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The Election, Incorporation, and Policy Impact of Women in City Government

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M.A., Emory University, 2003

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An abstract of
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Abstract

The Election, Incorporation, and Policy Impact of Women in City Government By Adrienne R. Smith

This dissertation examines women's pathways to powerful positions in municipal government and whether cities respond to women's interests in policymaking. In recent years, a growing number of women have been elected to city government. In light of this trend, the project addresses several questions: Why is the presence and power of women in municipal government greater in some U.S. cities than others? Does the increasing numerical representation of women in city government make any difference? Do cities where women hold positions of authority have more women-friendly policies?

Part I examines how variation in the political contexts of cities affects women's election as council members and mayors and their ascendance to prominent positions in municipal government. In Chapter 2, I analyze an original dataset of large American cities to extend the reach of our knowledge about women's presence as mayors and council members. In Chapter 3, I trace the process whereby women have gained increasingly prominent positions in the governments of Atlanta, Georgia and Houston, Texas since the 1970s.

Part II investigates the policy impact of women's presence and power in municipal government. In Chapters 4 and 5, I employ statistical analyses to examine whether women's presence and power of women in government influences how cities allocate funding in the federal Community Development Block Grant program and also whether they adopt a symbolic platform to strengthen families and improve neighborhoods. Throughout Part II, I draw on original fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta, including close to 50 interviews with municipal officials and civic leaders, to probe the findings from the statistical analyses and explore outstanding puzzles.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

This is a study about women's representation in local politics. Its focus is exceptional. Political scientists have devoted little attention to the study of women and women's representation in local politics (MacManus and Bullock 1995; Wolbrecht, Beckwith, and Baldez 2008). This is curious. The research on gender and politics tells us much about women in political institutions at the federal and state levels, and the number of such studies continues to grow. Yet there is an obvious dearth of scholarly attention where women's representation may matter most—the local level. Furthermore, urban politics research continues to develop our understandings of the representation of other marginalized groups without attending much to women's political representation.

The local level is a promising and interesting domain to study this topic for several reasons. First, local government affects people most frequently and directly; it is where policies are most likely to be implemented (Hajnal and Lewis 2003; Trounstine 2009). Residents tend to be very concerned about local matters such as zoning and land use, public safety, and schools and education.

Second, there are a large number of local offices and more women hold office at the local level than at any other level of government (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994). Moreover, many women who hold national or state office began their careers in municipal politics (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009). In terms of proportions, however, women remain just as under-represented in the councils and mayoralities of cities, especially those with populations of 30,000 or more, as they are at higher levels of

legislative and executive office (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010; Center for American Women and Politics 2010). Nonetheless, there is great variation in women's political representation from one city to the next. For example, during most of the 2000s, Atlanta had a female mayor, a female city council president, and women held over half of its council seats. Yet there are many cities like Milwaukee, where women have yet to be mayor and/or remain minorities on councils.

Third, variation in the design of cities' governmental and electoral institutions extends beyond that which exists at the state and national levels (Trounstine 2009). This variation can teach us more about how institutional design affects women's presence in policymaking positions and responsiveness to women's needs and interests (MacManus and Bullock 1995; Reingold 2008; Swers 2002; Trounstine and Valdini 2009). Cities differ in terms of forms of government (e.g., mayor-council versus council-manager versus commission), the decision-making powers accorded to various officeholders, the structure of their elections (e.g., partisan versus nonpartisan and at-large versus ward-based), to name just a few. These institutional features may have implications for whether women get elected and appointed to city positions and the extent to which they are able to affect policymaking once inside government.

Fourth, although there is a plethora of research on the election and policy impact of women legislators, much less is known about female executives. This is likely due to the dearth of female executives at the state and national levels (Weikert, Chen, Williams, and Hromic 2007). Cities offer an opportunity to examine the factors leading to election of female executives as well as their policy impact, simply because there is variation in the gender of mayors.

The Determinants of Women's Presence and Power in City Government

Why is the presence and power of women higher in some U.S. cities than others?

In Part I, I examine the election of women as city council members and mayors and their ascendance to prominent positions in municipal government. Previous empirical research has centered on how variation in urban electoral rules (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstein and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979) and the desirability of city positions (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010; Hill 1981; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Welch and Karnig 1979) facilitates (or hampers) women's descriptive representation (i.e., numerical presence) as mayors and council members. In Part I, I too investigate how structural features influence women's quest to attain municipal policymaking positions. However, building upon this line of work, I also propose that variation in the *political contexts* of cities affects women's election and appointment to municipal positions and the amount of power they have once there. The puzzle of why more women hold political offices in some cities than others may not be solved by examining either electoral institutions or the urban political context but rather by considering the two concurrently.

Several contextual factors are particularly consequential. The ideological climate and political culture of cities affect women's ability to gain municipal policymaking positions. For instance, I propose that women are more likely to be elected in cities that have liberal electorates. Likewise, the openness of cities' electoral arenas—including the absence of political machines and the presence of diverse and progressive-minded

populations, entrepreneurial cultures that privilege competence over cronyism, and expanding economies—plays a role in women’s political ascendance. The nature and extent of women’s organizational and socioeconomic resources affects the probability that women will participate in local campaigns, their chances of electoral success, and ascendance in government more generally. I explain how women rely on neighborhood organizations as launching sites and support networks for their political careers in municipal government (Clarke, Staeheli, and Brunell 1998). Similarly, women’s political fortunes depend on city-level variation in their socioeconomic resources, including educational attainment, business acumen, and income levels.

Women’s success in municipal elections and in gaining significant appointed positions has also been due, in part, to their alliances with other disadvantaged groups, such as racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities. While each group has focused on obtaining advances for their own communities, their efforts often open up local political systems more generally. Moreover, the boundaries of group membership are not simple, nor are various identity groups independent of one another. In recent years, for instance, some of the most important leaders in American cities have been African American women, lesbians, Latinas, and others who are situated at the nexus of multiple under-represented identity categories. Part I explores how and why these women forge cross-group coalitions when campaigning for municipal elections, securing bureaucratic appointments, and forcing open formerly closed political systems.

I execute a multi-method empirical approach to investigate the determinants of women’s presence and power in cities. In Chapter 2, I employ an original cross-sectional dataset of the 239 cities with at least 100,000 residents to extend the empirical reach of

our knowledge about women's presence as mayors and council members. The multivariate analysis reveals that the election of female mayors and council members are interdependent phenomena. It also suggests that the urban political context may be at least as important as electoral arrangements and other institutional features in predicting women's presence as mayors and council members. The ideological disposition of the electorate and women's store of organizational and socioeconomic resources appear to be particularly important.

In Chapter 3, I utilize an in-depth, process tracing methodology to provide a nuanced portrait of how the urban political context and structural arrangements of city government affect women's quest for elected and appointed offices. In recent years, women have held a large proportion of positions in the municipal governments of Atlanta, Georgia and Houston, Texas. Chapter 3 explains the political development of women as candidates for and holders of prominent and authoritative positions in Atlanta and Houston from the 1970s to the present. The chapter explains how several contextual factors were critical to the electoral, political, and professional success of women in the two city governments. Moreover, I uncover additional political factors—such as coalition building between women and other disadvantaged groups and the openness of the cities' political systems—that would be difficult to capture in a quantitative and strictly deductive study.

The multi-method approach that I employ in Part I provides several advantages. From the quantitative analysis presented in Chapter 2, I am able to draw generalizations about the determinants of women's presence as mayors and council members across a large set of American cities, thereby enhancing the study's external validity. Furthermore,

because of the availability of new data sources via the Internet, I am able to investigate understudied topics, including the determinants of women's presence in executive offices. In spite of these sources, a continuing challenge for urban politics scholars is collecting data that covers multiple cities over an extended time period. Given this challenge, in Chapter 3, I trace the historical processes underpinning women's political ascendance in Houston and Atlanta, thereby adding temporal breadth and internal validity to Part I. I provide a more nuanced description of how factors related to the urban political context and structural arrangements of city government lead to women's numerical representation in elected offices. Additionally, whereas the dependent variables in Chapter 2 center on women's presence as council members and mayors, in Chapter 3, I look more broadly at the extent to which women have been able to gain increasing power in municipal bureaucracies overall.

The Policy Impact of Women's Presence and Power in City Government

Are cities where women hold prominent positions in municipal government more likely to produce policies thought to benefit women's interests than cities with fewer or no female officials? In Part II, I examine the influence of women's presence and power in municipal government on public policymaking. My focus is on substantive representation, or the extent to which government officials enact and implement policies that address the needs, interests, and demands of their constituents (Pitkin 1967). Political theorists have proposed that descriptive and substantive representation are interrelated. They see the potential for a linkage between the presence of previously underrepresented groups, such as women, in political institutions and the production of policies that will benefit them (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995; Sapiro 1981; Williams 1998).

Over the past 30 plus years, empirical political scientists have found individual female representatives are more likely than their male counterparts to advocate and support measures that advance and protect women's interests (Barrett 1995, 1997; Burrell 1994; Dodson 2006; Poggione 2004; Reingold 2000; Swers 1998, 2002; Thomas 1991; Wolbrecht 2002). This is especially the case in the research on the policymaking behavior of representatives in U.S. state legislatures (Reingold 2000; Thomas 1994, 1997) and the Congress (Burrell 1994; Dodson 2006; Swers 2002; Tamerius 1995; Wolbrecht 2002). Researchers have found that female representatives are more likely than their male counterparts to take liberal positions on a variety of topics, pursue and take leadership roles on feminist policy agendas, and support legislation that deals with issues of traditional concern to women (Barrett 1995, 1997; Carey, Niemi, and Powell 1998; Diamond 1977; Dodson and Carroll 1991; Poggione 2004; Thomas 1991). However, it would be a mistake to "infer an impact on policy merely by adding up the preferences of individual legislators" (Weldon 2002, 88).

Although individual women representatives *behave* differently than men, the causal connection between having more women in political institutions and the production of policies that are often associated with women's interests is tenuous at best. This is the case whether one compares across municipalities (Bratton and Ray 2002; Kerr et al. 1998; Saltzstein 1986), states (Berkman and O'Connor 1993; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Keiser 1996; Saint-Germain 1989; Thomas 1991; Weldon 2004), or countries (Kittilson 2008; O'Regan 2000; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Weldon 2002). Consequently, if individual female representatives make a difference for the

representation of women's interests, why are institutions with more women not producing distinctive policy outputs?

I argue that while political scientists have examined the impact of women's presence in political institutions on producing women-friendly policy outputs, we have not considered the relative amount of power they have. Drawing upon Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's (1984) seminal work, I develop the concept of female political incorporation, which is defined as the extent to which women are strategically positioned to exercise power over the municipal policymaking process. I contend that when women obtain leadership positions in city government and when the offices they hold have greater power relative to other municipal positions, cities will be more likely to produce policies that are often associated with women's needs and interests. If women obtain powerful and influential leadership positions, women's interests will be better represented substantively than through their presence in office alone. Specifically, when the structural organization of the city is such that the offices that women hold are equipped with more power relative to other municipal positions, then they are more likely to improve policy responsiveness. In Chapters 4 and 5, I test the implication that the greater the political incorporation of women in municipal government, the more likely cities will be to produce policies thought to benefit women's interests. Connected to this hypothesis, I posit that the effect of female political incorporation on policy outputs will be greater than that of women's numerical presence in municipal government alone.

Conceptualizing the dependent variable, policy outputs that are thought to benefit women's interests, is one of the most challenging aspects of conducting research on women's substantive representation. Following other scholars (Beckwith and Cowell-

Meyers 2007; Bratton 2005; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Reingold 2000; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Swers 2002; Thomas 1991, 1994), I define policies thought to benefit women's interests as those that: (a) improve women's social, political, and economic status in relation to men, (b) address women's unique needs, related to their bodies and health, and (c) concern women's traditional role as caregivers. I define women friendly policies broadly to encompass the variety of conceptions that have been offered in the existing literature.

As in Part I, I undertake a multi-method approach to investigate women's substantive representation in cities. In Chapters 4 and 5, I employ quantitative analyses to examine whether women's increased presence and power in municipal offices produces policies thought to benefit women's interests. Since there is no centralized repository on the gender and race/ethnicity of municipal officials across cities and time, I conducted an original survey of city clerks to gather this information. Additionally, in the absence of a valid quantitative measure of the female political incorporation, I developed and employ an original measure of the formal power of women in municipal governments, based on their presence and leadership positions, weighted by the institutional powers city charters grant to these positions.

Operationalizing and collecting data on the dependent variable, municipal policies thought to benefit women's interests, presents a number of challenges. First, it is difficult to identify policy outputs that are comparable and measurable across cities and time. Second, it is challenging to identify policies that are subject to the discretion of local policymakers and not determined by officials at the state or federal levels. Third, the

policy outputs must be valid operationalizations of the concept, policies that are thought to benefit women's interests, as I have defined it.

Given these challenges, in Chapter 4, I examine city-level allocation decisions made as part of the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Importantly, all large cities receive funding via the CDBG program. As long as CDBG funding is used primarily to benefit low- and moderate-income people, city officials may fund a variety of activities and programs (Rich 1993). In the chapter, I investigate whether cities with higher levels of female political incorporation are more likely to allocate CDBG funding to services for battered and abused spouses, healthcare, childcare, and programs and services for the disabled and seniors. The quantitative analysis reveals a significant and largely positive relationship between female political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women in the areas of healthcare and childcare. However, the effect of female political incorporation on other policy areas covered by the CDBG program (e.g., services for victims of domestic violence) remains questionable. Furthermore, the impact of female political incorporation on policy outputs may not always or necessarily extend beyond the effect of women's descriptive representation by itself.

In light of the findings in Chapter 4, I investigate a different element of policymaking in Chapter 5, namely symbolic policy outputs. Unlike policies that are material, such as CDBG funding allocations, symbolic policies do not distribute tangible advantages or disadvantages to target populations. Instead, symbolic policies consist of public statements to various constituency groups that policymakers are addressing their values (Anton 1989; Birkland 2001; Elder and Cobb 1983). Given the economic and

structural constraints operating upon municipal governments (Elazar 1966; Peterson 1981), female city officials, even those with a certain modicum of power, may not be able to devote material resources to women's issues. In Chapter 5, I conduct a series of quantitative tests to assess whether cities with higher degrees of female political incorporation have signed on to a national platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children, begun by the National League of Cities (NLC) in 2005. According to the NLC, the campaign provides a framework for guiding and assessing local actions and progress related to children and their families. The findings indicate that women's formal power in city government is not connected to cities' adoption of the NLC's platform. Again, the effect of the political incorporation of women on policymaking is not necessarily greater than the effect of women's descriptive representation.

Throughout Part II, I draw on my fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta, including approximately 50 semi-structured interviews with municipal officials and non-governmental leaders, to probe the findings from the quantitative analyses and to explore outstanding puzzles. For instance, in Chapters 4 and 5, I find that the effect of female political incorporation on women-friendly policy outputs, operationalized as CDBG funding allocations and the adoption of the NLC's platform, is no different from that of women's presence on the council alone. This may be because, in the quantitative analyses, I employ a measure of female political incorporation that captures only formal power. My case studies reveal that informal power—power as perceived by city officeholders (Battista 2011; Hunter 1969; Stone 1989)—may trump formal power. For instance, as a former high-level official in Atlanta told me,

Some people have power by virtue of their position—their elected position—and some have power by virtue of their position and their ideas—their ability to convene people or articulate a point of view. The people who have power in local government are the people who take it (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Accordingly, in Chapter 6, I explore the mechanisms of informal power in cities, including persuasiveness, subject matter expertise, relationships and interpersonal skills, the ability to mobilize constituents quickly and effectively, among others. I investigate how officeholders gather and utilize their informal power in city policymaking, with the goal of generating a more accurate and fuller understanding of the female political incorporation concept.

Atlanta and Houston illustrate how a “lack of contextual opportunities” (Interview 922, 20 July 2011) makes the local level a hard case for finding support for the female political incorporation theory. City governments are responsible for providing core municipal services and those services do not tend to have an obvious gender component. The collection of garbage, maintaining sewer systems, and airport operations do not have any clear or direct connection to women in particular. At the same time, one would be mistaken to think of urban policymaking and governance as gender neutral. As a number of contemporary and former city officials, especially women, in Houston and Atlanta explained to me, certain municipal services and programs that, on their face, may seem gender neutral have different meanings, implications, and consequences for men than they do for women.

In Atlanta and Houston, women's issues have arisen on municipal policymaking agendas. When they did, they tended to be in idiosyncratic, entrepreneurial, and/or highly contextualized ways. My case studies demonstrated that there are three ways that women's issues arise in city policymaking. First, policymakers attend to women's issues when problems happen, especially ones that are difficult for them to ignore regardless of whether they are considered to be part of the city's jurisdiction. Second, women's issues may arise when they are related to the nature and delivery of core municipal programs and services. Third, some women's issues may be connected to political leaders' overall goals for the city. Given the three possible pathways, I begin to develop an entrepreneurial framework of women's substantive representation at the local level in Chapter 7. I argue that rather than devoting attention to the aggregate presence and power of women in city government, perhaps political scientists ought to focus on individual entrepreneurs, both inside and outside of government, who push women's issues onto the policymaking agenda and work for women-friendly changes in urban governance.

Contributions

This dissertation attends to the politics of women's representation in American cities. In Part I, I uncover a variety of contextual factors, including citizen ideology, the openness of urban political systems, and the nature of women's socioeconomic and organizational resources, that facilitate women's increasing presence and power in city governments. Contextual factors may interact with or even overwhelm institutional features to produce an increased number of powerful female officials in municipal government. In some cities, coalition building between and among women and other disadvantaged groups is critical to women's political ascendance. Such coalitions

underscore the need for political scientists to move beyond strictly single-axis frameworks (Crenshaw 1989) that treat race/ethnicity and gender as separate categories of analysis and experience when studying political representation.

Part II makes several theoretical and empirical contributions. Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's (1984) concept of political incorporation has spawned generations of scholarship on minority representation in cities. Before now, the concept has rarely been applied as a lens for understanding women's political representation. I too draw on their seminal work and, in doing so, refine and enhance the political incorporation concept. Disaggregating the formal and informal aspects of a disadvantaged group's political power yields a fuller understanding of representation and the dynamics of urban policymaking.

Much of the research on power in urban politics centers on the influential roles played by non-governmental actors, particularly business elites (Feagin 1988; Hunter 1969; Stone 1989), and mayors in urban governance. While continuing to devote attention to mayors and business elites, I also focus more broadly on women's placement in other policymaking positions, particularly female council members, high-level bureaucrats, and political appointees. The case studies illustrate how women have used these positions as a pathway to their increased standing in city governments. Additionally, even in cities where a large portion of policymaking power rests with the mayor, other female officeholders can and do influence the decision-making process and policy outcomes.

Throughout the dissertation, I rely on and analyze an array of original data, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. A continuing challenge for urban politics scholars

is collecting data on political phenomena across cities and time. As a result, there is a need for more scholarship that considers American cities comparatively. My study is one effort towards filling the hole. Finally, throughout the dissertation, I draw insights from several subfields of political science. In particular, I highlight linkages between the research on women and politics and urban politics. Scholars in these subfields often address similar questions about political representation without considering how their research and findings cohere.

Part I

The Determinants of Women's Presence and Power in City Government

Chapter 2.

The Political Determinants of Women's Descriptive Representation in Cities¹

When and where are women present in political offices? This is a long-standing question posed by political scientists, and for good reason. Women still hold far fewer elected and appointed positions than men. The disparity calls into question the openness of American politics and political institutions to women and may have significant and widespread repercussions for policymaking and responsiveness (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995). In this study, we seek to understand the geography of women's political fortunes, focusing on the presence of women as mayors and council members in medium and large American cities.

We argue for a more in-depth, theoretically informed analysis of the determinants of women's descriptive (or numerical) representation (Pitkin 1967) at the municipal level. To solve the puzzle of why women hold more policymaking positions in some cities than in others requires fuller consideration of the *political context* of cities. As the broader research on women and politics and the particular research focused on cities suggest, a mix of electoral, institutional, socioeconomic, and political factors may explain the presence (or absence) of women in local office. This mix of explanatory factors rightly involves a variety of actors throughout the electoral process—women contemplating a political career or running for a particular office, party leaders and other political activists and organizations responsible for recruiting candidates, campaign professionals and

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financiers, voters, or all of the above. Cities and their governments differ along all these lines. Yet it is unclear whether or how such differences help explain the variation in women holding office at the local level.²

Cities are a useful venue for examining women's descriptive representation in political offices, or the lack thereof. First, there is a large number of local offices, and "most women who hold public office in the United States do so at the local level" (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994, 30). Moreover, many women who hold national or state office began their careers in municipal politics (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009). In terms of proportions, however, women remain just as under-represented in the councils and mayoralties of cities (population 30,000 or more) as they are at higher levels of legislative and executive office (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010; Center for American Women and Politics 2010). Second, the presence of women in policymaking positions varies greatly from one city to the next. Third, variation in local political institutions extends beyond what is found at the state and national levels, and can therefore teach us more about how institutional design affects elections and descriptive representation.

Nonetheless, there is a paucity of research on women in municipal policymaking positions (MacManus and Bullock 1995; Wolbrecht, Beckwith, and Baldez 2008), partly due to the challenges associated with collecting comparable city-level data and the lack of existing datasets. We employ an original dataset of the 239 cities with at least 100,000 residents that allows us to gain analytical leverage and extend the empirical reach of our knowledge about women's descriptive representation. We develop and test hypotheses to

² As is the case at the state and national levels (Carroll and Fox 2010), female candidates for local office are as successful as their male counterparts in getting elected (Karnig and Walter 1976; MacManus and Bullock 1995). Much of the explanation for the geographic variation in the women's descriptive representation, therefore, may lie in the candidate identification and recruitment stages (Adams and Schreiber 2010).

explain how various aspects of the political context, particularly a city's ideological disposition and the group resources women possess, affect women's descriptive representation. We model the presence of women in both executive and legislative offices as interdependent outcomes, not simply as similar but independent processes. Drawing insight from research on the descriptive representation of women at the state level and racial and ethnic minorities at the local and state levels, we intend for our study to bring at least three fields of inquiry—urban politics, women and politics, and state politics—into conversation with each other. Too often scholars in these subfields address similar questions about descriptive representation without considering how their theories and findings cohere.³

Women's Descriptive Representation as Mayors and Council Members⁴

Extant research focuses primarily on how electoral institutions and the desirability of public office influence women's descriptive representation in municipal government. In spite of this theoretical focus on institutions, the strongest and most consistent predictors of women's presence as mayors and councilors are demographics and geographic region. We argue that demographic and regional variables serve as imperfect proxies for variation in urban *political contexts*. Moreover, a city's political context is at least as important as its electoral arrangements and the desirability of its offices in predicting women's presence as councilors and mayors.

³ Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2010) provide a notable exception.

⁴ The scope of research on women in city councils is small. Even smaller is the set of studies examining the correlates of women holding mayoralities. Studies that examine women mayors rely heavily on hypotheses developed and tested in the research on the representation of women in city councils (MacManus and Bullock 1995; Welch and Karnig 1979). We therefore simultaneously review the literatures on women's presence as council members and mayors, making note of any significant discrepancies between the two.

Electoral Institutions and the Desirability of Office. The potential effect of at-large versus district-based electoral institutions on the gender composition of city councils is a hallmark of extant research (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979). Many scholars researching women's descriptive representation share an interest in minority representation and may be influenced by findings that at-large elections dilute the electoral power and diminish the descriptive representation of minorities (e.g., Bullock and MacManus 1990; Davidson and Grofman 1994; Engstrom and McDonald 1981; Karnig and Welch 1980). However, since women are neither geographically concentrated nor a unified voting bloc, district-based elections should not have similar effects on women's descriptive representation. Rather, as Karnig and Walter (1976) first posited, the multimember nature of at-large council elections makes them *more* likely than district-based systems to attract and support female candidates. They and others (Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994) reason that women may feel more comfortable running, and parties and voters may feel more comfortable supporting women, when they are not the only possible winners, or when their victories do not necessarily hinder the election of men. Yet, the empirical evidence in support of this argument is mixed at best (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979).

Another electoral arrangement the literature considers is the degree to which local elections are expressly partisan. Theoretically, researchers are unsure what to expect regarding the effect of partisan elections. Some, citing evidence that “the political parties fail to encourage and promote the candidacy of women” at the local and state levels (Welch and Karnig 1979, 481; Karnig and Walter 1976; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Sanbonmatsu 2006), hypothesize that nonpartisan elected offices are more open to women, as well as other, less connected political aspirants. Others, referencing studies that show parties are supportive of women candidates (Darcy et al. 1994, 48; MacManus and Bullock 1995, 163-64; also Burrell 1994) and that women are as likely as, if not more likely than men to be recruited for local office by parties (Merritt 1977; Miller 1986), are skeptical that nonpartisan contexts are any better. The empirical evidence from cities, however, is clear: nonpartisanship has no significant effect on women’s representation on councils or as mayors (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010; Darcy et al. 1994; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstein and Valdinì 2008; Welch and Karnig 1979).

Informed by state legislative research (Diamond 1977), most studies of women’s representation in municipal government hypothesize that “the less desirable and the less important the office, the more likely that women will hold it” (Welch and Karnig 1979, 479). Scholars posit that legislative and executive positions with higher salaries, fewer seats, greater responsibilities, longer terms, and more policymaking resources are more powerful, prestigious, and rewarding, and thus more attractive to men looking to make their mark or begin their electoral careers. As a result, the “desirability hypothesis” reasons, “female office seekers may encounter stiffer male opposition in states and communities where legislative compensation is greater, tenure longer, and the prestige of

office-holding higher” (Hill 1981, 159). Faced with the likelihood of more competition from men, women eyeing more desirable council seats and mayoralties may find (or anticipate) that local political leaders, activists, and voters are more reluctant than usual to support their candidacies. Similarly, women may be more likely to serve as council-selected mayors since these positions have more “limited legal authority” than do popularly-elected mayors (MacManus and Bullock 1995, 158-59; Welch and Karnig 1979).

The reasoning behind the desirability hypothesis is plausible. However, empirical support for it at the local level is limited. Proportions of female council members tend to be larger in cities with more seats on their councils (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstone and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; but see Bullock and MacManus 1991; Karnig and Welch 1979). Yet higher salaries, longer terms, and other measures of institutional power have little or no effect on the gender composition of city councils (Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Welch 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstone and Valdini 2008; Welch and Karnig 1979). Likewise, studies of women’s representation in mayoral office provide only weak and inconsistent empirical support for the desirability hypothesis (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Welch and Karnig 1979).

The Urban Political Context. Demographics provide some of the most significant relationships and robust findings in the literature on women’s descriptive representation in cities. Population size, for instance, is consistently important in explaining variation in the presence of women as mayors and city councilors. Initially, borrowing from the

“desirability” logic, scholars speculated that women would be more likely to gain public office in smaller municipalities where the positions carry less prestige and invite less competition from men (Karnig and Walter 1976, 609). Yet most studies have found that *larger* municipalities are more conducive to women’s representation (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy et al. 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Karnig 1979; see Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010 for contrary results). Furthermore, women, especially white women, occupy more council seats in cities with more affluent and highly educated residents (Darcy et al. 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979). Several studies also report significant regional variation. The South and Northeast usually appear less hospitable to women seeking local office than the Midwest and West (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Trounstine and Valdini 2008).⁵

Despite the empirical clarity of these relationships, the literature provides little theoretical insight into why or how demographic and regional characteristics affect women’s descriptive representation in municipal government. Occasionally, demographics are included as control variables with little or no rationale (see, e.g., Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979). More often, multiple explanations for demographic effects are offered with limited guidance for weighing their relative validity.

⁵ Palmer and Simon (2008) demonstrate that similar demographic factors (e.g., income, education, and population density) consistently make some Congressional districts more “women-friendly,” or more likely to elect women, than others.

These somewhat ad hoc explanations point to more precise, theoretically informed concepts and hypotheses about the impact of the urban political context on women's representation at the local level. One such contextual factor is a community's political ideology. Given that states with more liberal electorates, for instance, have more gender diverse legislatures than those with more conservative electorates (Arceneaux 2001; Hogan 2001; Norrander and Wilcox 2005; Sanbonmatsu 2002; Palmer and Simon 2008), we propose that political ideology can propel or stall women's descriptive representation in city governments.

H1. Women's descriptive representation as mayors and council members is more likely in cities that have more liberal electorates.

Women's group resources are also likely to impact female descriptive representation. Welch and Karnig (1979, 481-82; see also, Alozie and Manganaro 1993, 388; Darcy et al. 1994, 45; Karnig and Walter 1976, 609-10) argue that "women will do better where the community is comprised of better educated, more middle class people" not only because such people are more "more sympathetic to women's rights than are others" (i.e., more liberal), but also because such communities "are likely to have proportionately more women available for office holding, given that candidates are recruited from those classes." Like the middle class in Black communities (Karnig 1979, 137), well educated, professional women should be most likely to have "the talents, the time, and the resources for electoral activity." States with more women in the labor force and in the professions, for instance, tend to have more female legislators (Arceneaux 2001; Hill 1981; Norrander and Wilcox 2005; Rule 1990; Sanbonmatsu 2002).⁶ Most

⁶ Similarly, studies of Black representation in cities reveal strong, positive relationships between the socioeconomic status of Blacks and the presence of Black council members and/or mayors (Engstrom

scholars see women's employment status as a measure of the size of the "eligibility pool" from which qualified female candidates emerge (Sanbonmatsu 2002). Professional women also may be the ones most willing and able to support women's campaigns by donating their money, time, and/or skills. For these reasons, we expect:

H2. Women's descriptive representation as mayors and council members is more likely in cities where women have significantly more personal and professional resources—that is, where more women are college-educated, own businesses, and have higher median incomes.

Municipal demographics may capture other features of a city's political context, such as the scope and scale of women's organizational resources. Larger, more populous cities may promote women's representation because they are more likely to have groups "such as the League of Women Voters, the National Women's Political Caucus, Business and Professional Women, and the American Association of University Women, which would give support to women candidates" (Darcy et al. 1994, 47; see also Alozie and Manganaro 1993, 388-89; Bullock and MacManus 1991, 80-81; MacManus and Bullock 1995, 161-62). Surveys of women in state and local elected offices suggest that organizations commonly associated with women—political interest groups like NOW, civic associations like the League of Women Voters, social and charitable organizations like the United Way, and business and professional organizations—mobilized them to run for office (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010, 8-9; Carroll and Strimling 1983, 85; Miller 1986, 88; Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009, 15). Given the historic roles women have played in building and sustaining civil society, and the gendered division of labor within the public realm, it is plausible that political women ultimately emerge in cities

and McDonald 1981; Karnig 1979; Karnig and Welch 1980; Marschall and Ruhil 2006; Robinson and Dye 1978).

where civil society is stronger and the number and/or density of women's social, charitable, and advocacy organizations is higher (Clarke, Staeheli, and Brunell 1995).

Reckhow's (2009) study of the "organized and elected representation" of racial and ethnic groups in midsized cities suggests caution, however. Contrary to expectations, she finds that the density of local organizations claiming to represent group members and descriptive representation in local government are either *unrelated*, as is the case for Latinos, or *inversely* related, as is the case for Blacks. Reckhow suggests that Latino organizations may lack electoral efficacy not only because Latinos have lower rates of citizenship, but also because Latino organizations do not operate "systematic candidate endorsement and election mobilization efforts similar to some of the African-American organizations in the South" (Reckhow 2009, 23-24). They have other strategies and objectives.

Reckhow's conclusions regarding Blacks suggest an entirely different relationship between group organizational resources and descriptive representation. In this case, electoral success may depend more on the unity or "consolidation of political capital within the minority electorate and the organizational community" than on sheer numbers—and achieving solidarity "could be trickier with a crowded field of organizations" (Reckhow 2009, 8). A large number of competing and fragmented organizations may harm more than help, while a small number of well-coordinated organizations may be quite effective. Given the likelihood that women's local organizations are numerous and diverse, this too is a lesson well taken by scholars.

At the same time, Marshall's (2002) study of a local chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) suggests that expressly *political* organizations may

be the catalyst for “growing” and supporting strong female candidates from amidst existing networks of community activists. Because organizations like NWPC “both understand the electoral system and are a part of the women’s community they seek to mobilize, they can serve as intermediaries between the candidate and this constituency... [and enable] candidates to reach voters who might otherwise remain inaccessible” (Marshall 2002, 720-21). Accordingly, we distinguish women’s organizations that are more politically oriented from those that are more concerned with general social or welfare issues. While both may enhance women’s descriptive representation, we leave open the possibility that the former may have a stronger impact than the latter.

H3A. Women’s descriptive representation as mayors and council members is more likely in cities that have more women’s political advocacy organizations.

H3B. Women’s descriptive representation as mayors and council members is somewhat more likely in cities that have more social, health, and grant-making organizations related to women.

Finally, the election of women as mayors and council members may very well be interdependent phenomena. MacManus and Bullock (1995), for instance, find a strong association between women in the mayor’s office and women on the council. This suggests either “a successful ‘first’ woman mayor... [smoothes] the path for women city council candidates (MacManus 1981)... [or] women mayoral candidates... emerge from the ranks of council members” (MacManus and Bullock 1995, 159). As the 2008 Mayoral Recruitment Study shows, among the vast majority of female mayors with previous office holding experience, 41 percent had served on a municipal council (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010, 10). Research from the race and descriptive representation literature supports the broader proposition that group experience on the city council fosters group representation in the mayor’s office. Marschall and Ruhil (2006, 842) report

that the number of Blacks on the city council (lagged) “plays a key role in increasing the likelihood of black mayors.” Hence, representation on the council provides an important group resource; not only are mayoral candidates likely to emerge from the ranks of the council, but those who do “are likely to have more experience, name recognition, political networks, and financial backing to launch more visible and successful campaigns” (832).

Findings from state and congressional politics research are also instructive. While women running for state legislative seats are likely to be first time candidates (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, and Walsh 2009, 18), those running for governor are most likely emerging from lower level offices (Windett 2009). When contemplating higher office, these veteran candidates “will not be driven primarily by their self evaluation, but rather on the political climate and environment” of the larger jurisdiction they aim to represent (Windett 2009, 4). The gender composition of the state legislature provides one of the most useful “low cost” indicators of a favorable climate. According to Windett, it is the most empirically powerful predictor of female candidate emergence in gubernatorial primaries (but see Oxley and Fox 2004). Similarly, Ondercin and Welch (2009, 609) find that “the history of women in elected office in the state [legislature] and in the district shapes the opportunities of women [congressional] candidates currently.” Previous officeholders have a positive impact on the number and success of women running for Congress, according to the authors, by expanding the eligibility pool and/or providing “an encouraging context for women thinking about running” (599). Comparing the election of women to state legislatures and congressional districts to policy innovation and diffusion,

Ondercin and Welch suggest that women's electoral success can "become routinized and diffused" (2009, 599).

We hypothesize that women contemplating a run for the mayor's office will likely emerge from city councils and/or consider the gender composition of their councils to see how women-friendly their city electorates might be. Also, women considering a run for city council might take into account the presence and/or history of women in the mayor's office (MacManus and Bullock 1995) or they may have been groomed by female mayors. The presence of women in other local offices may also increase the likelihood of women winning when they do decide to run for local office (Merritt 1977, 739). Thus, we expect the election of female mayors and city council members to be interdependent phenomena.

H4A. Cities are more likely to elect a woman as mayor when they have had, in recent years, larger proportions of women on the city council.

H4B. Women's descriptive representation on city councils will be higher in cities that have experienced a woman in the mayor's office in recent years.

Models, Data, and Measurement

We model the election of female mayors and council members to explain why women achieve varying levels of descriptive representation in city government. We identify a range of factors that theoretically influence women's representation in local office, including electoral institutions, the desirability of office, and the political contexts of cities. Furthermore, we propose that the presence of women in one local office is partially dependent on the presence of women in other local offices, either because one serves as a pipeline of viable candidates for the other or because one serves as a barometer against which potential candidates for the other office gauge the city's willingness to support women's descriptive representation. We do not deny that women's

descriptive representation in city governments may be associated with demographics such as population size, region, and the socioeconomic status of residents. Rather, we reason that our models provide a more precise view of the underlying causal mechanisms, which help explain why or how a particular demographic characteristic influences women's representation.

We investigate our claims with a cross-sectional dataset that includes measures for all 239 cities with greater than 100,000 residents as of 2000. We limit our analysis to mid- and large-sized cities for several reasons. First, limiting the sampling frame to larger cities with a more accessible and accurate presence on the web enables us to augment existing datasets and include a more complete sample of municipalities than those analyzed in previous studies. Second, with additional information obtained from web searches, we are able to incorporate variables that have never before been included in models of the gender composition of city offices. Third, our focus on medium and large cities coheres with the tendency in the urban politics literature to examine cities with greater degrees of political competition, more socioeconomic heterogeneity, and more varied pathways to electoral office (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 2003).

We collected our data from a variety of sources, including the 2001 and 2006 Form of Government (FOG) surveys of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the 2002 Survey of Business Owners and 2000 decennial Census by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Mayoral Election Center of the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), the *Municipal Yellow Book* from 1999 to 2007, and municipal websites, among several other sources. A full description of our sources and measures is found in the online Appendix.

Our dependent variables measure the proportion of women on the city council and the presence of a female mayor. The first is the *average percentage of council seats held by women in 2001 and 2006*. We average council representation across two years to correct any short-term fluctuations in the cross-sectional data. Averaging also makes the council variable more comparable to our two measures of women's descriptive representation in the mayor's office: a dichotomous indicator of whether each *city had a female mayor anytime between 2002 and 2007*, and the *percentage of electoral terms held by female mayors between 2002 and 2007*.⁷

The first set of independent variables is used to investigate our hypotheses regarding the urban political context. We test Hypothesis 1 using presidential vote returns at the city level for the 2004 election. The variable *ideology* measures the percentage of the city-level vote that went to the Democratic candidate and any liberal third-party candidates who received more than 0.1 percent of the votes cast in a city. A higher score indicates that the electorate is more liberal.⁸

To test Hypothesis 2, we generated a factor score of *women's socioeconomic resources* using the percentage of college-educated women, female median income, and

⁷ The dependent variables do not distinguish female mayors or council members by race or ethnicity. Reliable data on the race/ethnicity of individual mayors and council members, especially those who are neither white/Anglo nor African American, serving between 1999 and 2007 are unavailable.

⁸ Measuring ideology and partisanship on the city level is a notoriously difficult, but not insurmountable task. We use secondary, time invariant data rather than matching county level presidential vote returns to city boundaries ourselves. The problem with the latter approach is that counties and cities are not coterminous. Using county-level data would yield considerable measurement error—some predictable (e.g., cities likely are more racially/ethnically diverse than counties, and thus may be more likely to vote for the liberal candidate) and some unforeseen. The ideology variable that we employ is imperfect, especially since it covers only one point in time. We use it cautiously, assuming that (a) ideology is a relatively stable predisposition and (b) cities' collective ideologies did not shift much from 1999 to 2007. We recognize, too, that presidential vote returns are not ideal proxies for ideology. However, evidence from the state level suggests that the positive relationship between partisanship and ideology has strengthened and stabilized since 1988 (Erickson, Wright, and McIver 2006). Erickson et al. (2006, 250) report that although “[p]artisan cleavages provide a bit of electoral stickiness... they appear to follow the fundamental differences between contemporary liberals and conservatives.”

the number of women-owned businesses.⁹ To explore Hypotheses 3A and 3B, we include the *density of women's political and advocacy organizations* (logged) in each city as well as *the density of women's general organizations*, the latter of which include all social, health, and grant-making organizations that work on behalf of women, girls, and/or women's issues.¹⁰ We also include a measure of the *percentage of the population that is minority and female* as another indicator of group resources available to women in the cities. Scholars have observed in recent years that women of color have been elected to public office at significant rates—rates higher, in fact, than for white women when compared to white men (Bositis 2001; Darcy and Hadley 1988; Montoya, Hardy-Fanta, and Garcia 2000). Furthermore, Black and Latina women have been elected and appointed to top municipal positions in many cities like Baltimore, Atlanta, and Sacramento. Accordingly, all women may stand to benefit politically when more minority women are present in the population (Trounstine and Valdini 2008; see also Palmer and Simon 2008).

By design, some of our independent variables vary across models. In the model where the average percentage of council seats held by women in 2001 and 2006 is the dependent variable, we include a dichotomous indicator for the *presence of a female mayor in 1999 and/or 2000*. Similarly, in the models where the presence of women in the

⁹ We ran a principal-components factor analysis to generate the factor score. All three components loaded onto a single factor. The loadings were 0.89 for the percentage of college-educated women, 0.86 for female median income, and 0.79 for the number of women-owned businesses. We use the factor score rather than its individual components because from a practical standpoint, the individual measures are strongly correlated with one another. Including them individually in the same model would yield multicollinearity. Also, the factor score captures the broader underlying concept of women's socioeconomic resources. Finally, we lack a theoretical reason to expect the three measures have different effects on our dependent variables.

¹⁰ For both measures, we divide the number of organizations by population size (100,000s). The density of women's political and advocacy organizations is logged to minimize distortions from cities with an unusually high number of such organizations such as Berkeley, CA and Washington, DC.

mayor's office from 2002 to 2007 is the dependent variable, we include the *percentage of council seats held by women in 2001* as an independent variable. Including lagged versions of these variables accounts for the hypothesized interdependence of women as mayors and councilors (i.e., Hypotheses 4A and 4B).

The next set of independent variables measure the electoral institutions in effect across our sample cities.¹¹ *At-large elections* is a dichotomous indicator of whether the council is elected through either a completely at-large or a mixed system of elections, rather than exclusively through ward-based elections.¹² Term limits and their potential for ousting entrenched white male incumbents once held much promise for women and minorities. Although the research on state legislative elections suggests term limits have failed in this respect (Carey et al. 2006; Carroll and Jenkins 2001a and 2001b; Moncrief, Powell, and Storey 2007), one study suggests that term limits have a significant, positive effect on the numbers of white and Black women serving on city councils (Trounstine and Valdini 2008). Thus whether term limits influence the election of female mayors and council members remains debatable. In our models, we include *mayoral term limits* and *council term limits*. Both are dichotomous measures of whether there are limits on the number of terms these officials may serve. *Partisan elections* is a dummy variable indicating whether party affiliations appear on ballots in city elections. In the models

¹¹ Institutional variables change very little, if at all, over time. Therefore, we expect very little measurement error to be introduced by using a single point-in-time (or two time points, at most) to measure electoral structures for 1999 to 2007.

¹² As robustness checks, we specified two alternative models where (a) the percentage of council members elected by district or (b) two dummy variables, one for at-large and the other for mixed systems, were substituted for the at-large dummy variable. All three models yielded very similar results.

where having a female mayor is our dependent variable, we also include a dichotomous indicator of whether the *mayor is elected directly by voters*.¹³

Next, we include measures of the power and prestige (or desirability) of council seats and the mayor's office. *Strong mayor* is a scale of whether the mayor has the power to (1) develop the annual budget, (2) veto council passed ordinances, and (3) appoint department heads. The scale ranges from 0, indicating that the city has a council-manager form of government and the mayor does not have power to develop the budget, appoint department heads, or veto the council, to 3, indicating a mayor-council form of government, wherein the mayor possesses all of the aforementioned powers.¹⁴ Additionally, we include the *length of council terms*, the *length of mayoral terms* (both measured in years), the *number of council seats*, and *population* (logged).¹⁵

Descriptive statistics for our variables are available from the online appendix.

Results

Table 1 shows the results of our models of women's presence as councilors and mayors. Overall, our analysis demonstrates that the urban political context is at least as important as institutions in influencing the presence of female mayors and council

¹³ The variable is coded 1 if voters elect the mayor directly or the council member receiving the most votes in the general election becomes mayor and 0 if the council selects the mayor from among its members or council members rotate into the position. We include for theoretical reasons three cities in our sample that rotate the position of mayor. The likelihood of women being mayors should be greater in cities where mayoralties rotate among council members, as well as in cities where council members select the mayor. Per the desirability hypothesis, this is because mayors appointed by rotation or council selection typically have less authority than elected mayors. Moreover, as elites, council members may be more responsive than the general public to the issue of gender equality in city hall (Welch and Karnig 1979, 485).

¹⁴ Because there is only one city in our sample with a commission form of government, we are able to distinguish only mayor-council and council-manager forms of government.

¹⁵ We considered but decided against including Elazar's (1984) political culture measures in the models. Previous studies on this topic have included dichotomous regional controls. We replicated the traditional models employed in earlier studies and found that the regional variables were consistently insignificant. The political culture variables, when included in our models, were also insignificant. Furthermore, Elazar's political culture indicators are measured at the state rather than city level.

members. Model 1 regresses our set of independent variables on the average percentage of council seats held by women in 2001 and 2006.¹⁶ Two aspects of the urban political context are particularly important for electing female council members. First, congruent with Hypothesis 1, cities that are more liberal elect a larger percentage of women to their city councils. Figure 1a illustrates the influence of city ideology on women's descriptive representation, holding all other continuous independent variables at their means and categorical and dichotomous variables at their modes.¹⁷ When the percentage of the electorate that voted for liberal presidential candidates is one standard deviation below its mean (i.e., at 42 percent), the predicted percentage of female council members is 26. In contrast, when the ideology score is one standard deviation above its mean (i.e., at 72 percent), the predicted percentage of female council members is 32. Although it is perhaps unsurprising that liberal cities elect more female council members, our results are the first to validate this relationship empirically.

Second, women's descriptive representation on councils is higher in cities where women have significantly more personal and professional resources at their disposal. The coefficient estimate on our factor score of women's socioeconomic resources is significant and positive. Figure 1b graphs the predicted percentage of female council members for three standard deviations on either side of the mean of the female socioeconomic resource variable. As the factor score increases from one standard deviation below its mean to one standard deviation above, the predicted percentage of

¹⁶ The 210 cases included in Model 1 is lower than the 239 cities discussed in the previous section due to missing data for three variables: ideology, the presence of female mayors, and the number of women-owned businesses.

¹⁷ All point predictions and graphs in the results section follow this pattern of varying values of a certain independent variable while keeping the other dichotomous and categorical variables at their modes and other continuous variables at their means. These predictions were generated using the Clarify software in Stata (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000).

female council members increases from 27 to 31. The socioeconomic resources generated by and supportive of women increase female descriptive representation on councils. This provides support for Hypothesis 2. None of the other political context variables, including the measures of women's organizational resources, appear to influence women's descriptive representation on city councils. Also, the presence of a female mayor is unrelated to having a larger percentage of women on the council.

The only other significant independent variable in Model 1 is population size. *Ceteris paribus*, the descriptive representation of women on councils is higher in cities with larger populations. This finding contradicts the expectations of the desirability of office argument. Moreover, we expected that once city ideology was accounted for, the effect of population size would be attenuated or absent. Curiously, this expectation was not borne out. According to the results of the model, neither electoral institutions (at-large elections, council term limits, and partisan ballots) nor indicators of the desirability of office (the length of council terms, number of council seats, and strength of mayor) appear to influence women's descriptive representation as council members. Perhaps in the early 21st century, would-be female candidates (and their potential supporters) are no more wary of single-member districts or "desirable" municipal positions than are their male counterparts.¹⁸

¹⁸ Although just three independent variables are significant in Model 1, the results are instructive. The urban political context does, indeed, influence the election of women as council members. Moreover, the traditional models employed in earlier studies of women's descriptive representation on city councils (e.g., Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Welch and Karnig 1979) perform no better than our own. Replicating the more traditional model, we used the same dependent variable and the same independent variables measuring electoral institutions and the desirability of office. We also substituted regional dummy variables and general measures of the cities' socioeconomic characteristics for our own measures of political context. The traditional model yielded a lower R-squared (0.07) than our model (0.14). Furthermore, only three independent variables were significant in the traditional model, namely whether the council had term limits, whether the city held partisan elections, and population size.

Models 2 and 3 assess the effects of our independent variables on the presence of female mayors. The dependent variable in Model 2 is a dichotomous indicator of whether a city had a female mayor sometime between 2002 and 2007 and so we employ logistic regression analysis.¹⁹ As in Model 1, the presence of women in municipal office depends in part on the extent and nature of women's group resources. In Model 2, however, the density of women's political and advocacy organizations is negatively associated with the descriptive representation of women as mayors.²⁰ Figure 1c graphs the predicted likelihood of having a female mayor for several standard deviations around the mean of the women's political and advocacy organizations variable. As the density of women's political and advocacy organizations (logged) increases from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above, the predicted likelihood of having a female mayor decreases from 0.37 to 0.16. Although the negative association between women's political groups and the presence of female mayors counters our expectation (Hypothesis 3A), it is not without precedent in the urban politics literature. Similar to Reckhow's (2009) argument regarding the descriptive representation of Blacks in cities, we suspect that the prevalence of women running for and winning municipal offices—especially the city-wide mayor's office—may depend more on the cohesion among women's political organizations than on the absolute number or density of such organizations. Women are a large and diverse group, and the political and advocacy organizations to which they belong may not have a unified or consistent electoral

¹⁹ We have 217 cases in Models 2 and 3 instead of 239 cases because of missing data on the lagged percentage of female council members, city ideology, and women-owned businesses.

²⁰ We logged the density of women's political and advocacy organizations because it is extremely skewed. However, even when the measure is not logged, its coefficient estimate is negative and significant in Models 2 and 3. We also experimented with squared terms for the two measures of women's organizational resources. The theoretical rationale was that women's organizations may lead to increased female descriptive representation up to a certain point, whereupon additional organizations would produce the opposite effect. Results were inconsistent and unstable across our models.

strategy. As the field of women's organizations becomes more crowded in a city, the fragmentation among them may harm rather than help women's electoral chances.²¹

The percentage of women on the city council in 2001 is a significant and positive predictor of the descriptive representation of women as mayors in subsequent years. This finding lends support to Hypothesis 4A. Councils may provide pipelines of politically experienced women seeking mayoralties and/or potential female candidates for mayor may gauge their prospects for success by looking at the receptivity of cities to electing women to their councils. Regardless of the precise mechanism, when the percentage of female councilors increases from one standard deviation below its mean to one above (i.e., from 11 to 46 percent), the mean predicted likelihood of having a female mayor increases from 0.17 to 0.35 (see Figure 1d). In conjunction with Model 1, this suggests that while having female executives does not provide a pathway to the electoral success of female legislators, the reverse is more likely. The two processes are interdependent and should therefore be theorized about and modeled in tandem.

Two electoral institutions appear to affect the descriptive representation of women as mayors. First, partisan elections have a negative and significant impact on the presence of a female mayor. When a city holds nonpartisan elections, the predicted likelihood of electing a female mayor is 0.24. However, when a city holds partisan elections, the predicted likelihood of electing a female mayor decreases to 0.08. This finding lends some credence to the argument that nonpartisan elections may be more open to women

²¹ Alternatively, greater densities of women's political and advocacy organizations may reflect greater municipal neglect of, or even opposition to, women's interests. The density of organizations may signal the scale of women's unmet demands in a city and, if that is the case, the negative effect is not surprising. Another possibility, which we are unable to explore within the confines of this study, is that what really matters is not the number of such organizations, but the number of women (or potential candidates) who belong to and are active in them. We thank Sarah Reckhow and an anonymous reviewer for these suggestions.

and other less-connected political hopefuls. It is also congruent with the claim that strong party organizations at the state level do more to restrict than promote the emergence of female candidates (Sanbonmatsu 2006). Though relatively few (45 out of 239) cities use partisan ballots, this is an arena in which party leaders and organizations clearly fall short. Second, the likelihood of having a female mayor increases when the mayor is selected by the council from among its members rather than through direct elections. When a city holds direct elections for mayor, the predicted likelihood of having a female mayor is 0.24. In contrast, when the council selects the mayor, the predicted likelihood of a female mayor increases to 0.61. It is important to note, however, that only 22 cities in our dataset do not have direct elections for mayor and the majority of those (17 cities) are in California. Nonetheless, this finding suggests that political elites may be more sensitive than the general public to the need for gender representation in local offices, especially executive ones (Welch and Karnig 1979). It may also be the case that city council members are more willing to promote women as mayors because such appointed positions are not as “desirable” or powerful as their popularly-elected counterparts (MacManus and Bullock 1995).

None of the other variables measuring the desirability of the mayor’s office are significant in Model 2. As noted above, it may be that today’s would-be female candidates are no more reluctant to seek more desirable mayoralities than their male counterparts. Also, unfortunately, Model 2 does not lend support to our Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3B. It appears that city ideology, the extent of women’s socioeconomic resources,

and the density of women's general organizations do not influence the presence of a female mayor.²²

Model 3 considers the effect of the same set of independent variables on an alternative measure of women's presence as mayors, namely the percentage of electoral terms held by female mayors between 2002 and 2007. We employ ordered logistic regression since there are only seven possible outcome categories. The results of this model are largely consistent with Model 2. First, the percentage of electoral terms held by women is likely to be lower as the density of women's political and advocacy organizations increases, which refutes Hypothesis 3A. Second, the percentage of female councilors (lagged) is positively associated with the percentage of mayoral electoral terms held by women, lending additional support to Hypothesis 4A. Third, like Model 2, partisan elections negatively impact the percentage of electoral terms held by female mayors. The primary difference between Models 2 and 3 is that in the latter, we find no association between the presence of a female mayor and whether the mayor is elected directly by voters or selected by the council.

Conclusion

The descriptive representation of women in municipal government, especially as mayors, is a topic that political scientists generally neglect. In fact, ours is the first

²² We compared Model 2 to a "traditional" model of women's representation as mayors (Welch and Karnig 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995). The traditional model excluded our political context variables but included variables measuring region, electoral institutions, the desirability of local offices, and general socioeconomic characteristics. The method of mayoral selection was the only significant variable in the results of the traditional model. After running both models, we conducted a Cox-Pesaran (maximum likelihood) test of non-nested model specification to adjudicate between the traditional model and our enhanced model. Based on the test, we reject the null hypothesis that the traditional model performs better than our model (χ^2 statistic = -12.42 with a p-value < 0.0001). However, we do not reject the null hypothesis that our model performs better than the traditional model (χ^2 statistic of -0.88 with a p-value < 0.1882). This provides evidence that our enhanced model performs better than the traditional model employed in previous studies.

multivariate analysis of the presence of women as mayors in 30 years (Welch and Karnig 1979). Extending the extant literature, we argue and demonstrate that solving the puzzle of why women hold more policymaking positions in some cities than in others requires a more in-depth and theoretically informed analysis. Our work provides rigorous reasoning about the expected effects of the *urban political context* on women's descriptive representation in municipal office. More generally, our results indicate that it is critical to consider contextual factors, in addition to institutions, when seeking to explain political outcomes (Lax and Phillips 2009a, 2009b; Lupia et al. 2009).

Empirically, our analyses uncovered new dynamics of how women may achieve electoral success in American cities. First, the election of women as council members and mayors are interdependent phenomena. Although the presence of female councilors appears more important to electing a female mayor than vice versa, it is plausible that certain female mayors recruit, train, and support potential female candidates for the council. Future studies should incorporate this inter-branch interdependence when theorizing and analyzing women's descriptive representation at the local, state, and perhaps even national levels.

Second, the urban political context is consequential for the presence of women as mayors and council members. It may be at least as important as electoral arrangements and other institutional features. The ideological climate of a city and the supply of group resources available to women seem particularly important. Yet women's group resources may not always yield straightforward additive effects. More organizations may not necessarily produce more or better descriptive representation (Reckhow 2009). Our findings suggest that it is not simply the presence of women's political organizations, but

the cohesion and unity of purpose among them that influences the ability of women to hold elected office. Thus, scholars should attend to explaining the conditions under which group resources are helpful and when they are hindrances to achieving and expanding descriptive representation.

Similarly, future research should investigate the causal mechanisms or processes that link contextual characteristics to electoral outcomes. Our research is only one step in the right direction. Questions remain. Are group resources important for the recruitment and emergence of women candidates? Or are they more significant in generating campaign support and votes? What is the role of local political parties in recruiting and supporting female candidates? What is the mechanism that links the presence of female council members to the election of a female mayor? Do councils serve as pipelines of eligible candidates for mayor or are potential candidates assessing their chances of success by looking at the gender composition of the council? These questions are important given the continued under-representation of women in local office (and elsewhere) and the paucity of female candidates. Recent research reveals that women, more than men, need encouragement before they will run or contemplate running for public office; but they are less likely than men to receive it (Lawless and Fox 2005; Sanbonmatsu 2006; Sanbonmatsu et al. 2009). Despite earlier findings (Merritt 1977; Miller 1986), political parties, elected officials, and organizations have more work to do on this front.

