's job is to look after the home and family (Disagree)	55	89	+35	**	96	99	+3	**	90	100	+10	**

Note: Q36: "Recently there has been some discussion of women's rights. Can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements..." The figures represents the proportion who agree, or agree strongly, with the more egalitarian response (coded as indicated in parenthesis after the question). The difference is the % men minus % women. The significance of the difference in the mean score by men and women within each party is tested by ANOVA. *01 **05.

Source: 1997 British Representation Study N. 999 MPs and parliamentary candidates all British parties