A STUDY OF TRENDS IN THE POLITICAL ROLE OF WOMEN, 1936-1974

Tom W. Smith

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At the heart of American Democracy lies a set of fundamental political axioms--"liberty and justice for all," "equal protection under the law," and the like. These axioms express the basic principles of the political system and form the central ideals of the national political ideology.[1] In practice, these axioms have often been violated by such qualifications as "except for blacks," "excluding sexual and political deviants," and "not in cases of national security." Yet, while the exceptions have often been the rule, they have never become the ideal. As Robert A. Dahl remarked, there has been a "common tendency ...to qualify universals in application while leaving them intact in rhetoric."[2] The disparity between the ideal of equal political rights and the actual political role of women serves as a prime example of this phenomenon. From the birth of the republic until 1890 laws and constitutions denied women a political role. Between 1890, when Wyoming granted women the right to vote, and the passage of the twentieth amendment in 1920, most legal barriers to political participation were removed. Since then, however, the barriers of public attitudes and behavior have perpetuated the disparity. In fact, in the half century since the political emancipation of women, these non-institutional obstacles have proven to be as formidable as the legal ones had been before.

To gauge trends in the political status of women during the period 1936 to 1974, this analysis will focus on (1) changes in the public attitude toward the political role of women; and (2) changes in the sexual differentials in elective office holding. Data on public opinion comes mainly from a series of questions asking people whether they would vote for a qualified woman for President. This question was asked in

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[1] See Boorstin (1953: 8-35), and Hartz (1955).

[2] Dahl (1961: Ch. 28). Also, on the disparity between principles and practices, see Prothro and Grigg (1960), and McClasky (1964).

six different versions a total of 12 times between 1936 and 1974 (for exact uses, see the Appendix to this paper). Marginals are available for all data points and more extensive analysis is possible for studies starting in 1949. Data on office holding come from records of the sexual composition of the United States Congress and the state legislatures from 1921 to 1974 (see notes to Tables 8 and 9). Together, the public opinion series on a woman president and the legislative office holding data provide information on both attitudes and behavior.

Turning to the marginal trend first, Figure 1 graphs the per cent "no," the per cent unwilling to vote for a woman. The upper line shows the change with the undecided or "don't knows" retained as a category; the bottom line excludes the "don't knows" from the analysis (see Tables 1-A, 1-B). The graph shows that although the direction of change has been consistent, the rate of change has varied considerably. There is a "staircase" effect, with relatively level stretches from 1936 to 1945 and from 1949 to 1969, and steep inclines between 1945 and 1949 and from 1969 through 1974. Regression analysis indicates that there were linear rates of decline for each of these four periods as follows: from 1936 to 1945, -.0060 a year; from 1945 to 1949, -.0337; from 1949 to 1969, -.0037; and from 1969 through 1974, -.0434 (see Table 1-C). Over the whole period, the rate was not strictly linear (since it contains the step pattern), but did contain a large linear component, with a rate of decrease of .0109 a year.

In order to explore what accounts for both the alternating periods of slow and rapid change and the overall trend toward less opposition to a woman president, the relationship between sex, cohort, and education, and voting for a woman president, were examined,

The sex difference (Figure 2) breaks down into three distinct periods for the time under study: a period of greater approval by women until 1955; a change in 1958 to a period of greater male approval through 1969; and a disappearance of all sexual differences after 1969. The overall trend has been non-linear, although there has been a statistically significant degree of convergence at an annual rate of +.003 per cent (Table 2).

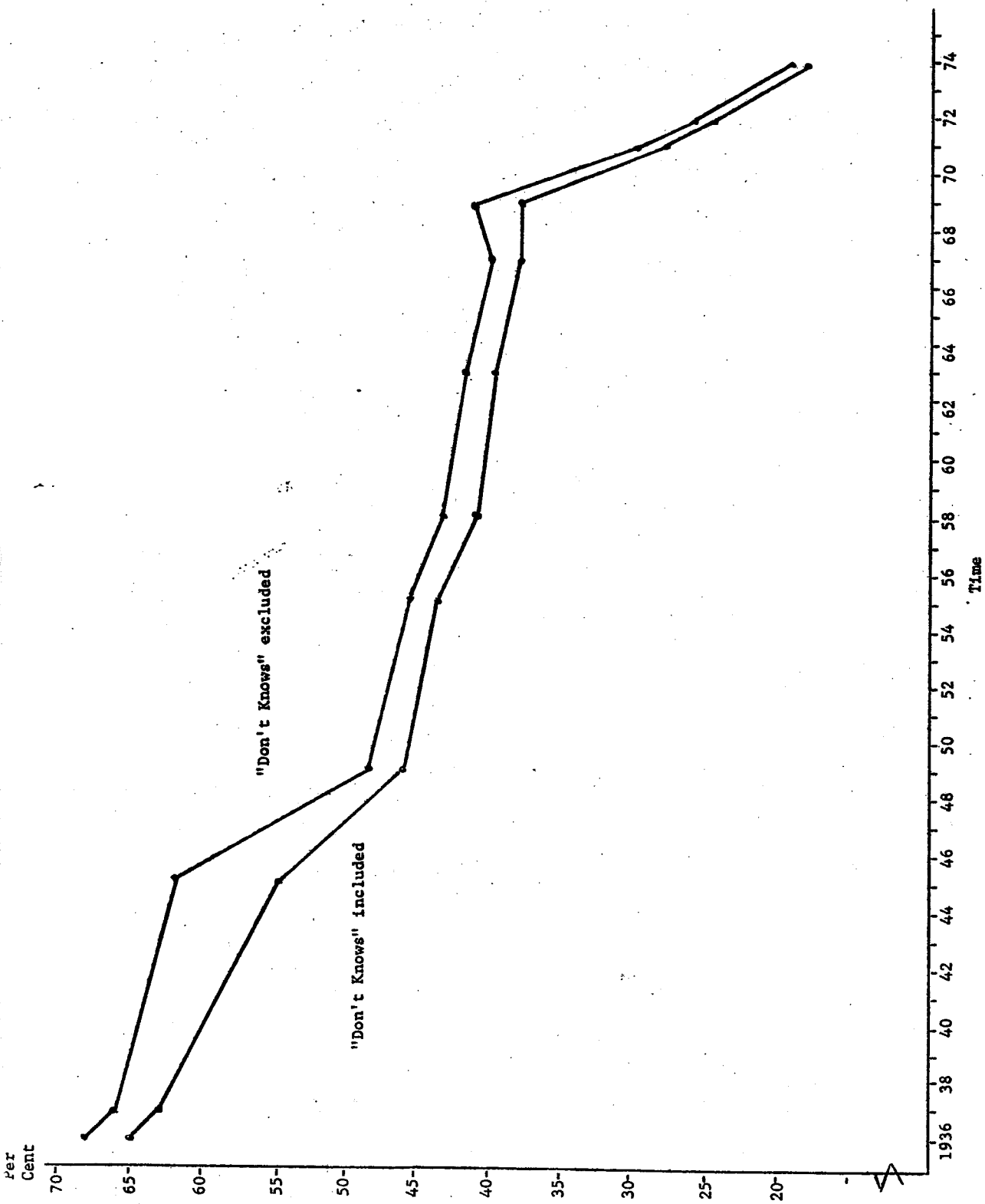

Fig. 1.--Proportion Unwilling to Vote for a Woman for President

TABLE 1-A

MARGINALS, "DON'T KNOWS" INCLUDED[a]

Data												
Survey[b]	AIPO[c]	AIPO66[c]	AIPO360K[c]	AIPO448	AIPO543	AIPO604	AIPO676	AIPO744	AIPO776	AIPO834	GSS72	GSS74
Date	1936	8/37	12/45	9/49	2/55	9/58	7/63	4/67	3/69	7/71	3/72	3/74
Per Cent Yes	31.0	33.0	33.0	49.7	51.8	53.8	55.5	57.0	53.9	65.8	70.0	77.8
Per Cent No	65.0	63.0	55.0	46.8	44.2	41.3	40.4	38.9	38.8	28.7	25.1	19.1
Per Cent Don't Know	4.0 (n.d.)	4.4 (n.d.)	12.0 (n.d.)	3.5 (1440)	4.0 (1579)	4.9 (1506)	4.2 (1588)	4.1 (1505)	7.3 (1633)	5.2 (1531)	4.8 (1611)	3.1 (1479)

Statistical Analysis					
Hypotheses	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
For "NO"					
a) No change	p = pooled	1573.6	11	<.05	Reject
b) Linear change	p = a + bx	135.7	10	<.05	Reject
Reduction from linear term		1438.1	1	<.05	Significant
For "YES"					
a) No change	p = pooled	1701.0	11	<.05	Reject
b) Linear change	p = a + bx	210.7	10	<.05	Reject
Reduction from linear term		1490.3	1	<.05	Significant
For "DON'T KNOWS"					
a) No change	p = pooled	113.5	11	<.05	Reject
b) Linear change	p = a + bx	126.2	10	<.05	Reject

Final Model

Marginal proportion "YES": P = 1.06 - .0106 (YEAR - 1900)
Marginal proportion "NO" : p = -0.08 + .0104 (YEAR - 1900)
Marginal proportion "DON'T KNOW" = NON-LINEAR CHANGE

[a] No answers and missing values were excluded from the following studies, AIPO448 (5), AIPO543 (6), AIPO604 (8), AIPO776 (1), AIPO834 (31), GSS72 (2), and GSS73 (5).