Our research also has implications for the empirical study of the substantive policy effects of electing female mayors and council members (Beck 2001; Boles 2001; Saltzstein 1986; Tolleson-Rinehart 2001). Many of the variables we explore may explain

both women's descriptive and substantive representation. Cities with strong records of contracting with women-owned businesses, for example, could also be the cities that tend to elect more women to public office, for many of the same reasons. Isolating the independent effect of female officials on policies is perhaps impossible without simultaneously modeling descriptive and substantive representation, or at least controlling for contextual and structural factors that affect both (Marschall and Ruhil 2006, 847).

Future research also needs to explore the intersections of gender, race, and ethnicity at the municipal and other levels of government. If the female council members and mayors in our sample are predominantly white, as they most likely are, then our conclusions may not apply to women of color. The institutions and communities that foster the election of white women may not affect the election of Black, Latina, and other minority women in the same ways (Trounstine and Valdini 2009). Given the continuing force of racial politics, the electoral fortunes of women of color may be more closely tied to their male counterparts than to those of white women.

A continuing challenge for urban politics scholars, in particular, is collecting data that covers multiple cities over an extended time period. We call for more concerted—and, perhaps, coordinated—efforts to identify and collect new sources of quality data. There is great empirical value in building original datasets at the city level. Surveys of local officeholders (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2010), members of local “eligibility pools” (Lawless and Fox 2005), candidates for local office (Merritt 1977; Miller 1986), and local electorates (Brown, Heighberger, and Shocket 1993) may be most fruitful,

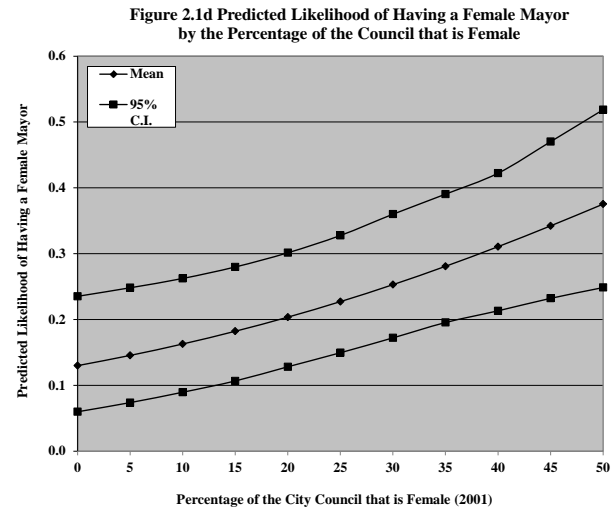
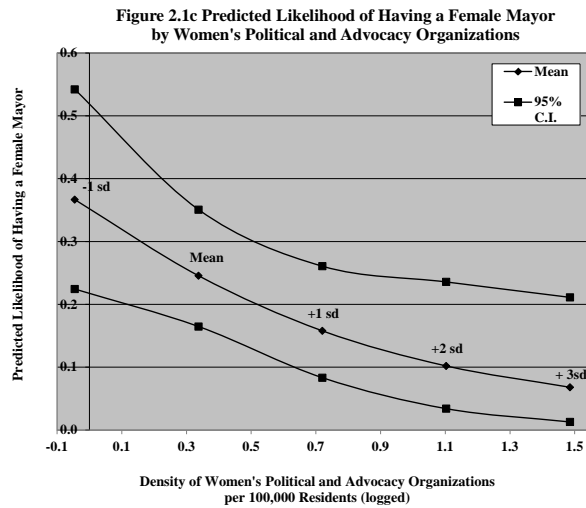
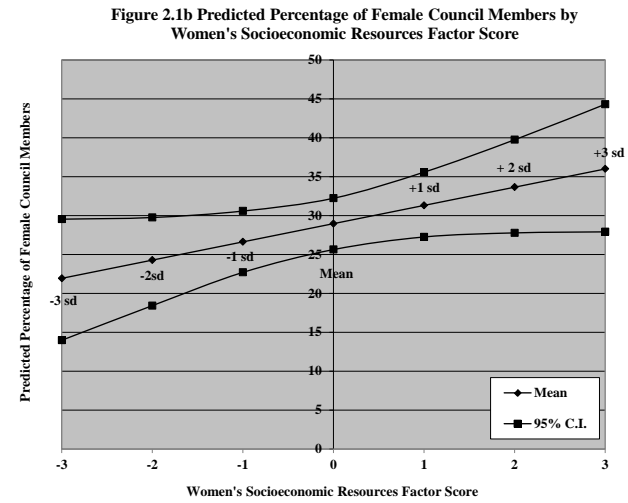
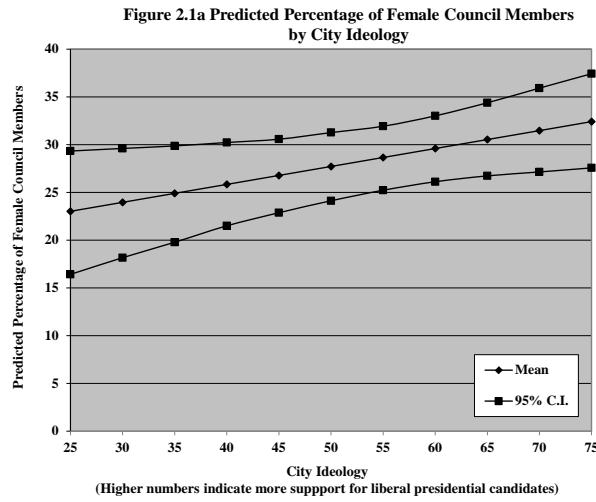
especially in untangling the roles of parties, political organizations, other elected officials, and voters in the recruitment and support of female candidates.²³

Finally, we demonstrate that there are advantages to political scientists looking beyond their subfields to develop theory, innovate empirically, and improve the precision of measurements. Our study, we hope, will foster more dialogue among several subfields of political science interested in descriptive representation, including urban politics, race, ethnicity and politics, state politics, and women and politics research. Most importantly, we believe that scholars in multiple subfields can draw lessons from our work. For example, those studying women's descriptive representation at the state level might consider the potential connection between electing women as governors and as state legislators. Scholars might also explore the implications of local nonpartisanship for the vertical pipeline of women in local politics who are well prepared to run for office at the state or national level but are too often overlooked by party leaders and funders (Sanbonmatsu et al. 2009). Gauging the macro-level determinants of women's descriptive representation at the local level, therefore, may reveal a great deal about the gendered electoral dynamics that continue to limit the numbers of women in public office at all levels.

²³ Our own data and efforts demonstrate that identifying and surveying the entire universe of female mayors and councilors of large ($\geq 100,000$) cities is possible, given the resources now available on the web. Surveying local eligibility pools of potential candidates may also be feasible, as least within a representative sample of big cities.

Concept	Explanatory Variable	1. Average Percentage of Council Seats Held by Women in 2001 and 2006 (Ordinary Least Squares)	2. City Had a Female Mayor Between 2002 and 2007 (Logistic Regression)	3. Percentage of Electoral Terms Held by Female Mayors, 2002-2007 (Ordered Logistic Regression)
Political Context	Ideology	0.19 (0.087)**	0.01 (0.016)	0.02 (0.015)
	Women's Socioeconomic Resources Factor Score	2.34 (1.195)**	0.05 (0.228)	0.07 (0.226)
	Density of Women's Political & Advocacy Organizations (logged)	2.17 (3.026)	-1.51 (0.637)**	-1.47 (0.628)**
	Density of Women's General Organizations	0.35 (0.372)	0.07 (0.060)	0.07 (0.059)
	Percentage Latinas & African American Women	0.05 (0.117)	-0.02 (0.022)	-0.016 (0.021)
	Female Mayor Lagged	-0.50 (2.655)		
	Percentage of Female Councilors Lagged		0.03 (0.010)**	0.026 (0.010)**
Electoral Arrangements	At-large Elections	0.69 (2.404)		
	Council Term Limits	-3.19 (2.264)		
	Mayoral Term Limits		-0.01 (0.393)	-0.09 (0.391)
	Partisan Elections	2.74 (2.763)	-1.49 (0.633)**	-1.48 (0.628)**
	Mayor Elected Directly by Voters		-1.66 (0.784)**	-0.78 (0.724)
Desirability of Office	Council Term Length	0.90 (1.275)		
	Mayoral Term Length		0.21 (0.250)	0.16 (0.241)
	Number of Council Seats	-0.14 (0.154)		
	Strong Mayor	-1.35 (1.058)	-0.04 (0.183)	-0.13 (0.179)
	Population Logged (in 100,000s)	3.51 (1.779)**	0.002 (0.303)	0.001 (0.295)
Constant		10.91 (6.601)*	-1.05 (0.936)	
Number of cities		210	217	217
F-statistic		2.43		
LR χ^2			33.98	27.21
P-value		0.0046	0.0007	0.0072
Adjusted/Pseudo R²		0.1420	0.1383	0.0667
Standard errors in parentheses				
*Denotes significance at 0.1 level (two-tailed)				
**Denotes significance at 0.05 level (two-tailed)				

Figure 2.1 Predicted Substantive Effects



Chapter 3.

Tracing Women's Ascendance in the Municipal Governments of Houston and Atlanta

Nationwide, there is a gap in parity between women's presence in city government and the presence of men. For instance, just 16.7 percent of mayors and 25 percent of council members are women (CAWP 2011; ICMA 2006). Yet some cities have differed greatly from national trends in the demographic composition of municipal government. Atlanta and Houston illustrate it. During the 2000s, women held an unprecedented number of appointed and elected positions in Atlanta's city government. In 2006, for example, a majority of the city's top officeholders were women, including the mayor, over half of city council members (8 out of 15) and the council president, as well as a host of administrative officers such as the chief operating officer, the city attorney, and the chief financial officer, among others. In the same year, a large number of women held prominent positions in Houston's city government. Although the mayor was male, women held other important posts including over half of the seats on the council (8 out of 14) as well as mayor pro tem, city controller, agenda director, director of health and environmental policy, and director of finance and administration.

What factors produced the constellations of women's office holding in Atlanta and Houston between the late 1970s and early 2000s? Why did women come to hold so many prominent positions in these cities?

The Houston and Atlanta case studies provide additional and nuanced support for the key findings of Chapter 2—namely, the *urban political context* facilitates women's

election to city offices and their increasing numbers and prominence in municipal bureaucracies. The quantitative models presented in the preceding chapter are cross-sectional, focusing on women's election as mayors and council members between 2001 and 2007. However, in cities like Atlanta and Houston, the number of women holding municipal offices has increased steadily over time. This chapter complements Chapter 2 by taking history into consideration and tracing women's ascendance in municipal government since the 1970s. Furthermore, the previous chapter centers on the determinants of women's presence as mayors and council members while this chapter takes a broader view. It also considers how and why women were able to gain increasing power and prominence in municipal bureaucracies more generally. To address these research goals, I employ a process tracing methodology, relying on case studies of two cities with high levels of female political incorporation.

There have been few, if any, case studies on the determinants of women's ascendance in municipal government. Much of the work on this topic has been quantitative in nature (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; Trounstein and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; Welch and Karnig 1979). In contrast, urban political scientists have conducted numerous case studies on the rise of other disadvantaged groups in municipal policymaking positions, particularly racial and ethnic minorities (Brackman and Erie 2003; Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984, 2003; Eisinger 1980; Geron 2005; McKeever 2001; Sonenshein 1993). Delving into the processes underpinning women's political and electoral fortunes in Atlanta and Houston provides an opportunity to refine existing theories and build new ones.

Women's success in municipal elections and in gaining significant appointed positions in Atlanta and Houston has been due, in part, to their alliances with and membership in other disadvantaged groups, particularly African Americans and the LGBT community. While each group has focused on obtaining advances for their own communities, their efforts helped open up local political systems more generally. Moreover, the boundaries of group membership are not simple, nor are various identity groups independent of one another. In the past 40 years, some of the most important leaders in Houston and Atlanta have been African American women, lesbians, Latinas, and others who are situated at the nexus of multiple under-represented identity categories. It may have been the unique ways that these women leveraged their intersectionality in urban elections and governance that made such coalition building possible (Fraga, Martinez-Ebers, Lopez, and Ramirez 2008). This chapter explores the ways that African American women, Latinas, and lesbians successfully forged cross-group coalitions when campaigning for municipal elections, securing bureaucratic appointments, and forcing open formerly closed political systems. I also investigate the roles that men, especially minority men, played in these cross-group alliances, calling attention to the political benefits that motivated their decisions to support and mentor women for office.

Building on Chapter 2, I consider the extent to which electoral institutions affect women's quest for positions of authority in local government. The experiences in Houston and Atlanta demonstrate that the effect of electoral structures on the gender composition of municipal government may be contingent upon the broader political context at a given point in time. The puzzle of why more women get elected in some

cities than others may not be solved by examining either electoral institutions *or* the urban political context but rather by considering the interaction of the two.

In more recent years, the general openness of Atlanta and Houston’s electoral arenas has played a role in women’s political ascendance. Historically, neither city had the political machines found in some American cities.¹ Instead, women have been able to enter government and develop skills and expertise in local contexts that tend to favor competence over cronyism, cosmopolitanism over parochialism, and inclusion of newcomers rather than their exclusion. These traits are rooted in the cities’ histories and entrepreneurial civic cultures (Doyle 1990; Feagin 1988; Stone 1989). Following the Civil War, Atlanta’s business elites and boosters encouraged unfettered economic and population growth as well as the “rapid obliteration of old landmarks and old ways” (Doyle 1990, 137; see also Reed 1987). Similarly, observers have long highlighted the entrepreneurial attitude that pervades Houston, a city that feels perpetually young, vibrant, and new despite having been founded in 1836 (Shelton, Rodriguez, Feagin, Bullard, and Thomas 1989). Certainly, some caveats to these general characteristics exist; Atlanta and Houston’s political systems have not always and in every respect been open to women and other disadvantaged groups.

Nonetheless, following the legacies of their predecessors, mayors and high-level bureaucrats who have recently been in office continued to diversify Houston and Atlanta’s governments. As I will explain, mayors—male and female—in both cities have *intentionally* appointed women, racial/ethnic minorities, and members of other

¹ Nonetheless, influential elites have, at times, monopolized both cities’ governments (Trounstine 2008). For instance, observers characterized the “Maynard Machine” in Atlanta as a type of political monopoly by African American officials because of the overlap of appointments and policies across successive mayoral administrations (Stirgus and Suggs 2009).

disadvantaged groups to important city positions. Likewise, other leaders in city government have deliberately created opportunities for women on their staffs to develop their skills, knowledge, and professional networks. This chapter explores these and other factors that led to the large number of women in Atlanta and Houston's municipal governments in recent years, thereby providing a more nuanced portrait of the determinants of women's presence and power in local government.

Case Selection Strategy and Research Methodology

Since both Atlanta and Houston have had relatively large numbers of women in prominent city positions, this chapter focuses on two cases with high values on the dependent variable. I trace the process through which women gained increasingly prominent and powerful positions in city government. I attempt to identify the intervening causal process—the causal chain and mechanisms—between a set of factors and the presence of women in positions of municipal authority (Brady, Collier, and Seawright 2004; George and Bennett 2005). My method allows for the identification of pathways to women's presence in authoritative positions in city governments, seeking to develop causal inferences from my two cases, while considering excluded or spurious factors of or explanations for women's political incorporation.

I develop the case studies from my original fieldwork in Atlanta and Houston during the summer and autumn of 2011. Across the two cities, I conducted 48 semi-structured interviews with current and former city officials and civic leaders, including mayors, council members, high-level bureaucrats, and leaders of business organizations,

philanthropies, and non-profit organizations.² Potential respondents were selected because they currently hold or have in the past decade held an important position in municipal government. Important positions include all city council posts, the appointed heads of bureaucratic departments, the mayor, and the people who experts and others in city government identified as part of the mayor's core governing team. Current officeholders and bureaucrats were identified using the *Municipal Yellow Book*. Non-governmental leaders and past officeholders and bureaucrats were identified via Internet searches, articles in local newspapers, and their current organizational websites. Robert Stein and Melissa Marschall at Rice University and Richard Murray and Robert Lineberry at the University of Houston suggested potential respondents in Houston and Michael Leo Owens at Emory University and Kelly Hill of Nexus Research Group made suggestions in Atlanta.

The material presented in this chapter is based on respondents' answers to a series of questions about the determinants of women's descriptive representation and political incorporation in their cities:

As you may know, in [city], women hold [X] percent of council seats and hold many/few positions in the bureaucracy [cite specific examples]. Why do you think women hold a significant number of public offices in [city]?

In [city], women are not simply present in public offices; they also hold or have held some of the most powerful policymaking positions. What factors explain this?

Additional material comes from local newspapers, scholarship, and other secondary source materials and primary sources, including archived interviews with and the private

² Due to time and resource constraints during my time in Houston, only Atlanta gave me the opportunity to interview non-governmental officials. In the near future, I plan to conduct additional fieldwork, including interviews with non-governmental officials, in Houston.

papers of city officials. Further information about the fieldwork and research methodology can be found in Appendix C.

Atlanta and Houston: History and Institutions

Houston, Texas is the nation's fourth largest city. Yet it "is the most understudied major city in America" (Klineberg, 2011b). This is peculiar. Houston's municipal institutions are unique compared to other American cities since it has, arguably, the strongest strong-mayor form of government of any city in the nation. Demographically, the city is extremely diverse as no racial/ethnic group makes up a majority of its population. The robust local economy is buttressed by the oil and gas industry and is ahead of the rest of the country in recovering from the recent recession. Houston's extensive authority to annex outlying areas has allowed it to amass over 640 square miles of land area. On the one hand, these, among other factors, make Houston an interesting city for political study. On the other hand, they also make Houston an odd city in many ways, which may explain why political scientists do not tend to study it.

Unlike Houston, Atlanta, Georgia has been the subject of numerous social science studies, including influential books like Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers* (1969) and Clarence Stone's *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946-1988* (1989). The political scholarship about Atlanta attends to the mechanisms of informal power that shape the city's politics and policies. It especially pays attention to the central role that economic elites play in local governance and policymaking. Yet, Atlanta has changed since the days of *Community Power Structure* and even since the publication of *Regime Politics*. Numerous social, economic, demographic, and cultural changes have occurred, altering the city's politics.

This section provides an overview of the political history and institutional structure of Atlanta and Houston, noting similarities and differences between the two. In both of these Sunbelt cities, business elites have played a dominant role in political and civic affairs, leveraging local resources to promote economic development and expansion (Feagin 1988; Stone 1989). Today, Atlanta and Houston have mayor-council forms of government with strong-mayors. Both mayors oversee and command the resources of the bureaucracy. However, Houston's mayor has more authority to participate in and influence city council affairs than does Atlanta's. Both cities have nonpartisan elections for city offices and councils that consist of a mix of at-large and district-based seats. Atlanta has a popularly elected council president, who presides over council meetings. In Houston, the mayor sets the agenda for and presides over council meetings. She may select a mayor pro temp from among the council members to act as an intermediary between the executive branch and other council members. Table 3.1 summarizes the institutional features of Houston and Atlanta's city governments.

Municipal Institutions: Atlanta

Atlanta began as the intersection of two railroad lines and its city government was incorporated in 1847 (City of Atlanta 2012a). In 1973, the city adopted its current charter, replacing a system where the Board of Alderman and mayor shared power to a mayor-council form of government with a strong-mayor (Stone 1989). A 1965 study conducted by an outside organization, but solicited by city leaders, deemed the peculiar Aldermanic form of government ineffective and said that it would become untenable as the city increased in population size and complexity (Spritzer and Bergmark 1998). A protracted political battle ensued because the aldermen were apprehensive about relinquishing the

powers they enjoyed under the existing charter (Spritzer and Bergmark 1998). Additionally, African Americans and in-town neighborhood groups advocated for revising the electoral rules to make city government more responsive to their interests. They favored the inclusion of district-based council seats, which provoked resistance from the white elite power structure (Spritzer and Bergmark 1998; Stone 1989). Eventually, the new charter was passed by the state legislature and approved by the governor in 1973 (Spritzer and Bergmark 1998).

Atlanta's mayor, limited to two consecutive four-year terms in office, is responsible for day-to-day administration and management of the city, executing the ordinances passed by the council (City of Atlanta 2012b). She oversees the executive branch of about 8,140 employees and appoints department heads (Census 2010; City of Atlanta 2012b). The mayor prepares and submits the annual budget to the council (City of Atlanta 2012a).

Atlanta's city council is responsible for developing and passing ordinances that are necessary to run city government (City of Atlanta 2012a). The mayor may veto council-passed measures; the council may override mayoral vetoes with a two-thirds vote (Atlanta City Council 2011). Council members can either introduce legislation in full council meetings or it may come through a committee. In addition to passing legislation, the council conducts government oversight, continuously assessing city programs and agencies (Atlanta City Council 2011). Each year, after receiving the mayor's proposed annual budget, the council holds a series of budget hearings and votes on it (City of Atlanta 2012a). Atlanta's city council has a combination of at-large and district-based seats; 12 council members are elected by districts and three are elected at-large (Atlanta

City Council 2011). Council members, who serve in a part-time capacity, are elected to four-year terms in office and are not subject to term limits (City of Atlanta 2012b). The city council president is elected at-large. He presides over all council meetings, votes on ordinances only in the case of a tie, and appoints chairs and members to the council's various committees (Atlanta City Council 2011). Additionally, the council president assumes the powers and duties of the mayor in the case of the mayor's absence or a vacancy in the office (Atlanta City Council 2011).

City elections are officially nonpartisan (City of Atlanta 2012b). Nonetheless, Atlanta's population is very liberal. For instance, in the 2004 presidential election, 75.4 percent of the electorate supported the Democratic or liberal minor party candidates (BACVR 2005). The city was one of the incubators of the Civil Rights Movement. Today, Atlanta continues to be an important symbol in the African American community (Boston 1999; Sjoquist 2000). In the 1980s and 1990s, the city became a "magnet for the legions of upwardly mobile, young Black professionals" (Whitaker 2002, 149), who were drawn by employment and educational opportunities. It is home to esteemed Historically Black Colleges and Universities, such as Spelman, Morehouse, and Clark Atlanta as well as many historic Black businesses.

African Americans have governed continuously in Atlanta for close to 40 years, exhibiting a degree of coordination across political elites that some might deem to be characteristic of a monopoly (Trounstine 2008). When the city elected its first African American mayor in 1973, it was the first major Southern city to do so (Stone 1989). Every mayor since Maynard Jackson has been African American and the city council has been majority Black since the 1980s (Owens and Rich 2003). Andrew Young, who had

served three terms in Congress and as ambassador to the United Nations during the Carter Administration, followed Jackson in office. After Young's tenure, Jackson served a third and final term in office. Then, city council member Bill Campbell, a Jackson protégé, was mayor from 1994 to 2002. Campbell's eight years in office ended with numerous allegations, indictments, and convictions for corruption. In 2001, Shirley Franklin received 50.24 percent of the city's vote, barely above the threshold necessary to avoid a runoff but well above the 33 percent received by her strongest opponent, Robb Pitts, the former city council president (Sack 2001). With the victory, Franklin became the first Black woman elected as mayor of a major city in the southeast. She had never held an elected office yet many considered her to be an insider because of the numerous years she spent working in and around city government (Owens and Rich 2003). In 2009, former state senator Kasim Reed succeeded Franklin, beating white challenger, Mary Norwood by a miniscule 715 out of 84,383 votes casted (Cooper 2009). Through four decades of Black leadership, critics have contended that Atlanta's city government is insulated and biased (Trounstin 2008), placing the interests and needs of middle and upper classes over lower and working classes, especially poor, African Americans (Owens and Rich 2003).

Atlanta's population continues to be majority Black. However, beginning in the mid 2000s, the African American share of the city's population started declining for the first time since the 1920s while the non-Hispanic white population increased (Atlanta Regional Commission 2010; Dewan 2006). In the first decade of the 21st century, the African American share of the city's population dropped from 61 percent to 54 percent (U.S. Census, numerous years; see Table 3.2), while the proportion of African Americans

grew in the suburbs and exurbs (Atlanta Regional Commission 2010). At the same time, a large number of affluent, mostly white residents moved into the city (Dewan 2006).

Recent demographic shifts have affected the city's electoral politics. Given the influx of white residents in the 1990s and 2000s, white politicians began to position themselves to run for mayor for the first time since Sam Massell's loss to Jackson in 1973. In the closely contested 2009 election, Kasim Reed ran against Mary Norwood and Lisa Borders. Borders, a Black woman, was serving as city council president. She spent several years working for a prominent local developer and then as head of the Grady Health Foundation.³ Norwood, who held an at-large seat on the council, was mockingly called a "Buckhead Betty" by some of her critics because she was a Junior League member from the Buckhead neighborhood, an affluent area at the north end of the city. In the end, Reed beat Norwood in a tight runoff. The closeness of the race may have been attributable to the decline of the city's Black majority and "the recession's sour effect on the mood of voters" (Dewan 2009).

Atlanta is a proportionally small, in terms of land area and population, but important economic and cultural component of a region that includes a large number and diverse assortment of municipal governments. Metropolitan Atlanta has a reputation for sprawl. Most of its sprawl extends outside the city's limits, across a metropolitan area that covers 28 counties and includes multiple suburbs, exurbs, edge cities, and unincorporated areas. In 2008, the Census Bureau estimated the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-

³ Tom Cousins is responsible for developing some of Atlanta's most recognizable landmarks, including the CNN Center, Philips Arena, and the Bank of America building. He was also instrumental in revitalizing East Lake Meadows, one of the city's most distressed public housing communities (*Atlanta Magazine* 2011a). A former head of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport called Cousins, whose work extends into the philanthropic and political realms, "one of the most influential business leaders in the history of the city of Atlanta" (quoted in Woods 2006).

Marietta GA Metropolitan Statistical Area's population as 5,376,285, compared to Atlanta's population of 420,000³—just under eight percent of the region's population. The MSA is the eighth largest in the country (Metro Atlanta Chamber 2012a). Between 2000 and 2008, the region grew by 1.1 million people, which is a 27 percent increase (Metro Atlanta Chamber 2012a).

From the 1980s to the early 2000s, the Atlanta metropolitan region ranked at or near the top of the nation's large MSAs in terms of population growth and job creation (Owens and Rich 2003). In recent years, the bulk of population growth has occurred in the suburbs and exurbs. The city itself grew by only 3,500 people between 2000 and 2010 (Atlanta Regional Commission 2010). The Atlanta Regional Commission (2010) speculates that the city's lower than expected population growth was due, in part, to higher than expected vacancy rates, fewer public housing units because of programmatic changes at the Atlanta Housing Authority, and the migration of African Americans from traditionally Black neighborhoods in the city to suburban counties.

The size, nature, and diversity of Atlanta's economy have all changed since Floyd Hunter and Clarence Stone conducted their research. The region is home to the headquarters of several major companies, including Coca Cola, UPS, Delta, Chick-fil-A, TBS, Home Depot, Newell Rubbermaid, Southern Company, and The Weather Channel. Atlanta ranks fourth in the country among cities with the most Fortune 500 companies. The city's top three employment sectors are trade, transportation and utilities, and business services and government (Metro Atlanta Chamber 2012a). The local and regional economy grew steadily during and following the 1996 Olympic Games. According to Owens and Rich (2003, 203), the factors driving this growth in the 1990s

and early 2000s, as well as throughout its history, have been “Atlanta’s location at the crossroads of the southern United States and its transportation infrastructure,” including railroads, interstate expressways, and the world’s busiest airport.

Echoing themes raised in Stone and Hunter’s books, a leader in a local business organization explained:

This region has always had a strong history of the business community really influencing major decisions that have gotten made... People call it ‘the Atlanta way.’ You know, it’s often said that unless the business community gets involved, you know, something doesn’t happen, decisions aren’t made. That’s been a long part of this region’s history... [Business leaders] saw that the role of the business community is to give, sometimes, government leaders the political cover they need to get something done (Interview 110, 20 September 2011).

Business leaders carry on the tradition of participating in local decision-making. This was especially the case during the move towards desegregation in the 1950s and 1960s.

Business elites worked with civic leaders inside government and in the Black community to “manage” the process of desegregation (Interview 110, 24 October 2011; Stone 1989).

They aimed to avoid the riots and problems encountered in other southern cities, which were viewed as bad for business in the city former mayor Ivan Allen deemed “too busy to hate” (Interview 110, 22 September 2011; Kruse 2005; Stone 1989).

Since the city, region, and economy have grown, the group of economic elites is not as small and cohesive as it once was. Also, in earlier years, business leaders were homegrown. For example, Robert Woodruff built the Coca Cola Company in Atlanta.

Now, the city is home to multinational corporations with CEOs who “parachute in and out.” Yet, even with these changes, CEOs who move to the city from other places say, “Wow, there really is something about Atlanta where it’s kind of expected of you if you’re a business leader to get involved in the community” (Interview 110, 20 September 2011).

Atlanta has suffered during the recent economic downturn and is recovering at a much slower rate than Houston. For instance, it currently has the most government-owned foreclosed homes for sale of any major city in the country. Home prices in the region are now below their 2000 levels. In 2010 alone, the price of entry-level housing fell by close to one-third (Rich 2012). Moreover, the recession has exacerbated the gap between rich and poor residents. The U.S. Census Bureau recently reported that from 2005 to 2009, the city had the highest income inequality rate in the country. The city’s population, which remains majority-minority, has been especially hard hit by the recession’s high unemployment rates and lower wages while, at the same time, Atlanta has a number of affluent areas such as Buckhead (Markiewicz 2011). Such trends have likely intensified what some critics call the “Atlanta paradox.” As Sjoquist (2000, 2) explains, it is,

[A] paradox of extreme racial and economic inequality—of abject poverty in a region of tremendous wealth, of a poor and economically declining city population in the face of dramatic economic growth, and of a Black mecca in a ‘city too busy to hate’ ... confronting a highly racially segregated population and the substantial problems associated with racism and poverty that pervade the city.

Municipal Institutions: Houston

State laws give the city of Houston an advantage over other local governments in the region (Murray 2004). In 1912, the Texas Legislature passed and voters approved a constitutional amendment that allowed cities with populations of 5,000 or more to operate under home-rule; Houston voters immediately approved a home-rule charter for their city. Leaders in the Progressive Movement supported such home-rule reforms in order to bring government closer to the people and to give local officials the authority to implement policies that best matched their communities' needs (Murray 2004; Trounstein 2008). At the time, Texas's home-rule amendment was the strongest in the country since it allowed cities to do anything that was not prohibited by the state or national governments. In contrast, the state specifically enumerated the roles and authorities of county governments (Murray 2004; Thomas and Murray 1991).

Houston has a mayor-council form of government, where the mayor has a significant amount of power relative to the council.⁴ The sources of the mayor's power are numerous (Murray 2004; Shelton et al. 1989). For instance, there is no separation of powers; the mayor is a true chief executive while simultaneously sitting on and influencing the output of the council (Interview 822, 16 November 2011; Thomas and Murray 1991). The mayor controls the resources of and oversees the city bureaucracy of over 22,000 people and appoints administrative department heads (Census 2010; Shelton et al. 1989). She prepares the annual budget, which the council then votes to approve

⁴ After a short-lived experiment with a council-manager system, in 1942, Houston's voters approved a charter revision that centralized the municipal government's power structure, combining the powers of a city manager with those of a strongly elected chief executive (Murray 2004). The word "mayor" was substituted in every place that there had previously been "city manager" (Interview 822, 16 November 2011; Murray 2011). Local business elites blamed the city manager system for poor service delivery and wasteful fiscal management and believed that a strong-mayor system would yield a *laissez-faire* approach to growth and development (Thomas and Murray 1991).

(City of Houston 2012c; Shelton et al. 1989). Council members may make amendments to the budget but this typically amounts to tinkering at the margins (Interview 76, 27 October 2011; Shelton et al. 1989).

On the legislative side, the mayor sets the agenda for weekly council meetings and is a full voting member (City of Houston 2012c). She does not have veto power over the council. However, veto power is unnecessary since policy proposals rarely make it onto the agenda without the mayor's approval (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). The mayor appoints one council member to the position of mayor pro tem, creates council committees (i.e., specifies the issue areas to be covered), and names council committees chairs and members (City of Houston 2012a; Interview 561, 20 October 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011).⁵ Proposed legislation does not have to go through a committee before it comes before the full council (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

In Houston's strong-mayor form of government, "the mayor initiates and the council reacts" (Shelton et al. 1989, 39). The city council enacts and enforces all municipal ordinances and resolutions (City of Houston 2012a). It approves all department heads that are selected by the mayor, as well as her appointments to boards and commissions (City of Houston 2012a; Shelton et al. 1989). The council consists of 16 members, who serve in a part-time capacity. Eleven members are elected by district and five are elected at-large (City of Houston 2012a).

The mayor pro tem assumes the powers and duties of the mayor in her absence or, in the case of a vacancy, until an election is called (City of Houston 2012b). The political role played by the mayor pro tem varies from one administration to the next. Generally,

⁵ The mayor is legally required to appoint council members to the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee. The organization and topics covered by the other committees are left to the mayor's discretion and have shifted over time (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

however, the mayor pro tem serves as an intermediary between the executive branch and council members (Interview 336, 3 November 2011; Interview 118, 17 November 2011) and “carries the water for the Mayor” (Interview 687, 26 October 2011).

The city also has a popularly elected controller who provides independent oversight of the government’s funds (Shelton et al. 1989). Before the mayor is permitted to put an item on the council’s agenda, the controller must first certify that funds are available to implement the policy in question (Interview 593, 7 November 2011). The controller can also opine on any policy proposal (Interview 593, 7 November 2011). The controller serves as an independent “watchdog” over the mayor’s activities (Shelton et al. 1989, 39).

Before the 1980s, most Houstonians considered themselves to be southern Democrats (Murray 2011). This has changed over time. Today, the central city votes majority Democrat in national elections while the remainder of Harris County votes majority Republican (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). Officially, city elections are nonpartisan. However, according to several interview respondents and experts, Houston’s politics have become more overtly partisan over time (Interview 561, 20 October 2011; Interview 906, 4 November 2011; Murray 2011). A former elected official explained,

[E]ven though the city is theoretically nonpartisan, partisan politics plays a big role in decision-making... [In council meetings,] the vote will go straight down partisan lines. So if anyone says it’s nonpartisan, that’s just not true (Interview 906, 4 November 2011).

Council member's party allegiances can be ascertained from the stances they take on policy initiatives and whether they tend to align with or against the mayor on major issues.

The increasingly partisan tenor may be attributable to term limits (Murray 2011), which were instituted by popular referendum in 1991. All elected positions are limited to three two-year terms in office (Murray 2011). Since elected officials in Houston know that they only have a short time to serve, they are constantly eyeing the next office, typically at the state or federal level. In order to be successful in their future political endeavors, they must start establishing "good partisan credentials" during their short time in city government (Murray 2004, 15).

The 1912 constitutional amendment gave home-rule cities "near total annexation powers" (Murray 2004, 2). Unincorporated areas in the Houston MSA can incorporate only with the city's permission. Since the 1960s, the city has undergone only two major annexations. However, before then, Houston grew mainly through annexation (Murray 2004, 2011). As a consequence, Houston is large, both in terms of land and population size, compared with other cities in the region. It covers about 640 square miles of territory (Interview 76, 27 October 2011), while the metropolitan statistical area covers 10,062 square miles (Greater Houston Partnership 2008). In 2010, the city's population was 2,099,451 (U.S. Census 2012), or almost 40 percent of the MSA's total population, which is 5,287,524 (Greater Houston Partnership 2012a). In comparison, Sugar Land, the MSA's next largest city, has a population of 78,817 or 1.4 percent of the MSA. It covers just 32.38 square miles of land (U.S. Census 2012). Murray (2004, 4) illustratively calls Houston "the 800 pound gorilla among local cities in its region." Currently, the MSA is

the sixth most populous MSA in the country while Houston proper is the nation's fourth largest city (Greater Houston Partnership 2012a).

Houston is a majority-minority city. However, no racial/ethnic group comprises a majority of its population. This has been true since 1990 when the number of whites fell below 50 percent for the first time since the city's founding. Table 3.4 shows that in 2010, white, non-Hispanics made up 25.6 of the population, Black, non-Hispanics constituted 23.7 percent of the population, and Hispanics made up 43.8 percent. The racial/ethnic composition of the population has implications for electoral politics. Since no group makes up a majority of the population, candidates for citywide offices have to put together at least a bi-racial/ethnic coalition to win elections (McKeever 2001).

Despite a large and growing Latino population, the city has yet to elect a Hispanic mayor. The closest it came was in the 2001, when Orlando Sanchez, who is of Cuban descent, almost unseated incumbent Lee Brown. Brown narrowly won the runoff by 51 percent to Sanchez's 49 (Geron 2005, 123). In terms of descriptive representation, Latinos are underrepresented in Houston's city government compared to their increasing presence in the population, mostly because of their low rates of voter turnout (Geron 2005; McKeever 2001).⁶ Although several Hispanics serve on the council, including the current mayor pro tem, they generally feel underrepresented in city government (Murray 2011).

The demographic composition of Houston has transformed over the past 25 years. Throughout most of its history, Houston was a "biracial Southern city, dominated and

⁶ Low voter registration and turnout among Latinos in Houston and across the country is caused by several factors including a legacy of exclusion and structural barriers to their participation, high rates of new immigrants and non-citizens who cannot vote and/or are not engaged in politics, and the fact that Latinos are, on average, younger than other ethnic groups (Geron 2005; Geron and Lai 2002).

controlled in an automatic, taken-for-granted way, by white men” (Klineberg 2010). However, over the past quarter century, it “has become one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse cities in the country” (Klineberg 2010). There has been a rapid transformation in the racial/ethnic makeup of the population, chiefly because of immigration. In 1980, 9.8 percent of the city’s population was foreign born. By 2010, it was 28.3 percent foreign-born (see Table 3.3).

In spite of this diversity, there has been only a minimal degree of tension between various racial and ethnic groups over the years. For this reason, Houston has been labeled the “consensus city”—it has a history of consensual rather than antagonistic interethnic and interracial relations and has not experienced a major race riot since 1917 (McKeever 2001). As McKeever explains (2001), three factors have facilitated this tendency. First, the city’s Black community has been relatively affluent, especially prior to the 1980s. Second, the large land area covered by the city and high degree of residential segregation means that people of different races did not come into contact with each other that frequently. Third, political and economic elites from the African American and white communities have worked together to diffuse any potential problems. This was especially the case during the Civil Rights Movement. As in Atlanta, African American and white civic leaders worked together to manage desegregation and avoid conflicts that could be perceived as bad for business (Interview 99, 24 October 2011; Interview 561, 20 October 2011; McKeever 2001).

Houston is an entrepreneurial city. Compared to the rest of the country, the city’s economy has fared quite well in recent years. In fall 2011, for instance, the ten-county Houston MSA surpassed its pre-recession employment peak. The MSA sits atop the

nation's 20 most populous MSAs in terms of recent job growth (Greater Houston Partnership 2012b). Because of its proximity to the east Texas oil fields, the oil and gas industry was and continues to be a source of wealth. Historically, a large percentage of the city's jobs have been tied to the oil industry (Klineberg 2010). However, Houston has other economic drivers as well. For example, the Texas Medical Center is the largest medical complex in the world and the Port of Houston is one of the nation's busiest.

The city's economy has not always been so strong. Following an 80-year period of growth, the oil boom collapsed in May 1982 and the region subsequently went through a deep and prolonged recession in the mid-1980s (Klineberg 2010). At around the same time, blue collar manufacturing jobs, at companies like Cameron Iron Works and Hughes Tool Company, started to disappear. Following World War II, steel workers' unions had been important players in local politics; the labor movement was a lynchpin in the city's liberal coalition (Murray 2011). Internal conflicts over the Vietnam War weakened the unions' political influence, as did the loss of blue-collar jobs. Today, well paying jobs in Houston, as elsewhere in the country, require high-level technical skills and educational credentials (Klineberg 2010).

Most American cities have a pro-growth coalition, consisting of political and economic elites (Logan and Molotch 1987). Houston has been portrayed as a city exemplifying the growth machine theory because of the unchecked manner in which the business oligarchy has guided urban growth (Feagin 1988; Fisher 1989). Local government has been described as an "instrument of the local business community" (Feagin 1988, 109). Business elites have long played a role in government affairs, by running for office themselves or selecting and providing critical support for those who

run, thereby controlling “to a substantial degree the character and composition of the local (and, on occasion, the Texas) governments” (Feagin 1988, 109).

The composition and leadership of Houston’s growth machine coalition has changed over time, from cotton merchants and real estate interests who dominated at the turn of the 20th century to real estate developers and the heads of major oil firms from the 1960s onwards (Fleischmann and Feagin 1987). Despite the changes in its composition, this tight-knit, small, and informal group of economic elites was consistently influential in local politics from the late 1930s until the 1970s. For many years, these leaders were nicknamed the “8F group” in reference to a room in the downtown hotel in which they met (Interview 99, 24 October 2011; Fisher 1989). The 8F group was strong because of its cohesiveness as well as the corporate networks and national and international resources from which it could draw (Feagin 1988). Some of the group’s influence waned during the economic bust of the 1980s. Nonetheless, Houston’s politics is still influenced by business leaders (McKeever 2001). Today, the growth coalition is larger and has a less cohesive power structure, which consists of leaders from many multinational corporations and the Greater Houston Partnership (formerly called the Chamber of Commerce) is now at the group’s center (Feagin 1988; Fisher 1989). Although the GHP is more public and formal than the 8F group once was, it still promotes similar goals with regards to economic growth (Fisher 1989).

The growth machine coalition is committed to a “free enterprise” philosophy, which is characterized by “an intense belief in economic growth, private property, private investment control, private profit, and government action tailored to meet business needs” (Feagin 1988, 108). Although the assemblage of business leaders has changed

over time, all have supported “an extreme version of the laissez-faire free enterprise philosophy” (Feagin 1988, 109; Fisher 1989). However, simply because business elites promoted free enterprise does not mean they were hostile to or rejected government aid. Instead, they sought federal and state aid to assist with business-oriented development projects, such as building highways, infrastructure, Johnson Space Center, and transport facilities (e.g., the port) (Feagin 1988; Shelton et al. 1989). At the same time, they have rejected all manner of redistributive programs and policies, which they see as anathema to the free enterprise ideology (Feagin 1988).

Over the years, the growth machine coalition has worked with local government officials to maintain weak regulatory mechanisms for the city (Feagin 1988; Murray 2004). Developers founded Houston and they have always influenced its planning policies, or lack thereof (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). The city is world famous for imposing very few restrictions on development (Fisher 1989; Klineberg 2010). Among outsiders, “Houston has a reputation as a sprawling, unplanned city that grew rapidly in a rather chaotic if not malignant fashion” (Thomas and Murray 1991, 345). Several proposed ordinances and public initiatives to institute zoning restrictions have repeatedly been defeated (Murray 2004), demonstrating the extent of the growth machine coalition’s influence on local politics.

Partnerships Between Women and Other Disadvantaged Groups

In recent years, Atlanta and Houston have had a large number of women serving in elected and appointed positions in city government. These trends are not a simple twist of fate. As the histories of the cities reveal, women’s political ascendance has been the result of a decades-long political process. First, women joined forces with members of

other disadvantaged groups to force City Hall to open its doors to them. Then, they received token appointments. Slowly, over the years, women took on increasingly prominent positions and roles, ones where they gained useful skills, networked with political and economic elites, and participated in public policymaking in meaningful ways.

In the 1970s and 1980s, women made inroads into the municipal governments of Atlanta and Houston. They were able to do this, in part, because of their memberships in and/or partnerships with other disadvantaged groups. The election of Atlanta's first African American mayor, Maynard Jackson, in 1973, proved fortuitous for women as Jackson was committed to opening the local political system to minorities and to women. In Houston, it was through partnerships with the LGBT community that women were able to gain a foothold in city government. Several of the women who participated in these partnerships were members of two or more of the identity groups that came together. Indeed, it may have been female leaders' membership in multiple groups, coupled with the burgeoning electoral prowess of these groups, that facilitated their ability to gain significant positions in the cities' municipal governments.

Such partnerships are not explored in existing research on the determinants of women's and other marginalized groups' election to city level offices. The bulk of the studies conducted thus far have been quantitative in nature and the measures they employ may be too crude to investigate women's memberships in and partnerships with other groups. For instance, the quantitative analysis presented in Chapter 2 does not examine whether the presence of members of minority groups in political offices leads to the subsequent electoral success of women because we lacked data on the gender of public

officials broken down by race/ethnicity. However, the political histories of Houston and Atlanta suggest that building intergroup coalitions may be vital to where and when women are elected to municipal offices.

Maynard Jackson's Push Towards Inclusion for Women and Minorities in Atlanta

As recently as the early 1960s in Atlanta, the City Council, which was at that time called the Board of Aldermen, was all white and all male (Stone 1989). This may seem surprising given that Atlanta's population was 38.3 percent African American in 1960 and 51.3 percent Black in 1970 (U.S. Census 2005). However, before 1973, all seats on the Board were selected at-large. Given the spatial concentration of Blacks in Atlanta (Kruse 2007; Owens and Rich 2004), their prospects for success were low in an at-large system (Bullock and MacManus 1990; Engstrom and McDonald 1981; Karnig and Welch 1980). Also, progressive era reformed governments, like the Aldermanic form of government in Atlanta, generally limit the influence of minority and low-income constituents (Karnig and Walter 1977; Karnig and Welch 1980). White elites had structured Atlanta's electoral rules and form of government in a way that insulated leaders from popular discontent and impeded the election of racial minorities (Bridges 1999; Stone 1989). After a protracted battle led by Grace Towns Hamilton, the first African American woman to serve in Georgia's General Assembly, and supported by the city's Black community and the burgeoning neighborhood movement, a new charter was adopted in 1973. The city moved to a mixed system of council elections, where 12 members were elected by district and six by the whole city (Atlanta City Council 2011; Spitzer and Bergmark 2007; Stone 1989).

Before the new charter was adopted, women and African Americans had been locked out of positions from which they could influence policy and management decisions. When Maynard Jackson ran for mayor in 1973, the electoral coalition that delivered his victory consisted of neighborhood activists, progressive white women, and African Americans (Holmes 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Future mayor Shirley Franklin headed the Women for Maynard Campaign Committee in 1973 and later became his commissioner of parks, recreation, and cultural affairs (Holmes 2011). Four years later, the city's Feminist Action Alliance endorsed Jackson in his reelection bid "because of his strong support of women's rights, his creation of the Commission on Women, and several appointments of women to top-level city positions, such as commissioner of administrative services" (Holmes 2011, 160).

A former official explained that women, neighborhood activists, and African Americans supported Jackson

[B]ecause they were locked out and he said, effectively to them, 'If I'm mayor, you will be in.' And he did. And people will never forget that about him... Ivan Allen had said we're a city too busy to hate. He didn't say we're a city that is going to take the time to get to know each other and everybody's going to have an opportunity [as Jackson did].

Everybody's going to have a voice. That's taking it a step further

(Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Throughout his tenure as mayor, Jackson was adamant about increasing the racial/ethnic and gender diversity of municipal government, particularly in the areas of city contracting and municipal employment. A recent biography noted that Jackson

“planned to put females in positions where none had previously served. He pledged to bring equal opportunity for women into city government as part of his inclusiveness policy” (Holmes 2011, 101). He was devoted to making the structure and composition of city government more equitable for previously locked-out groups. On January 1, 1975, he sent a memorandum to the heads of all city departments and agencies, saying that he wanted to,

Reemphasize my policy to work continuously toward improving recruitment, employment, development, and promotional opportunities for minority and women employees. Minorities and women have been denied equal access to opportunities and the executive branch must accept responsibilities to design and implement programs [to stop this]. We must strive to aggressively ensure equality of opportunity in the city, support affirmative action programs as leaders. You are responsible for producing results. Excuses for failure will find a very unsympathetic ear (quoted in Holmes 2011).

Jackson challenged his team to develop programs to recruit and train qualified women and minorities to work in management and policymaking positions. In response, the personnel department created training and outreach programs for women and African Americans (Eisinger 1980; Interview 882, 16 August 2011). For example, during Jackson’s first term, city administrators revised hiring procedures to place less emphasis on standardized written exams (Eisinger 1980). They also instituted a counseling program to train and mentor minority and female employees and developed an internal system for employees to file discrimination complaints (Eisinger 1980). Additionally, Jackson and

his core staff explained to “some of the managers, you know, about how do you go about changing not just the face of your staff but the culture of your staff. It was a huge huge change. It was larger for some department heads than others” (Interview 882, 16 August 2011).

As mayor, Jackson had the discretion to remove department heads if he so desired. Yet, when he first took office, he did not do so immediately. The municipal workforce was stable at the time and there were issues with seniority.

You had people who had held these jobs and held them competently. So the question is: How do we do this in a way that you’re not just displacing good folks? ‘Cause that wasn’t the agenda. The agenda, though, was to change the complexion and the gender and the fabric and that’s why he knew it wouldn’t happen overnight. You had to do it in a way that benefitted both the employees and City Hall (Interview 882, 16 August 2011).

In order to slowly change the composition of the city workforce, he appointed Blacks and women to top positions and as heads of the bureaucratic departments. These department heads were then responsible for hiring, evaluating, and promoting employees. Over time, through this cycle, they diversified the composition of the municipal workforce (Eisinger 1980).

Jackson’s devotion to increasing the diversity of the municipal workforce influenced how he conducted business in other ways as well. A former city official recalled,

If you were going to have a meeting on a public policy, like a neighborhood issue, he wanted to know how many women, how many whites, how many Blacks. You had to show him the invitation list. I mean, he was particular about that (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Jackson sought to incorporate diverse points of view into decision-making processes.

Jackson's efforts to promote inclusion were not restricted to city government. He also challenged—some might say, cajoled—local businesses to open up to women and minorities. Traditionally, the City of Atlanta had divided its monetary deposits among several local banks. Instead of taking this system as a given, Jackson issued an ultimatum: he would deposit the city's money in Birmingham unless Atlanta's banks named women and minorities to their boards and developed plans for them to be promoted to executive positions (Allen 1996; Stone 1989). In addition to diversifying the banks, Jackson likely employed this strategy to gain influence among economic elites, planting his allies in businesses to broker deals and sell his policies.

In a PBS interview, Jackson explained his thinking with regard to promoting inclusion:

Now, it fell in my lot to be the first Black mayor, and to kind of get really serious about building an even playing field, as the expression goes. When I became mayor... [t]here were no women department heads. This was not only a question of race, it was a question also of sexual discrimination and, you know, all the typical -isms, if there's one, normally there is a whole bunch of them and they were all there (Shearer 1988a).

Starting from the beginning of his administration, Jackson appointed women to prominent posts. For example, in 1973, Jackson offered the positions of city liaison to the Georgia General Assembly and intergovernmental affairs coordinator to Emma Darnell, a Howard Law School graduate who had worked for the regional office of the federal EEOC (Holmes 2011). Before Jackson came into office, Sam Massell had appointed Darnell to a number of city positions, including chair of the grants review commission and coordinator for intergovernmental programs (Holmes 2011). When the new mayor appointed Darnell to the more prominent post, some council members and state legislators were surprised because “no female had ever served in that position and there were no female lobbyists at the state capitol” (Holmes 2011, 100-101).

Jackson also asked Darnell to help him establish the department of administrative services, which would include the offices of personnel, purchasing, equal opportunity, and contract compliance (Holmes 2011). The department became a cabinet level agency and Jackson offered Darnell the position of commissioner of administrative services, making it clear that he wanted a woman to fill the slot (Holmes 2011). Darnell thus became the point person for the city’s equal opportunity programs, tasked with fixing discrimination problems in city operations, especially employment and contracting (Durcanin 1989; Holmes 2011).

When the business community rallied in opposition to Jackson’s joint-venture program, which required white-owned firms to subcontract a portion of their work on the construction of the international airport to firms owned by minorities, Darnell was on the frontline of defending it (Durcanin 1989; Holmes 2011; Shearer 1988b). A long and ugly conflict between business leaders and Jackson, Darnell, and the administration ensued.

Local newspapers published articles and cartoons portraying Darnell as having personality problems and being too hard on businesses (Holmes 2011). Eventually, in the year before he was up for reelection, Jackson made several concessions, including firing Darnell, “who had incurred the enmity of practically the entire business elite” (Reed 1987, 211). In exchange, business elites promised Jackson that they would accept an adapted version of the joint-venture program and also support his reelection bid (Reed 1987). Darnell ran against Jackson in the 1977 mayoral election, but did not receive any significant support; Jackson won with 77 percent of the vote (Reed 1987).

Years later, reflecting on her role in city government and the factors that led to her ousting, Darnell said,

I stirred up controversy for two reasons. Number one, we were dealing with a problem that carried with it a lot of emotional—feeling... When you begin to move public policy in areas that involve race, you can expect a great deal of emotion. And some of the emotion is fear. We underestimated, I might add, how controversial these practices would be... Another reason that I think I became very controversial is because of my own style. Number one, I was Black. Number two, female. Well, both. I was Black and female. And also, my style is not exactly one of a shrinking violet. I’m what people call assertive. I have very strong convictions and I express them in a very strong way. In fact, my conduct and my style was very different from what people really expected from women in a leadership position (Shearer 1988b).

Despite the political fallout with Darnell, Jackson's commitment to increasing the gender diversity of municipal government was genuine, as demonstrated by the other women he appointed to prominent posts. Examples include Shirley Franklin as commissioner of parks, recreation, and cultural affairs, Clara Axam as personnel director, Panke Bradley as head of the department of planning, and Marva Brooks as city attorney (ABA 2007; City of Atlanta 2007; Holmes 2011). Brooks, a Harvard Law School graduate, had served as assistant city attorney for five years and also as the city's first contract compliance officer under Darnell (Holmes 2011). After her appointment in 1980, she went on to be city attorney for ten years, during which time she selected female attorneys for leadership positions in the legal department and mentored them (ABA 2007). Brooks encouraged female attorneys on her staff to use their experience and knowledge from working in the city's legal department as a way to transition into more prominent positions in the private and public sectors (ABA 2007). This is something that more recent female city attorneys in Atlanta have done as well (Interview 531, 16 August 2011; Interview 870, 11 August 2011). In 1991, Brooks was recruited to serve as associate general counsel for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games. Together, she and Franklin were the two highest ranking women involved in planning the 1996 Olympics (ABA 2007).

Atlanta's Early Councilwomen

Concurrently with Jackson's successful mayoral bid, in 1973 the first woman was elected to Atlanta's City Council. Panke Bradley, who was white, had been active in the neighborhood movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. After college, Bradley attended the University of Chicago's School of Social Work, where she focused on

community organizing. After a short period in New York City, Bradley and her family moved to Atlanta (Durand 1999). While a stay-at-home mother, Bradley volunteered as a community organizer. She lived in the Candler Park neighborhood and became involved in efforts to oppose construction of the proposed Stone Mountain Tollway, which would have cut right through it (Durand 1999; Stone 1989). Bradley was motivated by self-interest to use her background in community organizing and urban planning to oppose the expressway's construction via organizing rallies and participating in other political activities (Durand 1999).

As a result of her efforts, in 1971, Mayor Sam Massell appointed Bradley as the first woman to serve on the Board of Aldermen. Years later, Bradley remarked,

[T]he conventional wisdom was that the only reason I was appointed was because I was the woman that was most involved in the neighborhood movement in that particular district that you had to be appointed from. So I mean, that was again a sort of accidental thing that catapulted me into this great job (Durand 1999).⁷

Two years later, she ran for and won the seat outright. The neighborhood movement supported Bradley throughout her time in City Hall. In an interview, she remarked, "I was just riding on the shoulders of the neighborhood movement," underscoring the importance of neighborhoods as sites for launching women's political careers at the local level (Clarke, Staeheli, and Brunell 1998).

⁷ At the time, all seats on the Board of Aldermen were elected at-large. However, the people holding several of the seats were required to reside within particular districts.

Bradley also drew campaign support from local organizations of the Women's Movement, including the Feminist Action Alliance and the local chapter of NOW. She explained,

[T]he Women's Movement was tremendously helpful to me in all of that time because those were my supporters... Those were the groups that I tended to spend more time with, not the League of Women Voters, and I never would have joined the Junior League (Durand 1999).

Bradley was reelected in 1977 and then Maynard Jackson appointed her to head the department of planning (City of Atlanta 2007). She was excited to be involved in Jackson's efforts to diversify city government and to address neighborhood concerns that had previously been ignored:

I just thought that's how government was. I didn't realize that I was just so lucky to be in a government that was changing so much, right at the time I got into it, that everything was possible (Durand 1999).

Bradley found Jackson to be devoted to changing the complexion and gender composition of city government (City of Atlanta 2007).

