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Advisor: Evelyn Simien: *University of Connecticut*

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Paths to Power:
The Ascendance of Contemporary
Democratic Congressional Leaders

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Only in modern times have women begun to ascend into the leadership of Congress. While there has been a great deal of theoretical work on gender and on Congressional leadership, there have not been enough actual female leaders in Congress to perform a study until now. The present study examines the impact of gender, committee/legislative performance, ideology, and fundraising ability on leadership ascendancy. The variables are investigated through a comparative case study of Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Sen. Hillary Clinton and Sen. Harry Reid.

Woodrow Wilson said “When you come into the presence of a leader of men, you know that you have come into the presence of fire.” In that quote, Wilson, a scholar of Congress and legislative government, attempted to capture the mystique and aura that surrounds Congressional leaders and powerful people. I will be the first to admit that I too have been captivated by legislative leadership and the people who exhibit it. There are others like me though, which means the subject of legislative leadership has been studied previously. However, until now there have not been female Congressional leaders and so the present study fills a void in the literature. Examining factors that contribute to the rise of these leaders over other potential candidates, I gain insight into factors are critical in the ascendance of Democratic members of Congress. The study

takes the form of a comparative case study of Sen. Harry Reid, Sen. Hillary Clinton, Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Rosa DeLauro; all four have recently ascended into the official or unofficial leadership of the Democratic Party in Congress. At the heart of my thesis are answers to several questions: What factors affect leadership ascendancy? How have those factors inhibited ascension? What is the relative importance of competing factors? To what extent does gender play a role in leadership ascendancy?

This thesis does not, and cannot, claim to provide the conclusive answers to the questions I have suggested. By studying only four individuals, the sample is too small to make conclusive statements about the relationship between gender and leadership. However, this study aims to provide an initial test of the applicability of theories of gender and leadership to current leaders. As women are beginning ascend to previously unachieved heights within Congress, this study takes a preliminary look at their ascendancy in order to begin to form the basis of future research into the changing nature of gender in Congress.

Despite being unable to draw conclusions with the certainty that a more quantitative study might allow with a larger number of cases might allow, this study provides information important for understanding not just the subjects being examined, but Congress as a whole. In writing this thesis, I understand that much can be learned about Congress by looking at it from the top-down. This does not mean that I understand Congress purely as a function of its leaders. To the contrary, I look at the leadership and their career paths as much can be learned about Congress. Knowing what types of potential leaders were embraced by the whole of Congress and which potential leaders were rejected by Congress provides a great deal of insight into the culture and norms of

Congress. Therefore, while in some ways this thesis is about the impact of several independent variables on the ascendancy of four people, it is also about the place of those four variables within the culture, norms, and operations of Congress.

In examining the ascendancy of the four subjects of this study it was necessary to identify several variables that would affect the ascendancy of a Congressional leader. These four independent variables are variables whose importance has been verified by scholars and whose importance to understanding Congress is well understood. It is important to note that these variables are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for leadership ascendance.

The first independent variable is ideology. Were the current leaders picked because they are charismatic leaders of the ideological and intellectual foundations of the modern Democratic Party? Are more polarizing individuals being passed over for leadership positions in favor of more centrist and consensus building leaders? Recent leaders have not been consistently centrist or ideological firebrands. I intend to examine whether or not the ideological position of the current leaders influenced their rise to power.

The second independent variable is fund raising ability. Current party leaders are expected to raise large sums of money for their party and for fellow members of Congress. I will determine whether leaders are being chosen on the basis of their ability to raise funds for the Democratic Party or if their fund raising ability is merely an effect of being selected to the leadership. For example, it is no secret that Rep. Nancy Pelosi has been and continues to raise large sums of money. It is worth researching if that had anything to do with her or any of the other leaders rise to power.

The third variable is committee placement and legislative effectiveness. It is a well known fact that placement on a powerful committee is necessary to become a major “player” in Congress. It is also vital to perform well on committee and demonstrate that you have political savvy to become a leader in Congress. Therefore, I will examine the relationship between committee placement/performance and leadership ascendancy.

The fourth independent variable is gender. A number of women have risen to positions of leadership, including Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Rosa DeLauro and Sen. Hillary Clinton. It is worth researching the effect of gender on their ascendancy. I will discern whether gender effects leadership ascendancy, by determining its role in the leadership ascendancy among Congressional Democrats.

Since legislative leadership has substantial influence on public policy outcomes and legislative decision-making it is therefore worth studying. My research seeks to examine the leadership ascendancy of recent Democratic leaders in Congress. I investigate ideology, fund raising, committee placement/performance and gender in an effort to develop a model of predictive value that explains leadership ascendancy.