[b] AIPO = American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup)
GSS = General Social Survey, Conducted by National Opinion Research Center, funded by The National Science Foundation

[c] Data from Hazel Erskine, "The Polls: Women's Role," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXXV (Summer, 1971), 275-278.
No data (n.d.) was available on number of cases. N = 1400 was used in calculations.

TABLE 1-B
MARGINALS, "DON'T KNOWS" EXCLUDED

Data												
Survey[a]	AIPO[b]	AIPO66[b]	AIPO360K[b]	AIPO448	AIPO543	AIPO604	AIPO676	AIPO744	AIPO776	AIPO834	GSS72	GSS74
Date	1936	8/37	12/45	9/49	2/55	9/58	7/63	4/67	3/69	7/71	3/72	3/74
Per Cent No	68.0 (n.d.)	66.0 (n.d.)	62.0 (n.d.)	48.5 (1401)	46.0 (1516)	43.4 (1432)	42.1 (1522)	40.6 (1444)	41.9 (1514)	30.3 (1447)	26.4 (1533)	19.7 (1433)

Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
a) No change	p = pooled	896.7	11	< .05	Reject
b) Linear change	p = a + bx	83.4	10	< .05	Reject
Reduction from linear term		813.3	1	< .05	Significant

Final Model

Marginal proportion "No" = 1.08 - .0109 (year - 1900)

[a]AIPO = American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup).

GSS = General Social Survey, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, funded by the National Science Foundation.

[b]Data from Hazel Erskine, "The Polls: Women's Role," Public Opinion Quarterly XXXV (Summer, 1971), 275-278.

n.d. = No data on number of cases; N = 1400 used in calculations.

TABLE 1-C

CHANGE IN PROPORTION. "NO," "DON'T KNOWS" EXCLUDED

Period	Hypotheses	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
1936-1945	a) No change	p = pooled	11.4	2	*	
	b) Linear change	p = a + bx	.6	1	>.05	Accept
	Reduction from linear term		10.8	1	<.05	Significant
1945-1949	a) No change	p = pooled	52.6	2	<.05	Reject
	b) Linear change	p = a + bx	0.0	1	>.05	Accept
1949-1969	a) No change	p = pooled	25.6	4	<.05	Reject
	b) Linear change	p = a + bx	2.8	3	>.05	Accept
1969-1974	a) No change	p = pooled	187.5	3	<.05	Reject
	b) Linear change	p = a + bx	4.4	2	>.05	Accept

Final Model

1936-1945 Marginal proportion "NO": p = .89 - .0060 (Year - 1900)

1945-1949 Marginal proportion "NO": p = 2.14 - .0337 (Year - 1900)

1949-1969 Marginal proportion "NO": p = .66 - .0037 (Year - 1900)

1969-1974 Marginal proportion "NO": p = 3.40 - .0434 (Year - 1900)

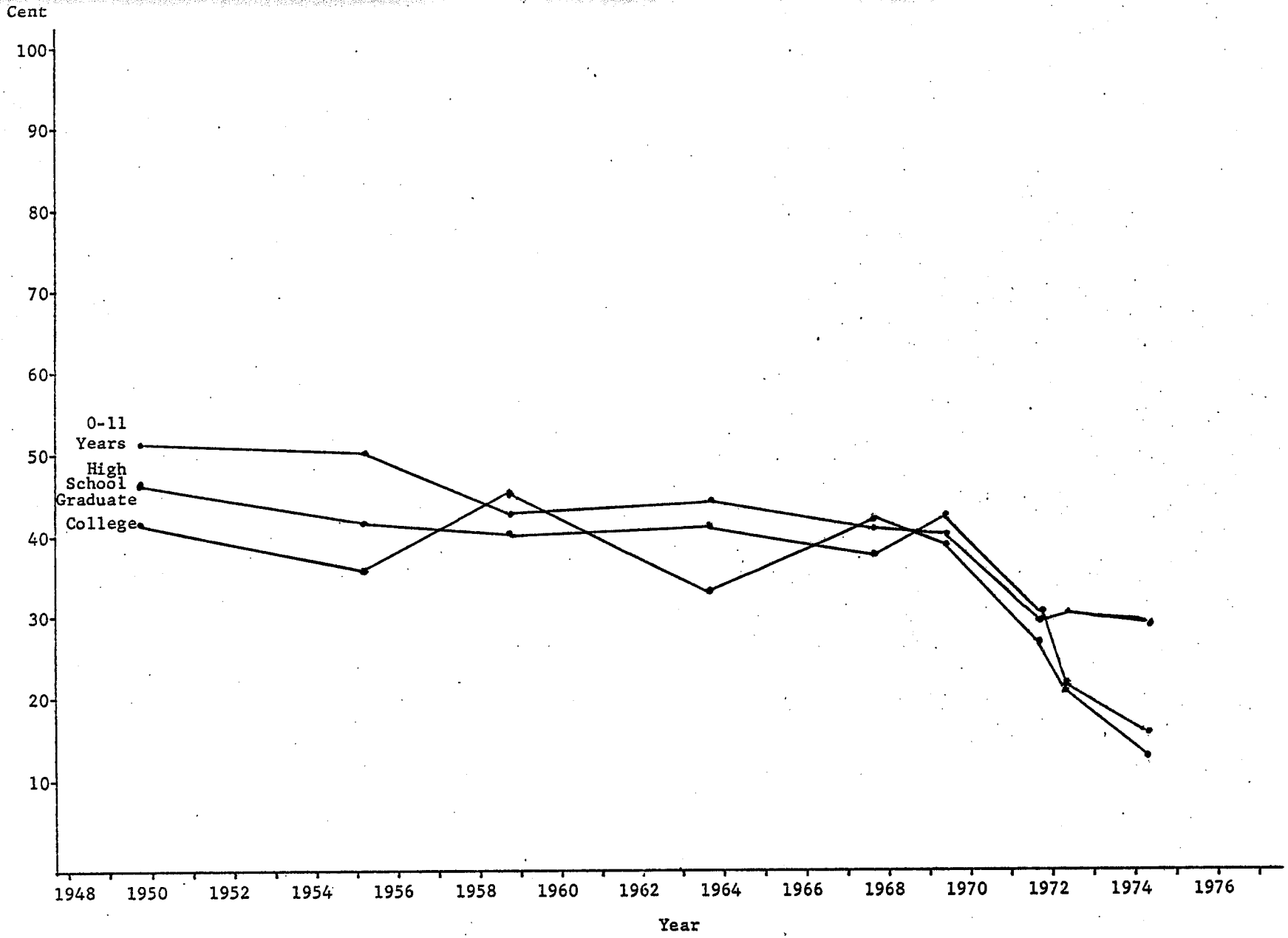

Fig.2.--Proportion Unwilling to Vote for a Woman for President by Education

TABLE 2

SEX DIFFERENCES

Data

Survey	AIPO448	AIPO543	AIPO604	AIPO676	AIPO744	AIPO776	AIPO834	GSS72	GSS74
Date	9/49	2/55	9/58	7/63	4/67	3/69	7/71	3/72	3/74
Per Cent No:									
Male	51.1 (669)	50.6 (753)	42.5 (689)	39.1 (742)	36.1 (710)	38.0 (756)	30.7 (713)	26.4 (762)	19.5 (671)
Female	46.0 (721)	41.7 (760)	44.3 (743)	45.0 (780)	45.0 (734)	45.8 (758)	30.0 (734)	26.3 (771)	19.9 (762)

Statistical Analysis

Category Difference (Base=Male)	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
Female	a) No difference	d = 0	43.3	9	< .05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = dp	41.5	8	< .05	Reject
	c) Linear change in difference	d = a + bx	33.0	7	< .05	Reject
	Reduction from linear term		8.5	1	< .05	Significant

Final Model

Female: Non-linear trend with significant linear component.