In 1977, Barbara Asher and Debbie McCarty were the next women elected to the city council; both Asher and Bradley held at-large seats while McCarty held the District 1 seat (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985; Shelton 2001). Asher served on the council for five consecutive terms, until her death from a stroke in 1995 (Campos 1998). She was white, Jewish, and lived on the affluent and majority white north side of town. She had spent many years volunteering and taking on leadership roles in community organizations, including the National Council of Jewish Women, United

Way, and the Atlanta Women's Network, before running for local office (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985). Through these volunteer activities, Asher developed skills relevant to working in city government and connected with a network of people who would support her candidacy. She drew support from a diverse set of people and organizations in the city. In a 1985 interview, she explained,

My real base was all the people I had met in 14 years at community service and I could go into the Grady Homes Day Care Center and sit down and have lunch with Susie LaBore and the kids. I knew that Susie was going to deliver that housing project. It was the gals from the Junior League that we had worked with on a number of projects who really were the backbone of my campaign (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985).

In this way, Asher's involvement in neighborhood affairs and organizations helped launch her political career, which urban politics scholars suggest may be a common path for women (Clarke et al. 1998).

Before she was elected to the council, in 1974, Maynard Jackson appointed Asher to serve on the city's newly created zoning review board. Later, Asher said that she saw the experience "as another volunteer activity and kind of enjoyed being around City Hall" (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985). The experience provided her with knowledge about and contacts in city government that she then used to run a successful campaign for an at-large seat on the council (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985). Asher also participated in campaign activities for Panke Bradley's council elections, suggesting that there was a degree of support and

coordination among these early female entrants into City Hall. Since Bradley had no real competition in 1977, her campaign manager moved over to coordinate Asher's campaign (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985).

One former council president explained that Asher "was very close to a lot of Black elected officials and businesspeople" (Interview 273, 19 July 2011), which was critical to her success in running for an at-large council seat. Asher's connections can be viewed as part of a larger unfolding of Black-Jewish cooperation in Atlanta, rooted in the engagement of both groups in the civil rights movement (Hatfield 2007). In a 1985 interview, Asher explained, "Part of the political dues that you pay in the city of Atlanta is to go to Black churches when you're on campaign" (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project). When she ran for a seat selected by the city as a whole, in addition to the white vote, she had substantial support "from influential Black people who would help her" (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). Given her extensive community service experience, Black elites were inclined to support Asher's bid (Interview 273, 19 July 2011).

Debbie McCarty started her career in Atlanta as a VISTA volunteer, working with an organization that sought to preserve the historic Grant Park neighborhood (Hedgpeth 1998b). McCarty, a white woman, became involved in many community-oriented projects, including improving housing codes for the elderly, convincing neighborhood groups to invest in and renovate abandoned homes, and lobbying city government to protect neighborhoods from commercial development (Hedgpeth 1998b). In 1977, at the age of 25, other activists encouraged McCarty to get into politics and so she quit her job at Neighborhood Housing Services and launched a door-to-door campaign for the District

1 council seat (Hedgpeth 1998b). She managed to oust the incumbent Republican council member in District 1 (a holdover from the Aldermanic era), which was majority African American at the time (Hedgpeth 1998b). McCarty went to serve on the council for 15 years before being appointed to head the department of parks and recreation (Hedgpeth 1998a). She ran unsuccessfully for city council president in 1997 (Hedgpeth 1998a).

Carolyn Long Banks attended Clark College, where she became a leader in the Civil Rights movement in Atlanta. She organized sit-ins at local restaurants and was arrested on several occasions (Helton 1994). In the early 1970s, Banks became a buyer for Rich's department store, a place where she had been arrested several years earlier for eating at their restaurant (Haugh 2010). She never considered a career in politics but was appointed to the city council in 1980 to fill a seat vacated by Marvin Arrington (Helton 1994).⁸ With the appointment, Banks became the first Black woman to serve on the council and went on to hold the at-large seat for 17 years (Helton 1994; Haugh 2010). In the mid-1990s, she served as president of the National League of Cities (Helton 1994; Haugh 2010).

A majority of Atlanta's early female city council members began their political careers through neighborhood activism and participation in community organizations. These distinctive non-electoral aspects of women's political involvement (Clarke et al. 1998) provided them with skills and knowledge that proved useful for holding local level offices as well as networks of supporters to rely on in their campaigns. Additionally, several of these former councilwomen held neighborhood-related positions within the executive branch (e.g., Bradley in the department of planning, Asher on the zoning

⁸ Arrington had won a special election to become city council president, a seat that Carl Ware gave up when he accepted a promotion to vice president at Coca Cola (Holmes 2011).

review board, and McCarty in the department of parks and recreation), where they could draw on their expertise and work experience. These somewhat “safe” slots placed those women firmly within Atlanta’s growth machine coalition (Logan and Molotch 1987), giving them visibility among political and economic elites. The positions served as a point of origin for women’s placement in more prominent slots within the growth machine coalition in the 1990s, such as the instrumental roles played by Shirley Franklin and Marva Brooks on the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

Houston’s Leading Women Partner with the LGBT Community and Minority Groups

Texas is widely recognized as one of the most conservative states in the country, rife with traditional southern values. Yet, in 2009, its largest city elected Annise Parker, a lesbian, as mayor. How did this happen? Houston’s relatively liberal character, compared to the rest of Texas, combined with its booming economy has attracted gay and lesbian residents for several decades. Similar trends have occurred in Atlanta (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). Over time, the growing LGBT community became an important voting bloc in Houston, as it has in other American cities (Bailey 1999; Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). Early female candidates drew strength and numbers from the LGBT community as they organized their campaigns for local political offices. In communities across the country, the LGBT community has often depended on support from “gay-friendly or tolerant heterosexual allies” to achieve electoral success (Button, Wald, and Rienzo 1999, 193). This proved true in Houston, where the coalition that delivered Parker’s 2009 victory consisted of Latinos, Asian Americans, Democrats, and moderate Republicans (Hylton 2009; Murray 2011). This coalition was one that female candidates

for citywide offices built and have reconstituted several times over the last 35 years, albeit in slightly modified forms each time.

Over time, three factors have contributed to the LGBT community becoming an effective political presence in cities: their numerical concentration in urban areas; the cohesiveness of the LGBT vote in terms of issues and ideology; and the similarity of urban gay and heterosexual residents in some policy preferences, which presents opportunities for coalition-building (Bailey 1999). In the 1970s, women in Houston were able to harness the support and burgeoning numbers and organizational structure of the gay and lesbian community to achieve electoral success. In 1979, the first two women were elected to the City Council; Eleanor Tinsley won an at-large seat and Kristin Hartung was elected to a district position. Tinsley was the first candidate for local office to welcome the gay community to work openly in a political campaign and to be part of her team. In a 2007 interview, she explained,

In elections before that one, gays had certainly participated but they were never allowed to be, sort of, in the front room or be where they were shown at all. Other politicians that had them be in the background somewhere [sic]. But my attitude was that they should be wherever their talents put them, just like anybody else. And so, using the gay community was a step forward for them and for me (Houston Public Library 2007).

The Gay Political Caucus (GPC) advocacy group formed in 1975 with the goal of representing the gay and lesbian community in Houston. Some members of the GPC had informally supported Kathy Whitmire in her race for city controller in 1977. As the organization started to grow and take shape, it officially endorsed Eleanor Tinsley in her

1979 campaign against incumbent Frank Mann, who had worked against gay causes throughout his time on the council (Goins 2010, 42). Mann and other detractors called Tinsley's supporters "oddballs and queers." The GPC responded by printing t-shirts that said, "Oddballs and Queers for Tinsley," thereby turning the insult into a fundraising tool (Alvarez 2009). With the GPC's support, Tinsley won the seat and "declared that she firmly supported antidiscrimination for homosexuals in city government and within the police force" (Goins 2010, 42).

Houston's current mayor, Annise Parker's entrée into local politics was as a letter stuffer and volunteer in Tinsley's campaign (Parker 2009). Upon Tinsley's death in 2009, Parker wrote, "When Eleanor won, the city's political establishment was awakened to the potential power of the LGBT vote" (Parker 2009, 1). Indeed, when Kathryn Whitmire ran for mayor in 1981, she won that election as well as four more with the GPC's backing. A former council member described Whitmire's electoral coalition: "[I]t was a strong group of women and it was a strong group of the Women's Political Caucus, NOW, and people from the gay community that helped elect her" (Interview 93, 16 November 2011). Following the election, the mayor promoted LGBT issues throughout her tenure, which drew criticism from the city's conservative faction (Goins 2010).

In a 2008 interview, Kathy Whitmire explained that increasing the diversity and transparency of local government were dominant issues in her 1981 campaign:

[P]eople wanted to see change. They wanted to see local government do a better job meeting its responsibilities, but they also wanted to feel that it was not controlled just by a handful of people who were looking out for themselves, but that there was recognition of the broader community... So

we were beginning to see the city grapple with its own growth and the need to recognize not only the demands of the local community for a well-run city, but also the need for recognition of the diversity of the city (Houston Public Library 2008).

The electoral coalition that delivered Whitmire's mayoral victories included progressive whites, the Black community, some Latinos, and organized labor (Murray 2011). The mayor endeared herself to the Black community when she appointed the city's first Black police chief, Lee Brown, a future mayor (Belkin 1990).

More recently, a similar constellation of groups has been critical to the electoral success of Annise Parker (Murray 2011). "[S]ince the victories of Kathy Whitmire and Eleanor Tinsley in the 1970s," according to political scientist Richard Murray, "a white female supported by a coalition of moderate to liberal whites and minorities has defeated a white male conservative in every high-profile city runoff contest for the last 30 years" (2009, 1). In 1997, Parker ran for an at-large seat on the council. In the first round of the election, the field included three African American men, two Latinos (one male, the other female), one white man, and Parker. Parker and Don Fitch, a white Republican man, received the most votes in the first round and with the minority candidates out of the race, Parker took a majority of both the Black and Latino vote shares in the runoff (Murray 2009). Parker's 2003 campaign for city controller was similar. This time, she faced a runoff against council member Bruce Tatro, who was a conservative white male. "The 2003 runoff results were the same as 1997, with Parker benefiting from a 'progressive' coalition of moderate and liberal Anglos, plus strong support from both Black and Hispanic voters with no minority candidates on the ballot" (Murray 2009, 1). In Parker's

2009 race for mayor, she enjoyed less support from the city's African American community because she ran against Gene Locke, an African American male attorney (Murray 2011). Like Whitmire before her, Parker's political base is in the progressive Montrose neighborhood, where many gays and lesbians reside (Hylton 2009). To build a successful electoral coalition, she reached out to vital constituencies such as Latinos, Asian Americans, and fiscal conservatives (Hylton 2009).

A member of Parker's core team explained that she was able to connect to these various constituency groups based on her experience in city government and knowledge of neighborhood issues:

I think that for this mayor, the fact that she was lesbian, was under the surface an issue, but in the end she had proved herself through six years of council service and six years of city controller service that yes, she very proudly and openly represented the gay and lesbian community. But she was about so much more than the gay and lesbian community and she proved it over and over and over again—that she got elected because she was a neighborhood activist out to protect her neighborhood and enhance services for the neighborhoods. She understood the neighborhoods. That's what she ran on. That's how people knew her (Interview 562, 20 October 2011).

Parker's background in neighborhood affairs won support from liberal groups while her experience as city controller and as an executive in the oil industry allowed her to also run on a platform of fiscal conservatism and budget discipline, which appealed to

moderate Republicans (Hylton 2009). She used this support from gay-friendly and tolerant allies to win the election (Button et al. 1999).

The Women's Movement in Houston

At about the same time that the partnerships between women and other disadvantaged groups were taking shape, the Women's Movement was spreading across the country. The social movement was a key factor in the elections of Eleanor Tinsley and Kristin Hartung to the City Council and Kathy Whitmire as controller and then mayor (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Whitmire was an accountant before becoming involved in local politics. In her first year as a CPA, she learned about the Women's Movement and "started reading about it, hearing about it, thinking about what it meant for me and for all of the other young women who had grown up in my era, believing that our only opportunity would be to have a role as somebody's wife" (Houston Public Library 2008). She became actively involved in January 1973 when the National Women's Political Caucus held its first annual convention at the Rice Hotel in Houston. After the convention, Whitmire helped organize the Harris County Women's Political Caucus, which, she explained, "really served as the volunteer base of my campaign for City Controller in 1977... [T]he Women's Movement, I would say was the most critical factor in the launching of my political career" (Houston Public Library 2008).

After she had spent several years as controller, people encouraged Whitmire to run for mayor.

[A] lot of people from the Women's Movement [were] very excited about the possibility of electing a woman mayor which seemed, you know,

almost impossible. [B]ut since I had been able to break that barrier once—there had never been a woman elected to any office in city government at the time that I first ran and then just two years later, the first two women on City Council—it seemed possible and I felt somebody was going to do it and why not me? (Houston Public Library 2008).

Whitmire ran for mayor and won in 1981.

In Houston, the growth of new social movements, particularly the gay rights and women's movements, facilitated women's rise to elected positions in city government. Whitmire, Tinsley, and others drew political strength and campaign support from these groups. Similar coalitions between women and other disadvantaged groups remain important today, as suggested by Annise Parker's elections to three citywide positions.

Institutional Changes Yield More Diverse Councils

As discussed in Chapter 2, previous research has focused on how electoral institutions and the desirability of public offices influence women's election as mayors and council members. For instance, the potential effect of at-large versus district-based electoral institutions on the gender composition of city councils is a hallmark of existing studies (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; Trounstine and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992). This research posits that women are more likely to run for and win council seats that are selected by the city as a whole than those that are tied to particular districts. However, empirical evidence in support of this reasoning has been mixed at best; some studies find support for the hypothesis (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Trounstine and Valdini 2008) while others report null findings (Alozie and

Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Karnig and Walter 1976; Welch and Herrick 1992). Moreover, the models presented in Chapter 2 further call into question the proposition that women's election is more common in at-large systems as various measures of this institutional feature were found to be insignificant.

The political histories of Houston and Atlanta over the past 40 years provide further insight for understanding how institutional features affect women's descriptive representation. In particular, *experiences in the two cities demonstrate that the effect of electoral rules and council structure may be conditional on the broader political context and time period*. In political systems that were opening up to previously excluded groups, revisions to electoral rules may have produced counterintuitive results for women's descriptive representation on the council.

Before 1979, all eight of Houston's city council members were elected at-large. Council members for five of the eight at-large posts were required to reside in specific districts and, in theory, represent the interests of those constituents (Thomas and Murray 1991). As a result of this fully at-large structure, which was designed to dilute the voting strength of non-whites, older white men dominated Houston's city council. Until 1979, only one Black candidate, Judson Robinson, Jr., served on the council (beginning in 1971) in spite of the increasing demographic diversity of the city's population (Murray 2004, 10-11).

This changed when the city attempted to annex the Clear Lake City area in 1977. Because of revisions to the federal Voting Rights Act, the annexation could not take place without pre-clearance from the United States Department of Justice. The DOJ ruled that, as long as council members were elected at-large, adding 20,000 mostly white

suburbanites from Clear Lake would dilute minorities' voting strength (Murray 2004). City and DOJ officials eventually reached a compromise: the city council would be enlarged from eight to 14 members with five at-large and nine district seats (Murray 2004; Thomas and Murray 1991).⁹

The revised electoral structure immediately produced a council that was more representative of the city's demographic composition (Murray 2004). In the nine elections before reform (1961-1971), winners included 18 men and no women; 17 of the 18 men were white and one was Black. In the six elections after reform (1979-1989), the winners included ten men and four women. In terms of race/ethnicity, eight of the post-reform winners were white, five were Black, and one was Hispanic (Thomas and Murray 1991, 225). As discussed in the previous section, in 1979, two women were elected to council—Eleanor Tinsley, who won an at-large seat and Christin Hartung, who won the District G seat (Parker 2009).

These changes are in the opposite direction of what existing scholarship might expect. Although the findings have been mixed, scholars predict that women's election will be more likely in cities with purely at-large systems or with a higher proportion of at-large seats (see Chapter 2). However, officials in Houston generally felt that the change to some district-based seats allowed groups, especially women and African Americans, which had previously been excluded from government to gain a foothold (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). As former mayor Kathy Whitmire recalled, the institutional changes “brought new minority representation to the City Council, new gender diversity to the City Council” (Houston Public Library 2008). To be sure, the increase in the number of

⁹ The 1979 compromise had an additional stipulation that the city would add two more district seats once it grew to 2.1 million people. These two seats were added in 2011.

seats and the availability of very open seats may have been the decisive factors that led to women's success in 1979. Positing that women are more likely to hold less desirable positions, previous research has found that the proportion of female council members tends to be larger in cities with more seats on their councils (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Trounstein and Valdini 2008; Welch and Herrick 1992; but see Bullock and MacManus 1991; Karnig and Welch 1979). However, in Chapter 2, the number of council seats was not a significant predictor of the average percentage of council seats held by women in 2001 and 2006.

Like Houston, Atlanta made significant changes to its electoral rules and council structure in the 1970s. The "principal architect" of the city's new charter, Grace Towns Hamilton, was the first African American woman to serve in the Georgia General Assembly (Spritzer and Bergmark 2007). Hamilton, who represented a district in mid-Atlanta, "worked tirelessly between 1965 and 1985 to expand political representation for Blacks in city, county, and state governments" (Spritzer and Bergmark 2007). With the new charter of 1973, the city switched from a weak-mayor form of government, where the Board of Aldermen oversaw administration of the city, to a strong-mayor system, where the chief executive had full powers of administrative appointment and reorganization (Stone 1989). African Americans throughout the city as well as a growing neighborhood movement composed of white residents in gentrifying neighborhoods believed that their likelihood of being descriptively represented on the council would be higher in a system with district-based elections (Spritzer and Bergmark 1998; Stone 1989). With the combined advocacy of these groups, under the new charter, 12 council members were elected by district and six were elected at-large. Previously, all members

of the Board of Alderman had been elected at-large. The total number of council members, 18, remained the same (Atlanta City Council 2011; Keating 2001).¹⁰ The council that was elected under the new charter in 1973 was evenly split between African Americans and Caucasians. By 1978, it included three women (Stone 1989). Panke Bradley won At-Large Post 15 in 1973 and Barbara Asher and Debbie McCarty won At-Large Post 16 and District Post 1, respectively, in 1977 (Barbara Asher Campaign 1977; Hedgpeth 1998b; Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985; Panke M. Bradley Papers 1970-1977).¹¹ In Atlanta, like Houston, it appears that having at-large council seats may not have been the decisive factor that led to the election of three councilwomen in the 1970s, especially since these women were elected to both at-large and district-based posts.

The experiences in Houston and Atlanta suggest that the effect of electoral structures on the success of female candidates may depend on the context and time period under examination. In the 1970s, Houston and Atlanta's city governments were opening up to minority groups, particularly African Americans. The councils in both cities switched from having all at-large seats to a combination of at-large and ward-based seats. Shortly after these changes occurred, several women were elected to each council.

In all likelihood, a combination of factors, both structural and contextual, facilitates women's success in council elections. In Houston, the Hartung and Tinsely campaigns were likely aided by the addition of more—and more open—seats, the

¹⁰ A new charter adopted in 1996 reduced the council to 12 district and three at-large seats (Atlanta City Council 2011). Proponents of this reduction argued that for its size, Atlanta had one of the largest and most expensive councils in the country. By decreasing the council's size, they wanted to save money and make the government run more efficiently (Helton 1995). Opponents said the reduction was politically motivated, with the goal of eliminating several of former mayor Bill Campbell's more outspoken opponents on council (Fears 1995).

¹¹ Mayor Sam Massell had appointed Bradley to the council in 1971; in 1973, she won the election to maintain her seat.

broadening of local government to include previously excluded groups, the women's movement, and women's partnerships with other disadvantaged groups. In Atlanta, the opening of city politics to marginalized groups, coalition-building between these groups, and a revised city charter may have all facilitated Asher, Bradley, and McCarty's electoral success. It hardly seems that electoral design, particularly the availability of at-large council seats, was the only or most decisive factor in either case. The experiences in Atlanta and Houston thus underscore an important point from Chapter 2—it is critical to consider contextual factors, in addition to institutions, when seeking to explain electoral outcomes.

Furthermore, these council elections should not be viewed as isolated events. The victories of Tinsley, Asher, and Bradley in elections for at-large seats set the stage for women to secure more prominent and desirable citywide elected offices in the future. Their victories opened the door for Kathy Whitmire, Shirley Franklin, and Annise Parker to take the top offices in their respective cities as well as Cathy Woolard and Lisa Borders to become city council presidents in Atlanta.

Women Developing Skills and Knowledge in Municipal Affairs

Given their early placement in municipal government, women in Atlanta were able to develop skills and knowledge about urban politics and policymaking. Over the years, female city officials were effectively being groomed to take on greater and more prominent responsibilities in Atlanta's bureaucracy. The large number of women in important city positions during Shirley Franklin's administration was, at least in part, the result of a long-term process started by Maynard Jackson. "If you look at some of the women leadership in this city, people are always amazed at the connections of a lot of our

women leaders back to Maynard,” remarked a former appointed official (Interview 882, 16 August 2011).

Another former official in Atlanta explained that the trend started with Sam Massell, who brought women into mid-level positions in the bureaucracy and appointed Panke Bradley to the Board of Alderman. Then, Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young followed suit, engaging an increasing number of women in their administrations. “Andy’s cabinet was 50-50 women to men. Maynard’s wasn’t quite 50-50” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Jackson appointed one of the few female professional engineers to head the Department of Watershed. “[C]learly, the experience that people brought to [Shirley Franklin’s] administration is a direct result of the opportunities that they had 20 years before and the doors that had been opened then” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Because of Jackson’s early efforts, “women were a part of the policy discussion and debate, which in addition to being trained and educated and smart and committed, they now are getting the experience they need in order to be leaders... It didn’t happen in a lot of cities” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). In a recent interview with a local magazine, Franklin remarked,

It’s hard to say that something happened in 2001 with my election that was revolutionary. I mean, in fact, my election is a continuation of women taking leadership roles, being engaged in public dialogue, being engaged in public policy and leadership over a long period of time (*Atlanta Magazine* 2011b).

A prominent official in Franklin's administration explained that women, who may have started in lower-level positions, were given opportunities to develop their skills and advance through the municipal hierarchy.

One of the odd things about Atlanta is that you would've had commissioners who started in city government as what was called a secretary back then and moved up. I had never seen that before... They could go to school because the city offered, you know, a subsidy for education and they could move up the ladder until they became commissioner. You have no idea how huge that is... [Atlanta] always had that and always had this sense of forward thinking (Interview 44, 22 August 2011).

Shirley Franklin herself had the opportunity to take on positions with more and more responsibilities. Franklin, whose ex-husband was a close friend and political advisor to Maynard Jackson, served as the former mayor's commissioner of cultural affairs (Holmes 2011). She then became deputy director of Andrew Young's 1981 mayoral campaign and, after the election, he appointed her the city's chief administrative officer.¹² A former city official recalled, "Andy had the guts to say, 'I'm gonna have a woman run my government.' And that, of course, was Shirley Franklin... He literally [said] that." If someone asked Young about government operations, he would respond, "I don't know. Ask Shirley." The mayor "left the decisions to Shirley Franklin. He left the decisions to her, [saying]... 'The city's in great hands. It'll be fine'" (Interview 882, 16

¹² The CAO was the highest-ranking appointed position in city government. As the chief planner for the city, Franklin oversaw all executive departments and developed goals and work priorities for the government (Dorfman 2005).

August 2011). Franklin had enormous responsibilities during this period, especially since Mayor Young was frequently traveling outside Atlanta (Owens and Rich 2003).

On the legislative side, having two women on the city council in the 1970s helped pave the way for others. In a 2007 interview, Shirley Franklin said that Panke Bradley and Barbara Asher “really did open the door for other women. They opened the door because they did a good job. They were competent. They were committed. They brought their creativity. They brought their education. And as a result of their hard work, I was able to run for mayor successfully” (City of Atlanta 2007). There is evidence that, especially in the early years of women’s presence in city government, they drew support from one another’s campaign staff. For example, Barbara Asher volunteered in Panke Bradley’s 1973 campaign and then employed Bradley’s campaign manager as her own in 1977 (Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project 1985). More recently, Franklin used her bully pulpit as mayor to campaign for Joyce Sheperd in a tightly contested race against Derrick Boazman for the District 12 council seat in 2005 (Interview 519, 24 August 2011; Suggs 2005). Boazman, who the mayor called a “bully,” had previously vacated the seat to mount an unsuccessful run for city council president (Suggs 2005).

Similarly, the prominent positions that women have held in Houston’s government more recently, especially in the White and Parker administrations, are due, in part, to the hard work and experience of early female officeholders. A long-time city official in Parker’s administration explained that Kathy Whitmire, Eleanor Tinsley, and Kristin Hartung “were all really competent—I mean, they were very active and outspoken... They weren’t just sit, put your feet up on the table and smoke a cigar kind of

politicians.” Houstonians saw the hard work of these three women “and so it was never an issue after that” (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). Since Whitmire, Tinsley, and Hartung were competent leaders, residents understood that women were just as able as men to be successful in city government.

Women Developing Skills, Knowledge, and Networks through Work Outside of Government

In addition to the experience gained inside the city governments of Houston and Atlanta, women developed their skills, knowledge, and political networks through opportunities outside of city government. Participating in civic clubs, school boards, and other local organizations provided training opportunities and political networks for many women who eventually ran for elected office. In this way, women’s involvement in civil society, particularly place-based community organizations, has served as a gateway into elected offices (Clarke et al. 1998). As one prominent former official in Houston explained,

I think, by definition, a lot of civic associations tend to have women as the people that do the work—volunteer activities in schools... It’s a farm team, you know? It’s leadership training. People—there are a lot of people in Houston who kind of learn about politics and policy by being the PTO president or being the Civic Club president, and they just sort of naturally, when they figure out where the power structure is, they figure out how to get there and are ambitious or feel that they have the skills to do it and that they can make a difference (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

Eleanor Tinsley, for example, was president of a Parent Teacher Organization, then was elected to the Houston Independent School Board of Trustees in 1970, and became its president in 1972. During her tenure, Tinsley was on the forefront of the effort to desegregate Houston's schools (Vasquez 2009). She describes her four years on the school board as the most challenging in her life because of the fierce opposition to desegregation. Tinsley and her family came under personal attack (Houston Public Library 2007). She spent just four years on the board and then failed to win reelection. However, Tinsley's supporters encouraged her to run for an office in city government.

More recently, former council members Carol Alvarado, Ada Edwards, and Toni Lawrence all rose out of the community activist ranks, which provided the training and networks necessary to support their candidacies (Interview 118, 17 November 2011). A former city official said that, prior to being elected, Alvarado, Edwards, and Lawrence were leaders in their districts,

[J]ust without the title and then they ran for office and they won. That's the difference I see [between men and women], is that women, they're naturally caregivers, whether it's to their family or their community. Women like that, [they're] doing it without the pay, without the title (Interview 118, 17 November 2011).

For these women, it was a natural progression from being community activists, gaining skills and a support network in their neighborhoods, to running for city council.

Similarly, in Atlanta, many council members cut their teeth in neighborhood groups and community organizations. A former council member thought that women and men tended to take similar pathways into office. "In Atlanta, most all leaders come up

through the neighborhood ranks or the community organizing ranks—sometimes through the business area, but not very often. So to get elected, you have to have some street credibility” (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

A current council member disagreed with this sentiment, believing instead that female candidates for council tend to prove themselves through their active participation in the community whereas,

Some of the men just come out of the blue. You know, wake up one morning and say, ‘I want to be a council member’ and end up on a ballot. So some of us are, I think, come up through having proven ourselves in our respective communities (Interview 240, 26 July 2011).

Several current councilwomen, such as Joyce Sheperd, Felicia Moore, Carla Smith, Cleta Winslow, and Natalyn Archibong, were involved in the Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) system, community and neighborhood organizations, and/or local schools before running for public office. Through those activities, they built a network of people who knew they were active in their communities and could competently represent others in policymaking.

The three female mayors of Atlanta and Houston had connections to the market sector, which likely made them more legitimate candidates in these pro-business cities (Feagin 1988; Fisher 1989; Stone 1989). Kathy Whitmire, who was an accountant before running for city controller and then mayor, was “a strong advocate of a probusiness approach to local government” (Feagin 1988, 155). Likewise, Annise Parker was well known to the business community, having worked in the gas and oil industry for 18 years and then owning a retail bookstore for ten years (City of Houston 2012c). She ran on a

platform of fiscal conservatism in 2009, which appealed to the city's business elites and moderate Republicans (Hylton 2009).

Following Shirley Franklin's time as chief administrative officer in the Young administration, she was a senior policy advisor and managing director of the Atlanta Committee on the Olympic Games, which gave her "high visibility among the city's economic elites" (Owens and Rich 2003, 213). The ACOG had a great deal of influence in Atlanta throughout the 1990s so Franklin's post as its senior policy advisor was significant (Keating 2001; Owens and Rich 2003). It positioned her in the growth machine coalition (Logan and Molotch 1987) and expanded her social capital, which she converted to political capital when campaigning for mayor. She ended up being the first Black mayor to, in a sense, come out of the business community, even though she did not enjoy full business support in the 2001 election (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). Since economic elites have historically been an influential component of Atlanta and Houston's governing coalitions, prospective mayors are more likely to be successful when they have ties to and (at least some) support from the business community, as was the case for Franklin, Whitmire, and Parker (Feagin 1988; Stone 1989).

Remedy to Corruption in Atlanta

Throughout his administration rumors of corruption dogged Bill Campbell. He faced accusations of "taking bribes, tax evasion and serving as ringleader to the circus of corruption that was Atlanta City Hall during most of the 1990s" (Henry 2006). A local reporter wrote,

Simply trying to keep track of the various scams, payoffs and crony moments... during Campbell's reign as mayor can make the head swim. If

you believe prosecutors, his eight years in office were filled with near-countless episodes of nickel-and-dime graft—they say he even scalped his free World Series tickets—punctuated by the occasional big grab (Henry 2006).

Following Campbell's tenure as mayor, at least a dozen former city officials, contractors, and businessmen with ties to the former mayor pleaded guilty to or were convicted of various corruption charges. Although Campbell was accused but never convicted of taking bribes in exchange for large municipal contracts, in 2006 a jury convicted him of failing to pay taxes on \$160,000 of income from 1997 to 1999, which was in the middle of his second term as mayor (Suggs 2011).

The connection between women's descriptive representation and corruption has been examined in cross-national perspective. Some studies report an association between larger numbers of women in national parliaments and reduced levels of corruption (e.g., Dollar, Fisman, and Gatti 2001; Swamy, Knack, Lee and Azfar 2001). However, more recent studies pointed out that empirical evidence in support of this finding might have been spurious. It is actually a contextual factor, liberal democracy, which reduces corruption (Sung 2003). Furthermore, Goetz (2007) contends that arguments about women and reduced corruption are based on "essentialist notions of women's higher moral nature and an assumed propensity to bring this to bear on public life, and particularly on the conduct of politics" (87). Even if women are no more or less corruptible than men, it may be that the public's belief in the "myth of women's incorruptibility" (Goetz 2007, 87) may lead people to support women's candidacies, thus increasing their descriptive representation following corruption scandals. Indeed, public

perceptions about the relative corruptibility of men versus women may have played a role in the 2001 election in Atlanta. American cities would be a useful context to investigate such issues in more depth.

Atlanta voters, upset by the corruption that plagued Campbell's administration, may have supported candidates who they believed could disrupt the culture of corruption in city government. Some city officials and civic leaders suggested that the corruption in City Hall during Campbell's tenure was at least partially the reason why women were elected to the mayoralty, council presidency, and 8 out of 15 council seats in the 2001.¹³ A former council member explained that people were disgruntled with local government and Bill Campbell had been "an enormous disappointment" (Interview 124, 22 July 2011). Franklin's campaign, accordingly, emphasized "themes relating to ethical, efficient, and effective government" (Owens and Rich 2003, 213). Shirley Franklin, who was familiar to people after decades in the public domain, had positive name recognition and a good reputation, which set her apart from Campbell. A civic leader remarked, "[T]here had been so much corruption with Bill Campbell that I think Shirley was sort of the antithesis of that image of the crooked mayor... Nobody could buy Shirley Franklin... She was, you know, smart as a whip and dripping with integrity" (Interview 361, 9 August 2011). As another informant put it, "You know, you go from somebody who was just a nasty, ill-tempered crook, you know, to a woman who had experience in city government and was tough, fairly [sic], perceived as being tough enough" (Interview 124, 22 July 2011).

¹³ I was unable to find public opinion data to assess the role that corruption played in the 2001 election in Atlanta. However, a national survey conducted on the eve of the midterm congressional elections in 2006 asked several corruption-related questions. In that survey, 52 percent of women and 43 percent of men said that they believed electing more congresswomen would address the corruption in Washington either a lot or somewhat (Lake Research Partners 2006).

Trying to live up to her campaign rhetoric, Franklin made decisions once in office that seemed to reward the public for its faith in her to make a difference. Her appointments seemed to clear the taint of the Campbell administration. Specifically, she replaced virtually all of the officials and bureaucrats who served under the former mayor, in many cases, with women. For example, Larry Wallace, Campbell's chief operating officer, who pleaded guilty to taking bribes from a city contractor, was replaced with Lynnette Young, the former chief administrative officer for Kurt Schmoke in Baltimore (Henry 2006).

The Atlanta example begs the question of whether corruption is connected to the subsequent electoral success of women in other cities, time periods, and political contexts. To be sure, female municipal officials are exposed to the same types of incentives and temptations as their male counterparts. Some women have not been able to resist them. For example, Baltimore's first female mayor, Sheila Dixon, resigned in 2010 after being convicted of using gift cards that had been donated for the city's poor (Hanes 2010).

Open Political Systems

In recent years, the openness of Atlanta and Houston's political systems has assisted in women's ascendance in city government. Neither city has a political machine in the classic sense of the concept.¹⁴ Both cities have diverse and relatively progressive populations. Both are viewed as places where hard work and competence are rewarded. Each of these factors pertaining to Atlanta and Houston's political contexts has facilitated

¹⁴ Erie (1988) defines mature political machines as those in which power is centralized in the hands of a single party boss, whose control extends throughout the city. Machine operatives remain in power for at least a decade and trade tangible goods, such as jobs and welfare services, in exchange for electoral support.

women's increasing descriptive representation, thus complementing the variables examined in Chapter 2. Furthermore, many of the factors described in this section indicate the absence or opposite of what Elazar (1966) would characterize as a traditionalistic political culture. In contrast to the political cultures of Texas and Georgia, politics in Atlanta and Houston do not tend to be hierarchical, controlled by elites, and centered on maintaining the existing social order.¹⁵

Absence of a Political Machine

In his seminal book, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta 1946-1988*, Clarence Stone explains that Atlanta lacks a political machine. Instead, it has a “governing coalition,” which is “a core group—typically a body of insiders—who come together repeatedly in making important decisions” regarding municipal affairs (Stone 1989, 5). Atlanta looks quite different from a machine city since it holds nonpartisan elections and lacks a mass patronage system. However, “it would hardly be accurate to describe civic life in Atlanta as open and fluid. Nonpartisanship has heightened the role of organizations connected to business, and the newspapers have held an important position in policy debates” (Stone 1989, 239).

While historically, Atlanta's governing coalition has been closed, its electoral arena has been relatively open, especially since Maynard Jackson's first mayoral election. Ever since that campaign, the business community, a key member of the governing coalition, has not supported the eventual winner.¹⁶ When taking office, former mayor

¹⁵ The concept of open political systems should thus be viewed as a continuum. Systems characterized as relatively more open lack political machines (extremely open systems lack political monopolies altogether), have diverse and progressive-minded populations, exhibit entrepreneurial cultures that privilege competence over cronyism, and have expanding economies.

¹⁶ Arguably, in the 2001 election, Franklin enjoyed a greater degree of support from the business community than her predecessors had. On the one hand, she had strong connections to important businesspeople, established during her time as mayor Young's CAO and as policy advisor to the ACOG.

Andrew Young famously said to the city's business leaders, "I didn't get elected with your help, but I can't govern without you" (Stone 1989, 110). Another former official explained,

Black mayoral candidates in Atlanta have not enjoyed full-scale business support in their elections. But I will say, this is an interesting business community because once elected the business community has been pretty strong partners with whoever was the mayor... You need some business support to run and win. You need lots of business support to govern. Lots. Lots to govern (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

The current leader of a business organization also noted that Atlanta lacks a political machine that dominates electoral politics. Instead, "[p]eople rise out of neighborhoods in Atlanta, but not machinery kind of people" (Interview 362, 23 August 2011). Some people think of the decades of Black mayoral leadership as a machine, "the Maynard Machine." They see the history of Jackson-Young-Campbell-Franklin-Reed as part of one political monopoly (Trounstine 2008), especially given the overlaps in appointments and policies, as well as beneficiaries.¹⁷ But the business organization president disagreed: "I don't think that is the case in the same context of Chicago where it's really the Daly machine... It is not as ground into the system" (Interview 362, 23 August 2011).

A long-serving former member of the City Council similarly explained, "[T]here's no real ward system, no patronage system. If you decide to run, and you have

Tom Cousins, a powerhouse in Atlanta's business community, was an early Franklin backer and served as a campaign co-chair, along with Young (Woods 2006). On the other hand, many prominent figures in the real estate, development, restaurant, and construction industries supported Franklin's opponent, council president Robb Pitts (Interview 273, 19 July 2011; Saporta 2000).

¹⁷ A newspaper editorial published in the wake of Franklin's first election described Atlanta as "a city where dynastic politics obviously works" (Baxter 2001, F4).

any kind of a following, depending upon which area you represent, if you have a big enough mouth, in some cases you can win. Or if you're smart enough in other areas, you can win" (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). But the absence of a political machine has not meant that local campaigns are not organized. For example, beginning in the 1940s, "[t]he tradition was that a 'ticket' (punch card endorsement) was distributed by Black *Atlanta Journal Constitution* newspaper carriers in the Black communities three or four days before the election" (Holmes 2011, 66). Ministers communicated the endorsements at church on Sundays too (Holmes 2011).

In spite of the absence of real machinery, Maynard Jackson allegedly had a role in selecting each of his predecessors until his death in 2003 (Stirgus and Suggs 2009). Prominent women in city government were connected to several former mayors, especially Jackson. For example, Shirley Franklin's ex-husband, David Franklin, was Maynard Jackson's close friend, law partner, and political advisor (Holmes 2011). The personnel director for Jackson and commissioner of administrative services under Young, Clara Axam, and her family had been close friends of Jackson's family for several generations (Interview 882, 16 August 2011). A former city council president explained that there was "a whole community here of influential, educated Black people in a really tight knit circle... It was just a club, so to speak... They all knew each other. They were educated, competent, articulate" (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). Several women's membership in this group contributed to their increasing numbers in local government.

Similarly, Houston lacks a political machine as there is no patronage system and local elections are nonpartisan. "[T]here are some of these pseudo machines and I really believe that—that they are waning," explained an elected official who has been in office

for several years (Interview 593, 7 November 2011). Instead of immigrant political machines, local business elites have dominated government decisions and non-decisions (Feagin 1988). This has been the case for well over a century now. For instance, a 1909 advertisement in a local publication read, “city hall is a *business* house. She has no wards, no ward politicians, no graft” (quoted in Shelton et al. 1989, 5). Business elites in the city have generally been willing to follow whatever course of action is most beneficial for economic development, including electing a woman to the city’s top post. In the 1981 election, many business leaders supported Whitmire’s candidacy because she was “strongly probusiness” and they believed that “she might improve the city’s ‘good old boy’ image” (Feagin 1988, 155). Importantly, the absence of political machines in Houston and Atlanta has made it easier for women to make their way in to city government.

Openness to Newcomers

In Houston and Atlanta, political novices can work their way into the system. Both cities are viewed as places where hard work, competence, and demonstrated ability are rewarded. The openness of these political systems has played a role in women’s increasing numbers and power in city government. Even though Houston was incorporated in 1836, a year before Chicago’s incorporation, Houstonians think of themselves as living in a new community. Several council members explained that Houston is a “young” city where people do not run up against “old traditions” and “old money” influence (Interview 93, 16 November 2011; Interview 336, 3 November 2011). This is because Houston is a fiercely entrepreneurial city (Feagin 1988; Shelton et al. 1989), which has expanded and contracted—economically, demographically, and

otherwise—based on trends in the oil and gas industry. A *Time* reporter recently characterized the city as “dynamic, diverse, a place to make a fortune and lose one” (Hylton 2009). The lack of regulatory mechanisms restricting development (i.e., the absence of zoning) has also contributed, in an architectural and urban planning sense, to this feeling of newness (Feagin 1988; Murray 2004). Additionally, in recent years, Houston has attracted many new residents, especially from other countries. Between 2000 and 2010, the city’s foreign-born population increased by 300,000 (Greater Houston Partnership 2010). Indeed, a recent study noted, “Among the 15 metro areas with the largest number of immigrants, only four posted significant, positive growth in their foreign-born populations between 2007 and 2008 (Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, and Seattle)” (Brookings 2010, 68).

Some compared Houston to Dallas, where the political system is much less open. One former district council member said,

Dallas is a much more closed city. It’s the ‘blue bloods,’ they say, and you can’t get anywhere in Dallas unless you have tons of money. And in Houston, people can come here and they are new, and people accept them. And if they volunteer and work hard, I think you can get things done...

It’s a much more open city (Interview 307, 24 October 2011).

Another current council member concurred, stating:

I just think Houston has a reputation from outsiders or even insiders as being a city where you can come here and succeed. I’ve been told the city of Dallas, for example, a lot of it happens based on who’s your family and where did you go to school kind of emphasis. Here, it doesn’t matter

where you came from or anything like that. You can come here and succeed. A lot of the people that come to Houston are from abroad. So I think there's a general openness. Everybody here has come from somewhere else, or a large number have come from somewhere else (Interview 99, 24 October 2011).

To be sure, in both Houston and Dallas, business elites have enjoyed privileged positions in terms of their strong alliances with local politicians and influence over municipal affairs (Elkin 1987; Feagin 1988). Though, in the post-War era, Dallas has differed in the degree to which business elites dominate governance and policymaking. The difference, in political theorist Stephen Elkin's view, is "the range of actors who become active bargainers being more restricted in Dallas" (1987, 61 quoted in Hill 1996).

Many people describe Houston as a "City of Opportunity" since it is home to a large number of multinational corporations and has an entrepreneurial culture that has been open to non-natives in more recent years (Feagin 1988). A former official in White's administration explained,

[I]f you work hard every day and if you're honest and you get a good education and stuff, you're going to make it here in Houston because we don't care what you look like, what color you are, where you came from, what your family name is. You're actually—you have a chance here. You can take it and make it big (Interview 625, 1 November 2011; also Interview 906, 4 November 2011).

During part of Bill White's administration, over half of the council seats were held by women. A former female council member explained that she finds Houstonians to be

“very open and wanting solutions, not caring if it comes packaged in a skirt or pants” (Interview 179, 9 November 2011). One of her colleagues agreed that Houston is

[A] working city. It’s a can-do attitude city, and nobody looks at what your differences are, only if you’re working hard and playing by the rules and want to succeed... [During the White years,] we just saw that—that dynamic on council being reflective of who is a Houstonian... Houston elects those people who want to work the hardest for the city, and it just—in that case, it just happened to be a lot of women were able to get their message across (Interview 387, 17 November 2011).

Like Houston, in recent years, Atlanta has had a relatively open political culture, especially in electoral politics. A long-time former city official noted, “Atlanta is seen as a city where people will be given a fair shake overall” (Interview 243, 24 August 2011). Women have held an increasing number of important city positions because they have demonstrated their knowledge of city affairs and ability to get things done (Interview 723, 25 July 2011). In a 1996 magazine article, the former director of the Atlanta Housing Authority, Renee Glover, was quoted as saying, “We’ve come to a point, particularly in government, where one’s ability weighs more than gender and race. That’s a testament to certain males in the city. The fact that there are a number of African American women who are in leadership positions points to the fact that there is an appreciation for what we can contribute to society” (*Ebony* 1996, 84).

Some attribute Atlanta’s openness to its legacy in the Civil Rights movement (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). For example, the president of a local philanthropy said:

I've always been convinced that women rode the coattails of the Civil Rights movement. I mean, that's why I stayed here rather than move back to [City X] when I graduated from college... Women of all colors have ridden the tails of the Civil Rights movement and that's why, I think, that women have gotten ahead in this community. It's because the doors were open and we slipped in. I mean, the doors weren't open for us necessarily but we slipped in whereas in [City X], they weren't open for anybody so nobody slipped in for years... [H]ere, because of the Civil Rights movement, it was all mixed up and all these doors were open and women just slipped right in... Unbeknownst to anybody, they just slipped right in the open door. And that's what really created a more level playing field for Atlanta than it did for a lot of other cities. Because they had more time to rise in there 'cause they got in the door earlier. I mean, Shirley [Franklin] got in the door in the '70s. She became mayor, maybe, much later. But she got in that door that was open. And she got in it—she was Black but, I mean, even if she'd been white, she could have gotten in that door. I got in the door because of the Civil Rights movement (Interview 16, 7 September 2011; also Interview 44, 22 August 2011).

Like Houston, people describe Atlanta as a “City of Opportunity,” perhaps more because of its Civil Rights legacy than its entrepreneurial opportunities, although there are elements of the latter factor as well.

Flow of Newcomers

Atlanta and Houston are each home to a number of large, multinational corporations. The economic engine of Houston is the oil and gas industry and several Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in Atlanta or the metro region. Therefore, the cities attract a constant flow of new residents with diverse sets of experiences. Officials in both cities pride themselves on having open-minded rather than provincial populations compared to other cities and regions in the South. The flow of new residents with worldly (non-Southern) experiences means that people are less likely to harbor biases against having women in high-level city positions.

In the Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown MSA, net international immigration accounted for a staggering 55 percent of net migration between the 2000 and 2010 censuses, underscoring the diversity of new residents' backgrounds (Greater Houston Partnership 2010). The Greater Houston Partnership (2010) attributes this inflow of residents to the area's prominence in international business. In 2009, the city's foreign-born population made up 28.6 percent of its total population. In comparison, the foreign-born populations of the other largest American cities, New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Philadelphia, make up 35.7, 39.7, 20.6, and 11.6 percent of their respective total populations (Census 2009). In 2005 and 2006, Houston experienced a surge in domestic migration, mainly due to the absorption of Hurricane Katrina evacuees from southern Louisiana (Greater Houston Partnership 2010). Net international immigration accounted for 33 percent of migration to the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta MSA between 2000 and 2007, which adds up to almost 184,000 new international residents (Georgia Power and Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce 2009). Fourteen percent of the metro area's population was foreign-born in 2010 (Metro Atlanta Chamber 2012b).

A former high-level elected official explained that many people who reside in Houston hail from other places, both in the U.S. and abroad. “You don’t find too many native Houstonians anymore... [T]hey came here because of the oil industry. This is the energy capital of the world here” (Interview 906, 4 November 2011; also Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Over the past 30 years, Georgia has imported a substantial portion of its educational talent (Interview 362, 23 August 2011). This trend is especially prevalent in Atlanta, which has changed the city. Table 3.2 shows that the percentage of Atlanta’s population that is college educated increased from 26.6 percent in 1990 to 34.6 percent in 2000 and to 45 percent in 2010. During the 1990s, Atlanta’s population of educated 25 to 34 year olds grew by an astounding 46 percent; it was second only to San Francisco in attracting this demographic group (Chapman 2011). As the head of a local business organization explained, “A lot of people have moved here and run for political office and been accepted... It hasn’t necessarily been homegrown talent that is changing the city” (Interview 362, 23 August 2011). Just under half (seven out of 15) of Atlanta’s current council members moved to the city from somewhere else. Of the recent mayors, Young, Campbell, and Franklin came from outside Atlanta while Reed and Jackson were natives. The civic leader cited above believes that newcomers to the city have been more progressive and thus more open to electing women than their counterparts who controlled the city in the past (Interview 362, 23 August 2011).

Progressive Populations

Cities with more liberal electorates, shown in Chapter 2, have a larger proportion of women on their councils. The Houston and Atlanta cases provide some additional

support for this finding. The electorate in Atlanta is more liberal than the electorate in Houston. In the 2004 presidential election, for instance, 75.4 percent of voters in Atlanta voted for the Democratic candidate or a liberal third-party candidate, compared to 46.3 percent of Houston's voters (BACVR 2005). Nonetheless, a bureaucrat said that people in Houston

[H]ave experienced more than their own backyards... [W]e have a huge conservative— philosophically conservative population. Conservative in some areas, very pioneering in other areas, but we certainly have our share of Republicans... So it's not that people aren't conservative... [B]ut it is for all its intolerance, tolerant (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

This community, with its “tolerant” conservatives and liberals as well, has supported women's election to public office and their increasing prominence once there. This was evident in the 2009 mayoral election. Parker's emphasis on prudence in municipal budgeting helped her secure support from moderate Republicans, who tended to be fiscally conservative but socially moderate (Hylton 2009).

Likewise, there are a large number of women in Atlanta's city government because the city population is progressive. The leader of a business group explained that Atlanta has excelled beyond peer cities like Birmingham because it has a history of “embracing diversity” (Interview 110, 22 September 2011; see also Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). Atlanta is the only American city to have been completely destroyed by war. After the city was rebuilt, business and civic leaders wanted to demonstrate to the rest of the country that it was open for business so they held a series of expositions in the 1880s and 1890s (Allen 1996; Doyle 1990; Interview 110, 22 September 2011). The

Cotton States and International Exposition of 1895 included a women's pavilion and a Negro pavilion, which was forward-thinking for the time period (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Building on the momentum of the women's department at the exposition, a number of society women founded the Atlanta Woman's Club in 1896 (Doyle 1990). Its purpose was to,

[P]rove to the world that women could mean even more in their homes by participating in the civic philanthropic and legislative interests of their growing city and in standing side by side with the development of the times they could aid in the progress of a great city (Atlanta Woman's Club historian quoted in Doyle 1990, 223).

Two of the oldest colleges in Atlanta, Spelman (founded in 1881) and Agnes Scott (founded in 1889), have all female student bodies (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). According to a former high-level official, "That stuff didn't just happen. This is a place where progressive people were attracted in the 1890s from throughout the South. It's still the case today" (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Atlanta's progressivism had made it a magnet for gays and lesbians from throughout the South (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). Despite its location in the most conservative region in the country, or perhaps because it is a liberal haven within this region, the city is home to a large LGBT community that has significant political standing in civic affairs (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). This progressive image has also facilitated women's increasing prominence in local government.

Despite the relative openness of Atlanta and Houston's political systems to women, there are still some problems and biases. The cities are not always the most

inclusive places, especially outside of city government. For example, Central Atlanta Progress, the influential business organization in the central business district, has always had white male presidents. Similarly, white men dominate the Harris County-Houston Sports Authority. Nonetheless, officials and bureaucrats inside of City Hall tend to be demographically diverse (Interview 362, 23 August 2011; Interview 723, 25 July 2011). Additionally, leaders at some of these non-governmental organizations said that they have put effort into diversifying their ranks in recent years (Interview 362, 23 August 2011).

Both cities have certain elements of a political establishment. Some view the mayors who followed Maynard Jackson and were supposedly chosen by him as part of such an establishment (Stirgus and Suggs 2009). Similarly, Houston's former mayor, Bob Lanier "was classically a part of the Houston establishment" (Interview 76, 27 October 2011). Lanier came from a wealthy family, lived in the well-to-do River Oaks section of the city, and was a successful businessperson (Interview 76, 27 October 2011). However, if Atlanta and Houston have some semblances of a political establishment or monopolies (Trounstine 2008), women have not been excluded from it, especially in recent years. For example, Shirley Franklin started working in city government in Jackson's administration and he supported her political ascendance (Stirgus and Suggs 2009). Likewise, Lanier was a huge proponent of the city's affirmative action program and of diversity in Houston generally (Interview 76, 27 October 2011).

Not everyone agrees that Houston is always the most open place. The city has "as many networks and cliques here and good 'ole buddies as anyplace else. So I don't want you to leave out of here thinking that Houston is just locked into competence and who's

best to do the job,” said a current council member. Certain people are “plugged in slots simply because it’s a brother-in-law deal or sister-in-law deal. That stuff still exists here. I’m not going to be the one to say that it doesn’t exist because I still see it” (Interview 789, 3 November 2011). Even if such networks do exist, however, it appears as if women have been able to penetrate them. Furthermore, many more interview respondents described Houston and Atlanta as having open political systems than those who said the opposite was true.

Mayors’ Efforts to Make Diverse Appointments

Since the 1980s, mayors of Houston and Atlanta have appointed people with various diverse backgrounds to positions in city government and to their core teams. In Atlanta, Andrew Young and Shirley Franklin followed Maynard Jackson’s legacy in this regard. Although few people discuss Campbell’s accomplishments as mayor since his tenure was overshadowed by corruption, a number of women served in his administration as well (*Ebony* 1996). Officials in Franklin’s administration said that she intentionally appointed women to high-level positions (Interview 786, 26 August 2011). Her administration “made a way for women to be in a variety of leadership positions within government” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Franklin and her team helped “define career paths and career opportunities for women that were non-traditional positions for women who had non-traditional careers” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). For example, neither of Franklin’s city attorneys, Beth Chandler and Linda DiSantis, had previous experience in municipal law nor had either been managing partners of a law firm. However, Franklin’s administration understood “the career progression through the eyes

of professional women” and realized that Chandler and DiSantis were competent and had valuable legal skills (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Another example is Dianne Harnell Cohen, who was the administration’s commissioner of parks, recreation, and cultural Affairs from 2003 to 2009. Cohen had over 30 years of increasingly important executive leadership but did not have a college degree (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Nonetheless, a former council member described Cohen as one of the city’s best commissioners. Cohen “got it. She understood how to count votes. She understood how to get council people comfortable. She understood that she needed to come to everybody’s office individually [to] see what their issues were. And [as a result,] she got a lot done with the parks” (Interview 379, 21 July 2011).

Purportedly, when recruiting another top official in her administration, Franklin said to this woman, “We really need you. This could be something that’s historic, to have a woman—a female mayor, female chief operating officer, female city council president, female city attorney, [and eventually a female chief financial officer]... So five females—a city of this size and that has this much influence, it was literally unheard of” (Interview 44, 22 August 2011). Franklin could have easily appointed men to these high-level city positions. “It is not for lack of men who have the same qualifications and experience out there,” recalled a member of her team (Interview 786, 26 August 2011). If two people had equal qualifications, Franklin would often choose a female applicant over a man.

In Houston, Kathy Whitmire’s appointments made the city government more inclusive than it had previously been. According to a current council member, Whitmire

[R]eally really really really turned some leaves here and made women more prominently noticeable with key assignments, real positions of authority... She gave females and minorities opportunities but you had to perform to stay there. I mean, she broke down the barrier and said look no, no, no, no, we're going to give everybody a chance and everybody means minorities and females (Interview 789, 3 November 2011).

During her time as mayor, Whitmire appointed an African American man and then a white woman as police chief, the firsts in both instances. Lee Brown, who eventually became Houston's first Black mayor, served as its police chief from 1982 to 1990 (Belkin 1990). When Brown left to become the police commissioner of New York City, Whitmire appointed Elizabeth Watson. Watson was the first woman to head the police force in one of the nation's 20 largest cities (Belkin 1990).

Following Whitmire, Bob Lanier intentionally promoted diversity in Houston's government, making sure his core team was diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). Afterwards, Brown and White followed suit. Brown, for example, appointed Carol Alvarado, who is now a state representative, as one of his senior aides. The Latino community supported Brown when he ran and once he was elected, Latinos "wanted somebody to represent them that would report directly to him with some authority, some decision-making power" (Interview 118, 17 November 2011). Alvarado was hired to be that person; Brown never made a decision that affected the Latino community without consulting her (Interview 118, 17 November 2011). Alvarado spent four years working in Brown's administration and then won a seat on the city council, where she eventually became Bill White's mayor pro temp.

A bureaucrat who has spent many years in Houston's government said, "Every mayor is conscious that she or he wants a balance of women appointees, racially diverse appointees, ethnically diverse appointees." Mayors are likely driven by "their own sense of fairness" when making these appointments, but there are also political motivations: "to get elected, they need the votes of all the segments of the population and so they try to be careful not to offend anybody... there's certainly a political component" (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Other Efforts to Recruit Women to City Government

Several high-level appointed officials in Houston and Atlanta reported that they made conscious efforts to recruit, train, and develop the skills of women on their staffs. During the Franklin administration, government leaders sought to build a diverse bureaucracy. For example, one former official explained that if one of her employees was interviewing only white men for a particular job, she would always ask why. "If the excuse was, 'We just couldn't find any,' I love that one because then I'll go out and find you a whole bunch... It was important for the mayor and her top staff for women to play not just a role but a major role in this, the 21st century of Atlanta" (Interview 44, 22 August 2011).