Literature Review

As in almost all other political phenomena, the explanation of leadership ascendancy involves a combination of several variables. Drawing from such seminal works as Davidson's and Oleszek's *Congress and Its Members* (2000) and Rosenthal's *Women Transforming Congress* (2002), several variables have been identified as essential to leadership ascendancy. The variables are gender, ideology, fund-raising ability, and committee placement.

Within the last decade, a new wave of Democrats has risen to positions of official and unofficial leadership in Congress. Official leadership positions, defined by Robnett (1996), are those positions that are institutionally recognized positions within organizations which entail intrinsic powers over subordinates. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Sen. Harry Reid, and Rep. Rosa DeLauro are examples of official leaders who hold formal leadership titles as House Minority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, and Assistant to the Democratic Leader, respectively. Unofficial leaders, as defined by Robnett (1996), are those that those that yield power and influence over subordinates and other members of Congress, though they hold no institutionally recognized titles. Sen. Hillary Clinton and Rep. DeLauro are examples of unofficial leaders in that they hold the positions of Junior Senator from New York and Assistant to the Democratic Leader, though they wield far more power than those positions would normally carry. Both the official and unofficial leaders in my comparative case study have been able to use their positions to shape legislative debates and policy making.

Committee Membership/Effectiveness

In order to build a coalition, members of Congress must give other members reasons to join them. As Bawn (1998) points out in her work on the utility maximizing model of leadership selection, there is a substantial cost to being on the wrong side of a leadership contest. There must be a strong incentive to support a prospective leader, especially if it is unclear that he or she will win. Committee membership, like fundraising, provides members of Congress with incentives to distribute in order to increase the benefit a member would gain from supporting them.

Arnold and King (2002) in their collaborative work directly link power and legislative prestige to committee placement. By analyzing the effects of an all male Senate Judiciary Committee had on the Clarence Thomas investigation¹, they drew conclusions about the importance of representation not just in Congress, but in important committees. They concluded that had there been more representation of women on the Senate Judiciary Committee the investigation would have been more effective. Without the perspective of people who could have been victims of sexual harassment themselves, the committee lacked needed perspective in the investigation. While their research was fairly specific it reveals important issues in how committee placement and congressional power correlate. Women lacked the prestige and power to have a voice in that congressional investigation because they lacked membership on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Research by Norton (1995) suggests that Arnold and King's findings about the importance of representation on committee can be generalized beyond any specific case –

¹ Clarence Thomas, then a nominee to the Supreme Court was being investigated for allegedly sexually harassing a law professor, Anita Hill.

for example, the Hill-Thomas episode. Norton shows this by demonstrating that the vast majority of legislative work, especially in the House of Representatives, occurs in the area of committees and subcommittees. For members of Congress to “make a name” for themselves they must show that they, as Lyndon Johnson said about power, “...know where to look for it, and how to use it” (Caro, 2002). Therefore Norton’s theory would state that committee work is a vital avenue for establishing the prestige and power needed to pursue leadership positions in Congress.

The legislative process requires more than just committee work though. One must effectively work with members of Congress outside of their committee. Outside of one’s committee there are numerous “players” in the legislative process. Degregorio (1995) studied the reputation of different players in the legislative process within Congress. He discovered that members of Congress are more known for their political savvy and ability than they are for their particular expertise. Skillful political activity within a committee earns members the reputation needed to raise themselves to positions of legislative leadership. Therefore, Degregorio (1995) would agree with Norton (1995) that in order to gain the power and prestige needed to be a leader, members must prove their effectiveness in committee.

Owens (1997) studied the relationship between party leadership and committee leadership. He concludes that there is far more coordination between the party leadership and committee leadership than there has been before. The independence of Committee Chairman has been decreased, and as a result the Committee Chairmen are more in step with the legislative priorities and initiatives of the party leadership. To rise to power, a member of Congress must collaborate with the party leadership and other major players.

They often need to do so by using their committee seat to steer favors and assist others so they can obtain reciprocated favors. Since committee leaders and partisan leaders such as the Majority/Minority Leader are growing closer, the jump from committee leadership to party leadership has become smaller. Thus, I can expect that Congressional leaders hold seats on major committees and have been able to effectively use their committee positions to extend their influence.

Ideology

There are three main theories with respect to the effect of ideology and leadership ascendancy: the middleman theory, the policy-deviant model, and the utility maximizing model. The middleman theory is the conventional one often applied to a variety of electoral and consensus based situations (Clauson and Wilcox, 1998). The middleman theory suggests that the ideology of the leader is likely to be the median position among the electing constituency. For example, a Senate Minority Leader should represent the median ideology of the minority party. This theory assumes that all leadership preferences are of the same intensity and given equal consideration in the selection of a leader. Put more simply, the middleman theory downplays the role of other variables that give a faction disproportionate power over the selection of the leader, such as fundraising and gender (Clauson and Wilcox, 1998). The middleman theory is a logical starting point since leaders build a coalition from the center of their electing constituency. If the middleman theory is completely accurate, other variables such as fundraising and gender will be less important.