Linear Component: -.18 + .003 (Year - 1900)

Turning to the graph of educational differences (Figure 3), a great deal of variation over time is again apparent. Differences among the three education groups are both best-ordered and largest at the initial two and final two data points. The statistical analysis shows that, on the average, the high school graduates were less opposed to a woman for President than those without a high school diploma (d = -.048). The difference between the college-educated and the less-than-high-school-educated has been so erratic that no single estimate can apply reasonably well over all times. What can be said is that the college-educated are generally the least opposed to a woman president and that, on the average, the difference in proportions between them and the less-than-high-school-educated has been -.077 (see Table 3).

As with the educational differences, the cohort differences are notable at the beginning and end of the time series (see Figure 4). In these periods, the youngest cohorts are the most willing to vote for a woman for President, and the middle and old cohorts are less approving. The statistical analysis (see Table 4) shows that the difference in proportions between the new and middle cohorts has been widening at 2.7 per cent a year, that the difference between the middle and young cohorts has been non-linear and averages -.043, and that no notable difference exists between the middle and old cohorts.

Based on these relationships a time-cohort-education-woman president model was selected to explain the changes. Sex was not included because no marginal shifts occur over time and no consistent relationship exists over time between sex and voting for a woman president. It is therefore unlikely that sex would explain the continuing decline in opposition. The statistical analysis in Table 5-A shows that, pooled over all data points, being in the young and new cohorts and having a college education were all related with attitudes toward a woman President. Net of time and education, the new cohort differed from the middle cohort at a rate of -.0285 between 1963 and 1974, and the difference between the young and middle cohorts averaged -.036. Net of time and cohort, high school graduates, did not differ significantly from the less-than-high-school-educated, whereas the college-educated differed by -.057.

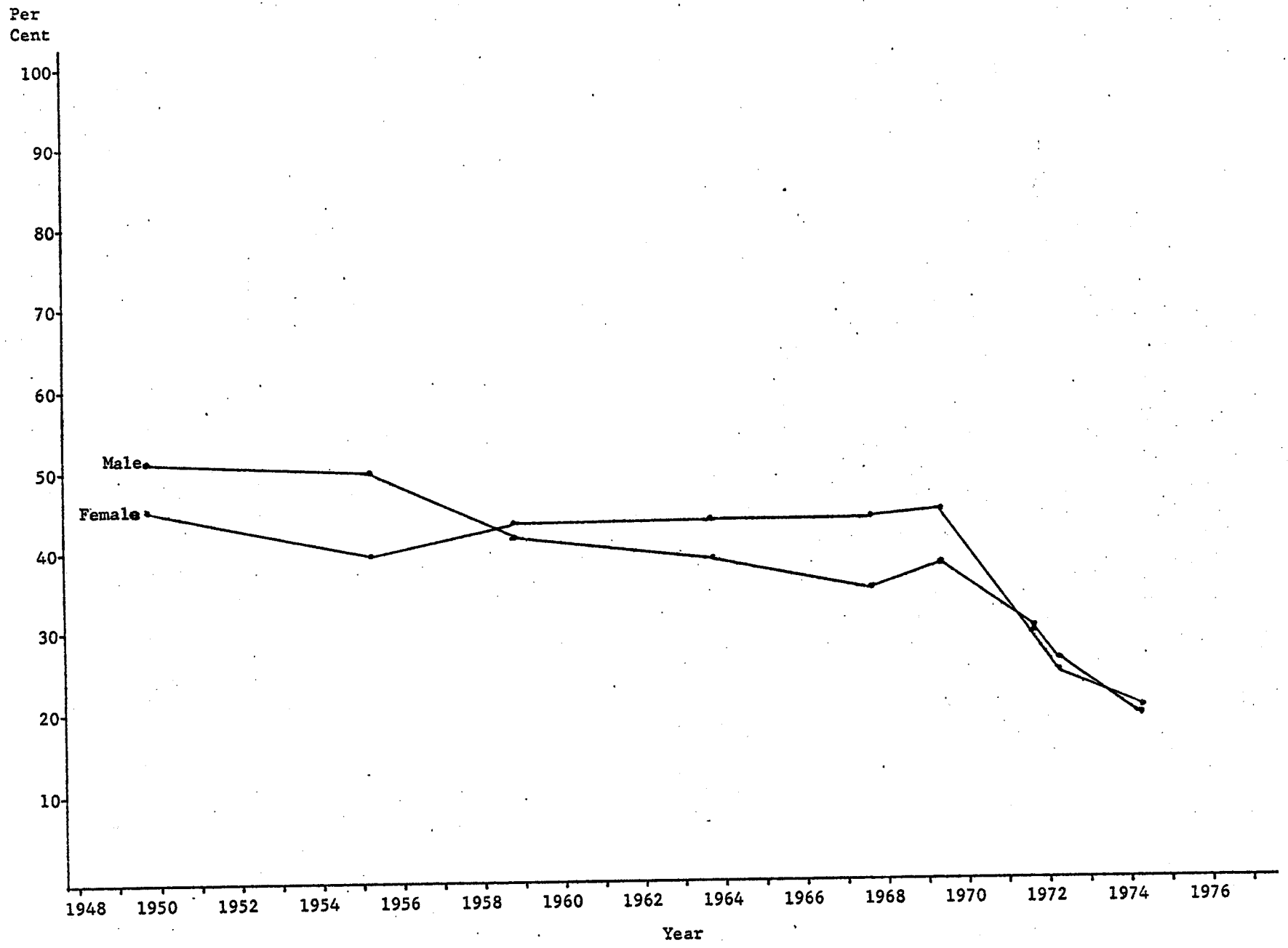

Fig.3.--Proportion Unwilling to Vote for a Woman for President by Sex

TABLE 3

EDUCATION DIFFERENCES

Data

Survey	AIPO448	AIPO543	AIPO604	AIPO676	AIPO744	AIPO776	AIPO834	GSS72	GSS74
Date	9/49	2/55	9/58	7/63	4/67	3/69	7/71	3/72	3/74
Per Cent No:									
0-11 Years . . .	51.7 (686)	50.4 (823)	44.1 (753)	45.4 (727)	42.1 (610)	41.5 (579)	30.2 (556)	31.9 (605)	29.3 (491)
High School Graduate . . .	47.3 (389)	42.7 (429)	41.2 (452)	42.0 (512)	38.0 (513)	43.7 (574)	31.7 (526)	22.5 (458)	16.0 (474)
College	42.5 (315)	37.9 (253)	45.5 (224)	33.9 (283)	42.0 (319)	39.5 (357)	27.9 (355)	22.3 (435)	13.1 (465)

Statistical Analysis

Category Difference (Base=0-11)	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
High School Graduate	a) No difference	d = 0	51.4	9	< .05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = dp	25.8	8	*	
	c) Linear change in difference	d = a + bx	25.4	7	*	
	Reduction from linear term		0.4	1	> .05	Not significant
College	a) No difference	d = 0	84.3	9	< .05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = dp	31.5	8	< .05	Reject
	c) Linear change in difference	d = a + bx	31.6	7	< .05	Reject
	Reduction from linear term		- 0.1	1		Not significant