A former high-level legal official in Atlanta would try to provide opportunities for female lawyers to be mentored by lawyers inside and outside of city government and to develop their professional networks. She encouraged them to use the city's legal department as a learning opportunity for other jobs (Interview 531, 16 August 2011). Another former official in the legal department said, "I tried to be a mentor and an advocate for all of my staff but I probably did more of that with the young women

because it was just easier to do. They would tend to come more than the guys would to talk to me.” Throughout her career, she has talked to younger female lawyers “about the career and the difficulties and the challenges in the legal profession, which are still many despite the fact that over half the students in law school are women” (Interview 870, 11 August 2011).

Likewise, in Houston, several high-level bureaucrats said that they attempt to develop the skills of women. One explained,

I have young women come to me and young women who work with me and I spend a lot of time mentoring them because I believe very strongly that women should have a choice with what they want to do in their lives and that their gender shouldn't impede them and that they have a whole lot to give (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Although many bureaucrats in Atlanta and Houston spoke of their efforts to recruit women to work in city government and to develop their skills once they were hired, there were inconsistencies across municipal departments and institutions. For instance, it was much less common for female council members to talk about their efforts to develop other women. It may be that mayors and high-level bureaucrats have more opportunities to hire and mentor women, by virtue of the fact that the executive branch has many more employees than the council does. Additionally, the part-time status of council members in Houston and Atlanta means that they have less time available to mentor others. Council members spoke of a need for improvement in this area. For instance, a female elected official in Atlanta who served during Franklin's tenure said,

We didn't build a strong enough pipeline, is what I would tell you, of people who could come behind us and be able to sustain the momentum that we built... We didn't build a strong enough pipeline and I count myself among those folks that didn't. We nurtured folks but not enough and not enough people and not enough time (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

She said that former elected officials were focused on their own political advancement rather than on creating a succession plan for women in city government. This official also explained that she had difficulty convincing ambitious potential candidates that a council seat was powerful and could be used to provoke policy change (Interview 559, 12 August 2011). Even today, though, seven out of Atlanta's 15 council members are women (Atlanta City Council 2011) so the perceived lack of a pipeline is debatable.

In Houston, several officials expressed concern that while efforts had been made to hire women, not enough was being done to develop and promote them, especially in the public safety departments. A former city official said,

[I]n terms of issues of equality and promotion, I think those are issues that you will find everyone saying that you're supportive and then the question is: what is actually being done to promote women? For example, in the employment arena, I think a lot of strides both for minorities and women have been made in the hiring. The issue becomes, sometimes, the retention and more so the promotion to upper level positions... When you talk about promotion of women, you are also having to look at the public safety

positions that have traditionally been non-female—the police and fire (Interview 621, 31 October 2011).

Although great strides have been made to increase women's presence and the amount of authority they have in Houston and Atlanta's city governments, challenges nonetheless remain. Houston's Fire Department has been particularly slow to bolster its recruitment of women and to retrofit fire stations to accommodate mixed-sex living quarters (Interview 99, 24 October 2011; Interview 223, 21 October 2011; Interview 621, 31 October 2011). However, the experience in HFD is not unusual as just 3.6 percent of nation's firefighters are women (Glanton 2011).

Conclusion

This chapter traced the political ascendance of women to significant positions in Houston and Atlanta's city governments over the past 40 years. As in Chapter 2, several contextual factors emerged as critical to the electoral, political, and professional success of women in both city governments. This chapter uncovered additional political factors—such as coalition building between women and other disadvantaged groups, the openness of the cities' political systems, and unique events like the corruption scandal in the 1990s in Atlanta—that would have proven difficult to capture within a quantitative and strictly deductive framework.

In all likelihood, a combination of factors contributed to women's political and electoral ascendance in Houston and Atlanta, meaning that the process tracing undertaken in this chapter was, indeed, a useful endeavor (Brady, Collier, and Seawright 2004; George and Bennett 2005). A fruitful next step will be to determine which of the factors identified here are generalizable to other cities, time periods, and contexts. Is building

partnerships with other disadvantaged groups a sufficient condition? Are open political systems necessary? In order to address such issues, it may be necessary to examine other cities (e.g., Milwaukee, WI, Omaha, NE, or Fresno, CA) where very few women have served in municipal government.¹⁸ Incorporating other cities would add analytical leverage to help address the puzzle of why women's presence and power is higher in some cities than in others. What is different about a city like Milwaukee, for instance, that prevents women from gaining influential city positions? What do cities like Houston and Atlanta have that other cities lack? Additionally, future quantitative research on the determinants of women's office-holding across cities should devote attention to coalition-building between women and other disadvantaged groups, the openness of municipal political systems, and other factors examined in this chapter.

The insights discussed in this chapter have implications for existing theories regarding the contextual determinants of women's election to municipal (and other) offices. For example, the experiences in Houston and Atlanta suggest that the incorporation of women and other disadvantaged groups into municipal government may be interdependent phenomena and also tied to the openness of the cities' political cultures and institutions. It was by partnering with African Americans, gays and lesbians, and other minority groups that women were able to gain access to municipal policymaking positions. Future research should seek to model women's descriptive representation and political incorporation in tandem with that of other groups, rather than continuing with the single-axis approaches undertaken in Chapter 2 and in the bulk of the empirical studies thus far. Recent work that calls attention to the unique ways that electoral

¹⁸ Qualitative methods like process tracing are better at assessing whether and how a variable mattered to the outcome than assessing how much it mattered (George and Bennett 2005). The latter is more easily captured through comparative case studies and/or quantitative methods.

arrangements influence Black women and Latinas' descriptive representation (Trounstein and Valdini 2008) is a step in the right direction.

In a study of state legislators, Luis Fraga and colleagues show that because of the intersectionality of their ethnicity and gender, Latinas are more likely to forge coalitions across ethnic and gender lines, giving them a “strategic advantage” in the policymaking process (2008, 162). This chapter provided evidence that similar a phenomenon might be at play in municipal elections and bureaucratic appointments since African American women, Latinas, and lesbians served as critical partners in electoral coalitions and in building more diverse municipal bureaucracies. Future studies should explore such coalitions in more depth. What do these women see as their roles in this type of cross-group coalition building? Are these coalitions more common and/or successful in some cities or time periods than others?

The increased gender diversity of city councils in Houston and Atlanta following structural changes in the 1970s is puzzling in light of previous research. Existing theories predict that women's descriptive representation on city councils will be more likely in cities with at-large council elections or where a greater percentage of council seats are selected at-large rather than by district. Curiously, in Atlanta and Houston, the opposite occurred. In a context and time period where city governments were opening up to the participation of other disadvantaged groups, it would not make sense to continue to lock out women. This suggests that the effects of structural factors on the gender composition of city government may, at times, be overwhelmed by the political context at hand. Alternatively, the impact of structural and contextual factors may be interactive. An

interesting area of inquiry for future research will be to specify quantitative models that include interactions terms between structure and context variables.

Table 3.1 Comparing Municipal Institutions in Atlanta and Houston

	Atlanta	Houston
Form of Government	Mayor-council with a strong-mayor (weak-council)	Mayor-council with a strong-mayor (weak-council)
Executive powers of the mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief administrator and official representative of the city ▪ Appoints administrative department heads ▪ Oversees, directs, and commands the resources of a bureaucracy of ~8,140 employees ▪ Prepares and submits annual budget to council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief administrator and official representative of the city ▪ Appoints administrative department heads ▪ Oversees, directs, and commands the resources of a bureaucracy of ~22,397 employees ▪ Prepares and submits annual budget to council
Legislative powers of the mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May veto council-passed ordinances ▪ Does not have a vote on the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May not veto council-passed ordinances ▪ Voting member of the council ▪ Sets agenda for weekly council meetings ▪ Appoints Mayor Pro Tem from among CMs ▪ Creates council committees ▪ Appoints committee chairs and members
Powers of the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enacts and enforces all ordinances and resolutions ▪ Reviews, revises, and approves budget prepared by mayor ▪ May override mayoral vetoes with a two-thirds vote ▪ Confirms administrative department heads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enacts and enforces all ordinances and resolutions ▪ Revises and approves budget prepared by mayor ▪ Confirms administrative department heads ▪ Confirms Mayor Pro Tem
Structure, procedures, and composition of council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15 CMs (three at-large, 12 district-based) plus a council president (at-large) ▪ CMs serve in part-time capacity ▪ Ordinances and resolutions can be introduced on council floor by a CM as a personal paper, or can come through a committee ▪ City council president --Presides over council meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 16 CMs (five at-large, 11 district-based); Mayor pro tem selected by mayor from among CMs ▪ CMs serve in part-time capacity ▪ Mayor sets the agenda for each full council meeting; CMs may introduce legislation but the mayor decides whether it gets on agenda ▪ Three CMs may write a letter to the mayor,

	Atlanta	Houston
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Votes only in the case of a tie --Appoints chairs and members of committees --Assumes powers and duties of the mayor in case of mayor's absence or a vacancy --Cannot introduce legislation ▪ Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Almost all proposed legislation goes before a committee --Council president appoints committee chairs and members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calling for a special council meeting; If eight CMs attend this special meeting, they may vote on the piece of legislation; This rarely happens in practice ▪ Mayor pro tem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Assumes powers and duties of the mayor in case of mayor's absence --Fills in as mayor in the case of a vacancy until election is called by council --Political role played by mayor pro tem varies from one mayor to the next ▪ Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Created by the mayor; Number and nature of committees varies by mayor --Budget and Fiscal Affairs committee is the only one that has been legally authorized --Proposed legislation does not have to go through committee
Electoral rules for all offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Candidates for elected office must receive a majority of votes in order to win election; Runoff held if no candidate receives a majority ▪ Non-partisan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Candidates for elected office must receive a majority of votes in order to win election; Runoff held if no candidate receives a majority ▪ Non-partisan
Electoral rules for council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not subject to term limits ▪ Serve four-year terms ▪ Mixed system – 12 CMs elected from districts and three elected at-large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lifetime limit of three two-year terms ▪ Mixed system – 11 CMs elected from districts and five elected at-large
Electoral rules for mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited to two consecutive four-year terms ▪ Elected from the city at-large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lifetime limit of three two-year terms ▪ Elected from the city at-large
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City controller <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Popularly elected --Independent oversight of funds (auditor)

Sources:

Interviews with city officials in Atlanta and Houston

<http://citycouncil.atlantaga.gov/howworks.htm>

<http://www.atlantaga.gov/index.aspx?page=25>

<http://www.houstontx.gov/council/index.html>

<http://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/index.html>

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U.S. Census. 2010. Government Employment and Payroll, <http://www.census.gov/govs/apes/>

Table 3.2 Snapshot of Atlanta, 1970-2010

City of Atlanta	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total population (in thousands)	497	425	394	416	420
% Change over previous decade	-	-14.5	-7.3	5.7	0.8
% White, Non-Hispanic	48.4	31.9	30.2	31.3	38.4
% Black, Non-Hispanic	51.3	66	66.8	61	54
% Hispanic (All Races)	-	1.4	1.9	4.5	5.2
% Foreign Born	1.3	2.3	3.4	6.6	7.6 ^a
% High school graduates	46.5	60.1	69.8	76.8	86.2 ^a
% College graduates	13	20.5	26.6	34.6	45 ^a
Poverty Rate (%)	19.8	27.5	27.3	24.4	22.6 ^a
Median household income ^b	\$34,371	\$31,367	\$36,215	\$42,075	\$45,171 ^a
Unemployment rate (%)	3.9	8	9.1	14	6.5 ^a
Owner occupied units (%)	41.1	41.3	43.1	43.7	44.9

a - Value for 2006-2010

b - In 2006 dollars except for 2010 value, which is in 2010 dollars.

U.S. Census

Retrieved from (26 January 2011):

<http://socds.huduser.org/quicklink/screen3.odt?citystring=1304000>

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/1304000.html>

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0076/twps0076.html>

Table 3.3 Snapshot of Houston, 1970-2010

City of Houston	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total population (in thousands)	1,232	1,595	1,631	1,954	2,099
% Change over previous decade	-	29.4	2.2	19.8	7.5
% White, Non-Hispanic	73.4	52.3	40.8	30.8	25.6
% Black, Non-Hispanic	25.7	27.4	27.7	25	23.7
% Hispanic (All Races)	-	17.6	27.2	37.4	43.8
% Foreign Born	3.2	9.8	17.8	26.4	28.3 ^a
% High school graduates	51.8	68.4	70.5	70.4	74 ^a
% College graduates	14.9	23.1	25.1	27	28.2 ^a
Poverty Rate (%)	13.9	12.7	20.7	19.2	21 ^a
Median household income ^b	\$44,253	\$51,300	\$42,596	\$44,308	\$42,962 ^a
Unemployment rate (%)	3.1	3.6	8.2	7.6	8 ^a
Owner occupied units (%)	52.6	47.8	44.6	45.8	45.4

a - Value for 2006-2010

b - In 2006 dollars except for 2010 value, which is in 2010 dollars.

U.S. Census

Retrieved from (26 January 2011):

<http://socds.huduser.org/quicklink/screen3.odt?citystring=4835000>

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4835000.html>

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Table 3.4 2010 QuickFacts for Atlanta and Houston

	Atlanta	Houston
Population, 2010	420,003	2,099,451
Population, percent change, 2000 to 2010	0.8%	7.5%
Population, 2000	416,474	1,953,631
Female persons, percent, 2010	50.2%	49.8%
White persons, percent, 2010 (a)	38.4%	50.5%
Black persons, percent, 2010 (a)	54.0%	23.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.2%	0.7%
Asian persons, percent, 2010 (a)	3.1%	6.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2010 (a)	Z	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2010	2.0%	3.3%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b)	5.2%	43.8%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2010	36.3%	25.6%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2005-2009	7.8%	27.9%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2005-2009	10.8%	44.6%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2005-2009	85.5%	74.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2005-2009	45.7%	28.3%
Per capita money income in past 12 months (2009 dollars) 2005-2009	\$37,480	\$25,625
Median household income 2005-2009	\$50,243	\$42,797
People of all ages in poverty - percent, 2005-2009	21.4%	20.8%
Total number of firms, 2007	50,970	219,324
Black-owned firms, percent, 2007	30.9%	15.1%
American Indian- and Alaska Native-owned firms, percent, 2007	0.6%	0.9%
Asian-owned firms, percent, 2007	4.4%	10.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms, percent, 2007	F	0.1%
Hispanic-owned firms, percent, 2007	2.4%	23.3%
Women-owned firms, percent, 2007	33.4%	28.9%

Source: US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

F: Fewer than 100 firms

Z: Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

Part II

The Policy Impact of Women's Presence and Power in City Government

Chapter 4.

Cities Where Women Rule: Female Political Incorporation and the Allocation of Community Development Block Grant Funding

When and how are women represented in government policymaking? While women now hold more offices than they did 30 years ago, uncertainty remains about whether their increased presence impacts macro-level policy outputs at any level of government (Grey 2006; Reingold 2008). In this chapter, I pose a set of questions: Do cities with significant numbers of women in elected offices have more women-friendly policies? Do women need to obtain the most powerful positions to make those policies happen? While the chapter begins with the expectation that female officeholders will produce policy benefits for women, the larger goal is to shed light on political and institutional factors that condition the range of policies that female officials are able to effect.

A wealth of political science research has found that individual male and female officials behave differently in public office. By and large, this research, which considers representatives' policy preferences and roll call votes, concludes that female representatives are more likely than their male counterparts to respond to women's needs and interests. However, results from the research on the relationship between the presence of increasing numbers of women in political institutions and policy outputs are mixed at best. This highlights an empirical puzzle: If individual female officials make a difference for representing women's interests, why are institutions with more women not producing distinctive policy outputs? Municipalities offer a unique opportunity to

compare across political institutions to address this question. However, in spite of the potential analytical benefits to be gained, political scientists have devoted relatively little attention to the study of women and women's representation in local politics (Boles 2001; Dolan 2008; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Reingold 2008). Moving from individual representatives' policymaking behavior to municipal-level policy outputs provides leverage for addressing the aforementioned empirical puzzle and for understanding potential contingencies in the relationship between women's numerical and substantive representation.

Something beyond women's mere presence in government may be necessary to produce policy responsiveness. I argue that in the context of urban politics, and perhaps more broadly, political incorporation is required (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984). When women obtain leadership positions in municipal government and when the positions they hold have greater power relative to other municipal positions, cities will be more likely to produce policy outputs that are often associated with women's interests and needs. Borrowing from research on identity politics, I define female political incorporation as the extent to which women are strategically positioned to exercise significant influence over the municipal policymaking process (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Haynie 2001; Preuhs 2006) and see it as a key variable that may intervene between the presence of female officeholders and policy responsiveness to women.

Policies thought to benefit women's interests include those that improve women's social, political, and economic status in relation to men, address women's unique needs related to their bodies and health, and concern women's traditional role as caregivers. In the empirical analysis, I examine whether female political incorporation influences cities'

spending patterns in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Begun in 1974, CDBG is one of the largest annual sources of federal money that flows directly to cities. Public officials in American cities are politically and economically constrained in their ability to impact policy outcomes (Elazar 1966; Nivola 2002; Peterson 1981; Rich 1993, 2003). Importantly, the CDBG program gives municipal decision-makers flexibility to pursue services and programs that are consistent with their communities' needs (Brooks and Phillips 2010; Rich 1993; Stern 2006). In order to determine whether female political incorporation produces policies thought to benefit women's interests, it is necessary to consider policy arenas over which municipal officials have discretion, as is the case for the CDBG program.

I test the female political incorporation hypothesis with an original dataset that includes cities with populations of 100,000 or more and covers the period from 2002 to 2007. The analysis reveals that the effect of female political incorporation is contingent upon which policy area is under consideration. While women's presence and power is a significant determinant of whether cities allocate CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare, it does not appear to influence cities' expenditures in other areas, such as services for victims of domestic violence and centers and services for the disabled and seniors. Furthermore, the impact of female political incorporation on policy outputs may not always or necessarily extend beyond the effect of women's office-holding by itself. I draw on my original fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta to probe the findings from the quantitative analyses, focusing on the jurisdictional scope of city governments vis-à-vis other local governmental units, the challenges of measuring formal and informal

components of women's political power concurrently, and the possibility of developing a more valid measure of tangible women-friendly policy outputs.

Connecting Women's Descriptive Representation to Policy Responsiveness

Over the past four decades, empirical political scientists have demonstrated that female representatives in American state legislatures and Congress make a difference for the advancement and protection of women's interests (Barrett 1995, 1997; Burrell 1994; Carey, Niemi, and Powell 1998; Diamond 1977; Dodson 2006; Dodson and Carroll 1991; Poggione 2004; Swers 2002; Thomas 1991; Wolbrecht 2002). By and large, researchers have found that female representatives are more likely than their male counterparts to take liberal positions on a variety of topics, pursue and take leadership roles on feminist policy agendas, and support legislation that deals with issues of traditional concern to women (Barrett 1995, 1997; Carey, Niemi, and Powell 1998; Diamond 1977; Dodson and Carroll 1991; Poggione 2004; Thomas 1991). Moreover, female state legislators have been found to express a sense of responsibility to represent women's policy preferences and to see women as a distinct component of their constituencies (Reingold 2000; Thomas 1994, 1997). At the national level, female members of Congress are more likely than men to vote in favor of legislation that promotes women's interests. Studies relying on roll call votes in the U.S. Congress have found that gender has a significant influence on voting patterns for specific gender-related concerns like abortion (Tatalovich and Schier 1993) and broadly-defined sets of women's issues (Burrell 1994; Dodson 2006; Swers 1998, 2002). More recently, scholarly attention has gone beyond roll call votes to identify the effects of congresswomen throughout the legislative process. It finds, in

particular, that congresswomen are more likely than congressmen to sponsor and cosponsor women's issues legislation (Swers 2002; Tamerius 1995; Wolbrecht 2002).

Although individual women representatives do *act* differently than men, the connection between having more women in political institutions and the production of policies that benefit women's interests is tenuous at best. This is true no matter whether one compares across municipalities (Bratton and Ray 2002; Kerr et al. 1998; Saltzstein 1986), states (Berkman and O'Connor 1993; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Keiser 1996; Thomas 1991; Tolbert and Streuernagel 2001; Weldon 2004), or countries (Kittilson 2008; O'Regan 2000; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Weldon 2002). The results of this sparse literature on the connection between descriptive and substantive representation at the institutional level of analysis leaves us with a puzzle: in some cases, female public officials are able to produce substantive representation as their numbers grow (Berkman and O'Connor 1993; Bratton and Ray 2002; Kittilson 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005), but in others, women appear to make more of a difference when they are small in number (Crowley 2004). In still other instances, women's presence fails to impact the production of women-friendly policies, one way or the other (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Tolbert and Streuernagel 2001; Weldon 2004). If individual female representatives "are more attentive to, and more involved in, issues of importance to women in general" (Cammisa and Reingold 2004, 192), why are institutions with more women not always more likely to provide policy responsiveness?

A model that focuses on female political incorporation provides an important link between descriptive and substantive representation that existing scholarship has yet to consider. Borrowing from extant literature on identity politics, I define female political

incorporation as the extent to which women are strategically positioned to exercise power over and impact the municipal policymaking process (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Haynie 2001; Nelson 1991; Preuhs 2006). If women obtain powerful and influential leadership positions, then they may be able to affect policy outputs to a greater extent than they would through their presence in office alone. Moreover, when the structural organization of the city is such that the offices that women hold are equipped with more power relative to other municipal positions, then they are more likely to improve policy responsiveness.

Responsiveness to Women's Issues in Municipal Policymaking

Cities are a promising domain to study women's representation in policymaking because variation in women's office-holding and in the design of municipal institutions extends beyond that which exists at the state and national levels. However, due to the structural constraints on municipal spending decisions (Peterson 1981), cities may also be a hard case for finding a connection between women's office-holding and leadership and the production of women-friendly policies. According to Paul Peterson (1981), city officials are decidedly limited in their capacity to affect policymaking, for they must pursue and enact economic development policies above all else. Municipal officials, regardless of their gender, do not have much room to pursue political agendas, especially related to identity group interests (but see Reed 1988; Stone 1989; Swanstrom 1988). This is because progressive policymaking, often associated with identity group interests, attracts the poor and causes an exodus of the rich. Since cities require a stable tax base to stay solvent, local officials, no matter their gender, may be constrained in their ability to pursue women-friendly policies.

Furthermore, some question whether there are real differences in elite behaviors and attitudes when it comes to local problems. They claim that “gender differences tend to decline with level of office” (Boles 2001, 69) and that municipalities are not where heated issues of the women’s rights agenda are deliberated over and decided upon (Beck 1995, 2001; Donahue 1997; Mezey 1978). For example, Beck’s (2001) study demonstrates that men and women in municipal government share the same policy priorities, namely maintaining low taxes and high property values. Weikart et al. (2007, 135) similarly find that “women mayors have a great deal in common with male mayors in their choice of focus on the top policy issues; economic development, physical infrastructure, and public safety were extremely important policy issues for both genders.” Concurring with this finding, Donahue (1997) reports that women on local school boards throughout Massachusetts behave in ways that are similar to men and spend little time addressing problems that affect young girls.

Other studies have reached quite different conclusions. For example, in her study of 174 cities with 500 to 10,000 employees, Saltzstein (1986) finds that the presence of female mayors positively and significantly influences the number and types of municipal government jobs held by women (see also Kerr et al. 1998). Likewise, Schumaker and Burns (1998) find that gender cleavages in the opinions of local policymakers in Lawrence, Kansas exist on 20 out of the 30 policy issues included in their study and are particularly acute on issues involving economic growth, neighborhood protection, and social welfare (see also Boles 2001). Yet, they also report that policy outcomes tended to reflect the preferences of male policymakers.

Finally, some may wonder whether there are gender differences in public attitudes regarding local issues. An examination of survey data suggests that men and women do, in fact, have different preferences about local issues. The data presented in Table 4.1 are taken from the Knight Foundation's 2002 Community Indicators Survey, which examined various quality of life issues in the 27 cities where the Knight-Ridder Corporation owns newspapers. The survey also includes respondents from a national random sample, yielding a total sample size of 18,505. As the table reveals, women were more likely than men to state that a range of issues are a problem in their community, including crime, drugs, and violence, unemployment, homelessness, illiteracy, lack of affordable/quality childcare, and too many unsupervised children/teens. Although the large sample size means that some statistically significant differences between men and women are likely to emerge, it is nonetheless notable that women were consistently more likely to view various community issues as problematic. Also, the gap between men and women, while relatively small in certain issue areas (e.g., crimes, drugs, and violence and too many unsupervised children/teens) becomes larger for others (e.g., unemployment and not enough affordable/quality childcare). It appears that there may be a gender gap in public perceptions of local issues, especially those issues that concern women's traditional role as caregivers.¹ Yet, as described above, there are reasons to believe that cities may be a hard case for finding evidence of a connection between women's presence and power in government and policy responsiveness.

¹ However, it is important to note that these gender gaps are relatively small overall. In no case, are a majority of women opposed to a majority of men.

Female Political Incorporation: Theory and Hypotheses

Women's increasing presence in public offices may not always and automatically yield responsiveness to women's interests, especially at the municipal level of analysis. As Browning, Marshall, and Tabb found close to thirty years ago, other variables sometimes intervene between "sheer" numbers and substantive representation (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007). Thus, my main theoretical claim is that when women obtain leadership positions in city government and when the offices they hold have greater power relative to other municipal positions, cities will be more likely to produce policies that are often associated with women's needs and interests.

The first element of female political incorporation is women's presence in city government and the leadership positions they hold, both elected and appointed. If women obtain powerful and influential leadership positions, then they may be able to affect policy outputs to a greater extent than through their presence in office alone. This element includes the presence and seniority of a female mayor, the percentage of council seats held by women, the presence of a female council president, and the presence of a female chief administrative officer.

Secondly, when the structural organization of the city is such that the offices that women hold are equipped with more power relative to other municipal positions, then they will be more likely to improve policy responsiveness. I consider female political incorporation in relation to variation in the forms of municipal government—mayor-council with a strong mayor (and weak council), mayor-council with a weak mayor (and strong council), and council-manager. In the mayor-council structure, residents elect both a mayor and city council members to represent them. Mayor-council governments may

have either a strong- or weak-mayor. In the former, more power is vested in the mayor than in the city council and in the latter, more power is vested in the council. In council-manager governments, voters choose members of the city council and may choose a mayor, who presides over and votes on the council, but the mayor is less independent than in the mayor-council system. The council makes policy decisions and appoints a manager to implement its policies (MacManus and Bullock 2003; Nelson and Svara 2010; Pelissero 2003).² In order to produce policy responsiveness, the positions that women hold in municipal government must be vested with more power than positions they do not hold at the time.

With the two elements of female political incorporation in mind, I hypothesize that:

The greater the political incorporation of women in municipal government, the more likely cities will be to produce policies thought to benefit women's interests.

There is some evidence, however, that the effect of political incorporation may not always or necessarily extend beyond the impact of descriptive representation alone. While Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (1984) found that minority political incorporation was a key factor predicting policy responsiveness to African Americans and Latinos in ten California cities, other research has been less conclusive. For instance, in his study of state legislatures, Haynie (2001, 90) finds that “the effects of higher African American incorporation [on black substantive representation] are not decidedly superior to the effects of increased black descriptive representation.” Tolbert and Streunagel’s (2001) study of women’s health mandates in the states is one of very few that considers whether women’s political leadership influences responsiveness. Somewhat surprisingly, they find

² Appendix B describes the forms of municipal government and the powers of officeholders therein.

that women's presence and power in the legislature, the presence of a woman's caucus, and whether women chair relevant committees are all unrelated to the adoption of women's health policies. By empirically gauging the effects of women's incorporation on municipal policymaking, this study sheds additional light on the analytical power of the political incorporation concept.

Defining Policies Thought to Benefit Women's Interests

Conceptualizing the dependent variable—policy outputs thought to benefit women's interests—is challenging. Just as there are differences between men and women, there are also significant differences among women (Jonasdottir 1988), and any essentialist notion of “an exogenously given, universally shared, fixed female identity” that creates a common set of interests among all women is faulty (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008, 396). Also, in many cases, women's interests are not mutually exclusive from the interests of men. For example, fathers may care just as deeply as mothers about policies related to education and children's healthcare.

Nonetheless, certain issues are commonly associated with women. These issues are likely to exist despite the presence of significant cleavages among women and the fact that men's issues and women's issues are not always or necessarily mutually exclusive. Table 4.2 summarizes the approaches other scholars have taken to define and operationalize policies thought to benefit women's interests in comparative analyses. Following the work of these scholars (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Bratton 2005; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Reingold 2000; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Swers 2002; Thomas 1991, 1994), I define policies thought to benefit women's interests as those that: (a) improve women's social, political, and economic status in relation to

men, (b) address women's unique needs, related to their bodies and health, or (c) concern women's traditional role as caregivers. Broader definitions, such as those employed in this study, are preferable to narrower ones for two reasons. First, women are a heterogeneous group and so defining women's interests narrowly may exclude the interests of certain subgroups (Reingold and Haynie 2012). Second, a broader definition permits comparison of the results to previous studies on women's substantive representation. In this chapter, I operationalize policies that improve women's social status, address women's unique needs, and concern women's care-giving role as whether cities allocate Community Development Block Grant funding to various program areas, including childcare, healthcare, services for abused spouses, and centers and services for seniors and the disabled.

The Community Development Block Grant Program

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) was signed into law as part of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 with the goal of making "power, funds, and responsibility... flow from Washington to the States and to the people" (Rich 1993, 29). Continuing today, CDBG gives local decision-makers the flexibility to pursue programs that are consistent with their communities' needs (Brooks and Phillips 2010; Harrigan and Vogel 2000; Stern 2006). Cities and qualified urban counties are entitled to a block of funds "to be spent at local option, but within broad guidelines established by Congress" (Walker et al. 2002, i). As long as funds principally benefit low- and moderate-income people, a variety of activities may be funded, including public services, economic development, housing, and public improvements.

CDBG is “the major source of federal aid for most city governments” (Rich 1993, 56) and since the mid-2000s, Congress has allocated approximately \$5 billion per year to the program (Cytron 2008).³ Central cities of metropolitan areas, metropolitan cities with populations of at least 50,000 and urban counties with populations of 200,000 or more are entitled to funding. Funds are distributed based on a formula of community need, which includes population size, extent of poverty, age of the housing stock, housing overcrowding, and population growth in relation to other metropolitan areas (Stern 2006; Walker et al. 2002).

I use the allocation of CDBG funding in this chapter’s empirical analysis for several reasons. Local officials, particularly mayors and council members, have discretion in deciding how CDBG funds will be spent (Brooks and Phillips 2010; Rich 1993). In our system of federalism, municipal officeholders are constrained in their ability to impact policy outputs since cities are not constitutionally recognized as independent (Elazar 1966; Nivola 2002; Rich 2003). Instead, they operate in a “complex intergovernmental environment in which federal, state, and local agencies can frequently limit the actions cities take or, alternatively, mandate certain actions” (Rich 2003, 36). In order to determine whether female political incorporation produces policies thought to benefit women’s interests, one must consider policy outputs over which municipal officials have discretion, as is the case for the CDBG program.⁴ Furthermore, several

³ Nonetheless, a GAO report estimates that real per capita CDBG funding has declined by almost three-quarters since 1978. The number of communities receiving CDBG has nearly doubled over time, from 606 in 1975 to 1,201 in 2008, without commensurate increases in federal funding (cited in Cytron 2008, 21).

⁴ For more information on the processes that cities undertake to allocate their funding, see Brooks and Phillips (2010) for a discussion of Los Angeles’ CDBG program and Rich (1993) for Chicago’s. Importantly, Brooks and Phillips (2010, 14) note that in L.A., “[t]hough there are other actors involved in the decision-making process, it is clear that most of the formal authority to shape the city’s CDBG expenditures resides with the mayor, who possesses agenda setting power, and the city council, which has

CDBG expenditure categories that are tracked by the Department of Housing and Urban Development cohere with the concept of policies thought to benefit women's interests.⁵

Models, Data, and Measurement

The analysis considers whether female political incorporation influences the expenditure decisions that cities make in the CDBG program. To test the hypothesis, I compiled a city-level dataset that includes the 239 American cities with populations of 100,000 or more as of 2000.

Dependent Variables

Conducting quantitative research on urban political phenomena presents a number of challenges. In terms of the dependent variables, it is challenging to identify policy outputs subject to local discretion, comparable and measurable across cities and time, and valid as operationalizations of the concept (i.e., policies thought to benefit women's interests). In this chapter, I use data on whether cities allocated CDBG funds to areas that cohere with this concept to gain traction over these challenges. Cities report how they spent their funds in annual "CDBG Expenditure Reports," which are available online for fiscal years 2002 to 2007.⁶ Communities may use as many as 90 different categories to report how they spend the funding, which underscores the notion that the CDBG program is subject to a broad degree of local discretion. I chose five areas that are most closely

the ability to amend the mayor's proposal." A variety of municipal officials in Atlanta and Houston are involved in allocating these cities' CDBG funding, including the mayors, council members, and bureaucrats.

⁵ Previous studies have used municipal expenditure data from the U.S. Census of Governments to operationalize policies that benefit minorities' and/or women's interests (Brown 2007; Hopkins and McCabe forthcoming; Karnig and Welch 1980). However, a shortcoming of using this data is that cities may not have discretion over the allocation of funds in many of the covered areas. Moreover, it is virtually impossible to determine which of the expenditure categories are subject to federal and state mandates, and to what extent, and which are not.

⁶ <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/budget/disbursementreports/> (accessed 3/2010)

connected to improving women's social status and addressing women's unique needs related to their bodies and health and/or their role as caregivers. The dependent variables are thus dichotomous indicators of whether a city allocated any CDBG funding to services for battered and abused spouses, centers and services for the disabled, senior centers and services, health facilities and services, and childcare centers and services.⁷

Independent Variables

Another challenge of conducting this type of research is that there is no central repository for information on the gender of municipal officials over an extended period of time. Thus, I collected data on the gender of municipal officials from 2002 to 2007, including mayors, council members, and chief appointed officials, via a survey of city clerks in April through June 2010. The survey was sent to clerks in 239 cities and 87 responded in full, yielding a 36.4 percent response rate. The cities where clerks responded to the survey differ slightly from non-respondents in a number of ways, as demonstrated by the difference of means and chi-square tests presented in Appendix B. In the analysis, I apply probability weights to the data in order to make the sample more similar to the target population.

Finally in terms of research design challenges, there is no match of the female political incorporation concept to a readily available measure. I am applying Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's concept to a new empirical domain—women in urban politics—and attempting to measure it across a large set of cities. Thus, I develop a measure that

⁷ In many cities, the percentage of CDBG funds allocated to these areas is zero. Since there are many areas to which cities could potentially devote their money, the likelihood of spending it in a given area is somewhat low. Therefore, I consider two data generating processes. The first is the dichotomous decision of whether to allocate money to a service category and the second is the continuous percentage of how much CDBG funding to allocate. For ease of interpretation, I employ logistic regression models because the most meaningful change occurs in the dichotomous decision of whether to allocate any money to a particular service category. Alternative operationalizations and modeling strategies (e.g., truncated regression) produce similar results.

considers the percentage of weighted leadership positions held by women in city government, scaled from 0 to 100. It is similar to Preuhs' (2006) measure of African American incorporation in state legislatures but with a weighting scheme appropriate for municipal institutions. For city in year, I coded the extent to which women occupy a position. Then, I multiplied by a weight, which assesses the relative power of the position. I added the positions times weights together and divided by the sum of the weights for all positions. The denominator consists of the maximum possible score for each city.

The positions consist of the presence of a female mayor, including her seniority, the percentage of council seats held by women, and whether the council president and chief administrative officer (CAO) are women. The weights are ordinal and based on the form of government and specific powers given to each position within a city. For instance, the weights applied to the mayor consider whether (s)he may veto council-passed legislation, appoint administrative department heads, and develop the annual budget. Thus, a female mayor gets weighted more heavily when the position of mayor is strong and the council weak; the percentage of women on the council and a female council president are weighted more heavily when the council is strong and the mayor weak; and a female CAO gets weighted more heavily when the council is strong and the mayor weak. Appendix B contains detailed information about the measurement strategy. Of the 87 cities that responded to the survey, 11 percent had a female mayor in 2007. The mean percentage of women on the city council was 29.49 and the mean political incorporation score was 28.37 in 2007.

Before conducting the multivariate analysis, it is prudent to consider bivariate relationships between female political incorporation and the outcome variables. In Figure 4.1, dropped line plots show the proportion of city-year observations that allocated CDBG funding to the five policy areas. The x-axis organizes the observations into 15 groups based on their female political incorporation scores. These graphs provide initial evidence of what may be a non-linear relationship between women's political incorporation and expending CDBG funds on women-friendly policy areas. For example, at first, there is a positive linear trend between female political incorporation and the proportion of observations allocating funding to childcare. The trend then tapers off about midway through the female political incorporation scale. For cities with higher values of women's political incorporation, a smaller proportion allocated CDBG funding to childcare.

The non-linear trend echoes nascent theorizing by women and politics scholars, which suggests several reasons why the relationship between female political incorporation and policy outputs may be non-linear. Borrowing from Kanter's (1977) research on women in corporate settings, proponents of critical mass theory contend that women are more likely to focus on women's issues when their presence reaches a certain threshold in the legislature.⁸ Thus, as women's presence increases, institutions become more likely to produce policies that are often associated with women's interests (Dahlerup 1988; Saint-Germain 1989; Thomas 1991, 1994). Critical mass theory suggests a non-linear, upward sloping relationship—a "J" shape—between female political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women.

⁸ The location of said threshold is the subject of significant debate by both proponents of critical mass theory and its critics (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Bratton 2005; Grey 2006).

Critiques of critical mass theory also suggest the relationship between women's political incorporation and policy outputs will be nonlinear. However, in this case, the trend is upward sloping at first and then levels off. Critics have offered several reasons why we might expect to see this type of relationship. First, individual female representatives may have less of an incentive to pursue women-friendly policies when other female officials are present to do so (Bratton 2002; Reingold 2008). Second, there may be a backlash from members of the male majority as women's power and presence in an institution grows (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Bratton 2005; Childs and Krook 2006; Hawkesworth 2003; Kathlene 1994). Third, as the number of female officials grows so too does their diversity, increasing the likelihood that they will have divergent policy preferences (Carroll 2001; Childs and Krook 2006; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Swers 2002). Finally, having more women present may raise the consciousness of male colleagues to women's issues. Ultimately, this "spillover effect" will reduce the gender gap in elite behavior with respect to women-friendly policymaking (Bratton 2005).

Regardless of the precise nature, critical mass and its critics prompt us to consider alternatives to a positive, strictly linear relationship between female political incorporation and policy responsiveness. I investigate the possibility of non-linearities by including female political incorporation and its squared term in the models. Including the squared term provides flexibility so that the relationship between female political incorporation and expenditure decisions may take on a linear, upward sloping, or other non-monotonic shape.⁹

⁹ Bratton and Ray (2002) include descriptive representation squared for a similar reason.

Confounding Factors

The models control for the confounding influence of other municipal political, socioeconomic, and demographic pressures on CDBG expenditure decisions.¹⁰ I use the General Fund (GF) balance as percentage of revenues (logged) as a measure of municipal *fiscal health*, where higher numbers indicate that a city is in a better economic state.¹¹ Given the “iron cage” of municipal finance that locks cities into pursuing developmental policies (Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001), female officials may find it difficult to be supportive of women’s interests in policymaking, especially if the policies in question are redistributive in nature. Therefore, cities where the GF balance as a percentage of revenues is smaller may be less likely to allocate CDBG funding to women-friendly policy areas.

Ideology and partisanship matter in municipal politics, but perhaps differently or to a lesser degree than they do at higher levels, especially since many cities hold non-partisan elections and local issues are often thought of as having no clear partisan

¹⁰ It may not be possible to isolate the independent effect of female officials on policymaking without accounting for the institutional and electoral factors that brought these women into office in the first place (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Marschall and Ruhil 2006). Recent studies have used Regression Discontinuity Design (Ferreira and Gyourko 2009; Hopkins and McCabe forthcoming), matching (Boyd, Epstein, and Martin 2010), and instrumental variable models (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009) to address similar complications. For several reasons related to my theory and research design, which I elaborate on in Appendix B, I do not pursue these methods here. Nonetheless, to avoid spurious causation, the models control for several factors that are likely to affect both women’s political incorporation and CDBG expenditure decisions (Alozie and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Karnig and Walter 1976; Karnig and Welch 1979; MacManus and Bullock 1995; Smith, Reingold, and Owens 2012; Trounstine and Valdini 2008). Although the models do not benefit from the quasi-experimental power to rule out omitted variables offered by the aforementioned techniques, the included control variables reduce the risk of biased results. Moreover, the key findings are robust to the inclusion of various other variables including measures of electoral institutions, the need for particular services, population demographics, and women’s socioeconomic and organizational resources.

¹¹ The General Fund (GF) balance as percentage of revenues was acquired through Moody’s Investors Service. The GF ending balance as a percentage of expenditures would be a preferable measure because it allows cities to plan for the use of accumulated savings. However, I would have had to consult individual cities’ Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFRs) posted on their websites to collect annual expenditure data since these data were not available from Moody’s. This was both time and resource prohibitive, especially since the CAFRs for some cities are not posted on the Internet. Thus the GF balance as a percentage of revenues is used as a proxy for the fiscal health of cities.

divisions (Ferreira and Gyourko 2009; Gerber and Hopkins 2010). It would be extremely difficult to measure the partisan affiliations of municipal officials across cities and time, particularly because just 19 percent of cities in my dataset hold partisan elections. Yet, cities with liberal electorates may be more likely to allocate CDBG funding to programs that benefit women's interests. Although women's interests are numerous and varied, many overlap with issues that the Democratic Party has traditionally promoted. Furthermore, as my coauthors and I found in Chapter 2, liberal cities tend to elect a larger percentage of women to their councils. The variable *liberal ideology* measures the percentage of the city-level vote that went to the Democratic candidate and any liberal third-party candidates who received more than 0.1 percent of the votes cast in a city.¹² Higher scores indicate that the city's electorate is more liberal and thus more likely to allocate CDBG funding to women-friendly policy areas.

The presence and power of other groups in city government may influence the allocation of CDBG funding. Consequently, the models control for *Black political incorporation* and *Latino political incorporation*. I expect cities where blacks and Latinos have attained more power to allocate CDBG funding to policy areas thought to benefit women's interests, especially since these areas often overlap with the interests of these minority groups (Brown 2007; Karnig and Welch 1980).

Finally, following Hajnal and Trounstein (2010, 1142), I expect efficiency gains from a larger population that will "lead to diminished allocation spending and potentially greater redistributive spending," often associated with identity group interests. The

¹² I control for the ideological disposition of the city's electorate with data from the Bay Area Center for Voting Research that includes presidential vote returns, at the city level, for the 2004 election. See Appendix A for further information.

models therefore control for *population* size (in 100,000s) from the 2000 U.S. Census. Descriptive statistics for all variables are provided in Appendix B.

Results

I present a series of models that estimate the impact of female political incorporation on CDBG allocation decisions. I then compare these baseline models to ones that substitute a measure of female descriptive representation for political incorporation. I also use my case studies of Atlanta and Houston to probe outstanding puzzles from the quantitative models, calling attention to the jurisdictional scope of city versus county governments, the challenges of measuring formal and informal components of women's political power concurrently, and the possibility of developing a more precise measure of tangible women-friendly policy outputs.

Determinants of CDBG Allocations: Baseline Models

The first set of logistic regression models, presented in Table 4.3, assess whether women's presence and power in government influenced the expenditure decisions that cities made as part of the CDBG program between 2002 and 2007.¹³ The dependent variables in these models are dichotomous, indicating whether a municipal government devoted any CDBG funds to childcare, services for abused spouses, healthcare, senior services and centers, and services and centers for the disabled. The key independent variables are female political incorporation and female political incorporation squared. Importantly, this set of models provides evidence of a non-linear relationship between

¹³ I use General Estimating Equation (GEE) models, which are flexible and yield robustly consistent point estimates, while accounting for within-unit correlation. See Zorn (2001) for more on the GEE approach. Since the models employ binary time-series cross-sectional data, I address the possibility of temporal dependence by including a cubic spline and spell counter (Beck, Katz, and Tucker's 1998). The spell counter records the number of years since a city previously allocated money to a given CDBG expenditure category. The cubic spline is a smoothed function of time dummy variables. A cubic spline is preferable to dummies because the latter are inefficient.

incorporation and the allocation of CDBG funding to policy areas thought to benefit women's interests. In models one and three, women's political incorporation is a positive and highly significant predictor of whether a city expends CDBG funding on childcare and healthcare, respectively, while the squared term is a negative predictor of these dependent variables. Female political incorporation increases the likelihood of allocating funds to childcare and healthcare up to point, whereupon the relationship may flatten out or turn negative.

In order to explore the non-linearities further, Figures 4.2 and 4.3 present the predicted probabilities of allocating CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare for varying levels of female political incorporation.¹⁴ The graphs of predicted probabilities resemble an upside-down U-shape, implying that women's political incorporation increases policy responsiveness up to a certain point. Then the relationship reverses direction. The turning point is at 57 on the female political incorporation scale in Figure 4.2 and 58 in Figure 4.3. However, the histograms at the bottom of the graphs demonstrate that there are a limited number of observations in the right tail of the data. This is also evident from the increasingly large confidence intervals around the mean predicted probabilities. Therefore, the results may be driven by outliers in the data, particularly the small number of city-years with a high level of female political incorporation. Although the variation in women's presence and power in municipal government extends beyond what is found at the state and national levels, there are still relatively few cities where women hold most positions of power (i.e., where female political incorporation is greater than 50).

¹⁴ In the figures, I hold all other dichotomous and categorical variables constant at their medians and continuous variables constant at their means. Other predictions in the results section follow this pattern.

The findings with regard to non-linearities appear to be driven by outliers.¹⁵ Thus, models one and three provide support for the original hypothesis of a linear relationship between female political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women. There is a significant and largely positive relationship between female political incorporation and whether a city allocated CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare. However, the models also suggest that more scholarly attention should be devoted to the potential for a non-linear relationship between women's political incorporation and policy outputs. City-level data may offer the necessary variation in women's presence and power to explore these possibilities.

It is important to note that female political incorporation is insignificant in models two, four, and five, where whether a city allocated funding to services for abused spouses and centers and services for seniors and the disabled are the dependent variables. Some of these findings are consistent with previous research on the policy impact of women's descriptive representation, albeit at other levels of analysis or in different contexts. For instance, similar to model one, Bratton and Ray (2002) find that the proportion of women on Norwegian municipal councils positively influences the percentage of children in a community who receive childcare slots. In contrast, Weldon's research (2002, 2004) demonstrates that there is less certainty about the connection between women's representation and domestic violence policymaking, across both the U.S. states and countries. This uncertainty is also borne out in model two. These emerging patterns beg the question—which others have raised but few have addressed empirically—of why the

¹⁵ If just four city-years with the highest levels of female political incorporation are removed from the data, I recapture a positive and significant result in models one and three.

politics of various women's issues are so different.¹⁶ They also underscore the importance of operationalizing women's issues broadly. Indeed, incorporating such complexity and disaggregating across policy areas may reveal "the variation in causal processes that are obscured when one considers gender policy as a single category" (Htun and Weldon 2010, 208). It could be that most female officials in the cities examined here feel strongly and share similar preferences with regard to childcare and healthcare but have divergent preferences for the other issue areas. Or perhaps powerful women in city government are able to recruit and persuade their male colleagues to support allocating CDBG funds to these particular issue areas.

Across the models, the ideological disposition of the city's electorate does not appear to affect expenditure decisions.¹⁷ In contrast, municipal fiscal health is a significant predictor of whether a city allocated CDBG funding to services for abused spouses and healthcare. However, its effect is in the opposite direction of what was expected. As the general fund balance as a percent of revenues increases, cities become less likely to expend CDBG funds in these two areas. As anticipated, cities with larger populations are more likely to allocate funding to women-friendly policy areas, including childcare, healthcare, and senior centers and services.

Curiously, as African Americans' presence and power in government increases, cities become less likely to allocate funding to childcare and services for abused spouses. These may be two policy areas where blacks and women have divergent preferences. An

¹⁶ Htun and Weldon (2010) discuss the few pieces that attempt to address this gap and propose a framework for understanding the political dynamics of different women's issues in the comparative context (across countries).

¹⁷ It could be that women's political incorporation is so highly correlated with ideology that the former is masking the latter's effect. I ran models that included ideology but excluded incorporation. Liberal ideology was consistently insignificant in these models. This finding is tangentially consistent with studies reporting that mayoral partisanship is rarely connected to expenditure decisions (Ferreira and Gyourko 2009; Gerber and Hopkins 2011).

alternative measure of black political incorporation, which could include whether they are incorporated into the dominant liberal coalition on the council (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984), might produce different results. Unfortunately, the data for such a measure are not available across a large set of cities. Finally, as expected, Latino political incorporation is a positive predictor of whether a city allocates CDBG funding to healthcare and services and centers for seniors and the disabled.

Bureaucratized versus Politicized Decision-making Processes

The non-linearities in models one and three are likely driven by outliers, like Atlanta, where for much of the 2000s, women held a majority of the city's most powerful positions. Yet, despite this trend, the city did not allocate CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare. Why was this the case? During former mayor Shirley Franklin's tenure in the 2000s, Atlanta's process for allocating CDBG funding was routinized and bureaucratized rather than politicized (Interview 543, 2 August 2011; Interview 786, 26 August 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011). Several interviewees explained the process as follows (Interview 543, 2 August 2011; Interview 786, 26 August 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011). First, the city's office of grant services, in the executive branch, solicited input from all city departments regarding their service and programmatic needs and priorities. Simultaneously, the grants services office solicited applications from organizations throughout the city that wanted CDBG funding to support their programs and services. The office then ranked the applications it received, according to clear measures and based on the needs identified by the departments, and developed an initial list of allocations. The office of grants services would then send the list to the mayor's office for approval. Once it passed through the mayor's office, the list went out for public

comment and hearings and, at the same time, was sent to the city council. It had to first be approved by the council's committee on community development and human resources and then by the full council, during which time council members sometimes made small changes.

The bureaucratic nature of this decision-making process may be one reason why, despite having a number of prominent female officials, Atlanta did not allocate CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare. The city's agenda setter, mayor Shirley Franklin, and her core team was intent to let the office of grants services run the process in a fair, objective, and bureaucratic way (Interview 543, 2 August 2011; Interview 786, 26 August 2011). As a result, there was a fair amount of path dependence in the allocations. CDBG money went to organizations that had a history in Atlanta and had received and depended on CDBG money for a number of years (Interview 543, 2 August 2011). During the years covered in my dataset, women held over half the seats on the city council. Yet, the council would make only minimal changes to the proposed list of CDBG allocations. The list was typically long and divided up a significant amount of money so it would be too much of a burden for council members, who serve in a part-time capacity, to overhaul it.

In contrast, during the years covered by my dataset, Houston did, in fact, allocate CDBG funding to childcare and healthcare. Houston's process for making CDBG allocation decisions was less routinized and thus more open to the influence of political officials than Atlanta's. Bureaucrats in the city's department of housing oversaw the process. However, the housing department had a reputation as one of the very few poorly run organizations in Houston's city government (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

According to one former city official, the process for allocating CDBG funds was not “objective” since it was not clear how, exactly, decisions were made (Interview 644, 25 October 2011). Moreover, according to several respondents, the mayor’s office played more of a role in influencing CDBG allocation decisions in Houston than it did in Atlanta (Interview 644, 25 October 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

The Jurisdictional Responsibilities of Other Local Governmental Units

Some issues that are of traditional concern to women, including those that could be funded through the CDBG program, are the responsibility of other local governmental units and not cities. Since municipal governments are the creatures of the states in which they are located, the functional responsibilities of cities vis-à-vis other local governments vary from state to state. For example, in Georgia, county governments are responsible for providing social and human services. Consequently, city officials do not see such issues as part of their core responsibility (Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 922, 20 July 2011). In Georgia’s Constitution, counties were created to serve as an administrative extension of the state government and are therefore responsible for state functions such as courts, healthcare, and social services (Hudson and Hardy 2005). This may be another reason why Atlanta, despite having high levels of female political incorporation, did not allocate CDBG funding to policy areas thought to benefit women’s interests, such as childcare and healthcare. City policymakers did not allocate funds to these areas because they expected officials in Fulton and DeKalb counties, which encompass the city of Atlanta, to address them. As a former council member in Atlanta succinctly explained, “Cities do infrastructure and counties do social services” (Interview 124, 22 July 2011). Likewise, a current member of the city council remarked,

When I think of women's issues, I tend to think more of discriminatory policies and then also reproductive rights and health, physical health, and we don't really deal in those two areas. The county does more of that and we don't really get involved with that (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Thus jurisdictional authorities and responsibilities in Georgia determine whether the city of Atlanta becomes involved in certain issue areas that pertain to women.

Compared to Atlanta, Houston plays a larger role in the provision of social and human services. This is likely because the city operates under a home-rule charter, which gives it the authority to do anything not explicitly prohibited by the state or national governments. The authorities granted to counties in the metropolitan area are more limited (Murray 2004; Thomas and Murray 1991). For example, the city of Houston has operated public health clinics for many years. These clinics offer services such as prenatal care and STD treatment and testing (Interview 644, 25 October 2011). The city of Atlanta offers no similar services.

Heterogeneity in the responsibilities of local governments across the American states complicates political scientists' attempts to examine urban political phenomena within a quantitative framework. Such heterogeneity is one reason why urban politics scholars have historically relied on case studies in their empirical research (Trounstine 2009). I do not employ city fixed effects in the quantitative models because I wish to include time invariant and slowly moving independent variables in the analyses.

However, a lesson from my interviews in Atlanta and Houston is that the jurisdictional responsibilities of city governments vis-à-vis other local governmental units affect officials' likelihood of pursuing policies that are thought to benefit women's interests. In

light of this complication, there are several options for improving the explanatory power and accuracy of the quantitative models. One option would be to attempt to collect more data on such constraints and all other potentially omitted variables. Another would be to use fixed effects models (i.e., include dummy variables for each city or state) to account for unexplained unit heterogeneity. A third option may be to pursue quasi-experimental techniques that, in theory, address the potential for omitted variable bias when modeling local policy outputs (Gerber and Hopkins 2011; Hopkins and McCabe forthcoming).

However, the conceptualization and measurement of female political incorporation makes such strategies difficult, or perhaps impossible, to employ (see Appendix B).

Determinants of CDBG Allocations: Comparing Descriptive Representation to Political Incorporation

The theory outlined above presumes that the effect of female political incorporation on policy responsiveness will be greater than that of women's descriptive representation by itself. It is therefore imperative to examine empirical models where women's presence is the key independent variable, especially since female political incorporation is correlated with the percentage of the council that is female $r=0.6625$ ($p<0.0001$). This makes sense conceptually since women's presence in city government is likely to be a precondition of their ability to gain power.

The dependent variables in models six through ten, presented in Table 4.4, remain the same—they are dichotomous indicators of whether a city allocated CDBG funding to childcare, services for abused spouses, healthcare, and services and centers for seniors and the disabled. Surprisingly, these models, where the percentage of the council that is female and its squared term are substituted in for political incorporation, produce similar

results as before. For example, models six and eight indicate that women's presence on the council is significantly related to whether cities allocate funding to childcare and healthcare. Likewise, women's descriptive representation is unrelated to the other CDBG policy areas under consideration. Much like models one and three, in models six and eight, the effect of women's presence on the council increases in the first term and decreases in the second. For example, when the percentage of the council that is female is at its 25th percentile value in the data (at 16.7 percent) the predicted likelihood of allocating CDBG funding to childcare is 0.29. The probability increases to 0.42 when women's presence on the council is at its 50th percentile value (28.6 percent) and subsequently decreases for extreme outliers (e.g., for the maximum value in the data, 71.4 percent, the predicted probability of allocating to childcare is 0.27).

Table 4.4 reveals that the effect of female political incorporation on CDBG expenditure decisions is not decidedly different from the effect of women's presence on the council. The findings are not without precedent in the identity politics literature (Haynie 2001; Preuhs 2006).¹⁸ Moreover, when studying the impact of women's representation on policy outputs, few scholars have distinguished between descriptive representation and political incorporation (but see Tolbert and Steuernagel 2001). Thus, these results suggest the need for further research to uncover the contexts and conditions under which the impact of women's power in government office extends beyond their "sheer numbers" alone.

¹⁸ Haynie (2001) and Preuhs (2006) both report that the effect of Black incorporation in state legislatures on policy responsiveness is not decidedly different from descriptive representation alone.