Clauson and Wilcox (1998) pose a second theory, which is known as the policy deviant model. The policy-deviant model posits that since legislative leaders and their selectors are concerned with reelection and reselection as leaders they cannot stray too far from the median ideology of their constituency while establishing their leadership. Leaders and their selectors will therefore ignore small but persistent “policy-deviants” that lie far outside of the mainstream (Clauson and Wilcox, 1998). The result will be a leader who does not occupy the true ideological median. Instead he/she moves toward the direction of the mode ideological score.

The third model put forth by Bawn (2002) is the utility maximizing model. Bawn’s model states that varying levels of utility, or value, gained from selecting a certain leader, outside of the potential leader’s ideology can affect their election. Bawn’s model, unlike previous models, questions the assumption that all preferences are held with equal intensity and that equal consideration is given to all positions. The utility model can bring a more (or less) centrist leader into power since a variety of other factors are introduced that could trump the importance of having a leader that represents the ideological median of the electing constituency. For example, someone who differs from the ideological median and mode could still ascend if their position or status yields a high level of utility in the form of fund-raising, electoral success or other important goals.

It is important to mention that these models are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Given the situation, different models can interact and co-exist. In the Senate, for example, the value placed on compromise and consensus will likely weaken the applicability of the utility-maximizing model. This result will lead not to a choice between the middleman theory and the policy-deviant theory but a tension between them.

No single model will dominate. Instead it is quite possible for a leader who is close to the median to ignore voters who are far off of the median such as conservative Democrats or liberal Republicans. In essence all three models attempt to explain the composition of ideological coalitions important for electing leaders and that there is no single method for explaining the formation of that coalition.

Fundraising Ability

To build the coalition necessary to be a congressional leader, it is important to have an incentive to attract supporters. Raising money for one's self and for the party is one way that members of Congress create incentives for supporting them. Larson (2004), in his study of incumbent contributions to their party's central congressional campaign fund, pointed out that through the 1990s organizations like the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) have become increasingly important. As these organizations have become more important, donating excess funds to create support incentives and demonstrate the political skill necessary to raise large sums of money has become more important. The process has come a long way since Lyndon Johnson's aides flew around the country in the 1950s with envelopes of money for struggling candidates. Today it is far more formalized and necessary for leadership ascendancy (Caro, 2002).

As mentioned earlier, Bawn (1998) points out that legislative leaders have two goals: first, to be reelected as the leaders, and second, to keep or restore their party to power. Raising large sums of money for their party and its congressional campaign committee assists in forming a large coalition as well as achieving electoral success. The utility-maximizing theory supports the notion that fundraising and ascendancy are

positively linked. By raising more money for the party, other members of the party will benefit from that leader's ascendancy and thus be more likely to support that leader. Other theories concerning ascendancy though, specifically the middleman theory suggests that being a top fundraiser is not absolutely essential to leadership ascendancy.

Gender

There exists, for women in politics, a paradox. Though 51% of the US population is female according to the 2000 census (Smith and Spraggins, 2001), and women have been voting in equal or higher numbers than men since the 1980s, women have been underrepresented in Congress (Bennett and Bennett, 1999). Three explanations that seemingly explain the under-representation of women in politics are sex-role socialization, structural factors, and situational factors (Bennett, 44; Klein, 1984).

Sex-role socialization is the way men and women are taught what their "proper" role should be in society with respect to political participation. Women who are active and assert themselves in American political processes risk being perceived as violating the norms established by sex-role socialization, which could ultimately inhibit their leadership ascendancy. According to Bennett and Bennett (1999) and Klein (1984), through various agents such as parents, political leaders, the media and religious institutions, young girls are socialized to assume a passive role in the political process.

Structural factors are the socioeconomic factors that make it possible for women to participate in the political process. These factors can include education, income and employment (Bennett and Bennett, 1999; Klein, 1984). Research by Bennett and Bennett (1999) shows that education, income and employment status generally correlate

positively with political participation. Differences between men and women in socioeconomic factors could account for differences in political participation (Verba, Nie, Scholzman, 1994). If women lack the resources and the ability to run for Congress or partake in the numerous activities needed to accumulate political power, then they will be inhibited from ascending to position of meaningful political influence.

Situational factors are factors such as marital status and motherhood that make it difficult for women to participate in the political process (Bennett and Bennett, 1999). By consuming large amounts of time and money, situational factors could prevent women from devoting the necessary time and resources to politics to run for Congress and be a Congressional leader. The under-representation of women in Congress could therefore be explained by the different situational factors confronting women in Congress.