Final Model

High School Graduate d = -0.048 σ = 0.010

College Non-linear trend

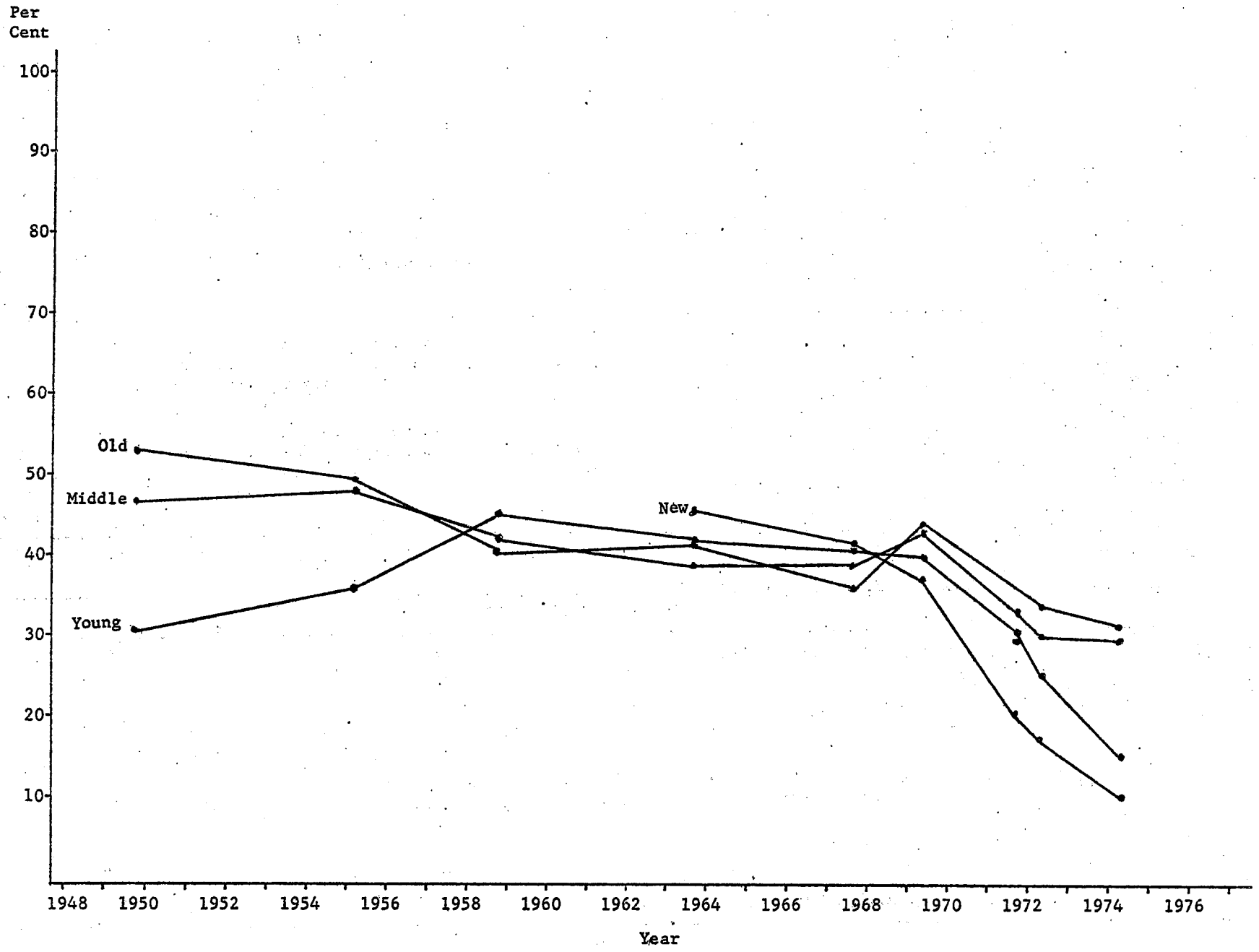

Fig.4--Proportion Unwilling to Vote for a Woman for President by Cohort

TABLE 4

COHORT DIFFERENCES

Data

Survey	AIPO448	AIPO543	AIPO604	AIPO676	AIPO744	AIPO776	AIPO834	GSS72	GSS74
Date	9/49	2/55	9/58	7/63	4/67	3/69	7/71	3/72	3/74
Per Cent No:									
New	--	--	--	46.2 (78)	43.1 (187)	38.2 (283)	21.2 (448)	18.5 (481)	10.4 (511)
Young	31.6 (133)	37.0 (343)	45.7 (381)	43.6 (482)	42.7 (509)	40.4 (500)	31.2 (349)	25.7 (409)	15.9 (384)
Middle	47.5 (581)	48.0 (646)	43.5 (565)	39.1 (511)	39.6 (457)	43.3 (416)	34.0 (388)	31.6 (433)	30.4 (352)
Old	52.9 (658)	49.8 (504)	41.1 (474)	43.1 (432)	37.5 (327)	44.8 (297)	30.8 (249)	34.5 (206)	32.8 (180)

Statistical Model

Category Difference (Base=Middle)	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
New	a) No difference	d = 0	93.5	6	< .05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = dp	33.3	5	< .05	Reject
	c) Linear change in difference	d = a + bx	1.6	4	> .05	Accept
Young	a) No difference	d = 0	54.2	9	< .05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = dp	39.1	8	< .05	Reject
	c) Linear change in difference	d = a + bx	39.2	7	< .05	Reject
	Reduction in linear term		- 0.1	1	> .05	Not significant
Old	a) No difference	d = 0	9.5	9	> .05	Accept

Final Model

New	d = 1.85 - .0276 (year - 1900)
Young	d = Non-linear trend
Old	d = 0

TABLE 5

EDUCATION BY COHORT DIFFERENCES

Survey Date	AIPO448 9/49			AIPO543 2/55			AIPO604 9/58			AIPO676 7/63			AIPO744 4/67		
	Data														
Per Cent No:	Education														
	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College
New	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	37.0 (27)	57.1 (28)	43.5 (23)	45.0 (20)	45.9 (37)	53.8 (26)
Young	25.6 (43)	34.7 (49)	34.2 (38)	45.8 (131)	31.2 (141)	31.4 (70)	46.7 (137)	42.1 (164)	51.3 (80)	45.2 (157)	44.9 (198)	39.4 (127)	41.1 (129)	41.6 (202)	49.1 (110)
Middle	52.3 (235)	43.1 (181)	45.1 (164)	50.4 (335)	49.0 (206)	38.2 (102)	43.3 (284)	43.6 (204)	(77)	42.8 (250)	40.2 (189)	23.6 (72)	45.6 (204)	37.2 (191)	32.0 (103)
Old	54.3 (398)	57.5 (146)	40.7 (108)	52.2 (347)	47.4 (76)	41.0 (78)	43.7 (327)	32.1 (81)	39.4 (66)	48.1 (283)	34.4 (90)	32.2 (59)	39.4 (249)	28.0 (75)	41.7 (72)

Survey Date	AIPO776 3/69			AIPO834 7/71			GSS72 3/72			GSS74 3/74		
Per Cent No:	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College	0-11 Years	High School Graduate	College
New	32.7 (55)	39.8 (123)	39.0 (105)	17.7 (96)	22.9 (188)	21.3 (164)	22.4 (98)	15.8 (190)	19.2 (193)	17.0 (94)	8.3 (206)	9.5 (211)
Young	36.4 (151)	42.8 (222)	40.9 (127)	25.0 (120)	36.5 (148)	30.8 (78)	24.8 (149)	26.8 (149)	25.2 (111)	24.6 (114)	14.9 (148)	9.1 (121)
Middle	45.1 (173)	45.2 (157)	34.9 (83)	30.3 (188)	39.7 (126)	32.4 (71)	36.5 (211)	28.5 (123)	23.7 (97)	33.3 (159)	31.4 (102)	23.3 (90)
Old	42.8 (194)	50.0 (64)	47.4 (38)	42.3 (149)	31.0 (58)	42.1 (38)	39.0 (156)	20.0 (25)	24.2 (33)	36.9 (122)	29.4 (17)	20.0 (40)

TABLE 5-A

Statistical Analysis

Differences on Woman President	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
Time:						
1974 vs. 1949	a) No difference	d = 0	75.3	12	<.05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = C	8.6	11	>.05	Accept
Cohort:						
New vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	87.4	18	<.05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = C	45.4	17	*	
	c) Linear change in difference over time	d = a+bx				
Young vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	75.5	27	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	64.9	26	*	
	Reduction from constant term		10.6	1	<.05	Significant
Old vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	32.5	27	>.05	Accept
Education:						
High School Graduate vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	62.2	33	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	54.6	32	*	
	Reduction from constant term		7.6	1	*	
College vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	82.6	33	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	55.0	32	*	
	Reduction from constant term		27.6	1	<.05	Significant

Final Model

1974 vs 1949	d = -.177	σ = .022
New vs Middle	d = 1.93-.0285 (Year-1900)	
Young vs Middle	d = -.036	σ = .011
Old vs Middle	d = 0	
High School Graduate vs Less than High School	d = 0	
College vs Less than High School	d = -.057	σ = .010

TABLE 5-B

Statistical Analysis

Differences on Woman President	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
Time:						
1955 vs. 1949	a) No difference	d = 0	12.0	9	>.05	Accept
Cohort:						
Young vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	29.1	6	<.05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = C	8.0	5	>.05	Accept
Old vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	8.0	6	>.05	Accept
Education:						
High School vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	11.8	6	>.05	Accept
College vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	21.4	6	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	4.7	5	>.05	Accept
	Reduction from constant term		16.7	1	<.05	Significant

Final Model

1955:	d = 0	
Young:	d = -.122	σ = .027
Old:	d = 0	
High School:	d = 0	
College:	d = -.102	σ = .025

TABLE 5-C

Differences on Woman President	Hypothesis	Model	Statistical Analysis x^2	df	p	Decision
Time:						
1969 vs. 1958	a) No difference	d = 0	12.7	12	>.05	Accept
Cohort:						
New vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	15.3	9	>.05	Accept
Young vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	19.7	12	>.05	Accept
Old vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	15.2	12	>.05	Accept
Education:						
High School vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	22.5	15	>.05	Accept
College vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	29.6	15	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	25.9	14	*	
	Reduction from constant term		3.7	1	>.05	Not significant

Final Model

All differences are zero.