Formal versus Informal Power

One of the reasons for the mix results of my quantitative tests is that the female political incorporation variable may not be capturing the full extent of women's political power in municipal government. Female political incorporation is a complex concept to measure. In this chapter, my measurement strategy relies on the institutional arrangements of city governments and formal powers granted to specific positions therein. In contrast, Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's (1984) operationalization of minority political incorporation included whether minorities had influence within a dominant liberal coalition on the council. Measures of power as perceived by officeholders, such as that used by Browning, Marshall, and Tabb, are subject to data availability limitations. Indeed, their study is restricted to ten cities in northern California. Studies like this chapter, which focuses on formal power (e.g., Haynie 2001; Nelson 1991; Preuhs 2006), may fail to capture officeholders' perceptions of who has influence. Informal power is undoubtedly important, too. A recent study reports that in U.S. state legislatures, measures of formal leadership powers are uncorrelated with measures derived from surveys that ask about legislators' perceptions of their leaders' powers (Battista 2011). This suggests that it may be important to examine both the formal and informal components of women's policymaking power in cities, as I am able to do by combining the quantitative analyses with data from my case studies.

My interviews in Atlanta and Houston demonstrated that there are various components of policymakers' informal power in cities, including persuasiveness, subject matter expertise, relationships and interpersonal skills, the ability to mobilize constituents quickly and effectively, among others. As a former key official in Atlanta remarked,

Some have power by virtue of their position—their elected position—and some have power by virtue of their position and their ideas—their ability to convene people or articulate a point of view... The people who have power in local government are the people who take it (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Furthermore, in many areas of city government, it is clear that there is a “symbiotic relationship between structure and agency” (Geron 2005, 176), whereby the formal powers bestowed on officeholders structure and shape opportunities in their quest for informal influence. Formal power may make the occasions for exercising influence over policymaking more likely; still, officeholders need to capitalize on the opportunities presented to them. A long-serving bureaucrat in Houston’s government described the mayor’s power thusly:

The Charter makes her strong—gives her a lot of authority, legal authority. The rest of it is up to her and how persuasive she is, how well she works with people, how good her political intuition is, what her mannerisms are, [and] how she treats people (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Likewise, informal power shapes the structure and nature of formal power as well. Over the long-term, people with large stores of informal power may rewrite rules and devise institutions in ways that benefit them and disadvantage their weakened opponents (Bridges 1999). In terms of influencing CDBG allocation decisions in cities, both formal and informal components of power may be necessary.

Affirmative Action in Contracting: An Alternative Women-Friendly Policy Output

In this chapter, a key research design challenge has been to conceptualize and operationalize the dependent variable, policies thought to benefit women's interests, especially those that are material in nature. To address this challenge, I have examined cities' allocations of CDBG funds. My fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta demonstrated that cities produce other women-friendly policy outputs. It could be that I found limited support for my theory because I have not been able to gather data on the most useful, appropriate, or consequential policy outputs. In other words, the theory may be accurate but the data that I have gathered on tangible policy outputs does not adequately test it.

When discussing CDBG allocation decisions, a former appointed official in Atlanta remarked:

[T]hose are small amounts of money. The big things you fight for are large contracts. I mean, in city government, large contracts are in really three places: the Department of Aviation, the Department of Watershed Management, [and] the Department of Public Works. That's where the big contracts are. So that's where the big money allocation is done. If you're going to have a fight, you might as well have a fight for big money otherwise you just end up fighting for, you know, little bits. I mean, not that little bits are not important too. You know, if you're a small women's organization that you're trying to have a business going forward and this particular contract is critical to your survival, even if it is small, hey it's critical to you. It might make you or break you... [But,] when you open up

the paper, you don't read about CDBG or any of those little things

(Interview 786, 26 August 2011).

Not coincidentally, Houston and Atlanta have two of the oldest Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) programs among American cities.¹⁹ Former mayors Maynard Jackson in Atlanta and Kathy Whitmire and Bob Lanier in Houston played critical roles in developing the MWBE programs and providing the political support to maintain them over the years. They had the vision and expended the political capital necessary to open up the municipal contracting systems to groups that had previously been locked out. As a result, the MWBE programs have provided significant economic opportunities to women, minorities, and members of other disadvantaged groups. Through the MWBE programs, Atlanta and Houston's governments have contracted with minority- and women-owned businesses to perform work and provide goods in a variety of areas. Other cities have not devoted the same level of money, energy, and resources to maintaining their MWBE programs (Interview 243, 24 August 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011). A former council member in Atlanta said:

[W]here the city has spent a lot of time, starting with Maynard Jackson, is equal opportunity in contracting. That's where the big dollars are. So the city is really conscious of race, women, small businesses—trying to make sure all of our contract money doesn't go to the 'big boys' (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

¹⁹ The MWBE programs in Houston and Atlanta have gone by different names over the years. Currently, Atlanta's Office of Contract Compliance administers the city's Equal Business Opportunity Program while Houston's Office of Business Opportunity is in charge of its Small/Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

Atlanta's affirmative action in contracting program started in 1974 while Houston's began in 1984 (Rodriguez 1999; Shearer 1988a).²⁰ Both were created because women and minorities had previously been shut out of the system, much as they had been excluded from employment in municipal government (see Chapter 3; Rodriguez 1999). As was the case for government employment, women's memberships in and partnerships with other disadvantaged groups allowed them to be included in and reap benefits from the MWBE programs. Politically disadvantaged groups, such as women, often depend on the presence of influential allies, like Maynard Jackson and Bob Lanier, to succeed in the local policymaking process (Button, Wald, and Rienzo 1999).

Today, municipal officials in both cities generally support their MWBE programs.²¹ For instance, council members often ask whether there is adequate participation by women and minorities in contracts that come before them for approval (Interview 307, 24 October 2011; Interview 870, 11 August 2011). One former council member in Atlanta said that she and the mayor were vigilant about working towards the goals set in the MWBE program:

We made sure we were meeting all of our targets for ensuring that women-owned businesses and people of color, in particular, were getting

²⁰ Today, Houston and Atlanta's MWBE programs both set goals, not strict thresholds, for women and minority participation in municipal contracts. Strict quotas or set-asides for minority or women-owned businesses are illegal (Interview 243, 24 August 2011; Interview 870, 11 August 2011; Williams 1993). In 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the city of Richmond, VA's requirement that prime contractors subcontract out at least 30 percent of work to minority-owned firms (Rodriguez 1999). As a result of the Court's decision in *Richmond v. Croson*, governments must conduct regular Croson disparity studies, which is "a factual analysis that examines the nature and extent of discrimination against minority and women owned businesses" (Williams 1999, 34). It is not enough to target presumed victims of societal discrimination in a MWBE program (Rodriguez 1999). Instead, participation goals have to be grounded in a proven disparity between the presence of minority- and/or women- owned businesses in the jurisdiction and the percentage of contracts received (Interview 76, 27 October 2011; Interview 243, 24 August 2011).

²¹ In 1989, Shirley Franklin, who was then City Administrator, said, "This city is adamant about having some sort of affirmative action and minority business enterprise program" (quotes in Smothers 1989).

their opportunities to bid on—whether it’s the airport or building something at the city... You had to ask the question, ‘Okay, well how many bids came in? How many were from women? How many were from people of color? Where did you advertise? Did people see it?’ (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

In fiscal year 2011, minority businesses earned 23 percent (or \$162 million) and female-owned businesses earned 8.7 percent (or \$61 million) of all contracts awarded by the city of Atlanta (ATLStat 2011).²² A former high-level official said that the trends for women and minority participation in city contracts increased during Franklin’s mayoralty (Interview 786, 26 August 2011). She and another former bureaucrat noted that the participation rates of women-owned firms tend to be lower than that of minority-owned firms since much of the work is done in traditionally male-dominated fields, such as construction (Interview 786, 26 August 2011; Interview 870, 11 August 2011).

In Houston, (white) women contractors have fared quite well compared to other groups. In fact, a legal settlement in 2009 eliminated contracting goals for white women in the area of construction because there was no longer a disparity between the presence of construction firms owned by white women in the city and the percentage of municipal contracts they were awarded. In FY 2010, white women received 2.5 percent of city contracts, Asians received 2.3 percent, African Americans got 3.9 percent, Hispanics received 5.2 percent, and Native Americans received 0.2 percent (City of Houston 2010). It is impossible to know from these data what percentage of contracts was awarded to firms owned by women who are racial/ethnic minorities.

²² It is not clear in the data that I have obtained where contracts going to firms owned by women of color are tracked and reported.

The history and current status of the MWBE programs in Houston and Atlanta beg the question: Do cities with higher levels of female political incorporation award a greater percentage of municipal contract dollars to women-owned firms? A promising path for future research would be to collect data on the percentage of contract dollars awarded to women-owned firms, ideally broken down by race/ethnicity, across cities and time. Awarding contracts is a key component of what city governments do—it is a key output that all cities produce, especially in the present era of increasing privatization of municipal services (Dilger, Moffett, and Struyk 1997). While the CDBG program is a relatively small percentage of municipal expenditures, contracts of various forms represent a large portion of city budgets. Moreover, it is tangible and zero-sum in nature: more contract money awarded to women-owned businesses necessarily means less for firms owned by men. The MWBE programs therefore reflect the extent of a city's commitment to providing a pathway towards women's economic equality.

Collecting data on MWBE outcomes is challenging. First, it is not clear whether all large American cities track data on women's contracting over time. Atlanta and Houston's governments collect this information, but both cities have historically been committed to maintaining their MWBE programs. It is questionable whether cities where officials and citizens are less committed to affirmative action, or even hostile to it, would collect such data. If city officials collect such data, they may be unwilling to share it. Second, the (limited) data from Atlanta and Houston demonstrate that cities organize and track their contracting with minority- and women-owned businesses in different ways. This is problematic both conceptually and in terms of obtaining reliable measures. In Houston, different goals are set for contracting with white women, Asians, African

Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans whereas Atlanta's goals are organized into those for minority-owned firms and those for women. In Atlanta, it is not clear where, precisely, minority women fall in these categorizations. Does the absence of explicit goals for minority women effectively erase them from the identification and remediation of discrimination in the area of municipal contracting? In Houston, white women are counted in their own category whereas minority women are counted in the same categories as their co-racial/ethnic male counterparts. What are the consequences of this type of approach for the ability of racial/ethnic women to obtain municipal contracts? Has the city awarded them contracts at the same rate as their male counterparts?

Conclusion

Political scientists have devoted little attention to the representation of women in municipal politics and policymaking. Yet, cities are a promising domain to investigate this topic because of the significant variation in women's office-holding, institutional arrangements, and policy outputs found at the local level. Several decades of research has demonstrated that although individual female representatives behave differently and have different policy preferences than men, the causal connection between having more women in political institutions and the production of policies thought to benefit women's interests is tenuous at best. This chapter leveraged the empirical variation found in U.S. cities to address that puzzle.

The analysis demonstrates that women in municipal governments can, indeed, influence expenditure decisions made as part of the federal Community Development Block Grant program. There is a significant and largely positive relationship between female political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women in the areas of

healthcare and childcare. However, the effect of female political incorporation on other policy areas covered by the CDBG program, like services for victims of domestic violence, remains questionable. Similar findings emerged for the connection between women's presence on the council and CDBG spending patterns. Though scholars have noted that "causal processes vary across gender issues, there are very few accounts of why and how the diverse processes of policy change vary across issues" (Htun and Weldon 2010, 208-209). Further inquiry and theorizing about the political dynamics of different policy areas and the representational consequences is certainly warranted.

Cities may be a hard case for finding evidence of a linkage between women's presence and power in government and the production of women-friendly policy outputs, especially since municipal officeholders are beholden to decisions made at the state and national levels and also given the competition between localities for a stable tax base. As my case study research revealed, the jurisdictional scope and responsibilities of cities vis-à-vis other local governmental units varies from one state to the next. Incorporating such jurisdictional diversity into comparative analyses would be a resource intensive yet empirically useful endeavor to undertake in future research. Moreover, some question whether a gender gap in public opinion with regard to local issues and problems exists, although the survey data presented in Table 1 suggests it does. Given these contextual factors, it is notable that female officials influenced the allocation of CDBG funding, demonstrating that there may be room for creative policymaking related to identity group interests in cities (Reed 1988; Stone 1989; Swanstrom 1988).

The analysis demonstrated that the impact of female political incorporation on policy outputs may not always or necessarily extend beyond the effect of women's

office-holding by itself. This finding may be driven by the fact that I employed a measure of political incorporation that includes only formal power. To be sure, holding positions of formal authority provides opportunities for female officeholders to pursue distinctive policy goals. However, they must also employ elements of informal power, such as persuasion, people skills, and partnerships with other city officials, to capitalize on the opportunities presented to them. In Chapter 6, I use my fieldwork to explore the components of informal power in more depth.

Finally, there is a continuing need for more research on the determinants of policy outputs produced by local governments, especially from a comparative standpoint. Collecting and analyzing data on whether cities administer affirmative action in contracting programs might provide further insight into women's representation in cities. Indeed, conducting research on women in urban politics may yield a richer understanding of the nature of democratic representation at all levels of government.

Table 4.1 Gender Gap in Opinions about Local Problems

	Male	Female
Crimes, drugs, or violence		
Problem	78.23%	80.46%
Not a problem	21.77%	19.54%
N	9,637	11,364
Chi-square	15.947	
P-value	0.001	
Unemployment		
Problem	76.40%	80.41%
Not a problem	23.40%	19.59%
N	9,215	10,504
Chi-square	46.827	
P-value	0.001	
Homelessness		
Problem	60.98%	63.96%
Not a problem	39.02%	36.04%
N	9,415	10,858
Chi-square	19.185	
P-value	0.001	
Illiteracy		
Problem	63.61%	67.16%
Not a problem	36.39%	32.84%
N	8,903	10,103
Chi-square	26.399	
P-value	0.001	
Not Enough affordable/quality childcare		
Problem	64.83%	69.59%
Not a problem	35.17%	30.41%
N	7,390	9,053
Chi-square	41.978	
P-value	0.001	
Too many unsupervised children/teens		
Problem	71.05%	73.14%
Not a problem	28.95%	26.86%
N	9,463	11,115
Chi-square	11.120	
P-value	0.001	
People don't get involved in community		
Problem	74.76%	73.70%
Not a problem	25.24%	26.30%
N	9,400	11,008
Chi-square	2.943	
P-value	0.086	

Source: Knight Foundation Community Indicators Survey, 2002

Table 4.2 Approaches to Conceptualizing and Operationalizing Policies Thought to Benefit to Women’s Interests in Comparative Analyses¹

Scholar & Study	Unit of Analysis & Scope of Study	Approach to Defining & Operationalizing Policies Thought to Benefit to Women’s Interests
Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers (2007)	Develop a theoretical model that is testable on all democratic countries.	Operationalize women-friendly policy as “a subset of policy advanced by women’s organizations that both addresses issues that affect women exclusively and directly and that simultaneously advances their status in society.” Such policies may include those “liberalizing divorce and reproductive rights; equalizing the civil rights of men and women in terms of education, employment, pay, training, property ownership and inheritance, marriage, mobility, and political representation; providing family and medical leave, subsidizing childcare, addressing domestic abuse, sexual assault, violence against women; and providing for women’s health care; among others” (556).
Bratton (2005)	Content coded bills introduced in the lower houses of three state legislatures, CA, IL, and MD, for the years 1969, 1979, 1989, and 1999.	Defines women’s interest legislation as “bills that directly address and seek to improve women’s economic, political, and social status... Thus, women’s interest legislation is coded from a feminist perspective. It should be noted that measures placed in broader categories such as ‘education’ or ‘health’ were not included in the definition of women’s interests, unless these measures directly focused on women, because such broader definitions, though certainly part of women’s traditional interests, do not quite as obviously run counter to the ‘predominant male culture’” (107).
Cowell-Meyers and Langbein (2009)	Data on 34 women-related policies for 47 states, gathered from a variety of sources, including federal agencies, advocacy organizations, government taskforces, and foundations. The data is averaged over 10 years (1990 to 2000).	Following Caiazza (2004), Cowell-Meyers and Langbein use the key policy concerns of a women’s advocacy organization, the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, to select women-friendly policies. The IWPR’s policy priorities, they say, are “central to the interests of women in the U.S. states” (496). The authors include several policies related to women’s health that go beyond reproductive health, as identified by the National Council of State Legislatures, and exclude “antifeminist” or “antiwomen” issues.

¹ Adapted from Bratton (2005).

Scholar & Study	Unit of Analysis & Scope of Study	Approach to Defining & Operationalizing Policies Thought to Benefit to Women's Interests
Kittilson (2008)	Aggregate data on the number of women in national parliaments and maternity and child leave policies for 19 OECD countries from 1970 to 2000	Following Carroll (1994, 15), Kittilson defines women's issues as those "where policy consequences are likely to have a more immediate and direct impact on significantly larger numbers of women than of men." Since Kittilson's study includes many country-years, she concentrates on policies related to maternity and childcare leave.
Reingold (2000)	Content coded bills sponsored in both houses of two state legislatures, AZ and CA, in 1990.	Classifies bills into six general categories. The first category includes "issues that, in an immediate and direct way, are about women exclusively (e.g., abortion, sex discrimination) or almost exclusively (e.g., domestic violence, breast cancer)" and the second through sixth categories consist of "issues that reflect women's traditional areas of concern, including children, families, education, health, poverty, and the environment" (167).
Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler (2005)	Aggregate data on the representation of women in the mid-1990s for an opportunity sample of 31 countries.	Use four indicators measuring "gender equality in political rights, gender equality in social rights, national maternity leave policy, and gender equality in marriage and divorce laws" (415).
Swers (2002)	Compares women's issues bills in the 103 rd and 104 th U.S. Congresses. Used monthly legislative reports of five major liberal and conservative women's groups to identify measures, and then reviewed bill synopses in each Congress, supplementing the sample to add bills that matched the subject areas defined by the women's groups.	Defines women's issues bills as those that are "particularly salient to women because they seek to achieve equality for women; they address women's special needs, such as women's health concerns or child-care issues; or they confront issues with which women have traditionally been concerned in their role as caregivers such as education or the protection of children" (34-35). However, Swers notes that this definition of women's interest policies is broad enough that it could be seen to include all policies or none at all.
Thomas (1991, 1994)	Conducted a survey in 1988 of members of the lower houses in 12 states: AZ, CA, GA, IL, IA, MS, NE, NC, PA, SD, VT, and WA.	Asked legislators to name their priority bills in the last legislative session. Measures then placed into eight categories: women's issues, children and family, education/medical, welfare, business, crime, budget, and environment. The definition of women's interests includes both feminist issues and traditional women's issues.

Table 4.3 Determinants of CDBG Allocations:
The Effect of Female Political Incorporation

	Model 1 Childcare	Model 2 Abused Spouses	Model 3 Healthcare	Model 4 Seniors	Model 5 Disabled
Women's Political Incorporation	0.0671 ** (0.0193)	-0.0157 (0.0160)	0.0621 ** (0.0225)	-0.0052 (0.0150)	0.0084 (0.0202)
Women's Political Incorporation Squared	-0.0006 ** (0.0002)	0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0006 ** (0.0003)	0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0002 (0.0003)
Liberal Ideology	0.0162 (0.0200)	-0.0053 (0.0189)	-0.0055 (0.0142)	0.0060 (0.0140)	0.0043 (0.0172)
Fiscal Health	-0.3917 (0.2605)	-0.4426* (0.2572)	-0.7348* (0.4136)	-0.0973 (0.1557)	-0.0401 (0.1137)
Population	0.2838 ** (0.1020)	0.0286 (0.0443)	0.2690 ** (0.1150)	0.2463* (0.1358)	0.0647 (0.0455)
Black Political Incorporation	-0.0218* (0.0124)	-0.0144 ** (0.0053)	-0.0084 (0.0081)	-0.0065 (0.0057)	-0.0009 (0.0088)
Latino Political Incorporation	-0.0050 (0.0071)	0.0080 (0.0074)	0.0215 ** (0.0096)	0.0251* (0.0151)	0.0126* (0.0066)
Spell Counter	-0.9551 ** (0.1456)	-0.2700 ** (0.0611)	-0.4504 ** (0.1099)	-0.5412 ** (0.1205)	-0.2858 ** (0.0847)
Cubic Spline	-0.0316 ** (0.0052)	-0.0117 ** (0.0032)	-0.0132 ** (0.0037)	-0.0163 ** (0.0043)	-0.0087 ** (0.0030)
Constant	-1.1096 (1.2768)	0.9954 (1.3791)	0.6767 (1.5322)	-0.2625 (0.9836)	-1.0743 (1.0226)
Observations	447	447	447	447	447
Number of Cities	81	81	81	81	81

Standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Logistic Regressions (General Estimating Equations)

Table 4.4 Determinants of CDBG Allocations:
The Effect of Women's Descriptive Representation

	Model 6 Childcare	Model 7 Abused Spouses	Model 8 Healthcare	Model 9 Seniors	Model 10 Disabled
Women's Descriptive Representation	0.0968 ** (0.0211)	0.0033 (0.0131)	0.0845 ** (0.0396)	-0.0055 (0.0179)	0.0057 (0.0133)
Women's Descriptive Representation Squared	-0.0011 ** (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0009* (0.0005)	0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)
Liberal Ideology	0.0127 (0.0193)	-0.0082 (0.0193)	-0.0055 (0.0154)	0.0069 (0.0138)	0.0011 (0.0170)
Fiscal Health	-0.3366 (0.2431)	-0.4818* (0.2619)	-0.7007* (0.4011)	-0.0881 (0.1614)	-0.0516 (0.1163)
Population	0.2751 ** (0.1061)	0.0277 (0.0438)	0.2113 ** (0.0982)	0.2528* (0.1403)	0.0660 (0.0445)
Black Political Incorporation	-0.0214* (0.0126)	-0.0133 ** (0.0052)	-0.0080 (0.0078)	-0.0059 (0.0058)	-0.0027 (0.0089)
Latino Political Incorporation	-0.0031 (0.0078)	0.0110* (0.0061)	0.0181* (0.0107)	0.0269* (0.0158)	0.0112* (0.0062)
Spell Counter	-0.9949 ** (0.1405)	-0.2821 ** (0.0593)	-0.4009 ** (0.1086)	-0.5844 ** (0.1230)	-0.3060 ** (0.0892)
Cubic Spline	-0.0329 ** (0.0050)	-0.0124 ** (0.0030)	-0.0125 ** (0.0036)	-0.0176 ** (0.0044)	-0.0094 ** (0.0032)
Constant	-1.5253 (1.3355)	1.0391 (1.4008)	0.1734 (1.4218)	-0.2343 (1.0283)	-0.8788 (1.0067)
Observations	447	447	447	447	447
Number of Cities	81	81	81	81	81

Standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Logistic Regressions (General Estimating Equations)

Figure 4.1 Dropped Line Plots of Service Categories by Female Political Incorporation

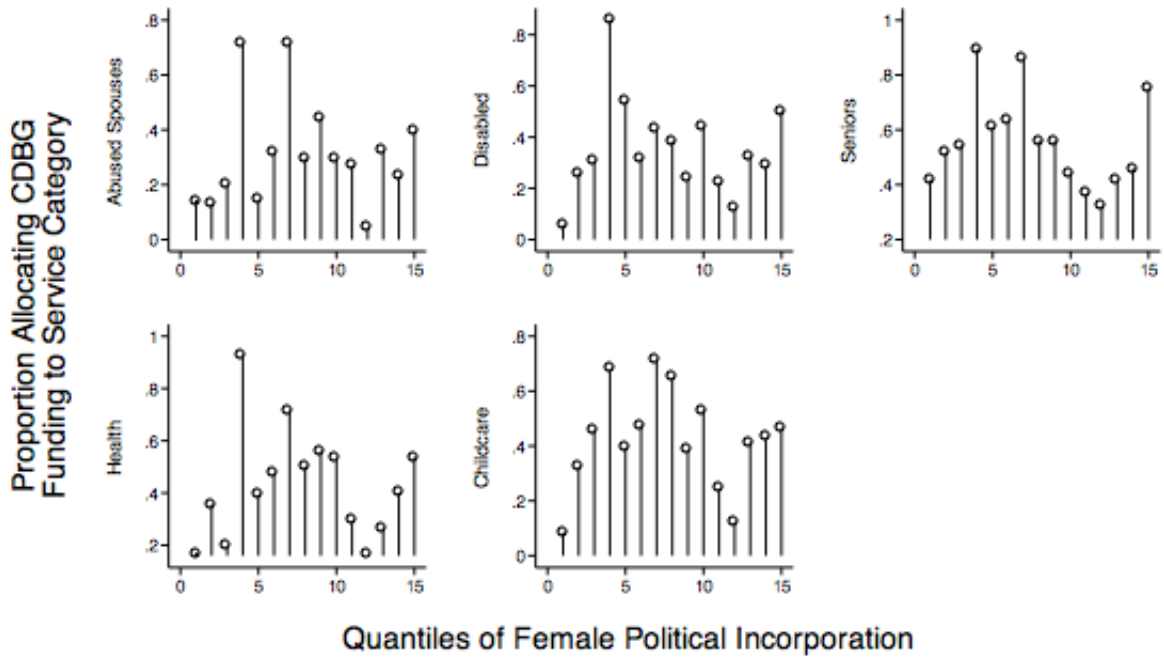


Figure 4.2 Predicted Probability of Allocating CDBG Funding to Childcare by Women's Political Incorporation

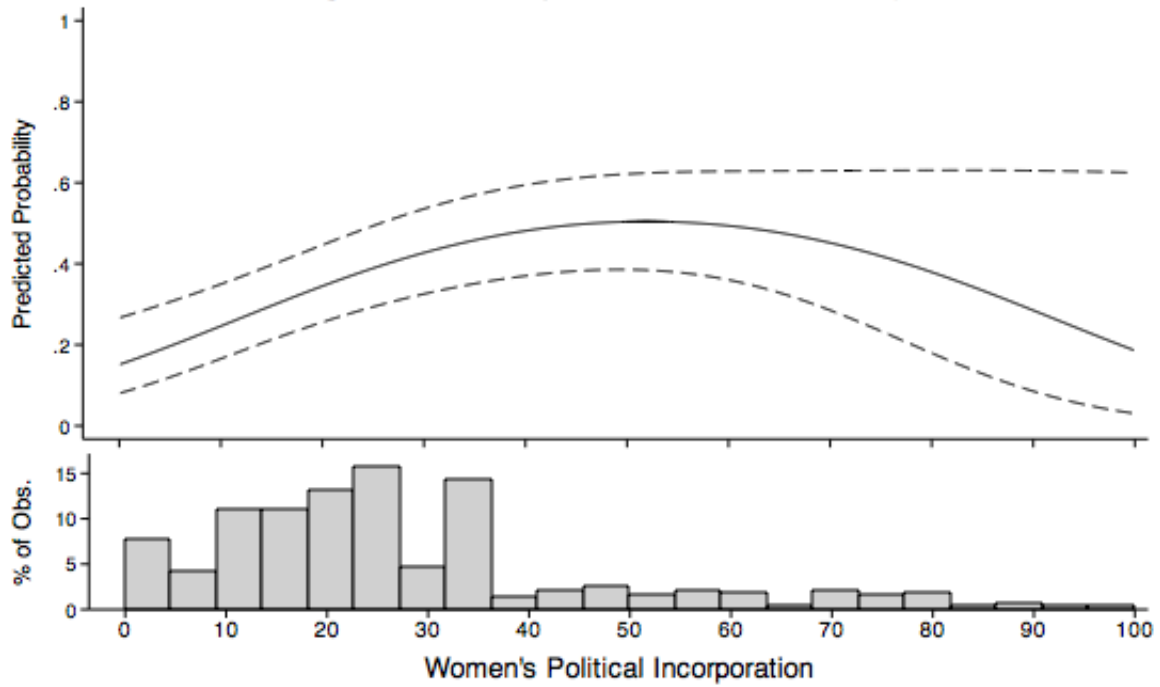
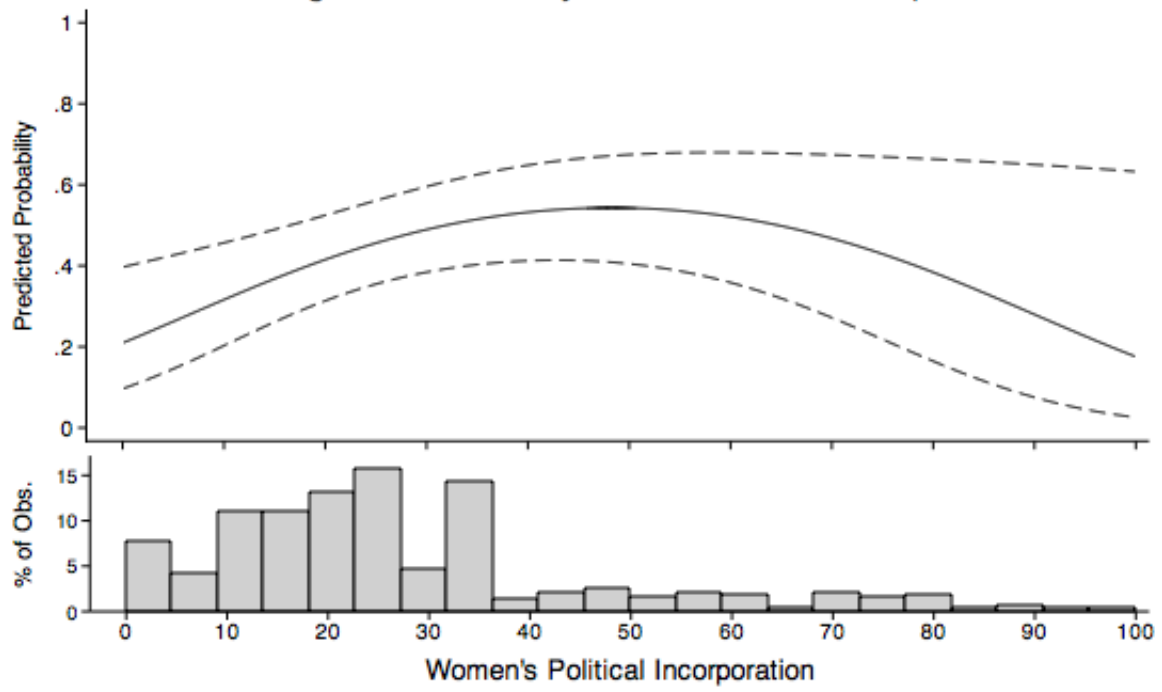


Figure 4.3 Predicted Probability of Allocating CDBG Funding to Health Care by Women's Political Incorporation



Chapter 5.

Female Political Incorporation and Symbolic Policymaking in Cities

What political processes cause city officials to adopt symbolic policies? How, if at all, does the gender composition of high-level municipal positions impact policymaking that is symbolic in nature? Building on Chapter 4, this chapter examines whether women's presence and power in city government causes cities to adopt a symbolic policy that accords with women's interests, particularly one that comports with their traditional role as caregivers in society. Unlike those that are material, symbolic policies do not allocate tangible advantages or disadvantages to target populations. Instead, symbolic policies consist of public statements to various constituency groups that policymakers are addressing their values (Anton 1989; Birkland 2001; Elder and Cobb 1983). Given the economic and structural constraints operating upon municipal governments (Elazar 1966; Peterson 1981), female city officials, even those with a certain modicum of power, may not be able to devote material resources to women's issues.

In order to determine whether female political incorporation produces policies thought to benefit women's interests, it is necessary to consider policy arenas over which municipal officials have discretion (Elazar 1966; Nivola 2002). This chapter considers whether cities have signed on to a national platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children, formulated by the National League of Cities (NLC) in 2005. The goal of the campaign, according to the NLC, is to provide a framework for guiding and assessing local actions and progress related to children and their families. As of October

2008, 97 cities across the country had adopted the NLC's platform. I conduct a series of quantitative analyses to assess whether cities with higher degrees of female political incorporation have adopted the platform. I also use my fieldwork in Atlanta and Houston to further explain the findings from the quantitative analysis.

The chapter proceeds in the following manner. I first define symbolic policymaking, drawing a distinction between it and more material policy outputs. Then, using the policy processes literature, I explore the political processes that often lead to symbolic policy outputs. I explain why symbolic policymaking is a useful lens for understanding women's political representation in cities. I provide background information on the National League of Cities' platform to strengthen families and children and describe the research design. Then, I present the results of the multivariate analysis, combining it with material from my interviews with city officials in Houston and Atlanta. The event history models indicate that women's placement in powerful municipal positions does not affect adoption of the NLC platform. The qualitative data from Houston and Atlanta suggests that the extent to which women and other city officials are incorporated in national advocacy networks may be a key determinant of whether the platform is adopted.

Symbolic Policymaking Processes

Symbolic policies do not allocate tangible advantages or disadvantages to target populations and have little or no effect on "resource allocation" (Edelman 1964, 26). Instead, these policies typically involve the "intensive dissemination of symbols" (Edelman 1964, 26), with the goal of reassuring "large constituencies that their values are being addressed by responsive authorities" (Anton 1989, 32; Birkland 2001; Elder and

Cobb 1983). Symbolic policies tend to appeal to esteemed societal values, such as patriotism, honor, and social justice (Anderson 2006). Cobb and Ross (1997) label such policymaking “symbolic placation” because it describes situations in which opponents to pursuing a given policy admit that a problem exists while blocking active consideration of a solution. Instead, they attempt to address the problem through visible but not very significant or tangible action. Other scholars emphasize that while symbolic laws may communicate important societal goals and values, they have “no real, material, enforcement-related impacts” (Grattet and Jenness 2008, 2; Mazur 1995).

At the national level, symbolic policymaking includes antidrug campaigns like “Just Say No” and D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) and the 1949 Housing Act’s call to provide “a decent home environment for all Americans” (Schneider and Ingram 1997).¹ More generally, symbolic policymaking may involve forming special commissions, taskforces, and study groups that are responsible for conducting investigations of societal problems and developing policy recommendations such the 1967 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders a.k.a. the Kerner Commission (Elder and Cobb 1983). In contrast, material policies “provide tangible resources or substantive power to their beneficiaries, or impose real disadvantages on those who are adversely affected” (Anderson 2006, 15; Birkland 2001). They often cause officials, organizations, and citizens to change their behavior in some way (Grattet and Jenness 2008).

In practice, there is rarely a strict dichotomy between symbolic policies and material policies (Anderson 2006; Grattet and Jenness 2008; Mazur 1995). In political

¹ To be sure, other elements of the Housing Act went beyond symbolic policymaking. However, the notion of providing “a decent home environment for all Americans” was arguably more symbolic than it was material.

scientist Amy Mazur's (1995) estimation, for example, each policy output is positioned somewhere along a continuum from symbolic to material. In the highly symbolic form of policymaking, government officials promise to produce a policy without ever actually taking action. In the middle ground, officials may adopt a formal piece of legislation or policy, which they fail to implement effectively. The most material policies tangibly address the problems they were intended to fix. Mazur explains (1995, 7), "Such policies not only include authoritative measures to deal with social problems, but governments often authoritatively implement these policies, because policy advocates in state and society work together in a policy network to implement them."

It is important to note that the symbolic versus material impacts of a policy may be context-specific. The same policy that is material in one city, for example, may become purely symbolic in another, depending upon how it is implemented (Grattet and Jenness 2008). Furthermore, policies that appear material when first enacted may be rendered symbolic by bureaucratic inaction (i.e., failed or sluggish implementation) or if politicians refuse to adequately fund them. Similarly, symbolic policies may become more material over time (Anderson 2006). For example, the 1949 Housing Act's preamble, which said that every American had a right to clean, safe, and sanitary dwelling unit, was not supposed to be taken literally. Yet, over time, this sweeping statement has "served to rationalize profound federal government involvement in the housing industry" (Schneider and Ingram 1997, 84).

The Politics of Symbolic Policy Adoption

Officials adopt symbolic policies for a variety of political reasons. Symbols are useful to politicians because they express "publicly affirmed values" that can be deployed

in political discourse and debate (Anton 1989, 32). Indeed, “[s]ymbolic reforms provide many benefits to politicians who support them in general public recognition, coalition-building capabilities, [and] interest group support,” especially since they do not cost much in terms of money and administration (Mazur 1995, 2). Decision makers undertake a “political calculus” to weigh the pros and cons of addressing a societal problem (Mazur 1995, 256). This calculus often results in the production of symbolic policies.

Political scientist Murray Edelman (1964) argues that symbols and symbolic policymaking are central components of the American political system. For most citizens, politics is a spectacle. People are anxious, ambivalent, and constantly seeking reassurance that they live in a meaningful world. Elites use politics as an instrument to manipulate policymaking so that they can receive material benefits, primarily money and power. They speak in rhetoric riddled with symbolism and pass symbolic policies to deceive the public into thinking that government is promoting the common good. In Edelman’s view, this political calculation is tied to elites’ quest for electoral success and also to representation:

Through taking the roles of publics whose support they need, public officials achieve and maintain their positions of leadership. The official who correctly gauges the response of publics to his acts, speeches, and gestures makes those behaviors significant symbols, evoking common meanings for his audience and for himself and so shaping his further actions as to reassure his public and in this sense ‘represent’ them (1964, 188).

Organized groups and public officials provide symbolic benefits to the unorganized while securing tangible benefits for themselves (Cobb and Ross 1997). In short, “The utilitarian politics of the few is a rational calculation of material interests. The mythical politics of the many is an irrational evocation of abstract ideas” (Arnhart 1985, 188). Symbolism inheres in politics and the policymaking process. Moreover, politicians use symbolism because they can; it is easier and less costly to satiate people’s demands with symbolic reassurances than it would be with tangible resources (Edelman 1964).

Symbolic gestures, rhetoric, and policies are connected to the ways that people perceive of their political leaders. Elder and Cobb (1983, 19) explain, “Unless a leader provides reassurance of his ability to cope through the appropriate symbolic gestures with respect to commonly perceived problems, he will lose the confidence of his followers and destroy his credibility as a leader.” Most citizens pay more attention to style than substance when it comes to evaluating leaders. They do not monitor the policymaking process regularly, lack detailed information, and therefore rely on symbolic cues in their assessments (Elder and Cobb 1983). Political officials must provide the appropriate cues to gain or maintain elected offices. Promoting and adopting symbolic policies are an efficient and effective way to do this, especially since “it is rarely possible to trace the leader’s acts to their consequences” (Edelman 1964, 190).

Symbolic policies are most likely to be passed when interest groups have failed to pressure government officials to adopt material policies (Mazur 1995). Typically, people support the “wider community values” addressed by the symbolic policy while not feeling strongly about (but not necessarily opposing) the particular issue at hand (Cobb and Ross 1997, 34). For example, Mazur (1995) investigates the politics of equal

employment policymaking for women over three decades in France. She finds that the perceived payoff for symbolic equal employment policies was high while the return for material versions of such policies was low, especially because few people outside of government were overly invested in these laws. The absence of organized non-governmental interests meant that policymakers did not think that people would mobilize against symbolic versions of equal employment policies. Therefore, there was no reason to revamp laws in related areas like employment and family policy to institute concrete equal employment policies.

The importance of symbolic policymaking has been subject to debate. On the one hand, public processes scholars claim that the symbolic aspects of policymaking are both ubiquitous and consequential (Cobb and Ross 1997; Elder and Cobb 1983; Elderman 1964). First, symbols are vital to the political system because they serve to “synchronize the diverse motivations of different individuals, making collective action possible” (Elder and Cobb 1983, 1). In this way, symbolism in policymaking helps narrow down and define the procedural and substantive concerns of government (Elder and Cobb 1983). Second, demands that go unanswered breed discontent in the polity (Elder and Cobb 1983). People need to feel that their concerns are being addressed in the policymaking process, hence the need for officials to pass symbolic policies. Otherwise, certain segments of the population that are not typically involved in politics may become activated and motivated to participate (Dahl 1961).

Third, although symbolic policies may, at first blush, appear costless compared to material policies, they may actually be quite costly to politicians. This is because unrealistic goals can lead to disappointment and cynicism among the public (Schneider

and Ingram 1997). If the goals articulated in symbolic policies are not achieved, citizens may come to believe that government officials made false promises (Schneider and Ingram 1997). Therefore, political officials have an incentive to work towards achieving the goals rather than letting them remain as abstract guiding principles.

Finally, by choosing ambitious and largely symbolic policy goals, policymakers may provoke more rapid action in a policy area than would have taken place with modest goals (Schneider and Ingram 1997). Occasionally, symbolic policies can turn out to have important tangible consequences (Anderson 2006).

On the other hand, some question the importance of symbolic policymaking. The adoption of symbolic policies does not necessarily lead to their implementation. In one scholar's view, symbolic reassurances "often have less practical impact than the words imply, largely because the political majorities that are strong enough to enact the symbols are not strong enough to implement the required action in the face of determined minority opposition" (Anton 1989, 32). Mazur (1995) concurs with this sentiment, arguing that symbolic policies often fail to generate an active network of governmental and extra-governmental organizations and people who are committed to carrying out the policy or sentiment.

If female municipal officials are sincerely committed to representing women's interests and they believe that symbolic policies can be impactful (Cobb and Ross 1997; Elder and Cobb 1983; Schneider and Ingram 1997), then cities with greater values of female political incorporation should be more likely to pass symbolic policies that address women's issues. If, on the other hand, they feel that symbolic policies typically

represent cheap talk rather than concrete action (Anton 1989; Mazur 1995), influential female office-holders may avoid adopting them.

Symbolic Policies and Women's Political Representation in Cities

The analysis that follows examines the city level adoption of one symbolic policy in particular—whether a city has signed on to a national Platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and youth. Considering the adoption of symbolic policies by city governments is useful and instructive for several reasons.

First, political scientists have devoted little attention to why governments pass symbolic policies (Mazur 1995), especially at the municipal level. Seminal books in the policy processes literature such as Edelman's *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* emphasize the role of symbolism and symbolic policymaking. However, these topics have received a minimal amount of empirical attention, especially in recent years. Furthermore, the empirical research that exists focuses on policymaking at the national level (Cobb and Ross 1997; Mazur 1995), with little consideration of symbolic policy outputs at lower levels of government. Plus, the work in this area tends to be somewhat atheoretical and based largely on case studies rather than large-N studies on the determinants of symbolic policy outputs. Consequently, many questions remain unaddressed but open to additional empirical research. For example, why do politicians decide to make symbolic policy reforms? What political processes lead to their adoption? How, if at all, is adopting symbolic policies similar to (or different from) adopting material policies? And, perhaps most importantly in this chapter, how, if at all, does women's political representation in cities affect symbolic policy adoptions? More generally, does the policymakers' identity group membership influence the likelihood of symbolic policy adoption? The empirical

analysis seeks to draw together the dynamics of symbolic policymaking and identity group representation in cities.

Second, local officials, particularly mayors and council members, have discretion over whether to adopt symbolic policies, such as the NLC platform. In the American system of federalism, municipal officeholders are politically constrained in their ability to impact policy outputs since cities are not constitutionally recognized as independent (Elazar 1966; Nivola 2002; Rich 2003). In order to determine whether female political incorporation produces policies thought to benefit women's interests, it is necessary to consider policy outputs over which municipal officials have discretion, as is the case for adopting the NLC's platform.

Third, given the significant economic constraints faced by municipal policymakers (Peterson 1981), symbolic policies may be an appropriate context to examine whether female city officials are making a difference for the representation of women's interests. Symbolic policies may be an easier venue for finding evidence of identity group representation, especially because city officials do not have to devote material resources to these initiatives, although they may. Given the results presented in Chapter 4 as well as earlier studies that report mixed evidence of a connection between women's descriptive and substantive representation in municipal policymaking (Beck 1995, 2001; Donahue 1997; Saltzstein 1986; Weikart et al. 2007), it is pertinent to consider a type of policymaking where female municipal officials may be more likely to have an impact.

Fourth, recall from Chapter 4 that policies thought to benefit women's interests are conceptualized as those that advance women's social, economic, and political status,

address women's bodies and health, or concern women's traditional role as caregivers in society. Given the numerous challenges of collecting systematic data on municipal level policy outputs, symbolic policies are a promising way to operationalize this concept. The NLC's platform is an operationalization of a policy that concerns women's traditional role as caregivers in society.

“A City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth”

In 2005, the National League of Cities, the oldest national organization representing and lobbying on behalf of municipal governments, undertook a campaign to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children in cities.² The goal of the NLC's strengthening families campaign is to provide a framework for guiding and assessing local actions and progress related to children and their families. There are two components to the NLC's platform. First, each city is to develop “an essential ‘infrastructure,’ key functions and processes that play a crucial role in effective or sustained investments in children and families” (NLC 2005a, 1). The infrastructure should include creating a commission, mayor's task force, or other group to bring the public, private, and non-profit sectors together to work on these issues; collaborating and regularly meeting with the leaders of local schools; encouraging and supporting youth engagement in the campaign; and developing indicators and benchmarks to assess progress. Second, cities are to take concrete action steps, perhaps guided by suggestions from the NLC, in the areas of “early childhood development; youth development;

² According to the NLC's website, the organization advocates on behalf of municipalities in Washington, DC, provides technical assistance to help city officials become more effective leaders, shares information about important urban issues, and engages in public relations and communications on behalf of the nation's cities (NLC 2010).

education and afterschool; health and safety; youth in transition; family economic success; and neighborhoods and community” (NLC 2005a, 1).

The NLC called on municipal leaders throughout the country to adopt the platform, announcing their adoptions of it via a mayoral proclamation, council resolution, and/or press release or other public proclamation. The NLC notes that the platform, while primarily symbolic and only a starting point for action, sets out ambitious goals since it asks mayors and other leaders to put the needs of children, youth, and families high on their city’s agenda. NLC officials argue that the costs of inaction, or not adopting and executing the platform, are high, too. Inaction will affect “individual lives, municipal budgets, and prospects for city growth and revitalization” (NLC 2005b) since the high costs of family failure often “land squarely on the doorsteps of our city halls, as spending for public safety, education, and human services rise and the strength of the local workforce and economy is undermined” (NLC 2005b).

As of October 2008 (three years after the campaign began), 97 cities had adopted the NLC’s platform. One such city was Baltimore, Maryland, where leaders announced their adoption of the platform in September 2007. The mayor at the time, Sheila Dixon, backed by then city council president (and current mayor) Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Maryland state delegate Ruth Kirk, made the announcement at a press conference. Dixon spoke:

I believe that we need to take steps now and continue to move forward by investing in our families, our children and our youth... Central to my vision for a cleaner, greener, healthier and safer Baltimore is the creation

of an environment that supports the development of the human potential of every Baltimore City resident, beginning with our children (NLC 2007).

Baltimore's adoption of the NLC platform suggests two things. First, female officeholders in municipal government may have different interests than men. Second, given that it was the female mayor and city council president who announced the strengthening families platform in Baltimore, the institutional power that women have may matter to symbolic policymaking. It remains to be seen whether evidence of a more systematic trend exists. That is the issue to which the empirical analysis turns.

Models, Data, and Measurement

The analysis considers whether cities with higher levels of female political incorporation are more likely to adopt a symbolic policy related to women's needs and interests. To investigate this hypothesis, I return to the city-level dataset of the 239 American cities with populations of 100,000 or more as of 2000 described in Chapter 4, albeit with a somewhat altered data structure. In this chapter, the dataset includes monthly adoption data for each city, from October 2005, when the National League of Cities began its campaign, until September 2008, when the latest data were available.

Dependent Variables

I use data on the city-level adoption of the National League of Cities' platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and youth to gain traction over the challenges of conducting large-N, comparative analyses on municipal policy outputs. For each month, a value of 1 is recorded if a city adopted the platform and 0 otherwise. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the cumulative number of cities in my dataset that have adopted the platform has increased over time. Given the nature of my dependent variable

and the data-generating process under examination, I employ Event History Analysis (Berry and Berry 1990; Jones and Branton 2005; Mooney 2001), specifically Cox proportional hazards models.³ I model the time (in months) until a city adopts the NLC's platform. As is the convention in single failure event history analysis, a city drops out of the dataset once it has adopted the platform.

Independent and Control Variables

The key independent variable is female political incorporation. It assesses the extent to which women hold leadership positions in city government, weighted by the relative amount of authority accorded to those positions. Detailed information on the measure is provided in Chapter 4 and Appendix B. The expectation is that cities with higher levels of female political incorporation will be more likely to pass the NLC platform. Alternatively, female municipal officials may be sincere in their representational efforts and, therefore, would prefer not to pass a symbolic policy, especially if the goal of the policy is to avoid engaging in material policymaking (Edelman 1964).

The analysis controls for the potential confounding influence of other municipal political, socioeconomic, and demographic pressures on whether cities adopt the NLC platform. In Chapter 2, we found that more liberal cities have a greater proportion of women on their councils. Additionally, cities that have more liberal populations will

³ I focus on estimating the effects of the covariates on the likelihood of adopting the NLC platform and, accordingly, employ a Cox proportional hazards model. Such models, arguably, are the most flexible type of event history analysis. Unlike parametric event history models, a Cox model does not require the analyst to specify a particular distribution for the baseline hazard (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004; Cleves, Gould, Gutierrez, and Marchenko 2008). Generally, a Cox proportional hazard model should be used over parametric survival models for most political science applications, as we rarely have strong theories to drive the choice among the various distributions in the parametric context and are typically not interested in the nature of the baseline hazard (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004; Jones and Branton 2005).

likely support local governments playing an active role in local affairs, particularly related to families and children. Conversely, cities that have more conservative populations may favor a more limited role for their municipal governments, which could be achieved through symbolic placation (Cobb and Ross 1997) rather than truly material policymaking. In either case, I include the control variable *liberal ideology*, which measures the percentage of the city-level vote that went to the Democratic candidate and any liberal third-party candidates who received more than 0.1 percent of the votes cast in a city.

It could be that local officials are simply responding to citizens' needs by adopting the NLC's platform. The models controls for it by a measure of *population* (in 100,000s, logged), using three year estimates from for 2005 through 2007 from the Census's 2007 American Community Survey (ACS). I include three measures of need from the 2007 ACS that are related to the well-being of families and children: the *percentage of families living below the poverty level*, the *percentage of families headed by single women*, and the *percent of the population 25 and older that has graduated from high school*. I expect cities with needy populations to be more likely to adopt the platform.

In Chapter 2, we found that the density of women's political organizations was negatively related to the election of a female mayor and the scope of their socioeconomic resources was a positive predictor of electing a larger percentage of women to the city council. Women may use non-electoral means, in addition to elected offices, to promote and secure advances for women in local level policymaking (Clarke et al. 1995; Weldon 2004). The civic arena may serve as a source of female candidates for municipal officials

and a means of institutional capacity building. The distinctive non-electoral aspects of women's political involvement may increase their ability to pursue women's interest policies when elected or appointed to municipal political offices. The non-electoral involvement of women may also increase their ability to effect women friendly policy regardless of who is in government office. Therefore, I include a measure of the *density of women's general organizations*, which include all social, health, and grant-making organizations that work on behalf of women, girls, and/or women's issues, as well as a factor score of *women's socioeconomic resources* using the percentage of college-educated women, female median income, and the number of women-owned businesses. The sources and coding for the control variables are described in the earlier quantitative chapters and Appendices A and B.

Results

In 2005, the National League of Cities announced its platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and youth and encouraged cities throughout the country to join the effort by adopting their own platforms. Since that time, cities have responded and, as Figure 5.1 demonstrates, 32 of the largest American cities had adopted platforms by September 2008. What factors prompted cities to adopt the NLC platform?

Determinants of Platform Adoption

Model one, shown in Table 1, presents the results of an event history model, where the dependent variable is whether and how long it takes a city to adopt the NLC platform.⁴ The key independent variable in this model is female political incorporation.

⁴ The coefficient estimates in Tables 1 are presented in terms of the hazard rate. A positive coefficient indicates that increases in a particular covariate are associated with a decrease in the time until a city adopts the NLC platform. A negative coefficient indicates an increase in the time until a city adopts the platform.

The model indicates that female political incorporation is not significantly associated with the adoption of the NLC platform. This provides some indication that as women gain more positions of power, cities become no more or less likely to adopt the platform. This finding does not provide support for the female political incorporation theory, nor does it contradict it. Female municipal officials may not want to deceive anyone regarding their commitment to women or women's issues so they do not invest effort toward promoting symbolic policies (Edelman 1964; Elder and Cobb 1983).

In terms of the other independent variables, the ideological disposition of cities' electorates is negatively associated with adopting the platform. As the percentage of voters in the 2004 presidential election supporting a liberal candidate increases, cities become less likely to adopt the platform. This is puzzling. However, it may reflect a preference in more ideologically conservative cities for smaller government. If the choice is between a symbolic policy that does not enlarge the scope of local government services and programs and one that devotes more tangible resources, conservative populations may prefer the former. It may also reflect a belief among conservative municipal policymakers that such a platform would be best implemented by the civic sector, perhaps in the form of municipal-level "faith-based and community initiatives" (Owens 2007). A graph of the hazard function for city ideology is presented in Figure 5.2.⁵ In this graph, the likelihood of a city adopting the NLC platform is shown for three different levels of the independent variable: at one standard deviation below the mean (41.5 percent), the mean (56.6 percent), and one standard deviation above the mean (71.1

⁵ According to Jones and Branton (2005), "the hazard rate is the probability, or risk, of adopting a policy during some time period, t ."

percent). All other independent variables are held constant.⁶ The figure shows that the substantive impact of ideology on the likelihood of a city adopting the NLC platform is very low overall. The values on the y-axis are miniscule. This means that while the ideology variable is statistically significant, its substantive impact may be inconsequential.

Cities where a larger percentage of families are headed by single females are more likely to adopt the platform. Adopting the platform may signal responsiveness to poorer women's interests. Figure 5.3 presents this relationship graphically. It shows that cities where 19.8 percent of families are headed by single women are 27.5 times more likely to adopt the platform than cities where 10.3 percent of families are headed by single women.⁷ Since families headed by a single parent tend, on average, to be poorer than those with two parents, city officials may be responding to the perceived needs of these families by adopting the NLC platform. Finally, population size is significantly associated with adopting the platform. All else equal, larger cities are more likely than smaller ones to adopt the platform. Perhaps larger cities are more likely than smaller ones to have a number of officials who are active members of the NLC and thus more knowledgeable about the existence and purpose of the platform.

The remainder of the independent variables included in model one fail to reach standard significance levels. Given other scholars' focus on women's extra-electoral resources in augmenting and provoking local government action (Clarke et. al 1995), it is curious that the scope of women's socioeconomic and organizational resources does not

⁶ The hazard graphs in the results section follow this pattern of varying the value of a particular independent variable while keeping the other covariates constant.

⁷ This substantive effect is calculated by exponentiating the coefficient times a given value of the independent variable (Jones and Branton, 2005).

impact whether the platform is passed. Perhaps non-governmental organizations in cities are working to address the issues covered by the platform and do not necessarily require symbolic action to advance their efforts.

To probe the sensitivity of the null findings with respect to women's representation, I substitute a measure of women's descriptive representation on the council for the political incorporation variable. The results of model two are presented in Table 1. Similar to model one, they indicate that women's presence as council members does not influence whether cities adopt the NLC platform.

Incorporation into National Advocacy Networks

What explains the null result with respect to the female political incorporation variable? My case studies indicated that the adoption of the NLC's platform might partly be determined by the extent to which female city officials are integrated into national advocacy networks and organizations, particularly the National League of Cities. The concept of a "policy subsystem" (McCool 1998; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993, 1999; Stein and Bickers 1995) builds from the traditional notion of an "iron triangle," or the three-sided relationship between interest groups, congressional committees, and government agencies in a given issue area.⁸ A policy subsystem is "the group of people and/or organizations interacting regularly over periods of a decade or more to influence policy formulation and implementation within a given policy area/domain" (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1999, 135). As traditionally conceived, the policy processes literature considered the horizontal relationships between congressional committees, bureaucratic

⁸ Similar concepts in the policy processes literature are variously referred to as policy monopolies (Baumgarnter and Jones 1993), issue networks (Hecl 1978), and advocacy coalitions (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993). See McCool (1998) for a helpful discussion of the overlap and divergence among these concepts, as well as the pitfalls of the subsystem family of concepts.

agencies, advocacy organizations, interest groups, businesses, and other actors exclusively at the federal level. More recently, however, attention has been paid to the vertical alliances that exist between federal and state and local level policymakers (Manna 2006; Martin 2001, 2006; Mollenkopf 1983). A policy that originates on the formal agenda at one level of government may then be contributed to, altered, or implemented at another level.