TABLE 5-D

Statistical Analysis

Differences on Woman President	Hypothesis	Model	x^2	df	p	Decision
Time:						
1974 vs. 1971	a) No difference	d = 0	68.5	12	<.05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = C	26.4	11	*	
Cohort:						
New vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	72.2	9	<.05	Reject
	b) Constant difference	d = C	75.0	8	>.05	Accept
Young vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	26.7	9	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	10.0	8	>.05	Accept
	Reduction from constant difference		16.7	1	<.05	Significant
Old vs. Middle	a) No difference	d = 0	9.2	9	>.05	Accept
Education:						
High School Graduate vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	27.8	12	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	25.1	11	*	
College vs. Less Than High School	a) No difference	d = 0	31.5	12	*	
	b) Constant difference	d = C	19.6	11	>.05	Accept
	Reduction from constant term		11.9	1	<.05	Significant

Final Model

1974:	d = -.101	σ = .016
New:	d = -.140	σ = .017
Young:	d = -.076	σ = .019
Old:	d = 0	
High School Graduate	d = 0	
College:	d = -.057	σ = .017

In Figure 5.A, the effect of these relationships on the over-time change is graphed. Moving from left to right, the diagram translates as follows. Associated with each of the cohorts are their changing marginal proportions from 1949 to 1974. The new cohort's proportion increased by .357, the young cohort rose by .174, and the old cohort decreased by -.352. Flowing out of the cohorts to the educational categories are their proportion differences in education. The old cohort, for example, had -.046 fewer members with college education than the middle cohort had. The long arrows from the new and young cohorts to opposition are the differences in proportion between these cohorts and the middle cohort net of education. The double arrow from the new cohort indicates that the relationship was linear over time and the absence of an arrow from the old cohort to opposition indicates no relationship exists between these categories. Going on to the education categories, there is an exogenous arrow into the high school category indicating that some of the decline in the high school graduates' proportion cannot be accounted for by cohort change. From college to opposition, there is a significant difference in proportions net of time and cohort, but no difference between the high school graduates and the less-than-high-school-educated. Last of all, there is an exogenous arrow flowing into opposition that represents the change in opposition that is unaccounted for by either cohort or education.

In Table 6, the transmittances along the paths in Figure 5.A are calculated and the change in opposition is decomposed into its causally distinct components. Cohort turnover accounts for a change of -.038, and an additional -.0048 is accounted for by the effect of cohort turnover on the educational composition of the population. Most of the change (-.171), however, is caused by time effects, net of cohort and education. In brief, while part of the change results from the direct and indirect effects of cohort turnover, the largest component has been an across-the-board shift by the population as a whole.

One feature of the change that is not apparent from the statistical analysis pooled over time is the repetition of the variation in effects at different periods of time. In 1949 to 1955 and 1971 to 1974, the causal effects followed approximately the same pattern (see Table 5-B

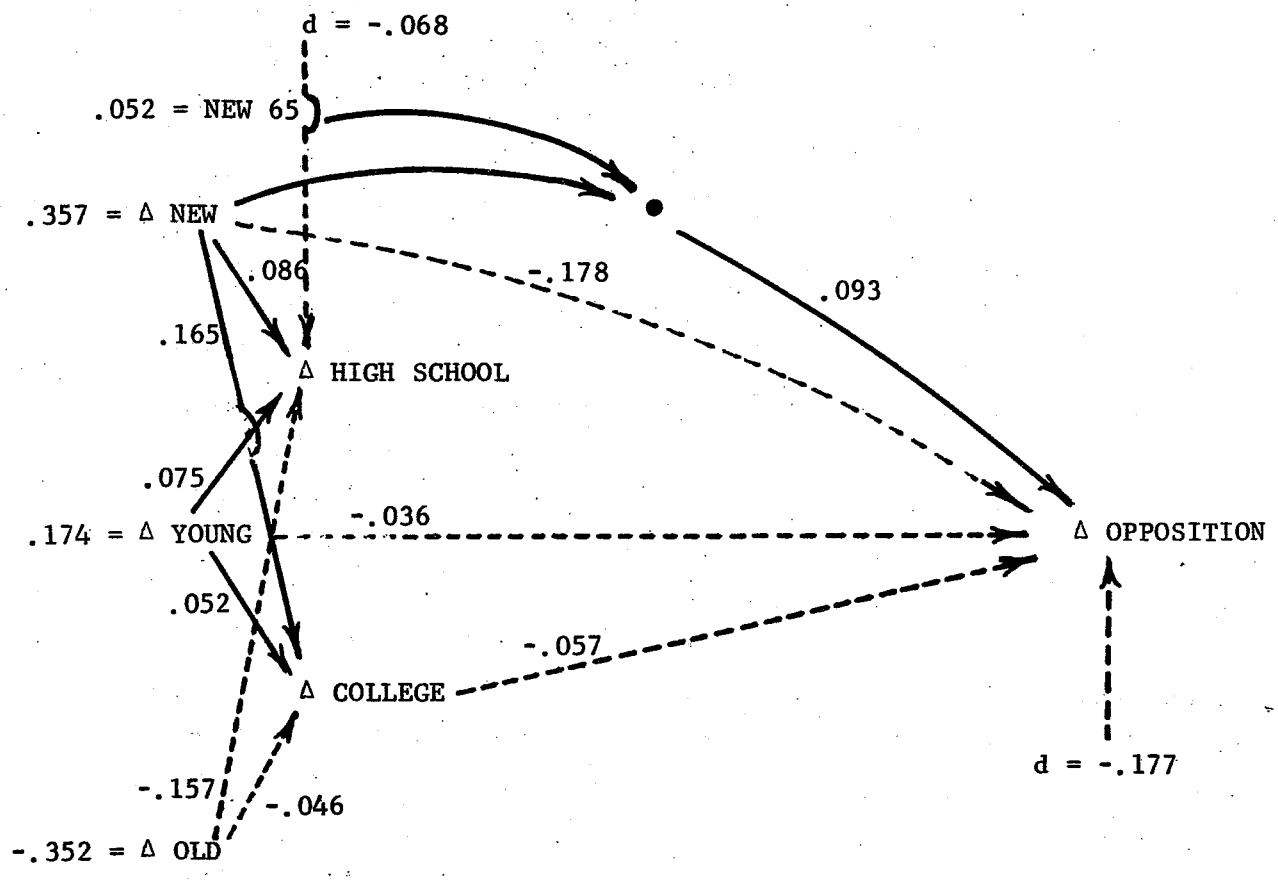

Fig. 5.A--Flow Graph Model of Change in Cohort, Education, and Woman President, 1949-1974

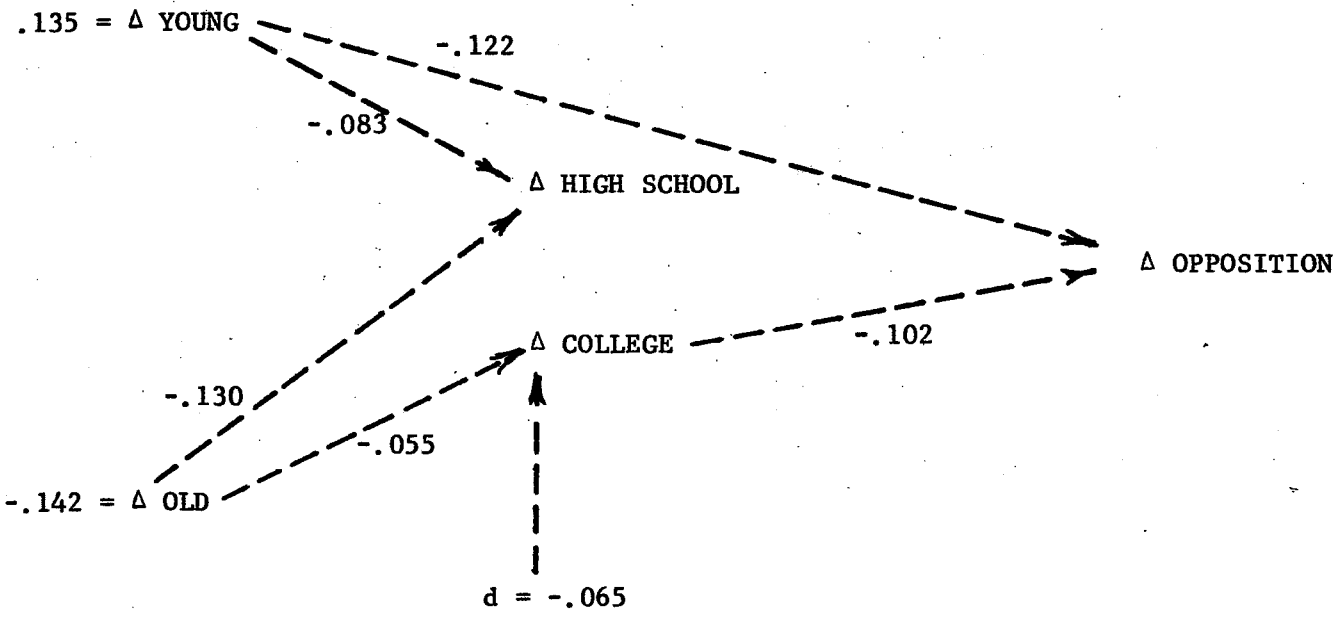

Fig. 5.B--Flow Graph Model of Change in Cohort, Education, and Woman President, 1949-1955

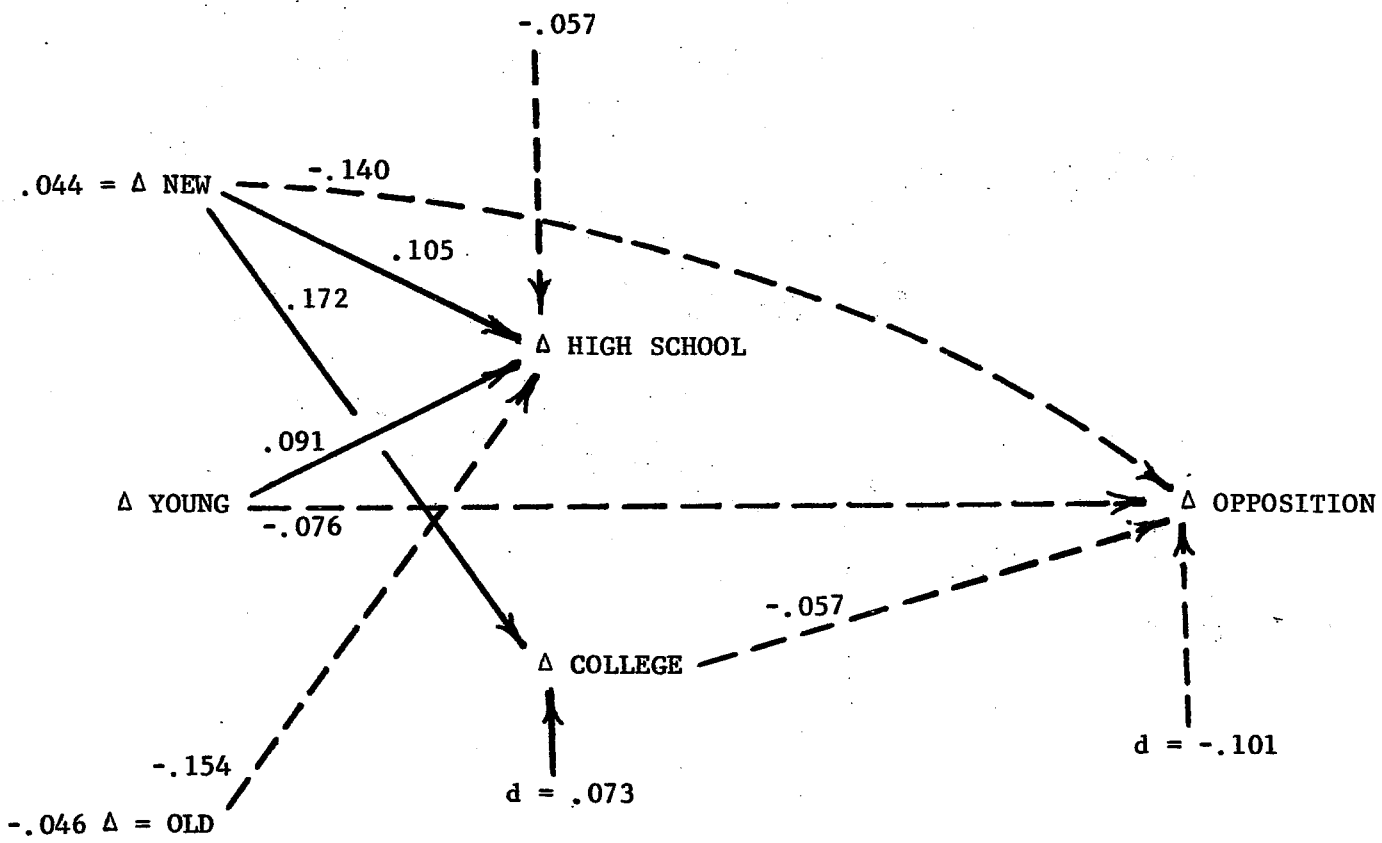

Fig. 5.C--Flow Graph Model of Change in Cohort, Education, and Woman President, 1971-1974

TABLE 6

DECOMPOSITION OF CHANGE IN WOMAN PRESIDENT
FROM FIGURE 5.1

Source		Change
Direct from Cohort:		
New - Opposition	.357 * (-.178 + .093) .052 * .093	-.0255
Young - Opposition	.174 * -.036	-.0063
Cohort via Education:		
New - College - Opposition	.357 * .165 * -.057	-.0034
Young - College - Opposition	.174 * .052 * -.057	-.0005
Old - College - Opposition	-.352 * -.046 * - .057	-.0009
Time net of Cohort and Education:		
1949 - 1974		-.1770
	Total Modeled Change	-.2136
	(Raw data	-.294)

and 5-D and Figures 5.B and 5.C). At both periods, paths flow from the younger cohort and the college-educated into opposition. In the 1958 to 1969 period, however, there is not a single significant path from any of the categories of cohort or education to opposition to a woman President (see Table 5-C). Since these three periods correspond approximately to the distinct periods of marginal change analyzed above, the following explanation for the alternating effects is possible. At certain times during the post-Depression era events have occurred that have tended to redefine the status of women in general, and attitudes toward a woman President in particular. These events have had a strong impact on all social groups, but have had the greatest effect on such change-prone groups as the young and the college-educated. When there has been no special impetus for change, the cohort and education differences have disappeared. In brief, on this issue, change is associated with differentiation and stability with homogenization.

Having hypothesied that the differing periods of marginal change and association are related to particular historical events, the next order of business is to describe the actions and forces involved. The 1930's can be seen as a period in which the traditional role of woman as mother and wife was still firmly rooted and attitudes on the political role of women reflected this perspective. This situation was fundamentally and permanently altered by the advent of World War II. One of the most dramatic changes (but by no means the only) was the influx of women into the labor market. In 1940, 25.4 per cent of all women of working age were in the labor force; by 1945, the participation rate had swelled to 35.7 per cent.[3] This entry of women into the labor force, as well as into the armed forces, community activities, and other non-traditional roles, altered both male and female attitudes on the place and abilities of women. In the political realm it lead to the growing acceptance of the notion that even the role of President could

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[3] These and all subsequent figures on labor force participation are from Women's Bureau, Employment Standards Administration, Department of Labor (1973: 91).

be filled by a woman. The war, in brief, served as a catalyst for redefining the social, economic, and political roles of women (Chafe 1972: 175, 246-47).