The relationships among subsystem members do not just exist horizontally, between government and nongovernmental actors; such relationships may also exist vertically, between officials at various governmental levels of the federal system. Applying the subsystem concept, Martin (2001, 2006), for instance, contends that the adoption of living wage ordinances in American cities is caused, in part, by an interaction of national policy networks with local labor unions and political contexts. The national living wage policy network, headed by the advocacy group ACORN, is a mechanism for information sharing, campaign strategizing, drafting policies, and providing legal advice. The national policy network is important, but only in combination with organized labor leaders working at the local level.⁹

In a similar vein, the extent to which city officials are integrated into the National League of Cities likely influences symbolic policy adoptions by cities (NLC 2010). My fieldwork in Atlanta and Houston suggested that when it comes to understanding the city-level factors predicting the adoption of the NLC's platform, the incorporation concept might need to be broadened somewhat. In Atlanta, few city officials were familiar with the NLC's platform. Several council members explained that their colleagues who attend

⁹ A more recent study on cities' adoption of living wage ordinances reports that political context factors are more important than the presence of an ACORN chapter or union density (Swartz and Vasi 2011).

the NLC's conferences would be more likely to have heard of the platform than those who do not (Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 935, 22 July 2011). Two current members of Atlanta's council participate in NLC events and conferences, while others do not (Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 240, 26 July 2011). These council members return from NLC conferences with new policy ideas and issues to promote among their colleagues on council (Interview 935, 22 July 2011).

Through my fieldwork, I had the opportunity to interview the two council members who others identified as active NLC members. Both of these council members said that they were aware of NLC's platform to strengthen families and said that Atlanta had not yet adopted it (Interview 240, 26 July 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011). This is confirmed in the data I received from the NLC. When asked why Atlanta had not adopted the platform, both council members explained that they were not active in the NLC's Institute for Youth Education & Families, which had developed the platform. One council member said that she is involved in several of the NLC's other committees and does not want to spread herself too thinly by joining more (Interview 865, 12 September 2011). The interview materials therefore suggest that whether city officials are active members of the National League of Cities, as well as the nature of that membership, affects the adoption of the platform.

Like Atlanta, Houston has not yet adopted the NLC's platform. Several officials said that some council members and officials are active members of the NLC while others are not (Interview 307, 24 October 2011; Interview 593, 7 November 2011). A high-level official speculated that Houston's city government has not adopted the NLC's strengthening families platform because "we're doing things similar without calling [it]

the National League's platform" (Interview 593, 7 November 2011). This suggests that cities do not have to adopt a symbolic platform touted by a national organization in order to implement the types of programs and policies suggested in the platform. In another current council member's mind, the most significant role played by organizations like the National League of Cities is the sharing of best practices amongst leaders from different cities (Interview 789, 3 November 2011). If local officials are already working on the issues covered by the platform, they may not need to adopt a symbolic measure to further the city's goals in this area.

In Chapter 4, I discussed the need to expand the female political incorporation concept to include both formal and informal elements of power. The models presented in this chapter, in conjunction with my interviews with city officials in Houston and Atlanta, suggest that, when it comes to the adoption of symbolic policies promoted by national advocacy networks, the incorporation concept could be broadened in another way. A key determinant of whether cities adopt the NLC platform is the extent to which city officials are integrated into the NLC and its various committees. Female political incorporation may therefore include whether women in city government are incorporated into vertical policy subsystems, which exist between cities and governmental and non-governmental organizations at the national level. The concept of women's intergovernmental incorporation could perhaps be measured as the percentage of female officials in a city who attend the NLC's conferences each year.

Conclusion

Symbolic policy adoptions have been understudied in the empirical literature on public policy processes. Scholars have not addressed the causes and consequences of

symbolic policymaking by sub-national governments nor have they connected symbolic policy outputs to identity group representation. This chapter began to fill some of these holes by examining whether women's presence and power in large American cities is connected to the adoption of a national platform to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children.

The findings from the quantitative models indicated that women's political incorporation in municipal government is not a significant determinant of whether cities adopt the NLC's platform. However, my interviews with city officials in Houston and Atlanta suggested that cities where officials are connected to vertical advocacy coalitions would be more likely to adopt the platform. Future research should develop a broader concept of female political incorporation that includes the extent to which female municipal officials are integrated into policy networks with organizations, entrepreneurs, and advocates at the state and national levels. One could imagine operationalizing this concept as the proportion of female city officials who are members of and/or attend the NLC's national conferences. Alternatively, it could be measured as the degree to which female municipal officials are active participants of national (or inter-level) organizations devoted to women and women's interests or "feminist civil society" (Weldon 2004).

More attention should be devoted to the implementation of symbolic policy outputs. The literature suggests that symbolic policies can become more material over time if they are implemented aggressively (Grattet and Jenness 2008; Mazur 1995). It would be useful to gather information on the post-adoption progress of a city that, unlike Houston or Atlanta, has passed the NLC platform. Have cities that adopted the platform made progress in this policy area? If so, what role have female officials played? In what

ways has adopting the platform “synchronized the diverse motivations of different individuals” (Elder and Cobb 1983, 1) in the areas of child welfare and family well-being in cities?

The finding regarding ideology, albeit substantively quite small, is still curious. Officials in more conservative cities may be adopting the NLC platform in order to placate residents who push for a larger government response to the challenges faced by families in cities. Testing this line of reasoning requires a dependent variable that directly measures the tradeoffs between a tangible municipal policy output and a more symbolic one. This as well as other lines of inquiry about the political causes and consequences of symbolic policy outputs should be pursued in future research.

Table 5.1 Determinants of NLC Platform Adoption

	Model 1	Model 2
Women's Political Incorporation	-0.0301 (0.0206)	
Women's Descriptive Representation		-0.0282 (0.0209)
Liberal Ideology	-0.0487* (0.0267)	-0.0205 (0.0388)
Percent of Families Below Poverty	-0.2172 (0.1463)	-0.1753 (0.1464)
Percent of Families Headed by Single Women	0.3482* (0.1816)	0.2209 (0.1922)
Percent High School Graduates	0.0465 (0.0427)	0.0572 (0.0487)
Population (Logged)	0.6642* (0.3971)	0.7190* (0.3875)
Women's Socioeconomic Resources Factor Score	-0.2038 (0.5603)	-0.1899 (0.6356)
Density of Women's General Organizations	0.0740 (0.0634)	0.0750 (0.0773)
Observations	2,758	2,769
Number of Cities	85	86

Robust standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Cox Proportional Hazards Model

Figure 5.1 Number of Cities Adopting the NLC Platform by Month

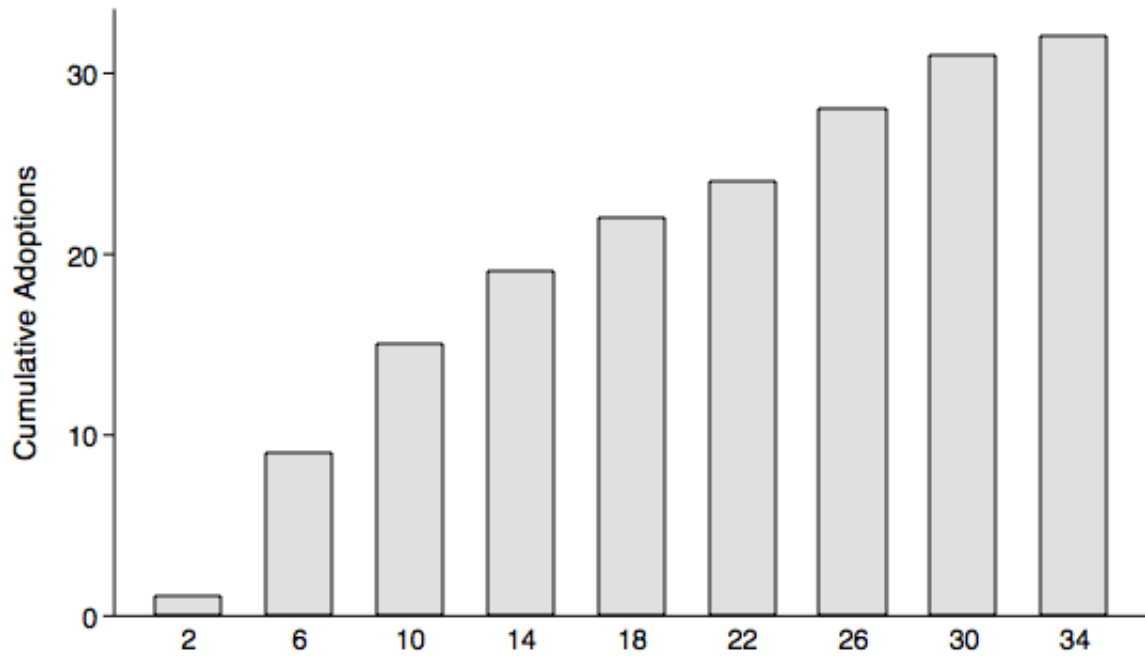


Figure 5.2 Estimated Time until City Adopts NLC Platform -- City Ideology

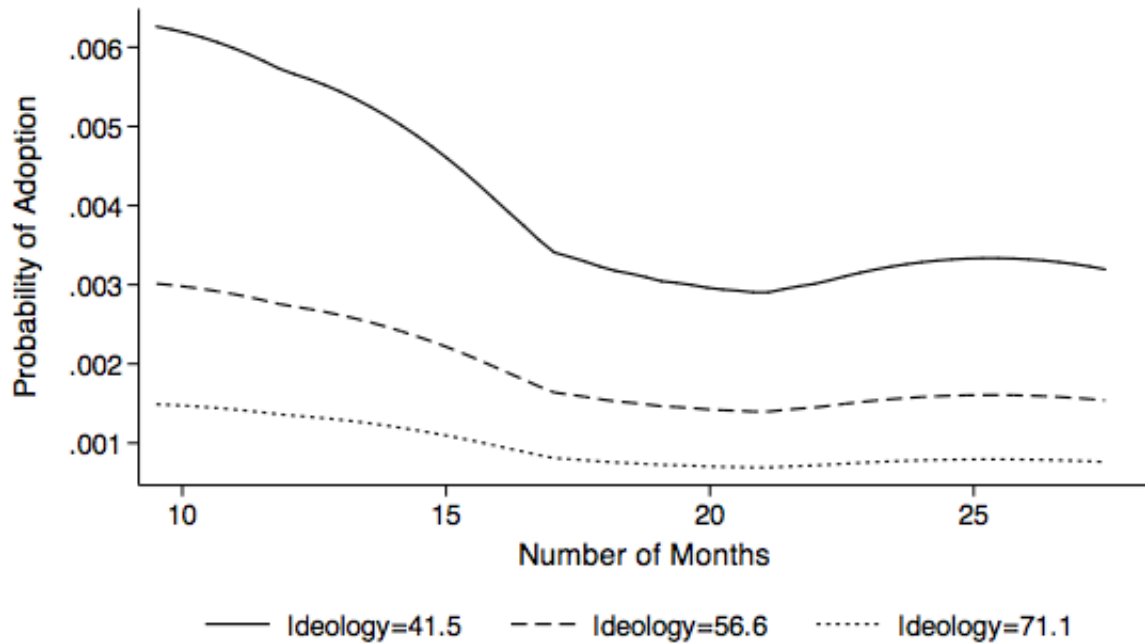
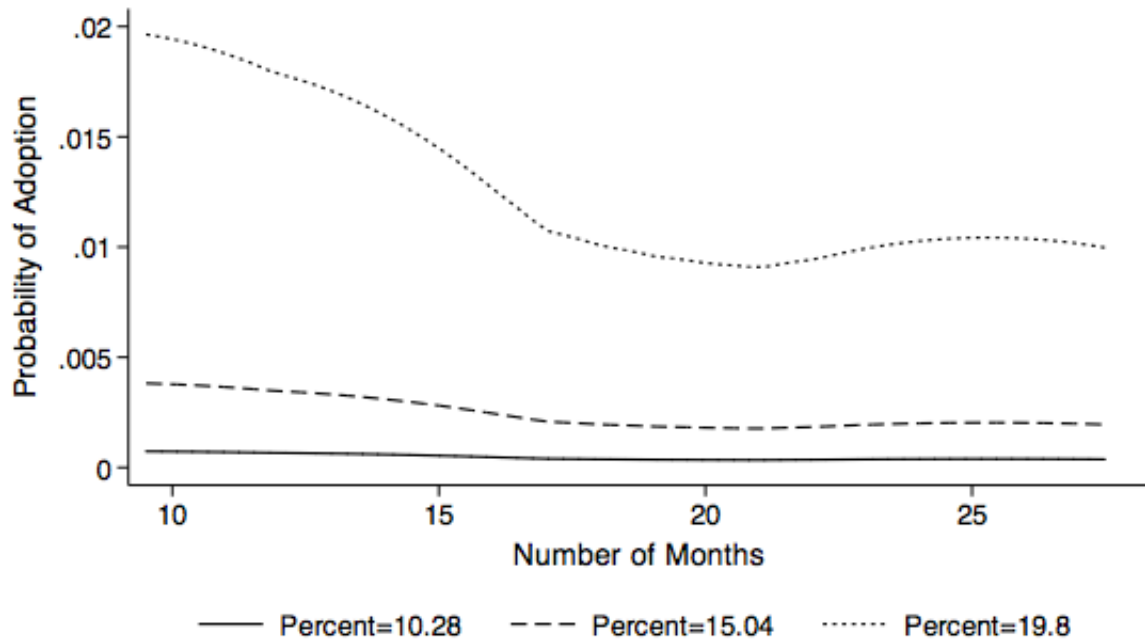


Figure 5.3 Estimated Time until City Adopts NLC Platform -- Percent of Families Headed by Single Females



Chapter 6.

Beyond Political Incorporation: Addressing the Puzzle of Women's Substantive Representation in Cities

Cities provide an opportunity to examine the connection between women's political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women's interests. However, my case studies in Atlanta and Houston suggest that female municipal officials, even well positioned and powerful ones, do not address women's issues on a regular basis. City officials, both male and female, focus on providing core municipal services and lack the time and resources to engage in policymaking often associated with women's interests. Nonetheless, my fieldwork in both cities revealed that, at times, women's issues come onto municipal policymaking agendas. When they do, their appearance tends to be idiosyncratic, entrepreneurial, and contextualized.

This chapter addresses outstanding puzzles regarding women's substantive representation in cities, seeking to explain why the quantitative application of my theory of female political incorporation in municipal government did not perform as expected. It explores alternative explanations for the results of Chapters 4 and 5 and women's substantive representation in cities more generally. I describe how the perceived scope of city government limits the extent to which female officials in Atlanta and Houston engaged in women-friendly policymaking. I then explore the conceptualization and measurement of female political incorporation, providing a closer examination of the differences between formal and informal power in cities. Both aspects of power contribute to governance, the policymaking process, and policy outcomes in Atlanta and

Houston, illustrating the complementary and interactive relationship between structure and agency (Geron 2005). I investigate how officeholders gather and utilize their informal power in city policymaking, with the goal of generating a more accurate and fuller understanding of the female political incorporation concept. The case studies also provide a more nuanced and accurate picture of how the formal institutions of city government operate in practice. I suggest several ways that the quantitative measure of women's formal power in cities could be refined as well as issues warranting further attention in future research.

Additionally, this chapter explains how some men in Houston and Atlanta's city governments have developed policies and initiatives that respond to the interests of women. The female political incorporation theory may not work as anticipated because progressive male officials are responsive, like their female counterparts, especially when lobbied by advocates and their constituents. However, when asked to cite leaders who stand up for women's issues, nearly all interviewees, both male and female, listed a number of female (not male) officials. This indicates that in the idiosyncratic instances in which women's issues arise in municipal deliberations, it is important for women to be present to participate in the discussions. Through detailed analysis of the qualitative data, this chapter provides a thorough account of women's quest for policy responsiveness in Houston and Atlanta.

The Scope of City Governments

City governments are responsible for providing core municipal services. Those services do not tend to have a gender component. The collection of garbage, maintaining sewer systems, and operating the airport, for example, do not have any clear or direct

connection to women in particular. At the same time, one would be mistaken to think of urban policymaking and governance as gender neutral. Certain municipal services and programs that, on their face, may seem gender neutral have different meanings, implications, and consequences for women than they do for men.

A Lack of Contextual Opportunities

In previous empirical research, scholars have questioned whether there are real differences in elite behaviors and attitudes when it comes to local problems. They claim that “gender differences tend to decline with level of office” (Boles 2001, 69) and that municipalities are not where heated issues of the women’s rights agenda are deliberated over and decided upon (Beck 1995, 2001; Donahue 1997; Mezey 1978). My interviews with city officials in Houston and Atlanta buttress these findings.

City officials are in the business of providing core municipal services and, as a result, they do not deal with issues that are thought of as focused on women. Numerous interviewees in Atlanta and Houston explained that their work centers on sewers, trash pickup, infrastructure maintenance, and similar issues, and therefore, they do not address women’s issues on a regular basis (Interview 45, 9 November 2011; Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 531, 16 August 2011; Interview 593, 7 November 2011). As a former council member in Atlanta suggested, a “lack of contextual opportunity” prevents officeholders from addressing women’s issues:

[I]f you’re talking about sewers, there’s nothing that is special to women and girls. If you’re talking about running the airport... It has to be related to what you’re talking about. So those contexts just don’t come up that often in municipal government... Municipal government is police and fire

and garbage collection and running the courts and the jails... There are times when the topic comes up and it makes sense to talk about it in whatever you're working on, but it's just not that often (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

According to several respondents, women's issues are part of the domain of state and federal government rather than local government (Interview 124, 22 July 2011; Interview 756, 25 August 2011). In the rare instances where women's issues (e.g., non-discrimination policies) may arise in city government, federal laws take precedence (Interview 124, 22 July 2011). A former councilman in Houston explained:

[W]e just are not in that area because we don't set policy, you know, on those types of things... It's funny, I remember early on, one of these extremely right-leaning groups asked me, 'Well what are your thoughts about, you know, abortion?' I said, 'Well, I promise not to perform any abortions while I'm on council and that's about the extent of what I can do.' You know, I mean, there is no place for, really, that question on council (Interview 593, 7 November 2011).

In short, city officials do not have jurisdiction over many of the issues that are associated with the women's rights agenda.

While many city officials may not think of municipal issues as having a gender-specific dimension, some women's issues still make it onto the municipal policymaking agenda. For instance, during 2009, pregnancy centers arose on the municipal agenda. Women's advocates worried that pregnancy centers had been giving women false or misleading information about the effects of pregnancy and birth control and not advising

them about the full range of choices that are available when facing an unwanted pregnancy, including abortion. Baltimore's city council passed an ordinance, the first of its kind in the country, requiring faith-based crisis pregnancy centers that do not provide abortions or contraception to post information about the scope and nature of their services (Brown 2009). This example illustrates that women's issues do, at times, arise on municipal policymaking agendas.

Are Municipal Policies and Services Gender-Neutral?

The extent to which municipal governments address issues commonly associated with women depends on how broadly or narrowly such issues are conceptualized and understood by municipal officials. Female officials may treat perennial considerations like budgeting, zoning, and safety differently than their male counterparts (Beck 2001). A councilwoman in Houston remarked,

I think everything that comes through here affects women and young women and girls. I never look at it as a guy issue or a women's issue.

What we do here, having a good police force, affects everybody. Having a good fire department affects everybody. Being able to give you clean water, and more importantly, for you to be able to flush your toilet, affects everyone... Everything we do, it's for everybody in the city, which includes women (Interview 93, 16 November 2011).

This councilwoman disagreed with the premise of thinking about a certain set of issues as pertaining exclusively or primarily to women. The head of a local philanthropy in Atlanta concurred. She thought that, "every issue is a women's issue... My goal is to make sure

that women are represented on every issue,” even seemingly unrelated topics like zoning (Interview 16, 7 September 2011).

A former member of Atlanta’s city council expressed a similar sentiment. Although certain issues that this official worked on may not have appeared to be centered on women and girls, she was often aware of their gender-specific implications. She felt that most of the issues she worked on—from the development of affordable housing to cleaning distressed properties—were family-oriented, and thus affected women most directly. When addressing quality of life initiatives, she explained,

People’s perception was that I was working on property values. Okay, I was. But at the end of the day, if you have overgrown lots and you have abandoned houses, that’s where women get raped and beat. And so my thought process was if everything’s clean and tidy and the bushes are trimmed, criminals can’t hide behind them, women don’t get dragged into buildings and get accosted in any way or small children, for that matter. So my mindset was always, make sure the community is accommodating for women and the families ‘cause we have a lot. You know, the largest demographic in the city is single women and single women with small children... So ensuring the community was safe and clean, in my mind, was for women and for families. We did that constantly (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

From this official’s viewpoint, seemingly gender-neutral issues may, in fact, have important implications for gender issues in city government and policymaking.

As one former budgetary officer in Atlanta explained, municipal budgeting is far from a gender-neutral process. She said, “If you look at Atlanta, you look at Fire, Police, Public Works, Watershed, Aviation—anything that is sort of male dominated, pretty much, they get whatever budget they want. That’s not the case with H.R. [Human Resources],” which was headed by a woman at the time (Interview 519, 24 August 2011). In recent years, city leaders have reduced the budget of the human relations department. In this official’s opinion, the budget reductions have been due both to who ran the department (a woman rather than a man) as well as officials’ perception that the work these departments do is less important than what male-dominated departments do (Interview 519, 24 August 2011).

Women’s issues are part of other aspects of city governance as well. For example, Shirley Franklin’s administration was involved in developing a series of trainings for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The UN has ten such training centers throughout the world, including one in Atlanta, whose goal is to increase the capacity and knowledge of leaders in local governments in a variety of different topical areas. At the time, none of the institutes had created trainings about gender equity in municipal budgeting, land-use planning, and other services. Along with Fulton County Commissioner Nancy Boxill, representatives from Franklin’s administration developed a training module focused on how local governments can make cities more livable for and responsive to women and girls. Consider when city officials plan parks:

Are you taking into consideration the gender issues that women have—longevity, the kinds of work they do, the kinds of daily activities that they have—in the design of the park? The answer is both yes and no. Most of

the time, no. Hence you see this steep bank of steps. Women carry babies, grocery carts, and live longer and they're older. This steep bank of steps alone does not serve them (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

The UNITAR training and development of the annual budget in Atlanta both demonstrate how municipal services and programs that may appear to have little to do with the differences (or similarities) between men and women can have disparate impacts on the two sexes. Depending on one's perspective, the budgeting and design of a city park is far from gender neutral.

The supposed gender-neutral nature of municipal policymaking may therefore be a social construct, as is the gendered nature of "women's issues." As Schneider and Ingram (1997, 73) explain, "We live in a world of constructs that simply 'are' to most ways of thinking. Social constructions are often generalized, intersubjective, and so much a part of our way of life that it is not easy to observe them as constructs." Seemingly mundane or routine issues such as infrastructure maintenance, garbage collection, and municipal budgeting are not associated with the women's rights agenda and have been constructed as gender-neutral. Many municipal officials in Atlanta and Houston, both male and female, do not identify such issues as having differential impacts on men versus women. However, the preceding examples illustrate that these issues may have been constructed as gender-irrelevant while, in practice, few of them are devoid of gender implications.

Revisiting the Boundaries of Municipal Policymaking

In *City Limits*, Paul Peterson (1981) contends that city leaders are under an economic imperative to pursue developmental policies rather than policies that

redistribute monetary entitlements and social services to their poorer residents. On the one hand, city officials, especially those of the progressive bent, would like to support redistributive policies that improve conditions for their lower-class constituency. On the other hand, officials must make their cities attractive to businesses and middle-class residents. The realities of urban economies, especially decreasing tax revenues and reduced funding from the federal and state governments, restrict city officials to pursuing developmental policies that will attract and retain private sector investment (Peterson 1981).

Given the “iron cage” of municipal finance that locks cities into pursuing developmental policies (Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001), female mayors and city council members may find it difficult, if not impossible, to be supportive of women’s interests in policymaking, especially if such policymaking is redistributive in nature. The economic context of American cities adds a limitation to the equitable representation of women’s policy preferences, which is not found at the state and national levels to the same extent. Therefore, an alternative hypothesis for this study has been that female officials in cities with dire financial situations are unable to adopt policies that are favorable to women’s policy preferences. “[A]s long as low taxes and high property values remain the *sine qua non* of municipal politics, women will continue to make decisions that do not fundamentally contrast with men’s,” concluded an earlier study of female council members in several suburban towns (Beck 2001, 64).

In my interviews, a number of city officials said that economic considerations limited their ability and/or willingness to pursue policies thought to benefit women’s interests. It is important to note, though, that many more officials said that a lack of

contextual opportunity prevented them from pursuing women-friendly policies than those who mentioned economic constraints. Nonetheless, a handful of officials said that while they would like to do more to respond to the needs and interests of women, they do not have the financial resources to do so.

When women's issues would arise in policy discussions, a former bureaucrat in Houston explained, the question becomes:

What is it going to take away from?... If you had a million dollars left, would you spend that to prolong police officers on the street or afterschool programs? [The answer typically is] police officers... Even a liberal mayor is—would have to, I think, by definition, focus on core services in municipal government right now (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

Since 2008, the decline in property values and higher foreclosure rates means that the yield from property taxes in many cities is lower than it once was. Given these economic constraints, city officials who might otherwise want to pursue women-friendly policies may be unable to do so (Interview 621, 31 October 2011).

A current member of Atlanta's city council believes that he was voted into office to make sure that government was using residents' taxes in a responsible manner. He, therefore, views his job as ensuring that city officials focus on initiatives and services "that are considered core issues and if it's not essential city services or non-core city services then perhaps it's something we should look at letting go" (Interview 68, 30 August 2011). He suspected that some policies commonly associated with women's issues are not considered core city services and thus should not be funded with the coffers of local government. It is important to note that none of the officials with whom I spoke

framed such decisions as a tradeoff between pursuing developmental policies and redistributive policies, as Peterson does. Instead, these few officials contended that city governments do not have the financial resources to fund services that are beyond their core responsibility, which, in their minds, included most women-friendly policies.

Formal versus Informal Power

In the urban politics literature, the conceptualization and measurement of power have fueled rich debates—debates that extend at least as far back as Robert Dahl and the pluralists’ critique of Floyd Hunter’s community power theory. My dissertation investigates how women obtain power in city government and, once they accumulate that power, how they exercise it in the policymaking process. The quantitative chapters rely on measures of power that are formal in nature. They are based on the objective positions that women hold (e.g., mayor, city council member, and CAO), as well as the extent to which the city charter empowers those positions. But as Clarence Stone, Floyd Hunter, and others have explained, not all or even most power in city politics and policymaking resides in these formal positions. “Power as seen in the rules” is just part of the story; “power as seen by [the rulers]” is likely to matter too (Battista 2011, 103-104; also Stone 1989).

Given the structure, constraints, and rules set by city charters, how do policymakers maneuver to influence policy outputs? My interviews in Atlanta and Houston suggested that there are various components of policymakers’ informal power in cities, including persuasiveness, expertise, relationships and interpersonal skills, the ability to mobilize constituents quickly and effectively, among others. This section investigates how officeholders gather and utilize their informal power in city

policymaking, with the goal of generating a more accurate and fuller understanding of the female political incorporation concept.

The Informal Powers of the Mayor

Atlanta and Houston both have a strong-mayor form of government. Yet even in this context, certain mayors have been more influential than others. In Houston, for example, Bob Lanier, who served from 1992 to 1998, was considered to be a powerful force in local politics. A former council member said that Lanier “was a strong mayor in the strongest sense... He really made the most of the strong mayor form of government because it was his way or the highway” (Interview 179, 9 November 2011). In contrast, the reviews are quite mixed for Lee Brown, mayor for the six years following Lanier. Respondents described Brown’s leadership as “more quiet and deliberative” (Interview 336, 3 November 2011), “hands-off” (Interview 179, 9 November 2011), and lacking a certain forcefulness (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). If a charter empowers all mayors equally, what are the sources and consequences of this variation?

Houston has perhaps the most empowered mayoralty in the country. The mayor not only commands the resources of the executive branch and develops the annual budget, but is also a voting member of the city council, sets the agenda for council meetings, designs the committee structure, appoints committee chairs and members, and presides over council meetings. While the mayor cannot veto council ordinances, nothing gets on the council’s agenda without the mayor’s approval. Even with all this power, however, the mayor would be ill advised to force legislation through the council. She must have the political wherewithal to make council members feel important even if individual council members are, in reality, not that important. Like most legislatures,

council members are most powerful collectively, as an institution. A retired municipal official explained:

This is the paradox of Houston city government. Yes, it is the strongest mayoral form of government [in the country]. If the mayor acts like they are the strongest person, it hurts—it makes it very difficult for them to do what [they want to do]. You know, the path of least resistance for a mayor is just, sort of, internally assume the power, know you have it, use it, but don't ever appear to be using it... [Council members] hate to be called a rubber stamp, and of course, most of the stuff that they do is brain—is no-brainer stuff... I think the mayor has to, in terms of just relationships, has to acknowledge that they are—they're there for a reason. They do represent their districts (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

Mayors must wield their power strategically, especially in interactions with the council. A former official in Atlanta offered a similar thought: “Some of the power of the position is knowing how to use the power without it being so obvious” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Mayors in both cities employ various strategies for exercising their power in ways that are not too obvious. For example, they attempt to build consensus with and among council members (Interview 76, 27 October 2011; Interview 387, 17 November 2011), give council members projects to lead (Interview 625, 1 November 2011), and trade favors (Interview 243, 24 August 2011; Interview 336, 3 November 2011; Interview 789, 3 November 2011) in order to gain influence. Employing these strategies, successful mayors in both cities have been able to translate their policy goals into tangible outputs.

Subject Matter Expertise

Municipal government is a complex enterprise. The people who are most influential in this enterprise have significant knowledge and information, which helps them effect policy change. The view that knowledge is one key to gaining influence is consistent with the “rational ideal” perspective of public policymaking (Stone 2002). In this view, which was prevalent among officeholders in Atlanta and Houston, “individuals consciously formulate goals, gather information about alternative means to achieve them, evaluate the alternatives, and choose the ones most likely to succeed” (Stone 2002, 305).

When asked what personal characteristics affected her ability to influence city policymaking, an official in Atlanta’s city government responded,

I have strong analytical skills. I detach myself emotionally from the analytical work that I do... I like data. I like research. So, I like to understand the fundamentals of the issues. I’m not an expert in everything. I’m not saying that. But I like to understand the fundamentals of public policy issues (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Moreover, she viewed her analytical skills and knowledge of city affairs as critical to her ability to influence city policymaking. These skills also enabled her to gain increasingly important formal positions of power in Atlanta. In this way, gaining informal and formal power may be iterative, one reinforcing the other. Indeed, when this official advises subordinates and mentees about how to influence policy outcomes, she tells them to “be deeply engaged in understanding all of the dynamics and the information. And then begin to present your expertise in the electoral process and in the policymaking process of your local government” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

In Houston, many officials cited the former Agenda Director, Marty Stein, as someone with a significant amount of influence over the policymaking process. In their view, she was the “grease” that made the policymaking process run in city government (Interview 223, 21 October 2011). Why was this the case? After all, Stein was an appointed official, not an elected one. The short answer is that she learned and knew about many facets of city government. A member of White’s core team explained that when trying to get the council to pass an ordinance, the mayor would often use people on his staff who were “subject matter experts” in that issue area (or “SME” for short) (Interview 223, 21 October 2011). In this person’s view,

[Marty Stein] was a subject matter expert on every damn thing. Here’s what I mean by that... This woman may have sixty issues on the agenda [but] she never had to look at anything. Okay, she essentially knew what was on the agenda. And she knew where it was and she knew... who the players were and she knew what it was about. I mean, I consider myself to be, you know, semi-smart. This lady blew me away with, I mean, I sit there, it may be—we may be ordering garbage trucks, who knows, and [Stein would say,] ‘The garbage trucks are being made in Wisconsin, they’ll be delivered on the 15th of August two years from now and they’re going to be green.’ I mean, who the hell knows this stuff? She knew everything ... This woman actually could call up a council member on the telephone and be able to articulate a point better than anyone else because she knew what the hell she’s talking about... (Interview 223, 21 October 2011).

Stein's in-depth knowledge of municipal issues was critical to her success in influencing policymaking on behalf of the mayors for whom she worked.

Certain types of knowledge are more valuable than others. People who understand municipal finance are especially influential. "[T]hose that had a good working knowledge of the fiscal affairs of the city [were influential] because you got to know how to work the dollars in order to make government work effectively or at least towards your agenda," remarked a former council member in Houston (Interview 387, 17 November 2011). Several former council members and administrative officials realized that a solid understanding of government finance was critical to their ability to influence policymaking and therefore decided to pursue MBAs at the University of Houston when they were also working in city government.

Mayors rely on the expertise of appointed bureaucrats to formulate and execute policies. As a member of Annise Parker's team explained,

[H]er department heads are experts in the field in which they are leading.

The Public Works Department, the Health Department, the Library Department, all of those are professionals in their field and so she works with them... They provide her with expertise and information and evaluation. They provide her with the implications of what may happen when she does it (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Furthermore, having a strong-mayor system means that administrative officials and high-level bureaucrats often have more knowledge and information than council members and their staff. Officials in the bureaucracy have the time and resources to gather information in a way that council members, who serve in a part-time capacity, do not. This is another

way in which formal power reinforces informal power. In one Atlanta council member's view, the executive branch's control over knowledge and information should not be discounted: "[I]t's very obvious when we're going through our conversation that the administration and the executive side has all the information, all the data, and we kind of have to ask for it or find it or get it or interpret it a lot of times" (Interview 68, 30 August 2011). This puts council members at a disadvantage in formulating and proposing new policies.

A long-serving former city official in Houston said that council members tend to know little about municipal government when they are elected. Since the adoption of term limits in 1991, council members elected in recent years do not understand the topics about which they are meant to create public policy (Interview 76, 27 October 2011). A former council member in Atlanta agreed with and extended this sentiment. She explained that council members typically run for city office to fix one or two specific problems in their neighborhoods or the city. She continued,

They get to City Hall and they realize it's an enterprise... And they have very little to no experience working on an enterprise... So what I found was a group of people who were passionate about the city, who loved the city, but who were ill equipped to deal with the challenges of the day (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

These comments suggest that some council members may not be prepared, in terms of level of knowledge and expertise, to influence city policymaking.

Other officials in Houston and Atlanta said that certain council members can and do have the expertise to influence policymaking. They may have some level of expertise

about a topic when they are elected or may develop this expertise during their time on the council (Interview 240, 26 August 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011; Interview 922, 20 July 2011). This knowledge may be based on their educational background, work experience, or other characteristics such as affiliations with particular identity groups. For example, as a council member, Annise Parker had a solid understanding of the gay community's policy agenda and interests. Likewise, former council member Gordon Quan was an expert on issues related to the Asian community. Their colleagues would therefore seek Parker or Quan out when the council addressed legislation that affected the gay or Asian communities, respectively (Interview 336, 3 November 2011). Similarly, council members in Atlanta often associate their colleague Joyce Shepherd with blight and code enforcement and seek her advice in this area (Interview 865, 12 September 2011). A council member in Houston described this tendency in more detail:

What I found is that eventually expertises [sic] developed within the council group... To be more effective on council, don't try to be a jack-of-all-trades, just try to specialize in four or five areas and do those well. The council members would come to you on those issues and you give them their territory to do things. That became more effective that way because it wasn't like I'm trying to step on your health care issues. I'll go to you as an expert, but when there's an issue on [a topic I know a lot about], you'll come to me and say, 'Hey, what's the scoop? How do we formulate a policy?' (Interview 336, 3 November 2011).

Collectively, council members have a wealth of knowledge. When council members recognize that their colleagues know things they may not know and vice versa, they can counterbalance the bureaucracy's extensive resources.

A former council member in Atlanta explained that local government is multifaceted. Given the complexity, she argued, it makes sense for council members to specialize:

[T]he amount of work and the number of topics is just enormous and you can't possibly learn everything about everything and you can't be an expert about hardly anything. And so if you are a council person that takes a deep interest in one or two topics and you can become a knowledgeable source, then you can really get a lot of things done. In that arena, you can change policy or you can steer the direction or you can help determine the allocation of funds (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

Several council members in Houston agreed that this was a logical approach to gain influence in municipal policymaking. One explained that her colleague, council member Melissa Noriega will look at an agenda item and say,

'[W]ell that's not in my lane, but I trust you to figure it out... My lane is public safety.' For her, that's the lane she she's chosen to be the expert on. And that's kind of what ends up happening, you divvy up among the people who are willing (Interview 179, 9 November 2011).

Persuasion

As the previous section argued, subject matter expertise is key to municipal policymakers' quest for influence. Once they have that knowledge, how do they use it?

The skill of persuasion is critical; indeed, “factual arguments unaided by persuasion seldom play a significant role in public debate” (Majone 1989, 8). In policy debates, municipal officials may have incomplete information. In these cases, persuasion is necessary to increase the credibility of their advice and thus the likelihood that others will support their proposals (Majone 1989).

Deborah Stone (2002) explains that there are two faces of persuasion in policymaking. The first, which is the rationalist approach, “offers a vision of society where conflict is temporary and unnecessary, where force is replaced by discussion, and where individual actions are brought into harmony through the persuasive power of logic and evidence” (Stone 2002, 307). In contrast, persuasion may have an “ugly face,” which is “intentionally manipulative” for it “robs people of their capacity to thinking independently” (Stone 2002, 307; see also Gaventa 1982). In the first face, political actors rely on “information” whereas in the second, they employ “propaganda” as a critical device.

My interviews with city officials in Atlanta and Houston demonstrated that municipal officials utilize persuasion, coupled with knowledge and information, to influence the policymaking process (Interview 543, 3 August 2011). The opinions of the officials I spoke with were rooted in the rationalist, first face perspective of persuasion. For example, a former official in Atlanta said, “The ability to convene people around a set of issues is a powerful tool in public policy... Your ability to articulate ought to be based on your ability to understand the issue” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). In her view, persuasion was most useful when paired with subject matter expertise. Neither

knowledge nor rhetorical skills of persuasion alone was sufficient (Majone 1989). She continued,

My advice has always been to people who wanted to influence public policy is that you have to develop a level of expertise in something. Something that you care about is the best thing. But people have political power because they understand how to use their positions and the resources that are either available to them or they can find the resources—that's where the influence and the consensus building grows. Just because you have a point of view, which might be well researched and data-driven, doesn't mean that anyone is going to be influenced by it and there are hundreds of examples of that. The poverty level in Georgia is very high. The statistics all say that. But no one has yet been able to influence public policy at various levels of government sufficiently to move those numbers. So having information is not enough. I mean, it's how do you galvanize a community or other powerful people to do something about it? You've got to have respect and credibility when you speak. And usually you gain that by doing something not just by having an opinion (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

The views expressed by this official are clearly from a rationalist standpoint; she believes that deliberation is a key component of government by persuasion (Stone 2002).

Furthermore, the Georgia poverty example illustrates how, without the tool of persuasion, information has little effect on policy decisions.

The two faces of persuasion overlap with the conceptual distinction that Clarence Stone (1989, 228) draws between “power to” and “power over” approaches to governance. The former emphasizes “gaining and fusing a capacity to act” through cooperation, deliberation, and consensus building whereas the latter is about force, control, and coercion. In this way, “power to” is related to the rationalist ideal of persuasion and “power over” is related to persuasion’s “ugly face,” namely propaganda and indoctrination (Stone 2002, 307). A former council member in Atlanta contended that “power to” approaches tend to be more effective when seeking to influence her colleagues:

If you’re introducing innovative legislation, especially on topics that people haven’t heard much about, you really have no choice but to do it [collaboratively]... Because you’ve gotta get your votes and so you’ve got to do more, kind of, explaining about the details and the nuance and how it would help your constituency and how it would help my constituency. You know, what’s in it for you. So, I think if you have those skills, you’ll probably be able to go a little farther... (Interview 124, 22 July 2011).

This council member was successful, she said, not only because she understood the nitty-gritty of issues but also because she was able to explain proposed policies in a way that illustrated the incentives for each district. In these ways, she established credibility with her colleagues, which is also connected to persuasiveness (Interview 124, 22 July 2011).

In addition to the content of a policymaker’s argument, her ability to be persuasive is based on the strength of her rhetorical skills. An official in Houston said that his background as a litigator helped him in city government.

I understand the issues but, you know, but I also know how to articulate them so that although you may not see my—you may not agree with me but you see why I'm, I have my point of view.... I'm a trial lawyer. I'm a great trial lawyer, you know, and I don't make any bones about it, I mean, I win trials (Interview 593, 7 November 2011).

Another elected official in Houston explained that an opinion-maker is someone “who stands up and, by force of their arguments or their persuasive—[by the] persuasiveness of facts that they articulate—is able to effectuate change” (Interview 179, 9 November 2011). For example, three-term former council member Sue Lovell “could get a number of people around an idea, without anything written, or any documents. She could get enough people around something to say let's move forward and get this thing going” (Interview 179, 9 November 2011). There are intangible elements to one's persuasiveness. Some city officials have the ability to galvanize support from their colleagues while others have more difficulty or lack interest in doing so. Persuasiveness, while not easily measurable in a quantitative sense, is nonetheless a critical element of informal power in city policymaking.

Relationships, Trust, and Compromise

Numerous interviewees in Atlanta and Houston said that relationships, trust, and the willingness to compromise are critical to one's effectiveness in policymaking. A leader of a business organization in Atlanta said that compelling municipal officeholders to pass policies that are pro-business comes down to “relationships and personalities,” what she called “People Skills 101” (Interview 110, 22 September 2011). In contrast to formal power, people skills are intangible.

Bill White, who was an effective mayor, was willing to compromise in order to get his legislation through council. He left office with an astounding 84 percent approval rating (Mann 2010). Ahead of controversial or close votes on the council, White would send a “Subject Matter Expert”—a member of his administration who was very familiar with the topic—to speak with council members who were on the fence (Interview 223, 21 October 2011). Based on these conversations, the reluctant council members might come to understand why the policy was necessary but still might want some adjustments made. If the requests were reasonable, White would placate the council members. If not, his team “would bend over backwards” to explain why the change could not be made (Interview 625, 1 November 2011).

Several council members suggested that it is unwise to be a lone wolf. Although council members want to get their policies passed, they realize that these policies are rarely passed in the ideal form they envisioned at the outset of the process. One former council member in Houston averred, “You have to compromise. Now, don’t compromise your values and your principles. But when it comes to policy, there has to be some flexibility” (Interview 118, 17 November 2011). Another council member explained that when it comes to council deliberations, council members should not force matters: “You can grandstand and you can stand up and say you’re opposed to something and you can be an obstructionist, but that doesn’t gain anything” (Interview 93, 16 November 2011).

Numerous officials contended that municipal politics is all about interpersonal relationships. A former member of White’s team explained that she could talk to any council member about policy proposals.

[T]here's sort of a nuance. And it's almost like if you have to explain that to somebody, they probably aren't going to do it very well. But that idea that you approached somebody with, 'What do you think about this vote?' rather than, 'I'm here to tell you why you have to vote for this.' And just, you can extract a lot more information and trust" (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

This approach to interpersonal relationships is connected to a "power to" framework rather than "power over."

Since the mayor is less involved in setting the legislative agenda in Atlanta, council members focus more on their relationships with each other. For instance, a freshman councilor in Atlanta spoke about his attempts to build and nurture individual relationships with his colleagues. He has found that some relationships are more difficult to build than others and so those are lower on his priority list. He remarked,

This sounds manipulative and I don't mean it to, but I want to get to a point where if I bring forward an issue that may be controversial, that because of my relationship with another council member that if I sit in front of him or her, present this, if they're sitting on the fence and they don't feel strongly either way, because of that relationship, they'll vote with me (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Building and utilizing personal relationships, trust, and engaging in compromise are cornerstones of policymaking in Atlanta and Houston.

Historically in popular and scholarly accounts, "power to" approaches to policymaking have been more commonly associated with women, while more coercive

“power over” strategies have been connected to men. However, in one study, female and male state legislators were found to share a preference for “power to” strategies, which may reflect strong, long-standing norms about the appropriate types of behaviors in certain policymaking bodies (Reingold 2000). In my interviews, male and female city officials in Houston and Atlanta appeared equally likely to use strategies rooted in cooperation and consensus-building. More scholarly attention should be devoted to uncovering gender differences in municipal officials’ views of the “rules of the game.” A key challenge of assessing potential gender differences is soliciting honest answers from officeholders about whether they ever use “power over” strategies. Researchers might consider designing a list experiment and implementing it on male and female council members in order to surmount this hurdle.

Council Members’ Partnerships with the Mayor

Given the constraints of operating within a strong-mayor system, how do council members obtain and wield power? In Atlanta and Houston, some council members are interested in being leaders and effecting policy outcomes whereas others focus on responding to constituent demands in a more instrumental way (Interview 124, 22 July 2011; Interview 593, 7 November 2011). The council members who stand out in terms of influencing long-range policy decisions use various strategies to maneuver within the constraints of a strong-mayor system. These strategies include forging partnerships with the mayor, creating alliances with their colleagues on the council, employing the rules of procedure and other formal tools wisely, and connecting with powerful constituency groups.

In Houston, with its extremely strong-mayor form of government, having a close working relationship with the mayor is critical (Interview 45, 9 November 2011; Interview 820, 14 November 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011). A former appointed official said that wise council members curry favor with the mayor “by being a team player, by listening, by working, and just by communicating with them” (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). Given the mayor’s extensive powers, on both the legislative and executive sides, it is not advisable for council members to go it alone. It is difficult to understate the importance of the mayor’s agenda-setting power. Numerous council members explained that they felt like they had to deal with the administration in order to get anything accomplished (Interview 45, 9 November 2011; Interview 687, 26 October 2011). “You have too; otherwise, you are just sitting on council,” said an at-large council member (Interview 687, 26 October 2011).

In Houston, the most effective council members tend to be those who are closely aligned with the mayor. In this way, formal power structures the nature of informal power. For instance, Carol Alvarado, a former mayor pro temp, led the effort to ban smoking in public workplaces. She was able to do this because of her close working relationship with Mayor Bill White and his core team, including the former Director of Health and Environmental Policy, Elena Marks (Interview 118, 17 November 2011). Marks and Alvarado worked together to secure other council members’ support for the ban and were successful, despite opposition from interest groups like bar and pools hall owners (Interview 644, 25 October 2011).

Supporting the mayor does not mean that council members have to vote affirmatively on all of her proposed policies. Rather, the mayor and her administration

value predictability most. They want to know, with as much lead time as possible, how council members are going to vote on each agenda item and why. A key former official described this reasoning: “It’s just that communications process... You can go on record as opposing something the mayor wants to do, but still not piss off the mayor too much... [By] voting with the mayor whenever you can and giving notice when you couldn’t,” council members can extract favors and resources from the administration (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). The most successful council members communicate with the mayor and her staff about their opinions about policy matters (Interview 138, 27 October 2011).

The mayor in Houston holds so much agenda setting power that several current council members did not realize they could bring items forward for consideration without the mayor’s approval (Interview 138, 27 October 2011; Interview 687, 26 October 2011). As described in Table 3.1 (see Chapter 3), three council members may write a letter to the mayor, calling for a special council meeting. If a quorum of eight council members attends the special meeting, they may vote on a piece of legislation (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). This very rarely happens in practice for several reasons. First, it requires a lot of effort on the part of the council members to prepare paperwork and solicit support (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). Second, the mayor must be notified about the special meeting ahead of time, which gives him lead-time to respond and build support for his point of view (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). Third, the shadow of the future matters. For council members “going against that tide a little bit, in the long term, the mayor still controls the agenda. There’s a lot of other items that’ll impact

communities and districts and things like that, that the mayor still has oversight because she controls the agenda” (Interview 99, 24 October 2011).

The mayor of Atlanta does not have the same amount of power as Houston’s mayor. Still, enterprising council members partner with the mayor to accomplish their policy goals. For example, former city council president Cathy Woolard was the first city official to champion the Beltline project. It is a comprehensive redevelopment effort that will provide “a network of public parks, multi-use trails and transit along a historic 22-mile railroad corridor circling downtown and connecting 45 neighborhoods directly to each other” (Atlanta BeltLine 2012). As council president, Woolard did not have the resources necessary to take up such a massive project; however, the mayor and her staff did. Woolard used her analytical skills as a policymaker as well as her relationship with Shirley Franklin to get the Beltline project started (Interview 124, 22 July 2011; Interview 543, 3 August 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Every so often, Woolard would describe the concept to Franklin, who hesitated initially since her administration already had a lot to accomplish. When Woolard left city government to run for Congress, she again implored Franklin and her top staff to explore the project. The mayor obliged because of her relationship with and respect for Woolard (Interview 124, 22 July 2011; Interview 543, 3 August 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Much like Houston’s city government, council members in Atlanta often align with the mayor and her team. At least one council member in Atlanta believes that this is detrimental to deliberation and the quality of the ordinances produced. It is especially true for controversial pieces of legislation.

[B]ecause of the form of government that we have, typically and unfortunately in a lot of instances if you ask me, council people pretty much align with the administration or the mayor's positions... In terms of the check and balance between the executive and legislative, I think that they're set up that way for a purpose. And I don't think that we always serve our purpose. Because in this type of form, a lot of policy is driven by the executive branch when it should be vice versa. But then again, they have all the resources. If you have all the tools in your kit, you can build bigger houses (Interview 240, 26 August 2011).

Creating strong partnerships with the mayor is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, given the strength of the mayor in Atlanta and especially in Houston, council members are at a disadvantage in terms of access to resources, knowledge, and information. Therefore, establishing a partnership with the mayor makes it more likely that services and programs will be delivered to one's constituents. Furthermore, the mayor's access to information via the departments is critical in the formulation of sound policy proposals. In this way, the mayor's formal powers structure councilors' informal strategies for gaining influence.

On the other hand, partnering with the mayor limits the autonomy of individual council members and the legislative branch over all. A handful of council members in both cities spoke of the respect they garnered from being an independent and articulate voice of opposition to the mayor's policy proposals (Interview 240, 26 August 2011; Interview 336, 3 November 2011; Interview 593, 7 November 2011). This strategy is most effective when council members can support their oppositional stance in a way that

is well articulated and backed by data and information. Since the procedural status quo in Atlanta and Houston is to go along with the mayor's policy proposals, council members who go against the grain must do so with caution. They cannot be so obstinate that they never support the mayor's proposals nor can they refuse to compromise. They must navigate the competing strategies of gaining influence through asserting independence versus forging partnerships with the administration.

A former council member in Houston said that typically, new council members' instinct is to immediately form an alliance with the mayor. However, this is not necessarily the wisest approach.

[S]ometimes, council members may overlook forming the alliances with their colleagues. Because there will be times where you will be not in the mayor's, you know—I wouldn't say her corner, but you won't, you will be on the other side of an issue. And at that point, you have to exert some power (Interview 593, 7 November 2011).

Legislative Coalitions

Council members exercise power in their numbers and alliances, not just through partnerships with the mayor. In both cities, coalitions among council members vary depending upon the composition of the council and the issues at hand. In Houston, council members tend to form alliances based on their ideological dispositions. This was especially the case during Lee Brown's administration, when a coalition of conservative and moderate council members worked against the mayor's initiatives (Interview 387, 17 November 2011). By joining together to oppose the mayor's proposals, these council

members caused more close and failed council votes than there had been under Bob Lanier and then there would be during Bill White's tenure.

In Atlanta, several people said that coalitions among council members tend to vary according to the issue at hand (Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 838, 18 August 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011). However, respondents also noted that there are pronounced geographic coalitions among council members, which fall along racial lines. For instance, council members representing wealthier, mostly white districts on the north side tend to work with one another on shared policy goals while other partnerships form among those members who represent similar, mostly black districts on the southwest side of the city (Interview 243, 24 August 2011; Interview 379, 21 July 2011).

It is important to note that in neither city did council members say that there was a regular coalition of female council members. And only a handful of councilwomen said that they have closer relationships with their female colleagues and tend to approach them first about policy initiatives (Interview 240, 26 July 2011; Interview 865, 12 September 2011). For instance, when asked if women on the council tend to work together, a councilwoman in Atlanta responded,

We don't really do that. I do that because I've created relationships because I'm a woman. I feel like I can relate to a woman better. So I'll go and try to win some of my women friends over first and then after that—get opinions from them and interact with them and then after that, there's a couple of men that I can respect, that I can go to straight out... [A] lot of the men have their own agendas, their egos. Even when there were women

who are controversial, I know that I can relate to them as women

(Interview 865, 12 September 2011).

Yet, this councilwoman emphasized that coalitions typically form on the basis of the issues at hand rather than along gender lines. When strategizing about how to get support from her colleagues, no matter whether they are male or female, she said, “You have to know who they are as people” and have a sense of their orientation towards various municipal issues (Interview 865, 12 September 2011).

Using Formal Tools Strategically

Council members can influence the policymaking process by using what little formal power they have wisely. This demonstrates, again, how formal power and informal power are oftentimes interrelated. A former council member in Houston said that one of the most important tools is the tag. At full council meetings, council members can tag an agenda item, delaying discussion of it for one week (Interview 307, 24 October 2011). Council members and/or the mayor can use the extra time to solicit additional support for or opposition to the proposal, depending which side of the issue they are on (Interview 336, 3 November 2011).

Another example of council members using formal tools to their advantage has to do with the budget review process in Houston. Although council members do not have authority to set the agenda in normal council meetings, they have substantially more influence during the budget review process. When Lee Brown was mayor, relations between the administration and some council members became antagonistic because the mayor was perceived as being a weak leader and too quiet and deliberative in interactions with the council (Interview 179, 9 November 2011; Interview 336, 3 November 2011).

To wrest power away from Brown, annually, council members began to offer many substantive amendments to his proposed budget. This trend continues today. The annual two-week budget review process has evolved into a marathon session where each council member presents several proposed amendments, many of which have policy implications (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). Nothing procedural prevented council members from proposing amendments before Brown's mayoralty. The norms have simply changed over time.

In Atlanta, parliamentary procedures affect council members' ability to influence council deliberations. If a council member did not know or understand the rules of procedure, Robert's Rules of Order,

[Y]ou could prevail or get defeated based on that sometimes... knowing when and how and what you can do and cannot do. And how if you don't do it correctly, someone can just come in and undo it just using a technical procedure that you just overlooked or didn't do correctly (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

A well-regarded former council member advised newly elected members to study the rules of governance and procedure because "that's all you have sometimes, in a contentious debate. I mean, that can win the day sometimes" (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). For example, a council member can make a motion to reconsider a vote on a piece of legislation. Then, although the council may vote on the issue, it will have to reconsider it at the next regularly scheduled meeting, like the tag in Houston. The motion puts the final vote on hold and if "you're not prepared for that, you can get undone by it" (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

Finally, council members can oppose and/or vote against the mayor's high-profile policies. In certain circumstances, being an independent and articulate voice of opposition on the council can go a long way. For instance, a former council member in Houston said that he gained respect from speaking out and even voting against the mayor's proposals, but always with a clear rationale (Interview 336, 3 November 2011). Another former council member said that he and Mayor White sometimes butted heads. In his view,

That's what makes a strong, I think, council member. You cannot be a rubber stamp for the mayor... [Y]ou've got to be able to, at some point, separate yourself from the pack if you see everybody else going down the wrong trail (Interview 593, 7 November 2011).

In Atlanta, officials disagree about the extent of the council president's power. Some city officials described the position as "fairly impotent" (Interview 922, 20 July 2011) and "a glorified parliamentarian" (Interview 379, 21 July 2011). Others viewed it as instrumental to determining the council's output. As outlined in Table 3.1, the council president in Atlanta presides over council meetings, votes on proposed legislation in the case of a tie, appoints chairs and members of committees, and assumes the powers and duties of the mayor in case of the mayor's absence or a vacancy. A current council member explained,

The city council president to a certain degree has some role in influence but it's more procedural... The council president can kind of drive an agenda but only to a certain degree because the council then, you know, as a collective body, we are the ones who vote. The council president doesn't

vote. So ultimately it falls back on our shoulders. And if enough of us kind of group together, we then can dictate how the game is played (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Successful council presidents use the limited powers they do have to their advantage. For example, although the council president cannot introduce legislation directly, she can introduce it through other council members. Council presidents who have specific policy agendas can have other council members (typically committee chairs) introduce legislation for them (Interview 124, 22 July 2011; Interview 559, 12 August 2011). Additionally, council presidents may also use their ability to set the order of agenda items for meetings to their advantage (Interview 68, 30 August 2011; Interview 124, 22 July 2011).

Connecting to Constituencies

In both cities, among the most important tools that council members can have is a connection to constituency groups and the ability to mobilize those groups. Local government affects people most frequently and directly and is the level where policies are likely to be implemented (Hajnal and Lewis 2003; Trounstine 2009). Nonetheless, residents tend to participate in local politics at low rates (Berry, Portney, and Thomson 1993). Turnout in local elections may be as low as half that of national elections (Hajnal and Lewis 2003). Strikingly, just 12 percent of *registered* voters turned out for Houston's 2011 general municipal election (Sanz and Miller 2011).¹ Turnout in Atlanta's last general municipal election in 2009 was better, albeit it still low compared to state and national elections—30 percent of registered voters cast ballots (Wheatley 2009).