By the end of the forties, however, the momentum triggered by the war had largely been dissipated. Sex roles had been modified and attitudes had changed, but there was little to sustain the role modification so forcefully effected by the war. One force that probably worked in that direction, though, was the continuing entry of women into the labor force. After the war, many women returned to domesticity, but the rate of participation in 1950 (33.9 per cent) was still well above the pre-war figure, and it continued to increase to 35.7 per cent in 1955 and 37.8 per cent in 1960. Countering this continued expansion of women's role was a movement towards the "revitalization of family." (Chafe 1972: 202-10; and O'Neil 1969: 338). The quality of family life became a topic of concern, and the traditional preoccupation of women with children was reinforced as the fertility rate soared from 85.9 per cent in 1945 to a high of 122.9 per cent in 1957.[4] The effect of this phenomenon was to freeze the political status of women. As Marjorie Lansing has noted:

> The 1950s were a disastrous decade for women.....The implication of the population boom produced adverse effects on the status of women in general. These years were accompanied by declines in the proportion of women seeking careers and graduate study, and unquestionably retarded the politicalization of women.[5]

In the sixties, the tide began slowly to reverse. Labor force participation rose more rapidly from 37.8 per cent in 1960 to 39.3 per cent in 1965 and to 43.4 per cent in 1970. At the same time, the fertility rate declined steadily from its peak in 1957 to 112.2 in 1962, 87.6 in 1967, and about 73.4 in 1972. A growing concern about the status of women was shown by the establishment in 1961 of the Presidential

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[4]These and all other figures on the fertility rate are from Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget (1973: 252).

[5]Quoted in Costello (1973: 120-21).

Commission on the Status of Women and the popularity of Betty Friedan's critique of traditional sex roles, The Feminine Mystique (1963). Evidence of the political impact of these and related events can be seen in the sex differential in presidential voting. From the 1948 through the 1960 election, the differences between men and women in turnout rates averaged around 11 per cent. In the 1964 election, however, the male turnout rate exceeded that of women by only 3 percentage points. In subsequent elections, this lower rate has been maintained (see Table 7). Although these signs all seem to contribute to an expanding political role for women, the rate of decline of opposition to a woman President continued at its leisurely 1949 to 1958 pace. Apparently, to change this rate another catalyst was needed.

Between 1969 and 1971 the needed impetus appeared in the form of the women's liberation movement. Although this new feminist movement had been growing since the early sixties and had gained national standing with the formation of the National Organization of Women in 1966, the period from early 1969 to 1971 marked its emergence as a national force. Displaying a keen understanding of the importance of publicity and an ability to win the desired news coverage, the fledgling movement succeeded in broadcasting its message of equal rights into virtually every home in the country. The following count of magazine articles dealing with feminist issues clearly indicates both the timing and the magnitude of the shift in exposure: from March 1965 through February 1966, 14 articles; 1966-1967, 6; 1967-1968, 12; 1968-1969, 36; 1969-1970, 18; 1970-1971, 115; 1971-1972, 94; 1972-1973, 97; and 1973-1974, 57. Clearly, the 1970-1971 period marked the turning point in the women's liberation movement as coverage reached a record high. Since then, its coverage has diminished as its novelty has declined.[6]

The impact of this movement is apparent from the sudden drop in opposition to a woman President. When brought face to face with the contradictions between the ideal of political equality and long-accepted

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[6] The figures on magazine articles were obtained from a count of titles under feminist subject headings (e.g., "Woman-Equal Rights," "Women in Politics," and "Women's Liberation Movement") in the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature. Also, on the publicizing and growth of the women's movement during 1969-1970, see Carden (1974: 64-65), Freeman (1973: 37), Altbach (1974: 157), and Chafe (1972: 238).

TABLE 7

SEX DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS[a]

Year	Sex		Difference (M - W)
	Men	Women	
1920	65	35	30
1936	84	77	7
1940	68	49	19
1944	75	61	14
1948-A	69	56	13
1948-B	57	45	12
1952-A	72	62	10
1952-B	73	55	18
1956	80	69	11
1960	80	69	11
1964	73	70	3
1968-A	76	73	3
1968-B	69.8	66.0	3.8
1972-A	76	70	6
1972-B	64.1	62.0	2.1

[a]Figures for 1920 and 1944 from Robert E. Lane, Political Life (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 21, 210. Figures for 1936 from American Institute of Public Opinion Poll for March, 1937 from Research in Progress by Lani Silver, University of Chicago. Figures for 1940, 1948-B, and 1952-B from Roper Surveys, cited in Helen B. Shaffer, "Women in Politics," Editorial Research Reports, I (1956), pp. 120-121. Figures for 1948-A, 1952-A, 1956, 1960, 1964, 1968-A, and 1972-A from Survey Research Center Surveys cited in Marjorie Lansing, "The American Woman: Voter and Activist," in Women in Politics, edited by Jane S. Jaquette (New York: John Wiley, 1974), p. 8. Figures for 1968-B and 1972-B are from the Current Population Surveys of the Bureau of the Census.

practice of sexual discrimination, the American public rallied to its principles and began to change its attitudes.

Yet before congratulating the American public for finally living up to its ideals, it is necessary to inquire about whether public behavior has kept up with attitudes. If holding political office was truly independent of sex, approximately one-half of all elective offices would be held by women. This is hardly the case. Office holding has been and remains heavily male dominated. In executive office holding (i.e., President, Vice President, and state governors) there has been only the most minute change. Four women have served as governor of a state: Nellie Taylor Ross, widow of the previous governor, was elected in Wyoming in 1925; "Ma" Ferguson, wife of the impeached governor "Pa" Ferguson, was elected in Texas in 1924 , and again in 1932; and Lurleen Wallace, wife of Governor George Wallace, who could not succeed himself in office, was elected in Alabama in 1966; but the one sign of change was the 1974 election in Connecticut of the fourth, the first politically self-made woman governor, Ella Grasso.[7]

In the legislative branch the situation is somewhat different. As Table 8 shows, there was a small but steady rise in the number of women in Congress from 1921 to 1961, a slump from 1961 to 1969, and then a rise from 1969 through 1975. Even at its "peak" women have never constituted more than 4 per cent of the Congress, and since 1951 their representation has varied within the narrow range of from 11 to 19 seats. Turning to the figures on state legislatures (see Table 9), the trend appears to be about the same as to the time periods: a steady rise to about 1963, an apparent decline until 1969, and a rise through 1975. The magnitudes, however, differ. The proportion of women in state legislatures has been higher than the proportion in Congress. Also, the increase in the number of female legislators has risen sharply since 1970, and by 1975 nearly 8 per cent of all legislators were women.

Despite the changes in recent years it is still safe to observe that political office holding is a male domain and that the rate of

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[7]On women in politics, see Jaquette (1974), Gruberg (1968), and Lamson (1968).

TABLE 8

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, 1921-1975[a]

Year	Number of Women	Year	Number of Women
1921	4	1949	10
1923	1	1951	11
1925	3	1953	15
1927	5	1955	18
1929	9	1957	16
1931	8	1959	17
1933	8	1961	19
1935	8	1963	13
1937	9	1965	12
1939	9	1967	12
1941	10	1969	11
1943	9	1971	13
1945	11	1973	14
1947	8	1975	18

[a]Figures for 1921-1963 in Werner, "Women in the State Legislatures," p. 42. Figures for 1965-1969 in Helen B. Shaffer, "Status of Women," Editorial Research Report (August 5, 1970), p. 57. Figures for 1971-1975 from National Women's Political Caucus.

TABLE 9

WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURES, 1921-1975[a]

Year Taking Office	Number of Women[b]	Year Taking Office	Number of Women
1921	31	1952	235
1923	95	1953	296
1925	146	1955	308
1927	135	1957	321
1929	153	1959	349
1931	154	1960	315
1933	136	1961	328
1935	138	1962	234
1937	141	1963-64	351
1939	154	1969	305
1941	144	1970	306
1943	188	1971	315
1945	228	1972	344
1947	221	1973	441
1949	218	1974	465
1951	249	1975	593

[a]Figures from 1921 to 1951, from 1953 to 1959, and for 1963/64 are from Emmy E. Werner, "Women in the State Legislatures," Western Political Quarterly, XXI (March, 1968), p. 42. Figures for 1952 from Martin Gruberg, Women in American Politics: An Assessment and Sourcebook (Oshkosh, Wis.: Academia Press, 1968), p. 201. Figures for 1961 from The Book of the States, 1964-65 (Chicago: The Council of State Governments, 1964), p. 436. Figures for 1962 from American Women: The Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women and Other Publications of the Commission (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), p. Figures for 1969, 1974, 1975 from Business and Professional Women's Foundation. Figures for 1971 from Mary Costello, "Women Voters," Editorial Research Reports (Oct. 11, 1972), p. 1. Figures for 1960, 1972 and 1973 from Nancy Gager, ed., Women's Rights Almanac, 1974 (Bethesda, Md.: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, n.d.).