¹ In addition to voter apathy, the fact that city elections take place every two years in Houston, causing voter fatigue, and are not held concurrently with national elections likely contributed to the low turnout (Hajnal and Lewis 2003).

Furthermore, the average resident does not tend to contact her council members. One long-serving former council member in Atlanta said that she and her colleagues noticed when as few as five constituents contacted them about an issue (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

A current council member in Atlanta said that he has influence because of the district he represents, which is made up of affluent, mostly white, young professionals and families (Interview 68, 30 August 2011; Stone 1989). He and other councilors who represent similar districts have clout, because of the socioeconomic status, educational profile, and activism of their constituency (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). A former council member variously referred to residents of this district as “the white in-town crowd” and “the yuppies” (Interview 273, 19 July 2011). The current council member of this district explained,

It is a community that’s known not to take anything lying down. In fact, if it’s incited, the city kind of knows, ‘Okay, here they go...’ That can be a point of influence as well. Like if you’ve got constituents, a group of constituents, that can be mobilized quickly and very very vocally, people listen. People respect that... [Other council members] recognize that the residents of District [X] can be activated very very quickly (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Residents in this district have a decades-long history of organizing to voice their opinions and concerns about local issues such as economic development, transportation, and city planning (Stone 1989). As a result of such activism, others will pay attention to the district council member’s proposals.

Residents of Atlanta rarely contact council members. Officials pay attention when they do it. Council members can use this to their advantage. For instance, a former district council member in Atlanta said that if she was having trouble getting the mayor to address an issue, “I’d have 300 people show up at the next council meeting” (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). This was a source of influence because, as she put it, “[n]o matter what the issue, if people get organized then I think their local officials are pretty responsive” (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). Citizen participation can sway council members’ opinions (Interview 379, 21 July 2011).

This phenomenon works similarly in Houston. A former council member said she trained her constituency to be active (Interview 307, 24 October 2011). If there were a particular neighborhood issue that the council member wanted to address, she would tell a neighborhood leader to gather 30 people. This group would then attend the council’s public hearings where they would each sign up to speak about the issue (Interview 307, 24 October 2011). From this activism, other officials had a better understanding of what the neighborhood group wanted. As a result, the council would often vote favorable on whatever it was this council member and her constituents had proposed (Interview 307, 24 October 2011).

This former councilwoman said that some current council members have come to her, complaining that they have no power.

And I just think, you’re stupid. You don’t know what your power is. You don’t understand how to use the little bit of power that you have. And then, I mean, it’s like organizing your neighborhoods—that’s power. You know, when you’ve got that many people speaking on behalf of an issue

that you're concerned about—that's power (Interview 307, 24 October 2011).

The mayor and other at-large elected officials are influenced by the mobilization of neighborhood groups because these people affect their prospects for reelection. A current council member in Houston explained,

[I]f the mayor thinks that you have the voice of your constituency that can then hurt her, then obviously it behooves a mayor to then say, 'Look, let's sit down and talk. How can we work together?'... Knowing that you've got your finger on the pulse of the people and the mayor's recognizing that, you can make life wonderful or you can make life miserable for her (Interview 820, 14 November 2011).

The mayor's electoral base is not mutually exclusive from that of district council members. It, therefore, benefits her to be responsive to district council members' concerns.

Aside from a connection to particular districts and neighborhoods in the city, certain council members can gain influence through their connections to other organized interests such as unions, religious institutions, businesses, and many others. A former council member in Atlanta said that while one of his former colleagues was not "book smart, he came up through the union movement. And when he spoke, you know, everybody knew—including other council members—that he was speaking for the unions. And that meant a lot of votes and, you know, a lot of clout. Money and all of that" (Interview 273, 19 July 2011).

The Importance of Informal Power

In the quantitative chapters on women's substantive representation in large American cities, I developed and employed a measure of women's formal power in cities. However, as countless scholars in the urban politics subfield and beyond have recognized, formal power is just part of the story. Informal power, or "power as seen by [the rulers]," is likely to matter too (Batista 2011, 104). In this chapter, I have used my interviews with officials in Atlanta and Houston to better understand how municipal officials gain, maintain, and utilize informal power in governance and policymaking.

In Atlanta and Houston, officials use a variety of tools to increase their power including persuasion, developing subject matter expertise, organizing and connecting to important constituency groups, building interpersonal relationships, among others. How can social scientists incorporate the informal and formal elements of women's political power into a single study? The answer may be to create various measures of power, using multiple methods (Battista 2011). A promising avenue for future research would be to survey municipal officeholders to ask them to rate themselves and their colleagues along the aforementioned dimensions of informal power. The survey could assess the extent to which female officials and their male counterparts are perceived as persuasive, willing and able to forge partnerships with their colleagues, willing and able to organize constituency groups, and related traits.

A challenge of this approach is surveys and interviews that ask respondents to rate the power of actors often do so without any fixed basis for comparison (Battista 2011).²

² Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's (1984) measure of minority political incorporation applied a similar survey technique. Recall that their measure had three components: the number of minority council members, the minority group's role, if any, in a dominant liberal coalition on the council, and minority occupancy of the mayor's office. The measure merges elements of formal and informal power. In order to

This means that it is difficult to compare measures of perceived power across space and time. However, the survey could be crafted in a way that better calibrates perceived power (i.e., in a way based on comparisons). For instance, the survey could ask municipal officeholders to compare the power of current mayor to that of the former mayor or the power of mayor in their city to that of a mayor in a neighboring city.

Formal Power vis-à-vis Political Incorporation

My case studies of Atlanta and Houston revealed that city institutions might not always work the way that one thinks they are working. The city charter may say one thing, while the rule or institution operates differently in practice. Furthermore, the charter does not dictate the structure and rules for every aspect of policymaking and governance in the cities. Some institutions and rules begin as norms, which become formalized and woven into municipal procedures over time (Pierson 2000).

Additionally, in the quantitative chapters, I was unable to gather data on all the positions that influence municipal policymaking. Recall from earlier chapters that one challenge of conducting quantitative analyses on representation in urban politics is that there is no central repository for data on the gender (or race/ethnicity, etc.) of city officials over time. By conducting a survey of city clerks, I was able to collect demographic information on some important city officeholders, not all of them. In Houston and Atlanta, women held relevant positions that were not included in the measure of female political incorporation.

create the second component, the authors conducted close to 400 structured and semi-structured interviews with city officials to identify dominant coalitions on the council, the ideologies of these coalitions, and the role that minorities played in them over time. Their measure of minority political incorporation thus faces a similar challenge as other measures of perceived power. What, precisely, does it mean to be a dominant coalition on the council—i.e., dominant relative to what?

How City Institutions Really Work

The strong mayor scale incorporated in my quantitative measure of female political incorporation considers whether the mayor has the power to (1) appoint administrative department heads, (2) develop the annual budget, and (3) veto council-passed ordinances. Houston has perhaps the strongest strong-mayor form of government in the country and yet its mayor does not have the power to veto council-passed ordinances. However, since the mayor sets the agenda for council meetings, veto power is irrelevant. As described above, the mayor decides which proposals make it onto the agenda and which do not. In contrast, Atlanta's mayor has veto power but does not sit on the council, set its agenda, or have a vote on it. The strong mayor scale weights Atlanta's mayor more heavily than is Houston's, which is arguably not accurate.

Even in a system where the council is more independent from the mayor, as in Atlanta, the mayor may still have some agenda-setting power in legislative affairs. The mayor of Atlanta has access to the bureaucracy's vast expertise, which is critical for policymaking. Council members do not have the same level of knowledge and information and they work in a part-time capacity. Therefore, the executive branch is oftentimes explicitly or implicitly involved in developing legislation that comes before council (Interview 243, 24 August 2011; Interview 379, 21 July 2011). One former council member estimated that the mayor's office initiates as much as 95 percent of the legislation (Interview 379, 21 July 2011).

A key official in Mayor Reed's administration said that council members rarely develop new policies. Each councilor has a set of pet projects, which are connected to prominent issues in their communities. In these areas, council members may raise novel

ideas. More often, however, the council influences how strongly the administration plants itself in a given area (Interview 756, 25 August 2011).

A member of Franklin's administration agreed with this reasoning, saying that council members tend to respond to whatever the mayor is pushing and "then occasionally, in that context, try to create their own issues" (Interview 870, 11 August 2011). However, most major initiatives come out of the mayor's office (Interview 870, 11 August 2011). The debate over pension reform for city employees in summer 2011 is illustrative. Mayor Reed (not the council) put pension reform on the municipal agenda by appointing a pension review panel shortly after his inauguration (City of Atlanta 2011). The mayor had the resources to put together a taskforce on the pension issue, solicit and fund studies, and hire experts. A district council member noted,

All the sudden they're out there and they've got that advantage because they have all the data. They have the time and they have the bandwidth to be able to conduct the analysis. They have the resources to pull together a taskforce to do it. And they put the straw man on the table first. From there, then council comes in and then we massage. We're like, 'Okay, how do we improve on this?' Sure, we could replace it at any time but, you know, it's so much more effort and energy to do that and even trying to get internal resources to do some analysis, we struggled (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Even though the charter does not grant the mayor legislative agenda-setting authority, *per se*, he still plays a central role in bringing forward issues and formulating policies.

The female political incorporation scale does not assess whether council members serve in a full- or part-time capacity. However, the part-time status of council members in Houston and Atlanta further empowers the mayor. To get proposals on the agenda in Houston, council members can either work with their colleagues and subvert the mayor, which rarely happens in practice, or work with the administration, which happens frequently. Their job is technically part-time, although a few members choose to work a full-time schedule (Interview 307, 24 October 2011). Since the mayor and her staff are working full-time, it is more efficient for council members to coordinate with them (Interview 307, 24 October 2011).

My quantitative measures of institutional features are simplifications in other ways as well. In Houston, beginning in 1991, all elected officials were limited to three two-year terms in office. Several respondents remarked that term limits have further empowered the mayor at the expense of council members. Council members now have little time to develop the expertise, knowledge, and relationships they need to engage in policymaking (Interview 76, 27 October 2011), especially since “six years in government history is a very short period of time” (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). Council members typically spend their first two years in office learning how city government works, their second two years doing things, and then the last term plotting their next career move (Interview 307, 24 October 2011; Interview 561, 20 October 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011). As a result, bureaucrats, who are not subject to such limits, tend to have a greater degree of expertise, more experience, and have developed more relationships than council members. Since the mayor commands the resources of and oversees the bureaucracy, this further empowers her relative to the council.

Previous research has shown that district council members are sensitive to the geographically confined concerns and problems of their wards while at-large council members rise above the limited perspective of a single district and focus on citywide problems (Mouler 2008; Svara 2003). Houston and Atlanta confirmed it. District and at-large council members assume different roles and responsibilities in the policymaking process, which have implications for measuring female political incorporation (Interview 99, 24 October 2011; Interview 118, 17 November 2011; Interview 138, 27 October 2011). A member of the mayor's team in Houston said that at-large council members have more time since constituents do not contact them as often.

There are council members who never offer a piece of legislation. The district council members work to get potholes filled... They do constituent services. We have five at-large council members and often, if an ordinance is going to come out, it's going to come out of an at-large office... The fact that they represent the city as a whole—they certainly do constituent work, but they don't have the same caseload of constituent work that the district offices have and so they have more time to look at the city as a whole (Interview 561, 20 October 2011).

Since district council members focus on providing constituent services, they necessarily depend on the mayor's resources to a greater extent than at-large council members do (Interview 593, 7 November 2011). A former at-large council member in Atlanta explained, from the mayor's perspective:

It is much easier to control a—for the most part, not unilaterally—to control a district person because if they are desperate to get a new stop

light or a street repaved or a path or a whatever, you as the mayor control all of those city services (Interview 379, 21 July 2011).

The case studies provided a more nuanced perspective of how city institutions work in practice.

Other Municipal Positions that Matter

The case studies revealed that the quantitative measure of female political incorporation does not include all of the most powerful positions in American cities. The important positions shift across cities and time, making it challenging to develop a reliable quantitative measure of female political incorporation. Also, while the charter may delineate the principle powers of a given position, some of its practical powers may be missing.

I selected Houston as a case study city because of its placement near the median of the female political incorporation scale in 2007. Given the other important positions women held, the city may have had a higher level of female political incorporation than initially anticipated. For example, during Bill White's tenure, women held prominent positions such as the Mayor Pro Tem, City Controller, Agenda Director, Director of Health and Environmental Policy, and Director of Finance and Administration. A comprehensive quantitative measure of female political incorporation would include these other positions too. A former bureaucrat and council member in Houston explained that the agenda director, mayor pro tem, and the mayor's chief of staff and deputy chiefs of staff can have a lot of influence. In her experience, "It depends on two things: how the mayor treats that position—how he or she molds that position—and then it also depends on the person, that personality" (Interview 118, 17 November 2011).

A comprehensive measure of female political incorporation would include the percentage of administrative departments that are headed by women. In both cities, department heads are powerful because they control resources and are experts in a particular area of governance and service provision. A former high level official in Houston explained that the expertise of department heads and their staffs dwarfs that of council members, making them influential in the annual budget process (Interview 76, 27 October 2011).

A more nuanced quantitative measure of female political incorporation would also include the proportion of council committees chaired by women. Certain committees are more influential than others and any weighting system should be devised accordingly. In Houston and Atlanta, the committee with authority over money and budgeting was regarded as most powerful, much like state legislatures (Preuhs 2006). One of the most influential council members is the chairperson of the Committee on Budget & Fiscal Affairs in Houston and the chair of the Finance Committee in Atlanta because “finance is like the blood of the city” (Interview 138, 27 October 2011). The Finance Committee chair tends to be “the smartest, most substantive person on the council. Or that’s at least how it should be,” remarked a former council member in Atlanta (Interview 124, 22 July 2011). Part of what makes the Finance Committee chair so powerful is her access to information from the administration, which can be used to cajole colleagues into supporting particular policies (Interview 935, 22 July 2011).

It is important to note, however, that simply because a council member chairs a committee does not mean that he wields power. A former council member in Atlanta remarked,

[I]f you're weak, it doesn't matter what committee you are chairing.

Because if you're a weak chairman and you have a strong member or two on the committee, they're going to control anyway, whether they're chairing or not (Interview 273, 19 July 2011).

A council member in Houston agreed with this reasoning, arguing that chairing a committee elevates council members only if they use the position wisely (Interview 179, 9 November 2011).

In the executive branch, the individuals and corresponding positions who are closest to the mayor tend to shift from one mayoralty to the next and even over time within the same administration (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). The power shifts depend on interpersonal relationships between the mayor and the members of her team. For example, in Mayor Parker's administration, the communications director has a central role in policy deliberations (Interview 561, 20 October 2011). The communications director has increased influence because Parker's chief of staff is functioning as more of a chief administrative officer than did people who previously served in her position (Interview 822, 16 November 2011). In contrast, Bill White's chief of staff, Michael Moore, was widely regarded as the mayor's right-hand man (Interview 644, 25 October 2011) or even his alter ego (Interview 625, 1 November 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

In short, the case studies suggest ways to improve the quantitative measure of female political incorporation, based on how municipal rules and institutions operate in practice. My interviews also demonstrated that several other positions of power could be

added to the measure. A continuing challenge of research in this area will be collecting data on the gender and race of the people holding these positions across cities and time.

Responsive Male Leaders in City Government

Some scholars have argued that liberal policy platforms reflect disadvantaged group preferences to such an extent that descriptive representation does not exert additional effects on policy decisions (Lublin 1997; Swain 2006). Liberal or Democratic Party lawmakers in Congress substantively represent disadvantaged group interests, and there is little difference, for instance, between the policy beliefs of liberal nonblack representatives and those of black representatives (Swain 2006).³ Although the political interests of African Americans are multifaceted and complex, they are, on average, still in need of the types of assistance that liberal governments offer. The same reasoning could apply to the representation of women's interests in municipal policymaking. Although women's interests are numerous and varied, many policies that benefit women's interests overlap with issues that progressive city officials, whether male or female, would promote. It is plausible that liberal city officials who are men may represent women's interests to a degree that is equal to female descriptive representatives, or even female city officials who have some modicum of power. Indeed, a handful of studies have reported few differences in the policy preferences and roll call voting of male and female lawmakers in the Congress and state legislatures (Reingold 2000; Tamerius 1995; Wolbrecht 2002).

My case studies in Atlanta and Houston revealed that progressive male officials in city government do, at times, address women's issues. As discussed in Chapter 3,

³ Many other studies are at odds with this line of reasoning, finding instead that African American officials represent group interests above and beyond other factors, such as constituency pressures and partisanship (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Canon 1999; Haynie 2001; Preuhs 2006; Tate 2003).

women's partnerships with members of other disadvantaged groups and membership in multiple groups facilitated their increasing numbers and prominence in the city governments. In my interviews with city officials, it also became apparent that similar partnerships, with progressive and minority male officials, brought certain women's issues onto the municipal policymaking agenda. When asked whether they have pursued policies often associated with women's interests, these male officials responded affirmatively. Often, men pursued such policies after first being pressed by women's advocacy organizations outside of government. Although Atlanta and Houston's governments are officially nonpartisan, these men had progressive policy platforms and supported liberal causes. Furthermore, the men who worked on women's issues tended to be minorities, either Latino or African American, and held prominent positions in government.

Male city officials may be just as likely as female officials to respond to women's needs, especially when approached by constituents or advocacy groups. One councilman in Houston remarked,

You know, I'm not a woman but if an advocacy group—and I meet with, you know, many advocacy groups—came to me and said, you know, 'We have a need. You know, this is happening and we want some help with this issue,' I mean, they would be able to advocate their cause and I would listen to them. Now, you know, obviously I think a woman would have a better understanding... If it [the council] was all males, I mean, we might get it but we might not get it either. It's just one of those things that it depends, really, on the values of the council members... I don't see, even

with the women we do have, where there's this big women's agenda, for example (Interview 99, 24 October 2011).

A former councilwoman in Atlanta agreed with this sentiment, saying that if constituents push their council member to address women's issues, the council member, no matter his/her gender, is likely to respond.

Men council members are going to respond just as well to active women constituents as women are going to, in my opinion—at least on this intimate local level... Council members are constantly in the neighborhoods and at community meetings. So you really can't be aloof or ignore an issue if your constituents are really active on something (Interview 922, 20 July 2011).

Certain characteristics that are unique to the local level, particularly its immediacy and officeholders' closeness to their constituents, means that officials of both sexes will respond to women's interests, especially when pressed to do so (Interview 118, 17 November 2011).

In both cities, there are examples of male officials advocating for women-friendly causes and policies. The councilman in Houston quoted above believes that “part of being an elected official is making sure that you're using the opportunity to be a leader to help bring awareness to a lot of issues” (Interview 99, 24 October 2011). Recently, he has undertaken a public education campaign on breast cancer prevention. As part of this campaign, he spread information about detecting breast cancer to his constituents via social media and snail mail.

Sometimes we think, ‘Well, that’s not one of my issues, you know. I don’t need to worry about breast cancer, per se.’ But by advocating for it, somebody thought, ‘You know, I never thought about that’ or ‘Hey, mom’ or ‘Hey, honey’ or ‘Hey, have you gotten tested? Have you gotten checked?’ (Interview 99, 24 October 2011).

Although the councilman did not consider breast cancer prevention to be one of his key policy issues, he used his visibility as an elected official to be an advocate and source of information. In recent months, he has also held two town hall meetings on the issue of teen pregnancy. It is important to note, however, that for both of these issues, the councilman has focused on education and advocacy rather than pursuing concrete policy initiatives.

In Atlanta, former city council president Robb Pitts, an African American, was the political force behind the creation of the city’s Commission on Women. Said one former councilwoman, “It’d be sad if it had been men who kept promoting the women’s commission, but I think that might have been the case” (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). Rita Samuels, a long-time community activist, advocated for the creation of the women’s commission and Pitts responded (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). Samuels was an activist in the Civil Rights Movement, worked on Jimmy Carter’s personal staff when he was governor of Georgia, and held a constituent affairs position in Andrew Young’s mayoral administration. She founded the Georgia Coalition of Black Women in 1981, which she then used as a platform to advocate for the creation of the Georgia Commission on Women in 1991 and the Atlanta Commission on Women in 2001 (*The Informer* 2010).

According to some city officials, Atlanta's Commission on Women is mainly ceremonial and has done little in the way of advocating for women's issues in municipal government (Interview 361, 9 August 2011; Interview 379, 21 July 2011). The group consists of people appointed by the council and the mayor. It is allotted a nominal amount of money for programming each year. In previous years, it held luncheons on various women's issues and an annual conference to train female entrepreneurs about how to bid on city contracts (Interview 361, 9 August 2011). The commission has not done anything of note in recent years (Interview 361, 9 August 2011). Its website is inactive.

Male officials in Atlanta and Houston have addressed women's interests in other aspects of city governance, such as public safety. A former high level official in Houston's police department, who is African American, said that in the 1990s, all of the police officers who trained police cadets in defensive tactics were men. He learned that this was making female cadets uncomfortable. When he was promoted to a position of greater authority, he insisted that the training academy include women on the defensive tactics training team. Small but significant changes like this have helped make Houston's police department a more gender inclusive workplace (Interview 789, 3 November 2011).

These are just three of several examples of male officials pursuing public service campaigns, initiatives, and policy changes on behalf of their female constituents and government employees. The examples demonstrate that progressive men in city government are often responsive to the interests and needs of women. Yet, interestingly, when asked to cite local leaders who stand up for women's issues, very few of the interviewees (both men and women) mentioned men. Almost every respondent listed a number of women—in city government, some state level officials, and leaders outside of

government—who came to mind. Thus the above examples may be the exceptions that prove the rule. This is not to say that all women will necessarily “act for” women in the policymaking process, or that all men will fail to do so (Reingold 2000). Rather, respondents seemed to believe that because of their life experiences vis-à-vis those of men, female representatives are more likely to bring a first-hand understanding of women’s interests to bear during the policymaking process (Mansbridge 1999).

Several respondents said that all or most of women on the city councils and among the mayor’s staff in Atlanta or Houston would stand up for women’s issues, if and when such issues arose. Both prominent women in city government *and* male allies play a role in getting women’s issues on the policymaking agenda and addressing them once there.⁴ A former high-level official in Houston explained that he relied on a female member of his staff and a volunteer to identify and address any issues about which female constituents were concerned. These two women created an advisory committee on women’s issues.

I worked on kids’ issues. I worked on women’s issues. I worked on minority issues. Again, the overall objective was to give everyone an equal opportunity for everything that the city had to offer. And that’s where you begin. That’s the platform you work from. To the extent that you find impediments, then you address those impediments. There’s no denial that they existed. But I could not be the one who could determine all the issues of all different women, for example. That’s the reason I had a

⁴ Similarly, Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Kniss (2000) find that elected gay officials and supportive non-gay elites are jointly instrumental to passage of domestic partner benefits by city and county governments.

staff member responsible for that... That's the reason I had a volunteer
(Interview 906, 4 November 2011).

The former official contended that women are much more likely than men to focus on women's issues, just as Latino representatives are more likely to focus on issues that pertain to Latinos (Interview 906, 4 November 2011). A current elected official in Houston agreed with this line of thinking, explaining that, as a man, there are times when he is unable to see issues from a woman's perspective, simply because he lacks the same set of personal experiences (Interview 593, 7 November 2011; see also Reingold 2000, 123-124). Similarly, a council member in Atlanta who considers himself a double minority remarked,

I wouldn't characterize myself as a feminist. And the only reason I say that is because I don't always see a feminine or feminist slant or I don't see it through those lenses immediately. I usually see it from a racial or sexual orientation lens first and then a women's after that... I wouldn't be the one to ring the bell. But as soon as that bell is rung, I'm there... I do believe that you want your representative body to be as closely as possible aligned demographically with your constituency. I think that's a good thing just because, you never know. You never know if something's going to come up and if you're not pre-wired to notice, the chances are greater that it'll get missed... You can't always rely on your constituents or your supporters. It's the people at the table talking and that is part of the whole issue of power and influence is sometimes you've gotta have that voice

but you also have to have those set of eyes too (Interview 68, 30 August 2011).

Like this councilman, political theorists have argued that since representatives have considerable autonomy, it matters who they are, in a descriptive sense.

“When there is a significant under-representation of disadvantaged groups at the point of final decision, this can and does have serious consequences,” contends Phillips (1998, 44).

Male officials in Houston and Atlanta pursue policies and initiatives pertaining to women, especially when organizations and constituents provide pertinent information and advocate for them to do so. In the examples cited above, male officials led public awareness campaigns about breast cancer, started a women’s commission, and made a significant change to police training practices in order to better serve female cadets. Male officeholders undertook these initiatives at the request of advocacy organizations led by women, female constituents, or women working in city government. However, in representative democracies, elected officials are necessarily privy to non-public information and are sometimes called on to make decisions absent public input. While men in office may be responsive to women’s issues when they are brought to their attention, they do not necessarily see issues from the same perspective or with the same intuition as their female colleagues.

A former council member in Atlanta, who is female, said that having women in city government “absolutely made a difference” (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

If there’s no one there to make the statement or to sensitize people or remind people that what they’re doing is wrong or what they’re doing is

insensitive or inappropriate... There has to be a voice. Someone has to speak up and say, 'That's not right. We shouldn't do that...' If there's no resistance, if there's no voice, people take the path of least resistance (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

At times in Atlanta and Houston, prominent municipal officials, both male and female, address women's issues. The examples cited above demonstrate that male officials are responsive to their female constituents, especially when compelled to do so by women in city government, advocacy organizations, and female residents. A majority of the men who have pursued initiatives that might benefit women were themselves members of disadvantaged groups. As discussed in Chapter 3, minority men have been supportive allies of women in Atlanta and Houston's city government. It may be that the unique perspective of these men makes them more likely than their white male counterparts to take up women's issues or be approached to do so. Having allies in city government is important. However, most of the officials to whom I spoke cited a number of female leaders—in city government, at the state level, and in organizations outside of government—as people who were mostly likely to stand up for women's issues. This should not be discounted. The perspectives and experiences that women bring to municipal government serve as added insurance that policymakers will not overlook women's interests. Having a small number of committed female representatives in city government may be adequate to ensure that such perspectives and experiences are incorporated into the policymaking process.

Conclusion

This chapter explored alternative explanations for women's substantive representation in cities. I explained how the perceived scope of municipal governments limits the extent to which officials address women's issues. The majority of officials in Atlanta and Houston viewed core municipal services as devoid of gender implications. However, some officials explained that certain policies and services that seem, on their face, to be gender-neutral can have different effects on female residents and employees than they have on men. Future scholarship should investigate the extent to which city officials recognize the gendered nature of seemingly gender-neutral policies (e.g., budgeting, city planning, and service provision) as a dependent variable.

The chapter then turned to the differences between officeholders' formal and informal influence in policymaking and the ways that municipal institutions operate in practice. Through qualitative analysis, scholars develop and investigate "thick" concepts, which are useful for describing political phenomena and making inferences about simple causation in a few cases (Coppedge 1999). However, when it comes to making generalizations, complex and multidimensional concepts can be unwieldy. In Appendix B, I explain the logic and construction of the quantitative measure of female political incorporation, which is based on the formal positions of city government and the powers vested in those positions. Compared to the thick concept of informal power that I investigated in Houston and Atlanta, the measure of female political incorporation may seem somewhat "thin" (i.e., simplistic or reductionist) (Coppedge 1999).

What does the "thick" version of female political incorporation look like? It incorporates informal elements of power, such as municipal officials' political acumen,

persuasiveness, ability and willingness to form coalitions with their colleagues, the extent of their knowledge about municipal affairs, connections to influential constituencies, among other elements. It may not be feasible to combine formal and informal aspects of women's power in municipal government into a single measure. It is, however, possible to employ multiple methods to investigate a single topic, thereby increasing confidence in the findings (Battista 2011). To this end, future research could utilize survey data to assess the informal elements of female political incorporation across cities and time. The survey would ask municipal officeholders and other civic leaders about which officials in their governments have various types of informal power. It could also employ an experimental design (e.g., a list experiment) to decipher whether there are gender differences in the use of "power to" versus "power over" strategies in policymaking.

Finally, this chapter revealed that some men in Houston and Atlanta's governments responded to women's interests, especially when lobbied by advocates and their constituents. In both cities, minority men appeared to be particularly responsive to the concerns of female constituents and employees. Scholars should examine the political partnerships between women and minority men in urban policymaking in more depth. Women's substantive representation may more likely to occur when women and minority men are present and powerful—by making a minimal coalition more feasible or simply by increasing the chances that one group will serve as a strong proponent of responding to disadvantaged groups' interests.

Based on the evidence presented in this chapter, it is clear that women's issues do, at times, arise on municipal policymaking agendas. When they do appear, it tends to be in an idiosyncratic, entrepreneurial, and contextualized manner. In the next chapter, I

conclude the dissertation by proposing an entrepreneurial model of women's substantive representation in cities.

Chapter 7.

Conclusion: Towards an Entrepreneurial Model of Women's Substantive Representation in Cities

This dissertation examined the politics of women's representation in urban governance and policymaking. In Part I, I attended to the determinants of women's election as mayors and council members as well as their increasing prominence in municipal bureaucracies more generally. The political context in cities and partnerships between women and other under-represented groups emerged as particularly important to women's increasing descriptive representation and political incorporation. Contextual factors—such as the extent of women's socioeconomic and organizational resources, the openness of urban political systems, and the presence of diverse and progressive-minded populations—are at least as important as electoral rules and other institutional features in predicting women's presence and power in city governments. Women's success in municipal elections and in gaining significant appointed positions has also been due to their alliances with and memberships in other disadvantaged groups, such as racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities.

In Part II, I investigated the factors that facilitate (and impede) the production of municipal policies that are commonly associated with women's interests. In this latter section, I developed a model that called attention to the formal and informal power that female office-holders have as a critical component of the quest for policy responsiveness. The quantitative analyses revealed that women's formal power increases the likelihood of allocating Community Development Block Grant funding to certain women-friendly

policy areas but not others. Additionally, women's formal power did not appear to influence whether cities adopt a symbolic policy intended to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children. In both cases, the effect of female political incorporation on policy outputs did not necessarily extend beyond the effect of women's descriptive representation by itself. Throughout Part II, I drew on my fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta to explore puzzles from the quantitative analyses. The Houston and Atlanta cases revealed that, when it comes to the factors influencing women's substantive representation in cities, female officials' informal power might trump their formal power. Additionally, urban policymakers' focus on providing core municipal services means that women's issues infrequently arise on municipal policymaking agendas.

Nonetheless, at certain times, city governments do address women's issues. Yet, the relationship between women's political incorporation and policy responsiveness to women's interests is far from certain. Instead, the Houston and Atlanta case studies suggest that women-friendly policymaking in cities is likely to be contextualized and idiosyncratic. The patterns that emerge are entrepreneurial in nature rather than the result of a process whereby greater numbers of more prominent female officials bring women's issues to the fore. In this conclusion, I suggest that we take a step back in the "stages" of the policymaking process to consider problem definition and agenda setting before policy choice (Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl 2009). Based on my fieldwork in Atlanta and Houston, I propose several explanations for how women's issues come onto local policymaking agendas. I develop an entrepreneurial framework of women's substantive representation in cities and, in doing so, suggest several avenues to pursue in future research.

Getting Women's Issues on Municipal Policymaking Agendas

I proposed that cities where women held positions of authority would be more likely to adopt policies commonly associated with women's interests. The findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and my fieldwork in Houston and Atlanta produced mixed support for this hypothesis. At times, women's issues arise on the policymaking agenda. But, given the "lack of contextual opportunities" (Interview 922, 20 July 2011), they arise infrequently. In order to understand when municipal policymakers enact women-friendly policies, we must attend to when and how they come onto the agenda, if at all (Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl 2009). In many people's minds, the principal duty of city government is to provide residents with core municipal services and programs and, as a result, city officials do not have the time, resources, or expertise to address women's issues on a regular basis (Interview 45, 9 November 2011; Interview 321, 13 July 2011; Interview 531, 16 August 2011; Interview 593, 7 November 2011). How do issues that many view as not part of the everyday business of city government end up on policymakers' agendas?

Women's issues may arise in city policymaking in three ways. First, policymakers attend to women's issues when focusing events occur (Birkland 2001), especially ones that are difficult for them to ignore regardless of whether they are considered to be part of the city's jurisdiction. Second, women's issues may arise when they are related to the nature and delivery of core municipal programs and services. Third, some women's issues may be connected to political leaders' overall goals for the city. These three avenues through which women's issues arise are not mutually exclusive.

Problems Happening in Neighborhoods

Municipal officeholders address women's issues when they are connected to problems happening in the neighborhoods and districts they have been elected to represent. Local officials serve in such close proximity to their constituents that it is difficult for them to ignore issues that constituents bring forward, even when such issues are not part of the typical jurisdiction of city government (Interview 922, 20 July 2011). In Houston and Atlanta, the immediacy of problems occurring in cities makes it difficult to deny that municipal policymakers have some stake in addressing them.

Some of the policies officials adopt and implement may go beyond core municipal services and programs. Still, they have obvious and strong connections to what happens in cities. The issue of childhood prostitution and sex trafficking is something that, arguably, state and federal officials are best equipped to address. In fact, they are now dealing with these issues. After a four year legislative battle, the Georgia General Assembly passed stricter penalties for human trafficking in 2011 (Interview 361, 9 August 2011). The new state law protects victims of prostitution from being prosecuted and imposes stricter penalties on traffickers and people paying for sex (Neal 2011). Additionally, the U.S. Attorney in Atlanta, Sally Yates, has made sex trafficking one of her key issue areas because she views it as a significant criminal issue (Interview 559, 12 August 2011; Quinn 2012). As Rochefort and Cobb (1994, 14) explain, problem ownership may refer to who has "jurisdictional control" over a problem, which is subject to contestation and debate. It is not always clear where jurisdictional authority lies and thus the assignment of roles and responsibilities is fluid, as the issue of sex trafficking and prostitution shows.

The city of Atlanta was one of the first governmental units to address the sex trafficking problem. Why was this the case? The problem was occurring, and continues to occur, on Atlanta's streets, affects city residents in a myriad of ways, and therefore became increasingly difficult for city officials to ignore. According to Kingdon (1995, 109), "conditions become defined as problems when we come to believe that we should do something about them." For a period of time during Shirley Franklin's administration, city officials believed they should do something about sex trafficking because it had become a significant local problem.

Officials in Atlanta deemed this an important area to work on because the city ranked high on the list of places where women and girls were exploited commercially. A former city council member reflected,

That's a dubious distinction, for sure. That kind of stuff doesn't come before city council or to the mayor's office, really. Somebody brought that to [Mayor Franklin] and said, 'This is a problem. You've got to fix it 'cause you're a girl and you should be more sensitive to it.' And she was like, 'I'm in. You're right' (Interview 559, 12 August 2011).

It is notable that Franklin was the target of advocacy efforts since she is female and was therefore presumed to have greater sensitivity to the problem of prostitution.

The Franklin administration's "Dear John" campaign addressed the commercial sexual exploitation of children. As part of the campaign, Franklin's team reached out to downtown hotels, where sex trafficking often occurs, and implored managers and owners to be more vigilant and report suspicious activity

to the police. The administration also devoted resources to ensure that police officers were trained to deal with investigations and arrests of sex traffickers (Interview 110, 9 September 2011).

Inherent in problem definition is continual bargaining and argumentation about where a problem comes from, what it consists of, and based on answers to these questions, what a likely solution could be (Rocheftort and Cobb 1994). In Atlanta, city officials attempted to redefine the problem of childhood prostitution through a public education campaign. A former bureaucrat in Atlanta noted that other cities' campaigns centered on "rescuing the victim" such as Chicago's "She Has a Name" campaign (Interview 110, 9 September 2011). Women in Atlanta's city government, however, reframed the problem, focusing less on the supply of prostitutes and more on the demand of johns (Interview 110, 9 September 2011).

Issues Related to the Provision of Municipal Services

Other women's issues come on to cities' agendas because they are related to the provision and delivery of municipal programs and services. Although the local level has not been the place where the most controversial women's issues are debated, female officeholders may treat issues like budgeting, zoning, and safety differently than their male counterparts (Beck 2001). In Houston, much like other American cities, women are severely underrepresented in the fire department.¹ In 2010, just 100 out of the city's 3,900 firefighters (2.6 percent) were women (Hewitt 2010).² Firefighting has traditionally

¹ According to a 2008 survey conducted by the International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Services, in large cities, the percentage of firefighters who were women ranged from one-quarter of one percent in New York City to 17 percent in Minneapolis (Casey 2009).

² In contrast, women make up 14 percent of Houston's Police Department (Pinkerton 2010). While this proportion is not on par with their presence in the population, considerably more women (and minorities) are employed in HPD than HFD. HPD has attempted to diversify its ranks, both in terms of

been a male-dominated profession and its occupational culture tends to be masculine (Casey 2009). A recent survey of female firefighters across the country found that 85 percent felt they were treated differently by their male colleagues and supervisors, 43 said they had been subject to verbal harassment, and 31 percent had experienced unwanted sexual advances (Horvath and Sadowski 2009).

In 2009, several minority female firefighters bypassed the leadership of the Houston Fire Department and went before the city council to complain about discrimination and harassment, which they argued, was not isolated but was evidence of the department's discriminatory culture (Barajas 2009). The final straw occurred when, after complaining about mistreatment by their coworkers, two women found racist and sexist graffiti on their lockers and personal items (Hewitt 2010). Several city officials said that HFD officials had not thought carefully about how to integrate women into their ranks (Interview 223, 21 October 2011; Interview 387, 17 November 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

A high-level municipal official observed, after noting that the HFD is not unique among fire departments in the U.S., that its culture and leadership ought to be changed:

[F]ire departments everywhere have a hard time recruiting women. I guess we're one of the worst and we are really an old-fashioned, inbred—I mean, I think that somebody said incestuous almost. I mean, a lot of firefighters are related to each other. It's this handing down and the family of firefighters, and they're resistant... It's something that should be changed and I think a lot of times in public policy, things that are sort of

gender and race/ethnicity, through extensive outreach to minorities and women (Interview 99, 24 October 2011; Pinkerton 2010).

ripe and should be changed end up getting changed because of that
(Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

And in the past two years, city officials have undertaken several initiatives to recruit more women to HFD and improve the conditions for women who already work there. The department holds a twice-yearly event called Camp Houston Fire that teaches young women about the profession (Interview 99, 24 October 2011). It also hosts recruitment events every month where women who are interested in joining the department can visit its training center (Hewitt 2010). These events are critical because, as a member of Bill White's core team explained,

[Y]ou gotta recruit and you gotta tell them that there's—from a very young age, you gotta say there's this option out there and it's a great option and that they're wanted and that it's an incredible career and then you have to have role models and mentors (Interview 625, 1 November 2011).

Additionally, Houston's female firefighters have complained about gender-neutral living quarters and a lack of privacy on the job (Interview 223, 21 October 2011; Interview 822, 16 November 2011). As a result of these complaints, the city has been retrofitting fire stations to make them more suitable for a coed workforce (Interview 223, 21 October 2011).

Recent events in Houston demonstrate that elements of municipal government that are not commonly associated with women's issues can have important consequences for women's equality in cities. Women's issues will arise on cities' policymaking agendas when they are connected to the planning, implementation, and provision of core

services and programs. Although the women's rights agenda may, indeed, be remote from the consideration of local policymakers (Beck 2001; Boles 2001), at times, they cannot ignore women's concerns that arise in service provision and municipal business more generally.

Issues Related to the Agenda Setter's Goals

When women's issues come onto the municipal policymaking agenda, they are often related to political leaders' overall goals for the city. In Atlanta and Houston, the mayor is the top agenda-setter in city government, although other officials have authority to bring items onto the policymaking agenda as well. When interviewing an important former official in Atlanta, I laid out the argument that city officials focus on municipal services and do not have the time or resources to address women's issues. When the official heard this, she responded,

Oh no, you do. That's not true. You always have time. I mean, busy people get things done... [E]very mayor puts something on the agenda.

The question is: what? Is it something related to their own political future?

I know a woman mayor in a small town in Michigan. She's been mayor for 20 years. She instituted, in the spring and summer in Michigan, walks with the mayor in various city parks. She's supposed to be there to do services, right? She does walks with the mayor because she's promoting health (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

In this official's opinion, mayors can "absolutely" put what they want on the agenda, even when such issues are not connected to the core duties of municipal government (Interview 941, 19 August 2011). The agenda-setter cannot put every single issue on the

agenda, just the things that he deems important. He has to turn down many requests that people make because of time and resource constraints. It is important, though, “to be strategic about the few things that you do [put on the agenda] and, ideally, you do them in relationship with your overall goals” (Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Another veteran official in Atlanta remarked that mayors’ ability to add items to the policymaking agenda is connected to their visibility as public figures:

[T]he mayors have a bully pulpit. They can move the media. People will come to a press conference. And they have special interests they would like to promote that have either a direct impact or not a direct impact on city government. But it’s a prerogative that they have, as long as it’s not something that’s costing the taxpayers a lot of money (Interview 243, 24 August 2011).

Most mayors in Atlanta have put items that are not entirely germane to city operations on the agenda because “they have different interests” (Interview 243, 24 August 2011).

In Houston, one former mayor’s goal was to include previously neglected groups in the business and products of local government; he viewed the inclusion of women as a part of this. To address impediments, the mayor held a convention for women to express their views on pertinent issues and their status in the city (Interview 118, 17 November 2011; Interview 906, 4 November 2011). These examples show that women’s issues may come onto the agenda when they are connected to an agenda-setter’s key goals.

Entrepreneurs Addressing Women’s Issues in Cities

Several challenges remain in this work to explain how women’s issues come onto the municipal policymaking agenda. First, the three pathways that I described are more

inductive and descriptive than predictive in nature. In this way, the discussion suffers from the same challenge as that of research on agenda setting and policy change more generally (e.g., Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Kingdon 1995). While I have described the nature of agenda setting related to women's issues in cities, I have not offered predictions about the factors that bring women's issues onto the agenda and facilitate policy change. In this way, I have explained *how* policy changes have occurred, not *when* they will happen.

Second, a significant challenge for studying such phenomena is that when women's issues arise, it is oftentimes in unsystematic and individualistic rather than structural ways—i.e., in ways that defy direct quantification and that are difficult to capture within the large-N framework. One way to further develop this framework would be to gather data on the issues identified above as relating to problems happening in cities and the provision of municipal services (i.e., local human trafficking campaigns and women's employment in public safety departments) across cities and time. Additionally, a future study could survey the agenda-setters in municipal governments (e.g., mayors in strong mayor systems or managers in council manager systems) about their key policy priorities and then code whether any of these priorities are women's issues.

At all levels of government, the causal connection between having more women in political institutions and the production of policies thought to benefit women's interests is tenuous at best (Berkman and O'Connor 1993; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Thomas 1991; Tolbert and Streuarnagel 2001; Weldon 2006). For this reason, I developed a theory that focused attention not just on the increasing number of women in office, but also on their relative amount of power.

Pondering the same puzzle, Childs and Krook (2006) proposed that rather than focusing on the connection between an increasing number of women in office and women-friendly policy outputs, political scientists should instead identify specific representatives who work towards women-friendly policy changes. They define “critical actors” as “those who initiate policy proposals on their own, even when women form a small minority, and embolden others to take steps to promote policies for women, regardless of the proportion of female representatives” (Childs and Krook 2006, 528). In this way, critical actors can be considered policy entrepreneurs who are located inside of government. When it comes to promoting policy change, critical actors may either act alone or provoke others to work with them (Childs and Krook 2006).³

In a recent book, Lee Ann Banaszak (2010) argues that “movement insiders,” women’s movement activists working inside the federal bureaucracy, played an important role in a number of issue areas, such as educational equity, equal employment, and women in international development. Interestingly, the feminist activists interviewed in the study were often located outside of bureaucratic agencies explicitly devoted to women’s issues. Yet, even in these locations, they influenced policy decisions. Banaszak concludes that since “a wide variety of policies affect women, feminist activists can have profound effects even when located outside of women’s policy agencies” (2010, 160). These points apply to municipal governments as well, where few, if any, organizational units are devoted to addressing women’s issues.

³ In Childs and Krook’s view, critical actors “may not even be women; in some situations, individual men may play a crucial role in advancing women’s policy concerns” (2006, 528). In Chapter 6, I described several instances in which male officeholders in Houston and Atlanta pursued policies and initiatives that were women-friendly, demonstrating support for this notion.

Historically, when women's issues arose on the municipal policymaking agendas in Atlanta and Houston, they appeared in individualized, idiosyncratic, and contextualized ways. Policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon 1995), both inside and outside government, pushed their pet projects related to women's interests forward. Women-friendly policy outputs are more commonly the result of these occasional entrepreneurial efforts than they are due to the steady work and coalition-building of a large number of powerful female officials.⁴ The defining characteristic of a policy entrepreneur is her willingness to devote resources such as time, reputation, and money in the hope of a future return. Furthermore, policy entrepreneurs must be "skilled at coupling. They must be able to attach problems to their solutions and find politicians receptive to their ideas" (Zahariadis 1999, 78). Those who are well connected and persistent are more likely to be effective. In this way, an entrepreneurial model of women-friendly policymaking in cities is not completely at odds with the female political incorporation framework. Indeed, entrepreneurs who hold positions with a degree of authority and who are connected to professional networks possess "access and potential influence over decisionmakers" (Zahariadis 1999, 84). Those who are members of multiple governmental and nongovernmental arenas and organizations may be more able to "move issues from one venue to another where success is more likely" (Zahariadis 1999, 84). In Atlanta and Houston, entrepreneurs have, at times, found that municipal officials are receptive and responsive to their pet causes.

Even in an environment where women's issues are addressed infrequently, enterprising individuals can find officials who may be sensitive and responsive to their

⁴ For instance, at the national level, Childs and Withey (2006) report that a single female Member of Parliament in England convinced Chancellor Gordon Brown to agree to a reduced VAT on sanitary products.

causes. When speaking about how well women's issues fare on the council, in the rare instances they do arise, an influential councilman in Houston said,

[W]hat really helps well, is finding advocates on council for certain issues.

Just because not everybody's gonna be an advocate. Not everybody's gonna understand it or support it, necessarily. But if you find someone that could help kind of champion that, then you're having a voice on council

(Interview 99, 24 October 2011).

This speaks to the notion that not every council member, whether male or female, will be receptive to promoting women's issues. However, policy entrepreneurs in Houston can often find council members who are willing to work with them and champion a particular cause.

In Atlanta, Shirley Franklin served as a critical actor, who was powerful and situated inside of city government, in efforts to combat childhood prostitution and sex trafficking. Towards the end of her first term in office, Stephanie Davis, the first director of the Atlanta Women's Foundation and current executive director of Georgia Women for a Change, approached Franklin about serving as a volunteer in her administration and using it as a platform to work on these issues. According to a high level official, Davis said to Franklin, "As a woman, you are obligated—you can do all those other things, but you're obligated to do this" (Interview 941, 19 August 2011; also Interview 559, 12 August 2011). Franklin followed the advice and made advocating against human trafficking a key initiative in her second term. In a *New York Times* opinion column at the time, Bob Herbert (2006) noted, "It is beyond unusual for a mayor, especially the mayor

of a city that depends as heavily on tourism as Atlanta, to shine a spotlight on a problem as repellent as child prostitution.”

After 11 years at the Atlanta Women’s Foundation, Stephanie Davis sought to move from the nongovernmental arena into municipal government to effect policy change. Her position as the Mayor’s Policy Advisor on Women’s Issues was essentially unpaid and Franklin made it clear that she had little time and few resources to devote to the issues that Davis intended to address (Interview 361, 9 August 2011; Interview 786, 26 August 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011). Nonetheless, Davis seized the opportunity of Franklin’s tenure as mayor to get city government to address sex trafficking and other women’s issues. Entrepreneurs, like Davis, do not control events. However, seasoned entrepreneurs can anticipate events and use them to their advantage (Kingdon 1995). Drawing on connections and resources both inside and outside of government, Davis developed the Dear John public education campaign and other initiatives to combat sex trafficking and prostitution in Atlanta. She pressed various high-level officials to work on her pet projects, including the mayor, the chief operating officer, the fire chief, lawyers in the city attorney’s office, the communications team, among others (Interview 361, 9 August 2011; Interview 559, 12 August 2011; Interview 786, 26 August 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Although Franklin had not previously taken on any women’s issues as mayor, strategically, it was a wise decision on Davis’s part to approach her. First, as mayor, Franklin had a bully pulpit and visibility in Atlanta, throughout the region, and even nationally, as the *Times* column illustrates. This suggests that the entrepreneurial framework is not at odds with the concept of female political incorporation.

Entrepreneurs and critical actors likely require some degree of positional power in order to affect policymaking (Zaharidias 1999).

Second, certain characteristics of Franklin as a person and politician made her receptive to and a good spokesperson for the Dear John campaign. The mayor attended an all-girls high school in Philadelphia, which she said, “made a big difference” in developing the confidence that she drew on to run for office and in shaping her political views (quoted on NPR 2007). Although no one but Franklin knew it at the time, the mayor’s personal experience shaped her attitudes about childhood prostitution and thus her willingness to do address it (Interview 361, 9 August 2011). After Davis started working for the city, she held a press conference to announce that the administration would be combating childhood prostitution by investigating, arresting, and prosecuting pimps and johns (Herbert 2006). At the press conference, Franklin disclosed publically for the first time that she had been molested as a child (Herbert 2006; Interview 361, 9 August 2011). Plus, Franklin may have been more willing than other politicians to shine a light on the city’s underbelly and to tackle such an intractable problem because, as she made clear throughout her tenure as mayor, she was not planning to run for another political office following two terms as mayor (Interview 543, 3 August 2011; Interview 941, 19 August 2011).

Policy entrepreneurs have similarly pushed for policy changes in Houston. For example, Cindy Clifford, who owns an influential public relations firm, volunteered in Lee Brown’s administration. Together with Brown’s senior aid, Carol Alvarado, she created a Women’s Advisory Committee. According to a former appointed official, Clifford developed the idea of an advisory committee and pitched it to Brown, who was

receptive and empowered Clifford to create it (Interview 118, 17 November 2011).

Clifford was especially concerned with how women were perceived in the administration and whether there was gender equity in municipal employment. When she investigated issues of pay equity, she found that women were being paid less than men in comparable positions and pressed Brown to remedy it, which he did (Interview 118, 17 November 2011; Interview 906, 4 November 2011). Clifford's efforts demonstrate that policy entrepreneurs can influence agenda setters to devote attention to women's issues even if these top leaders do not have the same level of sensitivity to such issues (Interview 906, 4 November 2011).

Furthermore, councilwoman Melissa Noriega was a critical actor who pushed for cultural and programmatic changes in the Houston Fire Department. Noriega responded when a number of female firefighters approached the council about their experiences of disparate treatment, a lack of privacy, and discrimination. She and her staff visited every fire station in the city to learn about the department's culture and determine ways to remedy the lack of recruitment and poor treatment of female firefighters. According to a former official, Noriega wanted to develop personal relationships with HFD's leaders so that she could understand,

[W]hat they do and why this is a challenge for them... If you go through that and you can then understand it and they develop that trust... then you can sort of talk to them about, 'A woman could do this' (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

Noriega pushed the White administration to amend the budget so that fire stations could be retrofitted, providing private sleeping arrangements and restrooms for women (Interview 822, 16 November 2011).

Conclusion

The empirical research presented in this dissertation suggests that city governments, even those with a large number of women in positions of authority, rarely address women's issues in policymaking. Rarely does not mean never, however. In this chapter, I called attention to how women's issues initially come onto municipal agendas. Since women's issues arise infrequently, it is necessary to move back in the policy process (Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl 2009; Kingdon 1995), in order to get analytical and empirical purchase on the topic of women's substantive representation in cities. I identified a set of rival explanations for how women's issues arise on policymaking agendas: when they are connected to a prominent official's goals, when they are related to the provision of core services, and when problems occur that cannot be ignored. It may be useful to incorporate these pathways into future research on women's political representation in cities.

If the theory of women's political incorporation should work anywhere, it would be in Atlanta and, to a lesser extent, Houston. Yet, in these two "most-likely cases" (Gerring 2007), where women held a large number of prominent municipal positions, there was no systematic evidence of relatively large amounts of women-friendly policymaking. At times, officials—both male and female—in Atlanta and Houston addressed women's issues. When they did, it tended to be in an opportunistic and entrepreneurial manner. Moving beyond this project, one could conduct fieldwork in a

“least-likely case” (Gerring 2007), such as Milwaukee, where women held very few positions of power. How, if at all, do policies associated with women’s interests get passed in such settings? Does women-friendly policymaking occur in an entrepreneurial manner, as it does in Atlanta and Houston?

In addition to conducting fieldwork in Milwaukee, an avenue for future scholarship is to further develop the entrepreneurial model of women’s substantive representation in cities. What specific factors make an officeholder more or less likely to advocate for addressing women’s issues in city policymaking? Based on the role that Shirley Franklin played in the Dear John campaign, a critical actor may need to have significant visibility and positional power in city government and personal experiences and a background that make her sensitive to the issue at hand. Does developing an entrepreneurial model require that we place more emphasis on political actors outside city government? Might both non-governmental entrepreneurs and insider critical actors be necessary to effect women-friendly policymaking in cities? If so, under what conditions will such non-governmental entrepreneurs emerge?

Much of the research on women’s substantive representation in cities and across political units more generally centers on whether increasing numbers of female officeholders will produce distinctive policy outputs. My theory diverged from this framework, to consider whether the positional power that women obtain influences policy outputs, over and above the effect of “sheer numbers” of female representatives (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007). The research design challenges of studying urban political phenomena, particularly the lack of reliable quantitative data on material policy outputs, as well as the constraints on municipal officeholders and absence of

opportunities for women-friendly policymaking, meant that cities are a hard context to find support for my theory. Yet, my research demonstrated that municipal policymakers do, at times, take up women's issues. Understanding the factors that produce this policy responsiveness may require moving away from a theoretical standpoint of aggregation to one that focuses instead on particulars—particular entrepreneurs, working at singular stages of the policy cycle within unique political contexts. Ironically, in order to capture the nature of such entrepreneurial efforts, we may have to move to a more capacious empirical framework, one that can capture a wide variety of widely dispersed actors and their policymaking efforts.

Appendix A.

Quantitative Analysis of Women's Descriptive Representation in Cities¹

This document provides supporting information about the data and measures included in “The Political Determinants of Women’s Descriptive Representation in Cities.” Specifically, we discuss the scope of the dataset and rationale behind it; the data sources for our dependent and independent variables; and the coding protocol for creating the organizational resources variables. Additionally, descriptive statistics for our variables are provided in Table A1.

Scope of the Dataset

As described in the paper, we analyze an original cross-sectional dataset that includes measures for all 239 American cities with 100,000 residents or more as of 2000. Limiting the sampling frame enables us to include a more complete sample of municipalities than those analyzed in previous studies. Scholars have relied almost exclusively on data from the International City/County Management Association’s (ICMA) Form of Government (FOG) surveys (Alozi and Manganaro 1993; Bullock and MacManus 1991; Karnig and Walter 1976; MacManus and Bullock 1995). Using only FOG data may be problematic as over half of the municipalities queried do not respond. We restricted the sample to cities with populations of at least 100,000 to fill in missing data from the FOG surveys via web searches. Larger cities are more likely than smaller ones to have an accessible and accurate presence on the World Wide Web. This data collection strategy allows us to study the entire population of larger cities. Although we

¹ This is the Online Appendix for Smith, Adrienne R., Beth Reingold, and Michael Leo Owens. 2012. “The Political Determinants of Women’s Descriptive Representation in Cities.” *Political Research Quarterly* 65(2): 315-329. It is included in my dissertation with permission from Sage Publications.

cannot necessarily generalize to smaller cities, our dataset includes cities throughout the country, ensuring substantial variation on the relevant independent and dependent variables.

Sources for the Dependent Variables

The average percentage of council seats held by women in 2001 and 2006 is taken from the FOG surveys and augmented with web searches of individual council members. Approximately half of the cities in our sample responded to the FOG surveys in 2001 and 2006. For cities that did not respond, we created lists of the council members' names from the 2001 and 2006 *Municipal Yellow Book*. We then searched for pictures of individual councilors on Lexis-Nexis, Google Images, city websites, and various other websites to identify their gender. In 2001, 28 percent of the 2,195 council members in our sample cities were women. For 2006, 30 percent of the 2,192 council members were women. We coded the two measures of women's descriptive representation in the mayor's office (i.e., whether each city had a female mayor anytime between 2002 and 2007, and the percentage of electoral terms held by female mayors between 2002 and 2007) using the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Mayoral Elections Center database and verified them with the *Municipal Yellow Book* for the corresponding years. From 1999 to 2007, 331 out of 2,091 city-years had female mayors. In 2001, of the 229 cities for which we have data, 17 percent had female mayors, compared with 14 percent of 239 cities in 2006.