[b]Figures on the number of legislators vary according to whether they are pre- or post-election figures and due to interelection vacancies and appointments. Two sources not infrequently report different numbers for the same year. When such minor discrepancies occurred, the number from the more authorative source was selected.

change in this has been well behind the rate of change in attitudes toward women in politics or toward a woman President. Figure 6 illustrates the situation. The top of the graph represents total intolerance; the bottom, total tolerance--the ideal of political equality regardless of sex. The trend in specific attitudes is represented by the change in the proportion unwilling to vote for a woman for President between the two end points. The corresponding aspect of actual behavior would be Presidential office holding by sex, which, of course, shows a constant level of perfect intolerance (represented by a level line at the top of the graph). A second, less direct measure of objective behavior is the trend in the sex composition of state legislatures (1.0 - (the proportion of female legislators * the proportion of females in the adult population)). Now, the trend in attitudes has been toward greater tolerance. The trend in objective behavior has also been in that direction although it has not reached to the Presidential level as yet. The difference is that, while the disparity between both attitudes and objective behavior and the ideal have been narrowing, the difference between the specific attitude and actual electoral behavior has been widening. Attitude, in brief, has changed faster than behavior.

The reasons for the low and lagging level of office holding can be classified as historical, social, and political. In the first place, historical events got things off to a bad start. The passage of the Twentieth amendment in 1920 was the last great reform of the Progressive era. Once women had gained the vote, the "return to normalcy" of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover had set in. Retrenchment, not reform, became the rule of the day. In this climate, the innovation of female candidates sparked little enthusiasm. (Chafe 1972: 29; and O'Neil 1969: 262-64). Also, to a large extent, the feminist leaders of the suffrage campaign did not push for female office holders; instead, they declined to work within the established parties and followed a non-partisan approach to politics (Lawson 1968: 19-20; Chafe 1972: 26; O'Neil 1969). Along with these historical reasons, several entrenched social processes retarded the political involvement of women. Subtle differences in

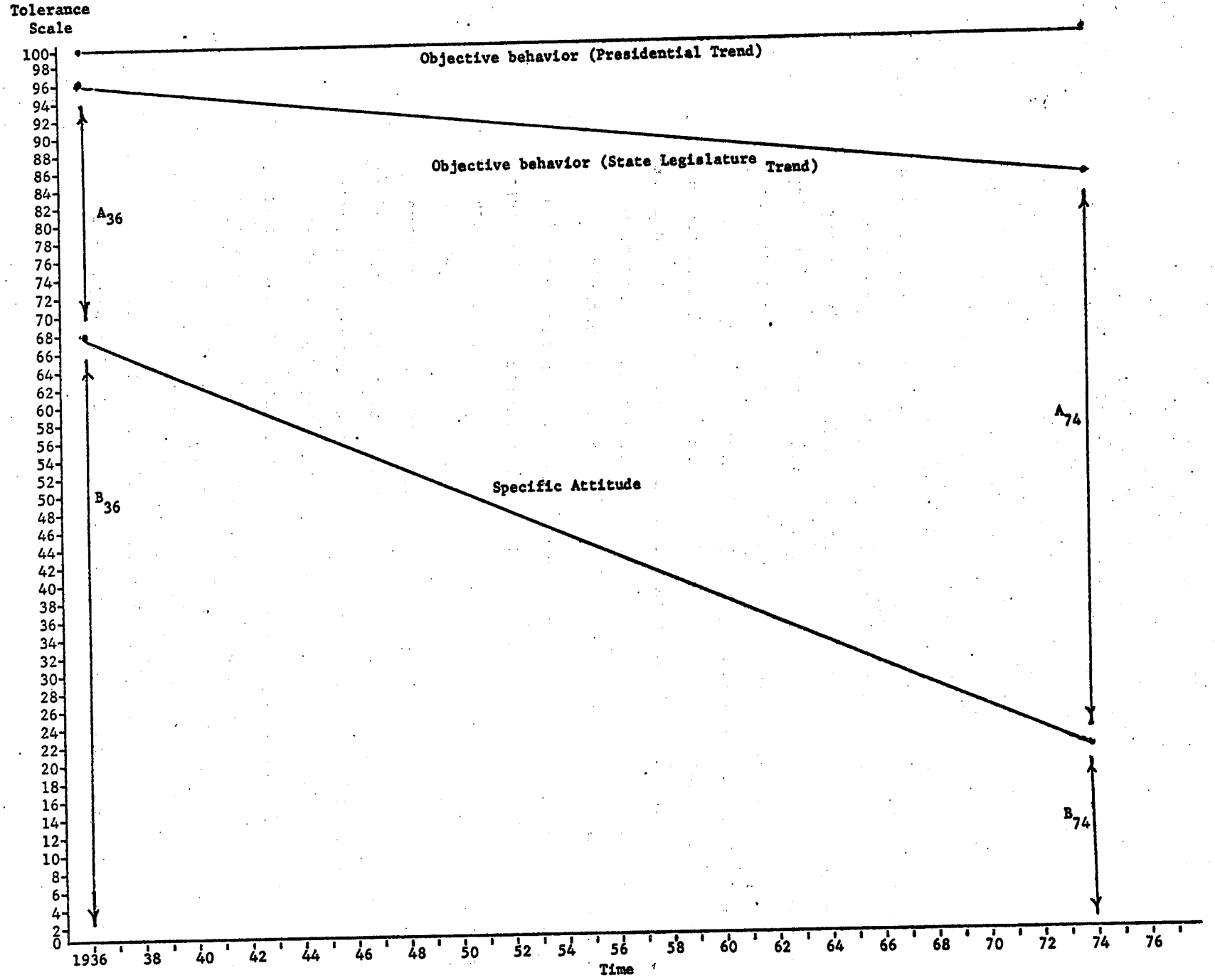

Fig. 6.--Comparison of the Change in Tolerance of Women in Politics: Ideal, Specific Attitude, and Objective Behavior, 1936-1974

childhood socialization have made women less likely to consider a political career as either desirable or appropriate. As Fred I. Greenstein explained in his seminal article, "Sex Related Political Differences in Childhood":

> Children's political sex differences do not flow from a rationalistic developmental sequence in which the girl learns "politics is not for girls," hence "I am not interested in politics." Rather there is a much more subtle and complex process in which, through differential opportunities, rewards and punishments which vary by sex, and through mechanisms such as identification with one or the other parent, a sex identity is acquired. Among other things this learning process associates girls with the immediate environment and boys with the wider environment. Political responses, developing as they do relatively late in childhood, fall into the framework of already present non-political orientations. (Greenstein 1961: 369).

With this process reinforced by the overt prejudice of males and denigration by women themselves, the result has been that few women have seriously contemplated a political career.[8]

For those few hearty souls who have sought a career in public office, political obstacles have arisen. The first has been the party regulars. Dedicated to the goal of maximizing party power, they have considered women candidates poor electoral risks. As the Democratic wheelhorse John Bailey remarked, "The only time to run a woman is when things look so bad that your only chance is to do something dramatic."[9] Adding to this pragmatic reason has been a large reserve of male prejudice, which is typlified by Dr. Edgar Berman's "raging hormone theory" on why a woman should not be President. The final obstacle has been the electorate itself. Although never conclusively shown, it is frequently argued that a qualified woman candidate for any office will lose more votes than she gains because of her sex. (Of course, under the

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[8] See Lamson (1968: 25-26), Grubert (1968: 26), Werner (1968: 40-41), and Amundsen (1971: 85).

[9] Quoted in Lamson (1968: 23).

ideal of political equality, she should not gain or lose any votes because of her sex.)[10] In sum, while it is hard to apply ideals universally and difficult to translate favorable attitudes into political offices, in the case of the political role of women, it appears that the first step has been accomplished and the second is now underway.

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[10]There is evidence of an anti-woman vote from the surveys cited in this paper, and there is evidence of a lack of a "women's" vote (i.e., block voting). There is, however, little information on the question of a pro-woman vote.

APPENDIX

Study	Question Wording
AIPO(1936) AIPO66	Would you vote for a woman for president if she was qualified in every other respect?
AIPO360K AIPO543	If the party whose candidate you most often support nominated a woman for President of the United States, would you vote for her if she seemed best qualified for the job?
AIPO448	If the party whose candidate you most often support nominated a woman for President of the United States, would you vote for her if she seemed qualified for the job?
AIPO604	If your party nominated a woman for President, would you vote for her if she seemed qualified for the job?
AIPO676, AIPO776, AIPO834	If your party nominated a woman for President, would you vote for her if she qualified for the job?
AIPO744, GSS72, GSS74	If your party nominated a woman for President, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

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