Sources for the Independent Variables

Earlier studies did not investigate the potential link between political ideology and women's descriptive representation perhaps because of the challenges associated with

collecting city-level data, especially before the advent of the World Wide Web. Even today, gathering systematic data on the ideology of urban electorates is daunting. Most cities hold nonpartisan elections and the precincts for state and national elections are often not coterminous with city boundaries. In light of these challenges, we use the Bay Area Center for Voting Research's (BACVR) data on 2004 presidential election returns at the city level as a proxy for political ideology. For more information on the data, see "The Most Conservative and Liberal Cities in the United States" (pages 30-36) at <http://alt.coxnewsweb.com/statesman/metro/081205libs.pdf> (accessed 5/19/2009). The BACVR contacted the city recorder, city clerk, or other designated official in each city to obtain presidential election returns at the precinct level. It then tabulated the voting returns for all precincts located in a given city. Its report lists the liberal and conservative percentages of the total vote by city.

For the factor score of women's socioeconomic resources, we use the percentage of college-educated women and female median income, both available from the 2000 Census, and the number of women-owned businesses, available from the 2002 Survey of Business Owners. We developed the variables measuring the density of women's political/advocacy and general organizations using the "Build a List" function of Hoover's online database of companies and organizations (accessed and coded in April 2009). A coding protocol for these variables is included at the end of this appendix. Our variable measuring the percentage of the population that is minority and female is taken from the 2000 Census.

The electoral institutions and desirability of office variables (i.e., at-large elections, mayoral and council term limits, partisan elections, mayor elected directly by

voters, length of council and mayoral term limits, and the number of council seats) were taken from the 2001 FOG survey, the 2006 FOG survey, or the mode of both years' surveys. For cities that did not respond to either survey, we searched their websites and municipal codes (available from www.municode.com) to fill in missing data. Finally, population size (logged) comes from the 2000 U.S. Census.

Table A1. Variables and Descriptive Statistics

Concept	Variable Name	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent Variables	Average Percentage of Council Seats Held by Women in 2001 and 2006	27.86	14.68	0	73.08
	City Had a Female Mayor Between 2002 and 2007	0.26	0.44	0	1
	Percentage of Electoral Terms Held by Female Mayors, 2002-2007	14.24	28.42	0	100
Political Context	Ideology	56.79	14.89	14.00	93.96
	Women's Socioeconomic Resources Factor Score	0.00	1.00	-1.87	4.08
	Density of Women's Political & Advocacy Organizations (logged)	0.34	0.38	0	2.12
	Density of Women's General Organizations	4.72	3.33	0	18.92
	Percentage Latinas & African American Women	19.24	11.14	1.21	49.51
	Female Mayor Lagged (1999-2000)	0.21	0.41	0	1
	Percentage of Female Councilors Lagged (2001)	28.24	17.30	0	88.89
Electoral Arrangements	At-large Elections	0.72	0.45	0	1
	Council Term Limits	0.32	0.47	0	1
	Mayoral Term Limits	0.37	0.48	0	1
	Partisan Elections	0.19	0.39	0	1
	Mayor Elected Directly by Voters	0.91	0.29	0	1
Desirability of Office	Council Term Length	3.69	0.68	2	5
	Mayoral Term Length	3.35	1.01	1	4
	Number of Council Seats	9.21	6.09	4	51
	Strong Mayor	1.11	1.20	0	3
	Population Logged (in 100,000s)	0.73	0.72	0	4.38

Coding Protocol for Hoover's Database
Created April 16, 2009

Hoover's is an online database that provides information on public and private companies as well as non-profit organizations worldwide. The Hoover's database is available through subscription only. The authors accessed the database through an account paid for by Emory University's Robert W. Woodruff Library.

Conduct the searches using three different functions in Hoover's "Build a List" function (<http://premium.hoovers.com/subscribe/tools/bal/>). First, enter the relevant city (i.e., state, MSA, and city name) in the company location fields. Second, enter the appropriate NAICS codes—see the list below—in the industry field. Third, in the specialty criteria field, enter the following keywords (except when coding 1a): woman, girl, feminist, female, mother, lesbian, gender, sister, and Latina (both singular and plural forms).

Variables to code:

1. ***Health and welfare***; Codes: 621410 (Family Planning Centers), 623990 (Other Residential Care Facilities), 624110 (Child and Youth Services), 624190 (Other Individual and Family Services), 624221 (Temporary Shelters), 624410 (Child Day Care Services)
 - a. (healthorgsa) Global count of healthcare and social assistance organizations (without keywords)
 - b. (healthorgsb) Narrower count of healthcare and social assistance organizations pertaining to women (with keywords)
2. ***Social membership organizations*** (socialorgs) (not overtly political); Code: 813410 (Civic and Social Organizations)
3. ***Advocacy organizations*** (advorgs), including interest groups and human rights organizations; Codes: 813319 (Other Social Advocacy Organizations), 813311 (Human Rights Organizations), 81331 (Social Advocacy Organizations)
4. ***Political organizations*** (polorgs); Code: 813940 (Political Organizations)
5. ***Grant-making organizations*** (grantorgs); Codes: 81321 (Grantmaking and Giving Services), 813211 (Grantmaking Foundations)

Keywords to search on, for 1b through 5: woman, girl, feminist, female, mother, lesbian, gender, sister, and Latina (Note: Must use "or" in between the keywords and both the plural and singular forms of each word.)

Count the number of organizations generated for each of the above categories.

Appendix B.

Quantitative Analysis of Women's Substantive Representation in Cities

Appendix B provides supporting information about the data, measures, and methods used in Chapter 4, *Cities Where Women Rule: Female Political Incorporation and the Allocation of Community Development Block Grant Funding*, and Chapter 5, *Female Political Incorporation and Symbolic Policymaking in Cities*. Specifically, I discuss the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the National League of Cities' Platform for Children and Families, and measurement of the dependent variables; the city clerks survey; coding decisions for the female political incorporation measure; and estimating the causal effects of female political incorporation. Additionally, descriptive statistics and sources for all variables are provided in Table B3.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables employed in Chapter 4 measure whether cities allocated CDBG to several policy areas that are commonly associated with women's interests. Communities report how they spent their CDBG funds for 2002 to 2007 in annual "Expenditure Reports," posted at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/budget/disbursementreports/> (accessed February-April 2010). HUD tracked CDBG spending patterns prior to 2002, but used a different format. I limit the analysis to 2002 to 2007 because of inconsistent reporting categories across the two formats. The Expenditure Reports run from July 1st of a given year until June 30th of the next. This timeframe provides a six-month lag between the independent variables, which follow the calendar year, and the dependent variables.

Such a lag is appropriate given that it takes time for the policy decisions made by municipal officials to be implemented. Some communities follow a different fiscal year for reporting their CDBG expenditures. I adjusted for this complication by dividing their fiscal years into 12-month intervals and reorganizing to be consistent with the July 1st to June 30th format. The reorganization resulted in the loss of one year of data for the cities in question.

Figure B1 shows the percentage of CDBG funds expended across various categories nationwide, in fiscal year 2007. Cities may allocate funding to the eight general categories depicted in this graph. Fundable activities are broken down even further within these eight categories, into about 90 different program areas. The allowable expenditure categories vary, for example, from Legal Services to Tree Planting to Water and Sewer Improvements. For a full list of the expenditure categories, see the “CPD-IDIS Reference Manual” (<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/systems/idis/library/refmanual/>, accessed 5/2010). The areas that serve as dependent variables in the analysis—services for abused spouses, childcare, healthcare, senior centers and services, and centers and services for the disabled—are taken from both the public services and public improvements general categories. Figure B1 further illustrates the fact that CDBG expenditures are subject to a broad degree of local discretion.

In Chapter 5, the dependent variable measures the time until a city adopts the National League of Cities’ Platform to Strengthen Families and Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth. Ninety-seven cities, 32 of which are included in my dataset of the largest American cities, adopted the platform as of October 2008. Michael Karpman at the NLC kindly provided the month and year of each city’s adoption.

City Clerks Survey

The survey of city clerks was piloted in February and March 2010. I identified clerks using Leadership Directories' *Municipal Yellow Book*, available through Emory University's Robert W. Woodruff Library's subscription, as well as city websites. Clerks were contacted first via email and asked to complete the survey instrument on the Internet. Mail surveys were then sent to clerks who did not respond to the Internet-based survey. Once the paper surveys were mailed, non-respondents were called and reminded to complete the surveys. The survey instrument is included at the end of this appendix.

The survey was sent to clerks in 239 cities and 87 responded in full, yielding a response rate of 36.4 percent. The cities where clerks responded to the survey differ from non-respondents in a number of ways, as demonstrated by the difference of means and chi-square tests presented in Table B1. In the analyses in Chapters 4 and 5, I apply probability weights to the data in order to make the sample more similar to the target population. The probability weights were calculated as the inverse of the predicted probability of responding to the survey, based on a logistic regression using the variables presented in Table B1 as independent variables. A word of caution is in order. While the probability weights make the sample more representative of the target population, the data are still far from perfect. The clerks in many large, distinctive cities (e.g., New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago) did not respond to the survey and it is unlikely that another city can truly represent them, even with the weights.

Female Political Incorporation

The formula used to calculate female political incorporation (following Preuhs 2006) is: *Female Political Incorporation* = $\frac{\sum W_{pct} P_{pct}}{\sum W_{pct}}$. I divide by the sum of the

weights since the positions of council president and CAO do not exist in every city. The components of the institutional weights were taken from the ICMA's 2001 Form of Government (FOG) survey, the 2006 FOG survey, or the mode of both years' surveys. For cities that did not respond to either survey, I searched their websites and municipal codes (available from www.municode.com) to fill in missing data. Institutional variables change very little, if at all, over time. Therefore, I expect little measurement error to be introduced by using a single point-in-time (or two time points) to measure institutional powers for 2002 to 2007.

With one exception, the cities in my dataset have either a council-manager or mayor-council form of government.¹ Historically, mayors of cities with mayor-council FOGs have had relatively more power than those in council-manager systems; likewise, councils in council-manager systems have been more powerful than those in mayor-council systems (MacManus and Bullock 2003; Pelissero 2003). However, recent studies report that the two forms of government are converging, as "certain structural features initially associated with one form of government (e.g., directly elected mayors, single-member district or mixed elections, professional management) have gradually been adopted by municipalities governed by other forms" (MacManus and Bullock 2003, 3; see also Frederickson and Johnson 2001; Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood 2004; Nelson 2002). Using survey data from the ICMA, Frederickson and Johnson find that over time, cities with council-manager systems have adopted structural features of mayor-council systems in order to "increase their political responsiveness, leadership, and accounting capabilities" (2001, 872). Similarly, cities with mayor-council systems have taken on some features of council-manager systems to improve their efficiency and management

¹ Portland, OR, with its commission style government, is excluded from the analyses.

capabilities (Frederickson and Johnson 2001). Given these trends, it is inadequate to use dichotomous FOG indicators for mayor-council versus council-manager systems in the weighting scheme.

As described in Table B2, there are four components to the political incorporation scale and a set of ordinal weights associated with each component. First is the mayor, including both the presence of a woman in the mayor's office and the seniority of that person. I assume that mayoral power increases with time spent in office, such that mayors in their second term or beyond are more powerful than mayors in their first term. However, in cities that have mayoral term limits, there may be a lame duck phenomenon, where a mayor becomes less powerful near the end of her last term. Thus, I account for a curvilinear relationship: p is coded as 0 if a woman does not occupy the position of mayor; 0.8 if a woman is mayor and she is in her first term; 0.9 if a woman is mayor in her second term or beyond and this is her final year in office because of term limits; and 1 if the mayor is a woman in her second term or beyond and this is not her final year in office.

I weight the mayoral component (p) by the form of government as well as the strength of the mayor. The mayoral powers scale indicates whether the mayor has the power to (a) develop the annual budget, (b) veto council passed ordinances, and (c) appoint administrative department heads. The scale ranges from 0, indicating that the mayor does not have power to develop the budget, appoint department heads, or veto the council, to 3, indicating the mayor possesses each of the aforementioned powers. The weights (w) range from 6.5, where the city has a council-manager system and a 0 on the

mayoral powers scale, to 10, where the city has a mayor-council system and a 3 on the mayoral powers scale.

Second, I include the percentage of women on the city council. For this component, p is coded 0 if no women are on the council; 0.25 if women hold 1 to 19 percent of the council seats; 0.5 if women occupy 20 to 39 percent of the council seats; 0.75 if women occupy 40 to 59 percent of the seats; and 1 if women hold 60 percent or more of the council seats. If women hold a sizable majority of the council seats (i.e., 60 percent or more), then they are more likely to control the policymaking agenda and successfully pass legislation. Holding a sizable majority on the council means that women are well incorporated, warranting a score of 1.

The council typically enjoys more power in a council-manager FOG than a mayor-council FOG, although this may be less true today as cities incrementally adopt features from both forms of government (Frederickson and Johnson 2001; Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood 2004). Again, the weights are a combination of the FOG and the specific powers allocated to the council. The council powers scale indicates (1) whether council measures can be vetoed by the mayor, (2) whether the council selects the mayor, and (3) whether the council is involved in appointing administrative department heads. The scale ranges from 0, indicating that council measures may be vetoed by the mayor, the mayor is elected directly rather than selected by the council, and the council is not involved in appointing department heads, to 3, where the reverse of these three elements

is true.² Thus, w ranges from 6.5 for a mayor-council system where the council powers scale is 0 to 10 for a council-manager system where the strong council scale is 3.

Third, I include a dichotomous indicator of whether a woman occupies the position of city council president. The weighting for the council president is similar to that for the council as a whole, but the weights are smaller in value since the council president position is less powerful than the entire council. For the council president, w ranges from 2.25 for a mayor-council system where the council powers scale is 0 to 4 for a council-manager system where the council powers scale is 3.³

Finally, I include a dichotomous indicator of whether a woman occupies the position of Chief Appointed Official. Developing weights for the CAO position presents challenges. For one, it is not clear whether the CAO position is more powerful in one system of government versus another since administrators are more alike than different in mayor-council and council-manager cities (Svara 1990, 169). For example, one study reports that city managers in council-manager systems and CAOs in mayor-council systems are quite alike “in terms of professionalism, experience, and degree of administrative authority” (Nelson 2002, 52).

However, a recent study finds that CAOs are less active in cities that have a mayor-council system with a strong mayor (Krebs and Pelissero 2009). Generally speaking, council-manager governments empower CAOs at the expense of elected officials. For

² The mayoral selection component of the council powers scale is coded 0 if voters elect the mayor directly or the council member receiving the most votes in the general election becomes mayor and 1 if the council selects the mayor from among its members or council members rotate into the position.

³ The council president’s ability to influence policymaking could be conditional on whether the position is elected or appointed. For instance, elected council presidents could have more democratic legitimacy in policy debates and therefore may be a stronger indicator of incorporation. On the other hand, appointed council presidents may demonstrate the support of their colleagues, and imply that they are part of a dominant policymaking coalition. Unfortunately, my data do not include a measure of whether the council president is appointed or elected so these possibilities are not explored.

instance, Nelson and Svvara note that in council-manager FOGs, city managers “determine the scope of their position and typically match or exceed the influence of elected officials” (2010, 552). Therefore, once again, I use the weighting scheme laid out for the mayoral component of the political incorporation scale. But in this case, the weighting runs in the opposite direction. The weights (w) for CAO range from 2.25, where the city has a mayor-council system and a 3 on the mayoral powers scale to 4, where the city has a council-manager system and a 0 on the mayoral powers scale.⁴

Estimating the Causal Effect of Female Political Incorporation⁵

My assumption is that, by controlling for likely confounding factors, I can estimate the likely causal effects of female political incorporation on municipal policy decisions. Given the confounding factors I examine, plus the literature from which they are extracted, I am confident in this assumption. As is the case for any non-experimental, observational approach, however, it is still possible that I have failed to include or account for other, heretofore unknown variables that might affect both female political incorporation and municipal policy outputs, such as CDBG funding allocations and symbolic policy adoptions. There are methods of analysis that, in theory at least, allow researchers to overcome this uncertainty regarding omitted variable bias and generate unbiased estimates of causal effects in non-experimental data. Most notably, instrumental variable models (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009), matching (Boyd, Epstein, and Martin 2010), and regression discontinuity design (RDD) (Hopkins and McCabe 2011;

⁴ For budget development and department head appointment, the mayoral, council, and CAO powers scales are given one point if that particular institution is involved in these processes in any way. For example, a 1 is added to the mayoral powers scale if department heads are appointed by the mayor or by a combination of the mayor and CAO or by the mayor and then approved by the council or by the mayor, CAO, and council together.

⁵ Material in this section is taken from the Support Information of “Welfare Policymaking and Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in U.S. State Legislatures” (Reingold and Smith 2012).

see also Lee, Moretti, and Butler 2004; Rehavi 2007) have been used in similar applications, to investigate the policy impact of descriptive representation. There are several aspects of my theory, concepts, and research design, however, that render such methods prohibitive and/or inappropriate.

I know of no suitable instrumental variable that is both exogenous to the formation of CDBG funding allocations or symbolic policy adoption and predictive of female political incorporation (Gelman and Hill 2007, 216-217; Sovey and Green 2011). Additionally, the concept of female political incorporation also poses numerous challenges to matching and RDD in their attempts to simulate the random assignment of an experimental treatment. There is no natural, theoretically plausible, or non-arbitrary threshold or cut-point in my concept and measure of incorporation that is analogous to an experimental treatment (and lack thereof). “Critical mass” theory (Thomas 1994) is suggestive, but is too imprecise and empirically weak for my purposes (Bratton 2005; Childs and Krook 2006; Reingold 2008). Furthermore, using either critical mass theory or close elections to distinguish “treated” states from “control” cities would move me further away from estimating the effects of female political incorporation and closer to estimating the effects of descriptive representation, for they say more about the mere presence of women in municipal government than they do about their power.

For all these reasons, I do not pursue these alternative methods here. Of course, further experimental, quasi-experimental, and observational research examining the causal links and mechanisms connecting political incorporation and municipal level policy outputs would certainly be worthwhile, but is beyond the scope of this study.

Table B1. Survey of City Clerks: Responding versus Non-responding
Cities

T-Tests

	Respondents	Non-Respondents	P-value
Liberal ideology	52.909	59.110	0.0001
Percent of the population that is black	14.571	19.867	0.0001
Poverty rate	13.879	15.163	0.0001

Chi-Square Tests

	Respondents	Non-Respondents	Chi-square	P-value
Mayor-council form of government	35.6%	46.0%	2.2944	0.130
South	40.7	28.3	3.5882	0.058
Midwest	21.7	12.6	3.0282	0.082

Table B2. Measuring Political Incorporation

Position (<i>p</i>)	Weights (<i>w</i>)
1. Mayor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – Mayor is not a group member • 0.8 – Mayor is a group member in the first term • 0.9 – Mayor is a group member in their second term or beyond and this is their final year in office because of term limits • 1 – Mayor is a group member in their second term or beyond and this is not their final year in office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.5 – Council-manager FOG and 0 on mayoral powers scale • 7 – Council-manager FOG and 1 on mayoral powers scale • 7.5 – Council-manager FOG and 2 on mayoral powers scale • 8 – Council-manager FOG and 3 on mayoral powers scale • 8.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 0 on mayoral powers scale • 9 – Mayor-council FOG and 1 on mayoral powers scale • 9.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 2 on mayoral powers scale • 10 – Mayor-council FOG and 3 on mayoral powers scale
2. City Council	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – 0% of council members are group members • 0.25 – 1 to 19% of council members are group members • 0.5 – 20 to 39% of council members are group members • 0.75 – 40 to 59% of council members are group members • 1 – 60% or more of council members are group members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 0 on council powers scale • 7 – Mayor-council FOG and 1 on council powers scale • 7.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 2 on council powers scale • 8 – Mayor-council FOG and 3 on council powers scale • 8.5 – Council-manager FOG and 0 on council powers scale • 9 – Council-manager FOG and 1 on council powers scale • 9.5 – Council-manager FOG and 2 on council powers scale • 10 – Council-manager FOG and 3 on council powers scale
3. Council President	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – Council president is not a group member • 1 – Council president is a group member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.25 – Mayor-council FOG and 0 on council powers scale • 2.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 1 on council powers scale • 2.75 – Mayor-council FOG and 2 on council powers scale • 3 – Mayor-council FOG and 3 on council powers scale • 3.25 – Council-manager FOG and 0 on council powers scale • 3.5 – Council-manager FOG and 1 on council powers scale • 3.75 – Council-manager FOG and 2 on council powers scale • 4 – Council-manager FOG and 3 on council powers scale
4. Chief Appointed Official	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – CAO is not a group member • 1 – CAO is a group member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.25 – Mayor-council FOG and 3 on mayoral powers scale • 2.5 – Mayor-council FOG and 2 on mayoral powers scale • 2.75 – Mayor-council FOG and 1 on mayoral powers scale • 3 – Mayor-council FOG and 0 on mayoral powers scale • 3.25 – Council-manager FOG and 3 on mayoral powers scale • 3.5 – Council-manager FOG and 2 on mayoral powers scale • 3.75 – Council-manager FOG and 1 on mayoral powers scale • 4 – Council-manager FOG and 0 on mayoral powers scale

Table B3. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Description (if necessary)	Descriptive Statistics (Mean/St. Dev./Range)	Source
Female Political Incorporation	See section on Independent Variables above.	27.24/19.87/0-100	Survey of city clerks International City/County Management Association Municipal Form of Government Surveys 2001 and 2006 Municipal codes (www.municode.com) and websites
Liberal Ideology	Percentage of city-level vote that went to the Democratic candidate and any liberal third-party candidates in 2004	52.91/13.73/14.00-92.76	Bay Area Center for Voting Research. 2004. "The Most Conservative and Liberal Cities in the United States" (pages 30-36) at http://alt.coxnewsweb.com/statesman/metro/081205libs.pdf (accessed 5/19/2009)
Fiscal Health (logged)	General Fund balance as percentage of revenues	3.08/0.61/0.34-5.17	Moody's Investors Service
Population (in 100,000s)		3.07/4.58/1.01-36.95	2000 U.S. Census
Black Political Incorporation	Same as described for women's political incorporation	17.90/22.05/0-100	Survey of city clerks ICMA Municipal Form of Government Surveys 2001 and 2006 Municipal codes (www.municode.com) and websites
Latino Political Incorporation	Same as described for women's political incorporation	10.00/21.16/0-100	Survey of city clerks ICMA Municipal Form of Government Surveys 2001 and 2006 Municipal codes (www.municode.com) and websites
Childcare	City allocated CDBG funding to childcare services and centers	0.41/0.49/0-1	CDBG Expenditure Reports, 2002-2007 http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/budget/disbursementreports/ (accessed February-April 2010)
Abused Spouses	City allocated CDBG funding to services for abused spouses	0.29/0.45/0-1	CDBG Expenditure Reports, 2002-2007
Healthcare	City allocated CDBG funding to childcare services and centers	0.41/0.49/0-1	CDBG Expenditure Reports, 2002-2007
Seniors	City allocated CDBG funding to services and centers for seniors	0.54/0.50/0-1	CDBG Expenditure Reports, 2002-2007
Disabled	City allocated CDBG funding to services and centers for the disabled	0.33/0.47/0-1	CDBG Expenditure Reports, 2002-2007

*Table includes descriptive statistics for the 87 cities for which survey data is available.

Figure B1. Nationwide CDBG Expenditures, FY07

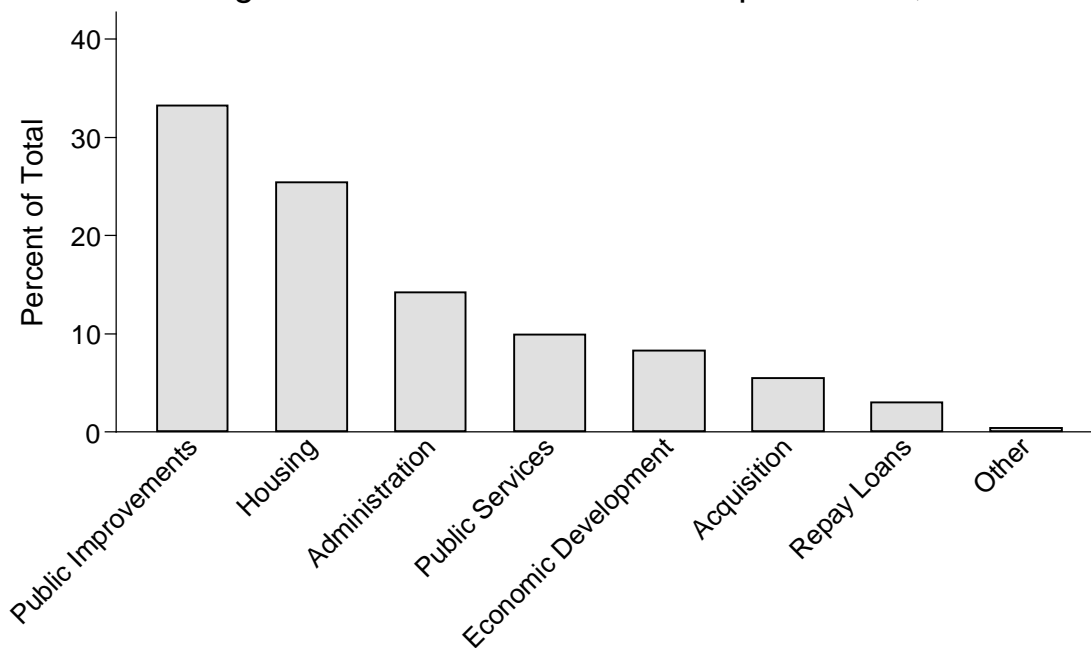


Figure B1 shows the percentage of CDBG funds expended across various categories nationwide, in fiscal year 2007. Cities may allocate funding to the eight general categories depicted in this graph. Fundable activities are broken down even further within these eight categories, into about 90 different program areas.

*Survey of
Women and Minority Municipal Officeholders, 1997-2007*



Survey conducted by

The Survey Research Center
University of Georgia

In conjunction with

The Political Science Department
Emory University

The Survey Research Center at the University of Georgia is conducting a survey on behalf of Adrienne Smith, Beth Reingold, and Michael Leo Owens of the Political Science Department at Emory University. The study examines the representation of women and other groups in municipal politics in the United States.

The survey includes questions about the gender and racial composition of municipal offices, particularly mayors, council members, and administrators, over a period of ten years. The survey *does not* collect information about your attitudes or opinions. Rather, it asks for information that is objective and publicly available. There is, however, no central repository for this information across many cities; hence the need for a survey.

The survey contains three sections, with questions about the gender and race of the mayor, the gender and racial composition of the city council, and the gender and racial composition of other municipal positions, particularly the chief appointed official and administrative department heads. If you cannot respond to the survey, or feel that there is someone else in your city's government who knows more information about the questions being asked, please give this mailing to that person to complete. Alternatively, you may contact me at jbason@uga.edu or 706-542-9082 to request that a survey booklet be mailed directly to them. If you have already completed the online version of this survey, you *do not* need to complete this mailed version.

The survey and other parts of the study are sponsored by a grant from the National Science Foundation (SES-0919536). The National League of Cities (NLC) has also endorsed the project. The study will make important contributions to our general understanding of representation in American politics and should be valuable to scholars, leaders in local government, and city residents throughout the country. I hope you will take the time to complete the survey, which will make the broader study possible.

If you have any questions about this survey or the study more generally, please contact either myself at jbason@uga.edu or 706-542-9082 or Adrienne Smith at adrienne.smith@emory.edu or 404-693-5643.

Thank you very much for participating in the survey.

Sincerely,

James Bason
Director and Associate Research Scientist

PART I. MAYOR/CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

I.A. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Mayor

Please fill in the following table for each year from 1997 to 2007. Record the mayor’s name and check the appropriate boxes to indicate his/her gender, race, and ethnicity.

	Year	Name of Mayor	Gender of Mayor	Race of Mayor	Ethnicity of Mayor
a.	2007		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
b.	2006		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
c.	2005		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
d.	2004		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
e.	2003		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
f.	2002		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
g.	2001		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
h.	2000		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
i.	1999		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
j.	1998		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
k.	1997		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown

I.B. Mayor's Tenure in Office

When was the mayor who was in office in 1997 first elected? _____(year)

PART II. CITY COUNCIL/BOARD OF ALDERMEN

II.A. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Council Members

Please fill in the following table for each year from 1997 to 2007. Record both the total number of council seats and the number of female and male council members, broken down by race and ethnicity.

Year	Total Number of Council Seats	Number of Female Council Members							Number of Male Council Members						
		African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown	African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown
a. 2007															
b. 2006															
c. 2005															
d. 2004															
e. 2003															
f. 2002															
g. 2001															
h. 2000															
i. 1999															
j. 1998															
k. 1997															

II.B. Council President/Vice Mayor

Did your council have a president (or the equivalent thereof) at any time between 1997 and 2007?

Note: This position may also be referred to as Vice Mayor, President of the Board, or something similar.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please skip to question II.D. if the council did not have a president at any time from 1997 to 2007.

II.C. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Council President/Vice Mayor

For each year from 1997 to 2007, did your council have the position of Council President (or the equivalent thereof)? (Please insert a check in the “yes” box if your council had president in that particular year or the “no” box if not.) Then, if your city had the position of Council President, please check the appropriate box to indicate whether the person in that position was male or female and the appropriate box to indicate his or her race/ethnicity.

	Year	Council Had a President?	Gender of Council President	Race of Council President	Ethnicity of Council President
a.	2007	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
b.	2006	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
c.	2005	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
d.	2004	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
e.	2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
f.	2002	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
g.	2001	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
h.	2000	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
i.	1999	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
j.	1998	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
k.	1997	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown

II.D. Council Committees

Did your council have standing committees (permanent bodies with set memberships and regularly scheduled meeting times) at any time between 1997 and 2007?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please skip to question III.A. if the council did not have standing committees at any time from 1997 to 2007.

II.E. Council Committees (continued)

For each year from 1997 to 2007, did your council have standing committees that considered specific policy matters? If yes, how many standing committees and committee chairs were there? (Please insert a check in the "yes" box if your council had committees in a particular year and "no" if not. If there were standing committees, insert the number of committees and committee chairs in the appropriate columns.)

Year	Council Had Standing Committees?	Number of Committees	Number of Committee Chairs
a. 2007	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
b. 2006	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
c. 2005	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
d. 2004	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
e. 2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
f. 2002	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
g. 2001	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
h. 2000	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
i. 1999	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
j. 1998	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		
k. 1997	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know		

II.F. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Council Committee Chairs

Please fill in the following table for each year from 1997 to 2007. Record the number of female and male committee chairs, broken down by race and ethnicity.

Year	Number of Female Committee Chairs							Number of Male Committee Chairs						
	African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown	African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown
a. 2007														
b. 2006														
c. 2005														
d. 2004														
e. 2003														
f. 2002														
g. 2001														
h. 2000														
i. 1999														
j. 1998														
k. 1997														

PART III. ADMINISTRATION OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

III.A. Chief Appointed Official (CAO)

Did your city have a Chief Appointed Official at any time between 1997 and 2007? Note: This position may also be referred to as City Manager, Chief Executive Officer, City Administrator, Chief Administrative Officer, or something similar.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please skip to question III.C. if your city did not have a Chief Appointed Official at any time from 1997 to 2007.

III.B. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Chief Appointed Official (CAO)

For each year from 1997 to 2007, did your city have the position of Chief Appointed Official? (Please insert a check in the “yes” box if your city had a CAO in that particular year or the “no” box if not.) Then, if your city had a Chief Appointed Official, please check the appropriate boxes to indicate that person’s gender, race, and ethnicity.

	Year	City Had a Chief Appointed Official?	Gender of Chief Appointed Official	Race of Chief Appointed Official	Ethnicity of Chief Appointed Official
a.	2007	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
b.	2006	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
c.	2005	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
d.	2004	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
e.	2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
f.	2002	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
g.	2001	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
h.	2000	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
i.	1999	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
j.	1998	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown
k.	1997	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity unknown

III.C. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of Administrative Department Heads

Please fill in the following table for each year from 1997 to 2007. Record both the total number of administrative department heads and the number of female and male department heads, broken down by race and ethnicity.

Year	Total Number of Department Heads	Number of Female Department Heads							Number of Male Department Heads						
		African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown	African American	White, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Native American	Multi-racial	Race/ethnicity unknown
a. 2007															
b. 2006															
c. 2005															
d. 2004															
e. 2003															
f. 2002															
g. 2001															
h. 2000															
i. 1999															
j. 1998															
k. 1997															

IV. CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

IV.A. Length of Survey

Approximately how long did it take you to complete this survey?

_____ hours _____ minutes

IV.B. Comments and Questions

Are there any other questions or comments that you have about the survey? If so, please provide them below.

IV.C. Your Contact Information

Name: _____

Title: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Appendix C

Qualitative Analysis of Women's Descriptive Representation, Political Incorporation, and Substantive Representation in Cities

This appendix provides additional information about the research design, data collection, and analysis for the qualitative elements of my dissertation, particularly in Chapters 3 and 6. In those chapters, I relied on data collected through original fieldwork in Atlanta, Georgia and Houston, Texas. Additionally, the appendix contains the four protocols I developed for my semi-structured interviews with city officials and civic leaders in both cities.

Case Selection

I selected Atlanta and Houston as case studies because of their diverse values on the key independent variable, female political incorporation. As Figure C1 shows, Atlanta had an extremely large proportion of women in powerful positions in 2007 whereas Houston's value was closer to the median. Given the mixed findings in Chapters 4 and 5, I selected these cases in order to maximize analytical leverage for the goals of addressing outstanding puzzles and refining my theory and hypotheses. Moreover, Lieberman (2005) and Gerring (2007) suggest investigating an outlier when the researcher's goal is to generate hypotheses and new explanations for the outcome of interest. Atlanta is a deviant observation because, despite having very high levels of female political incorporation throughout the 2000s, officials did not allocate Community Development Block Grant funding to policies thought to benefit women's interests.

In the near future, I plan to conduct fieldwork in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a city where women have held very few positions in municipal government. Together,

Milwaukee, Houston, and Atlanta represent the full range of possible values of female political incorporation.

Data Collection and Analysis

I conducted fieldwork in Atlanta from July to September 2011 and in Houston from October to November 2011. The material presented in Chapters 3 and 6 is based on respondents' answers to a variety of questions about how women came to hold prominent municipal positions, the development of municipal policy priorities, building policy influence at the local level, and the effective representation of constituents, especially women. Additional material comes from local newspapers, scholarship, and other secondary source materials and primary sources, including archived interviews with city officials available online and officials' personal papers stored in libraries. Across the two cities, I conducted 48 semi-structured interviews with current and former city officials and civic leaders in Houston (21 interviews out of 39 people contacted) and Atlanta (27 interviews out of 57 people contacted), including mayors, council members, high-level bureaucrats, and leaders of business organizations, philanthropies, and non-profit organizations.

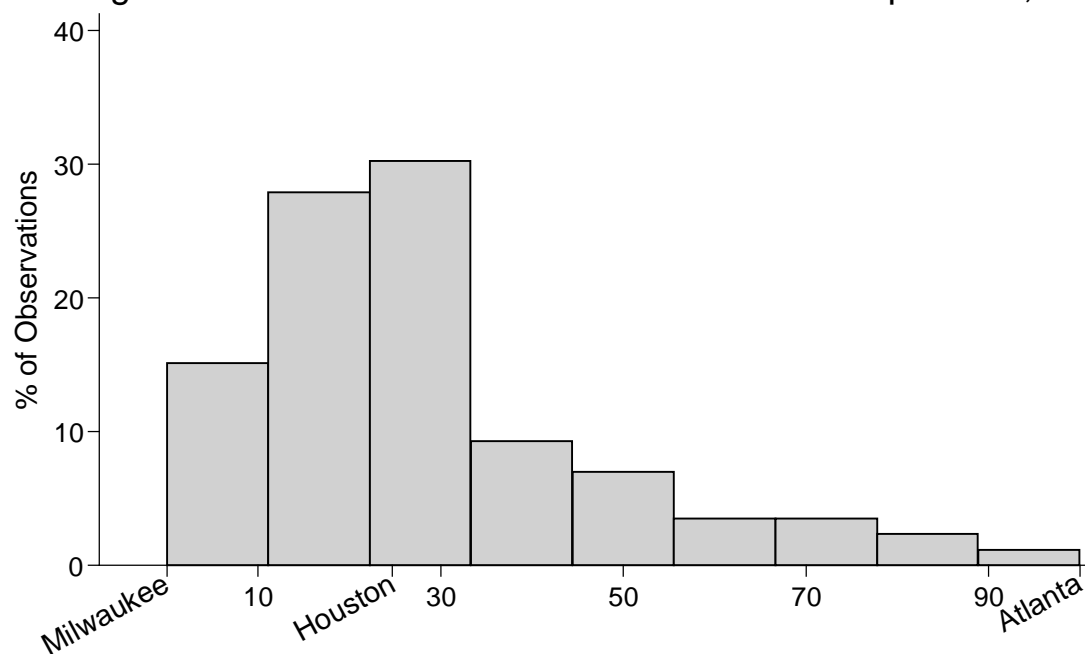
Four protocols for the semi-structured interviews—for mayors, council members, bureaucrats, and non-governmental leaders—are included at the end of this appendix. The average length of the interviews was approximately one hour. Before each interview, respondents were asked to sign a "Consent to be a Research Subject" form, which was approved by Emory's Institutional Review Board on June 9, 2011. The form assured respondents that their answers would be kept confidential and the findings from the interviews would be reported only at the city-level. With each respondent's permission,

the interviews were audio recorded.¹ The audio recordings were then transcribed and/or summarized.

To analyze the qualitative materials, I read through the interview transcripts and, as patterns and commonalities emerged, I coded and organized responses into theme categories.

¹ Two respondents asked not to be audio recorded. In these cases, I took detailed notes and wrote interview summaries immediately following the interviews.

Figure C1. Distribution of Women's Political Incorporation, 2007



The histogram in Figure C1 shows that in 2007, Atlanta had an extremely large proportion of women in powerful positions, Houston's value was closer to the median, and Milwaukee had very few female officeholders.

Political Incorporation and Women's Interests in Municipal Policymaking
Interview Protocol – Mayors

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I'm interested in your thoughts about representation and influence in city policymaking, based on your own experiences in local government. Please remember that all of your responses will be kept confidential. [Provide respondent with informed consent form that summarizes the project, including my hope to record and why. Walk respondent through the basics, letting them know that they can refuse to participate at any point, including recording them. Ask them if they agree to participate and get their signature.]

I. Policy Goals & Priorities

[TP:] What got you interested in local politics? Serving as mayor?

What (two to three issues) are at the top of your agenda?

Why are these issues important to you?

II. Power in the Policymaking Process

Power can be thought of as the ability to get the city government to adopt a preferred policy (or to keep it from adopting a bad policy). With this in mind, who are the most powerful players in city policymaking?

What makes them so influential?

[IN:] You just mentioned several officials/groups/people, what about certain officials/groups/people [whichever category wasn't mentioned] in [city]?

Political scientists sometimes distinguish between “power over,” which is about force, control, and coercion, and “power to,” which emphasizes cooperation, deliberation, and consensus-building. Do those with the most influence typically use more of a “power to” or a “power over” approach? Why?

How much power does the position of mayor have compared to other local stakeholders (e.g., business leaders and CEOs, heads of foundations and community organizations, etc.)?

In [city], there's a [council-manager or mayor-council] form of government, which means [insert brief description]. How much power do mayors in [city] *really* have, especially compared to other local officials?

[IN:] Why does the position of mayor have so [much/little] power? What could be done in [city] to make the position more powerful?

Are mayors who've been in office for longer more powerful? Why or why not?

How would you describe your own power? To what extent are you able to affect city policymaking? How are you able to do so [or why aren't you able to do so]?

[IN:] Aside from holding the position of mayor, what skills, traits, or relationships have affected your ability to exercise power?

[TP:] If you wanted to become more influential, how could organizations and resources outside of [city's] government help you?

Do you have any particularly strong partnerships with council members?

(IN/If yes:) Which council members? Why (or how) are these partnerships important?

Do you have any particularly strong partnerships with key stakeholders outside of [city's] government (e.g., businessmen and CEOs, heads of foundations and community organizations, etc.)?

(IN/If yes:) Which stakeholders? Why are these partnerships important?

We've been talking about power in policymaking in general. Now I'd like to ask you about one policy area in particular: the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds.

Who are the most influential players and how have they managed to gain such influence?

How much influence do you, as mayor, have over these decisions? What gives you this amount of influence?

Are "power to" or "power over" approaches just as effective in this context? Why or why not?

[TP:] How, if at all, are the partnerships you mentioned earlier important?

III. Women & Representation

I'm also interested in so-called "women's issues"—that is, issues or policies thought to benefit women/girls in particular. How often do you deal with these types of issues? [IN:] Can you recall one or two of the most recent ones?

What about the National League of Cities' Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Neighborhoods? Have you heard of this platform? Has it come up while you've been mayor?

[If yes, repeat CDBG questions above.]

[If no:] Why not?

When you think of local officials who stand up for women's issues, who comes to mind? [IN: Get respondent to consider who they think are the "real" leaders, if there's not enough gradation.]

[IN:] Why did you think of these officials, in particular?

[IN:] Would you include yourself? Why or why not?

[IN:] Do you see yourself as a leader on such women's issues? Why or why not?

[IN/TP:] Do others see you as a leader on women's issues? Why or why not?

Can you give an example of a time you promoted a policy that would benefit women/girls, in particular? Please tell me about this proposal.

[If yes:] Were your strategies or experiences on this issue any different from others you've worked on?

[IN:] Is working on such "women's issues" any easier or harder than working on other issues? Why or why not?

[TP:] What, if anything, might prevent mayors from pushing policies that directly benefit women in [city]?

In general, how do women's issues fare in [city's] government compared to other local issues/problems? To what degree do they get the attention and support of local policymakers?

Who are the most powerful players on these issues?

[IN:] Are they any different from those you mentioned before, who have power over city policymaking generally?

[IN:] Do women have power over city policymaking in general or just on these issues?

How well would the interests of women/girls be represented if there were fewer [more] women in prominent positions in your administration? What about if there were fewer [more] women on the council?

[TP:] As you may know, in [city], women hold [X] percent of council seats and hold many/few positions in the bureaucracy [cite specific examples]. Why do you think women [don't] hold a significant number of public offices in [city]?

[In Atlanta and Houston:] In [city], women are not simply present in public offices; they also hold or have held some of the most powerful policymaking positions. What factors explain this?

[In Milwaukee:] In [city], women haven't held many powerful positions in government. Why not?

How would you describe your administration's record on hiring and appointing women to local policymaking positions?

Thanks again for allowing me to interview you. Your answers have been very interesting and I've enjoyed our discussion. Do you have any questions for me (i.e., about my dissertation)?

Political Incorporation and Women's Interests in Municipal Policymaking
Interview Protocol – City Council Members

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I'm interested in your thoughts about representation and influence in city policymaking, based on your own experiences in local government. Please remember that all of your responses will be kept confidential. [Provide respondent with informed consent form that summarizes the project, including my hope to record and why. Walk respondent through the basics, letting them know that they can refuse to participate at any point, including recording them. Ask them if they agree to participate and get their signature.]

I. Policy Goals & Priorities

[TP:] What got you interested in local politics? Serving as a council member?

What (two to three issues) are at the top of your agenda?

Why are these issues important to you?

II. Power in the Policymaking Process

Power can be thought of as the ability to get the city government to adopt a preferred policy (or to keep it from adopting a bad policy). With this in mind, who are the most powerful players in city policymaking?

What makes them so influential?

[IN:] You just mentioned several officials/groups/people, what about certain officials/groups/people [whichever category wasn't mentioned] in [city]?

Political scientists sometimes distinguish between “power over,” which is about force, control, and coercion, and “power to,” which emphasizes cooperation, deliberation, and consensus-building. Do those with the most influence typically use more of a “power to” or a “power over” approach? Why?

Are there any particularly strong partnerships/coalitions among council members?

(IN/If yes:) Between whom? What makes these partnerships so powerful?

Are there any particularly strong partnerships/coalitions among council members and other city officials (e.g., the mayor, bureaucrats, etc.)?

(IN/If yes:) Between whom? What makes these partnerships so powerful?

How much power do council members have compared to other local stakeholders (e.g., business leaders and CEOs, heads of foundations and community organizations, etc.)?

In [city], there's a [council-manager or mayor-council] form of government, which means [insert brief description]. How much power do council members in [city] *really* have, especially compared to other local officials?

[IN:] Why do council members have so [much/little] power? What could be done in [city] to make them more powerful?

Which positions on the council (e.g., president, committee chairmanships, etc.) are most powerful? Why?

Are council members who've served on the council for longer more powerful? Why or why not?

How would you describe your own power? To what extent are you able to affect city policymaking? How are you able to do so [or why aren't you able to do so]?

[IN:] Aside from holding a seat on the council, what skills, traits, or relationships have affected your ability to exercise power?

[TP:] If you wanted to become more influential, how could organizations and resources outside of [city's] government help you?

We've been talking about power in policymaking in general. Now I'd like to ask you about one policy area in particular: the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds.

Who are the most influential players and how have they managed to gain such influence?

How much influence do you, as a council member, have over these decisions? What gives you this amount of influence?

Are "power to" or "power over" approaches just as effective in this context? Why or why not?

[TP:] How, if at all, are the partnerships you mentioned earlier important?

III. Women & Representation

I'm also interested in so-called "women's issues"—that is, issues or policies thought to benefit women/girls in particular. How often do you deal with these types of issues on the council? [IN:] Can you recall one or two of the most recent ones?

What about the National League of Cities' Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Neighborhoods? Have you heard of this platform? Has it come up while you've been on the council?

[If yes, repeat CDBG questions above.]

[If no:] Why not?

When you think of local officials who stand up for women's issues, who comes to mind?

[IN: Get respondent to consider who they think are the "real" leaders, if there's not enough gradation.]

[IN:] Why did you think of these officials, in particular?

[IN:] Would you include yourself? Why or why not?

[IN:] Do you see yourself as a leader on such women's issues? Why or why not?

[IN/TP:] Do others see you as a leader on women's issues? Why or why not?

Can you give an example of a time you promoted a policy that would benefit women/girls, in particular? Please tell me about this proposal.

[If yes:] Were your strategies or experiences on this issue any different from others you've worked on?

[IN:] Is working on such "women's issues" any easier or harder than working on other issues? Why or why not?

[TP:] What, if anything, might prevent council members from pushing policies that directly benefit women in [city]?

In general, how do women's issues fare on the city council compared to other local issues/problems? To what degree do they get the attention and support of local policymakers?

Who are the most powerful players on these issues in [city]?

[IN:] Are they any different from those you mentioned before, who have power over city policymaking generally?

[IN:] Do women have power over city policymaking in general or just on these issues?

How well would the interests of women/girls be represented if there were fewer [more] women on the council? What about if there were fewer [more] women in prominent positions on the council?

[TP:] As you may know, in [city], women hold [X] percent of council seats and hold many/few positions in the bureaucracy [cite specific examples]. Why do you think women [don't] hold a significant number of public offices in [city]?

[In Atlanta and Houston:] In [city], women are not simply present in public offices; they also hold or have held some of the most powerful policymaking positions. What factors explain this?

[In Milwaukee:] In [city], women haven't held many powerful positions on the council or in government, more generally. Why not?

[TP/IN:] To what extent do women on the council work together? Has there been a recent initiative where several women on the council worked together? Please tell me a bit about it.

[IN:] Was it all/most women on the council who worked on this effort, or only those who held prominent positions (e.g., committee chairmanships)?

How did others on the council receive it?

[If no:] What factors keep women on the council from working together?

[IN:] Would women on the council be more likely to work together if they held more prominent positions (e.g., committee chairmanships)? Why or why not?

Thanks again for allowing me to interview you. Your answers have been very interesting and I've enjoyed our discussion. Do you have any questions for me (i.e., about my dissertation)?

Political Incorporation and Women's Interests in Municipal Policymaking
Interview Protocol – Bureaucrats/Appointed Officials

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I'm interested in your thoughts about representation and influence in city policymaking, based on your own experiences in local government. Please remember that all of your responses will be kept confidential. [Provide respondent with informed consent form that summarizes the project, including my hope to record and why. Walk respondent through the basics, letting them know that they can refuse to participate at any point, including recording them. Ask them if they agree to participate and get their signature.]

I. Policy Goals & Priorities

[TP:] What got you interested in local politics? Serving as [position]?

What (two to three issues) are at the top of your agenda?

Why are these issues important to you?

II. Power in the Policymaking Process

Power can be thought of as the ability to get the city government to adopt a preferred policy (or to keep it from adopting a bad policy). With this in mind, who are the most powerful players in city policymaking?

What makes them so influential?

[IN:] You just mentioned several officials/groups/people, what about certain officials/groups/people [whichever category wasn't mentioned] in [city]?

Political scientists sometimes distinguish between "power over," which is about force, control, and coercion, and "power to," which emphasizes cooperation, deliberation, and consensus-building. Do those with the most influence typically use more of a "power to" or a "power over" approach? Why?

Are there any particularly strong partnerships among city officials (e.g., council members, bureaucrats, appointed officials, etc.)?

(IN/If yes:) Between whom? What makes these partnerships so powerful?

How much power does the position of [position] have compared to other local officials (e.g., the mayor, council members, etc.)?

How much power does the position of [position] have compared to other local stakeholders (e.g., business leaders and CEOs, heads of foundations and community organizations, etc.)?

[IN:] Why does the position of [position] have so [much/little] power? What could be done in [city] to make them more powerful?

Are [position] who've served in [city's] government for longer more powerful? Why or why not?

How would you describe your own power? To what extent are you able to affect city policymaking? How are you able to do so [or why aren't you able to do so]?

[IN:] Aside from holding [position], what skills, traits, or relationships have affected your ability to exercise power?

[TP:] If you wanted to become more influential, how could organizations and resources outside of [city's] government help you?

We've been talking about power in policymaking in general. Now I'd like to ask you about one policy area in particular: the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds.

Who are the most influential players and how have they managed to gain such influence?

How much influence do you, as [position], have over these decisions? What gives you this amount of influence?

Are "power to" or "power over" approaches just as effective in this context? Why or why not?

III. Women & Representation

I'm also interested in so-called "women's issues"—that is, issues or policies thought to benefit women/girls in particular. How often do you deal with these types of issues? [IN:] Can you recall one or two of the most recent ones?

What about the National League of Cities' Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Neighborhoods? Have you heard of this platform? Has it come up while you've been a [position]?

[If yes, repeat CDBG questions above.]

[If no:] Why not?

When you think of local officials who stand up for women's issues, who comes to mind? [IN: Get respondent to consider who they think are the "real" leaders, if there's not enough gradation.]

[IN:] Why did you think of these officials, in particular?

[IN:] Would you include yourself? Why or why not?

[IN:] Do you see yourself as a leader on such women's issues? Why or why not?

[IN/TP:] Do others see you as a leader on women's issues? Why or why not?

Can you give an example of a time you promoted a policy that would benefit women/girls, in particular? Please tell me about this proposal.

[If yes:] Were your strategies or experiences on this issue any different from others you've worked on?

[IN:] Is working on such “women’s issues” any easier or harder than working on other kinds of issues? Why or why not?

[TP:] What, if anything, might prevent [position] from pushing policies that directly benefit women in [city]?

In general, how do women’s issues fare in [city’s] government compared to other local issues/problems? To what degree do they get the attention and support of local policymakers?

Who are the most powerful players on these issues?

[IN:] Are they any different from those you mentioned before, who have power over city policymaking generally?

[IN:] Do women have power over city policymaking in general or just on these issues?

How well would the interests of women/girls be represented if there were fewer [more] women in prominent positions in the bureaucracy? What about if there were fewer [more] women on the council?

[TP:] As you may know, in [city], women hold [X] percent of council seats and hold many/few positions in the bureaucracy [cite specific examples]. Why do you think women [don’t] hold a significant number of public offices in [city]?

[In Atlanta and Houston:] In [city], women are not simply present in public offices; they also hold or have held some of the most powerful policymaking positions. What factors explain this?

[In Milwaukee:] In [city], women haven’t held many powerful positions in government. Why not?

Have mayors of [city] intentionally appointed women to prominent positions in the bureaucracy? Why or why not?

Thanks again for allowing me to interview you. Your answers have been very interesting and I’ve enjoyed our discussion. Do you have any questions for me (i.e., about my dissertation)?

Political Incorporation and Women's Interests in Municipal Policymaking
Interview Protocol – Non-governmental Leaders

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule for this interview. I'm interested in your thoughts about representation and influence in city policymaking, based on your own experiences as someone who frequently works with local officials. Please remember that all of your responses will be kept confidential. [Provide respondent with informed consent form that summarizes the project, including my hope to record and why. Walk respondent through the basics, letting them know that they can refuse to participate at any point, including recording them. Ask them if they agree to participate and get their signature.]

I. Background

[TP:] Have you ever worked for [city's] government?

Why do you work for [organization] rather than in [city's] government?

II. Power in the Policymaking Process

In what ways do you rely on and collaborate with policymakers in [city's] government to work towards your organization's mission?

Who, inside of [city's] government, do you turn to in order to achieve your policy goals?

Do you/your organization have any particularly strong partnerships with council members?

(If yes:) Which council members? Why (or how) are these partnerships important?

Do you/your organization have any particularly strong partnerships with the mayor or officials in the mayor's administration?

(If yes:) Which officials? Why (or how) are these partnerships important?

Power can be thought of as the ability to get the city government to adopt a preferred policy (or to keep it from adopting a bad policy). With this in mind, who are the most powerful players in city policymaking?

What makes them so influential?

[IN:] You just mentioned several officials/groups/people, what about certain officials/groups/people [whichever category wasn't mentioned] in [city]?

Political scientists sometimes distinguish between "power over," which is about force, control, and coercion, and "power to," which emphasizes cooperation, deliberation, and consensus-building. Do those with the most influence typically use more of a "power to" or a "power over" approach? Why?

To what extent are you able to affect city policymaking on behalf of [organization]?

How are you able to do so [or why aren't you able to do so]?

We've been talking about power in policymaking in general. Now I'd like to ask you about one policy area in particular: the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds.

Are you/your organization at all involved in this decision-making process? Does your organization receive CDBG funds?

[If yes:] Who are the most influential players and how have they managed to gain such influence?

[If yes:] Are "power to" or "power over" approaches just as effective in this context? Why or why not?

[TP:] How, if at all, are the partnerships you mentioned earlier important?

III. Women & Representation

I'm also interested in so-called "women's issues"—that is, issues or policies thought to benefit or concern women/girls in particular. How often do you/your organization deal with issues or policies that benefit women/girls in [city]?

[If > never:] What resources does your organization bring to the table to help local officials address "women's issues"?

What about the National League of Cities' Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Neighborhoods? Have you heard of this platform? Has it come up while you've been working for [organization]?

[If yes, repeat CDBG questions above.]

[If no:] Why not?

When you think of local officials who stand up for women's issues, who comes to mind?

[IN:] Why did you think of these officials, in particular?

[IN:] Who, inside of [city's] government, do you turn to in order to achieve your policy goals related to "women's issues"? Why do you turn to these people, in particular?

Is working on "women's issues" in [city] any easier or harder than working on other issues? Why or why not?

[IN:] Are your strategies or experiences with local officials any different on these issues?

In general, how do you think women's issues fare in [city's] government? To what degree do they get the attention and support of local policymakers?

What factors increase (or decrease) attention to women's issues?

[IN:] How advantageous/disadvantageous is it to be working on women's issues in [city]?

How well would the interests of women/girls be represented if there were fewer [more] women in prominent positions in [city's] bureaucracy? What about if there were fewer [more] women on the city council?

[TP:] How, if at all, has your organization been involved in supporting women for local political offices?

[IN:] In recent years, which female candidates has your organization supported?

If/when these female candidates won, how, if at all, has your organization stayed connected to them?

[TP:] As you may know, in [city], women hold [X] percent of council seats and hold many/few positions in the bureaucracy [cite specific examples]. Why do you think women [don't] hold a significant number of public offices in [city]?

[In Atlanta and Houston:] In [city], women are not simply present in public offices; they also hold or have held some of the most powerful policymaking positions. What factors explain this?

[In Milwaukee:] In [city], women haven't held many powerful positions on the council or in government, more generally. Why not?

Thanks again for allowing me to interview you. Your answers have been very interesting and I've enjoyed our discussion. Do you have any questions for me (i.e., about my dissertation)?

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