Recent research by Linda and Stephen Bennett (1999) ranks the importance of socialization, structural and situational factors. Using a multivariate regression analysis, they found that such socializing factors such as religious intensity and youth culture, as well as structural issues such as education and income, were the most important in shaping attitudes about the political participation of women. This research indicates that women who ascend in Congress will have to face obstacles with respect to religion and gender roles as well as structural issues such as education, employment and income in order to ascend.

Hawkesworth (2003), for example, conducted a hermeneutic study of interview data from women-minority members of Congress during the time welfare reform was being proposed in 1993 and 1994. As Hawkesworth (2003) points out role perceptions

and discrimination still taints the work of Congress. She uncovered in her research, systematic and chronic marginalization and stereotyping of women of color in Congress through the denial of credit for their achievements and the institutional “invisibility” of women and minorities in Congress. By making it hard for women to be noticed for their achievements, and for their priorities to be discussed and voted on, marginalization hurts women who wish to ascend in Congress by making it difficult for them to be perceived as tough, savvy, and accomplished political operators in Congress.

Hawkesworth’s (2003) important theoretical contribution to gender studies is complemented by the work of Whicker and Whitaker (199) on women in Congress. Whicker and Whitaker studied characteristics of female members of Congress such as region, committee assignment, and term length to analyze the changing status of women in Congress. Whicker and Whitaker (1999) studied the decline in stereotypical committee assignments for women and the impact of that change on women in Congress. While concluding that women are marginalized and underrepresented in Congress, they also concluded that a major factor in the success of a woman in Congress was being able to cross over from stereotypical women’s issues such as health care, education and poverty and into more masculine issues such as defense, economics and foreign policy. The work therefore, agrees with Hawkesworth but augments it by providing examples and methods of overcoming marginalization and stereotyping.

Scholars seemingly agree that women are initially outsiders facing sex-role stereotyping and marginalization in Congress. Guy, (1995) who focused on Hillary Clinton’s work on President Clinton’s health care plan is a case in point. The work of Guy (1995) describes how Hillary R. Clinton, then the First Lady of the US, was not

taken seriously when she initially approached Congress about health care. In her attempt to work with Congress she subjected to the same sex-role stereotyping that women face when arriving before Congress.

Other theories concerning women in Congress echo the more positive side of Whicker and Whitaker's (1999) theory. Arnold and King (2002), in their work on women in committee, discuss how important committee placement is to power and prestige in Congress. They differ from Hawkesworth (2003) in that they conclude that marginalization and discrimination decrease as women gain legislative credibility and power within Congress. Obtaining placement on the powerful, and traditionally male, committees such as Foreign Affairs, Appropriations or Armed Services, requires time but they suggest that over time women can shift from being outsider to insiders. They can obtain the committee position needed to prove themselves in areas that are traditionally male and show they have the toughness and savvy needed to command a majority in Congress. Norton (1995) agrees that it committee placement and seniority can help the transition from outsider to insider. Committees, according to Norton, are a vital and ideal place for women to prove their effectiveness and represent the interests of women.

Taken together, these theories stress that women who run for office, and particularly those who ascend, will share sociological and structural factors in common. As such, once they arrive in Congress, all the women will face similar challenges of stereotyping and marginalization. However, the theories presented also suggest that with seniority and strong committee placement comes recognition and acceptance. Demonstrating savvy, skill and toughness equal to the perceived levels of men, it is possible to ascend in Congress.

Research Methodology

Data

Data was collected from multiple sources, including autobiographies, biographies, official government records, media reports and academic works. Autobiographies provide a wealth of information; however, they must be consulted with some degree of skepticism. Autobiographies are written to allow the author to convey his or her perspective, which is valuable in the study of several variables, mainly gender. That same perspective, however, can also skew the story being told in favor of the writer. For example, Hillary Rodham Clinton has published an autobiography titled, *Living History*, which can be used to provide great insight into her election and ascendancy in the Senate. However, some skepticism must be used when reading the story since it is likely to be biased in favor of making her look good.

Data will also come from mainstream print media and newsmagazines, featuring personal interviews and headline stories derived from such sources as the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *The Washington Post*. While Mainstream print media is perhaps the most abundant and plentiful of all sources available as it provides background information, it often does not provide the nuanced and in depth coverage found in insider media and scholarly work. For more detailed coverage of the internal affairs of Congress, scholarly work and insider media are the best resources. In addition to mainstream print media sources, magazines, particularly ones that cater to women such as *O* and *Ms.*, can be useful since they often profile women in politics and government.

When investigating the role of gender, the interviews, profiles, biographies and analysis offered in these magazines will be important.

For more focused coverage of Congress, insider publications provide a great deal of useful information. By insider publications I refer to publications such as *The Hill*, *Roll Call*, and *Congressional Quarterly* that are largely read by members of Congress, their staff, and few others. Insider publications are generally more attuned to the nuances and internal activities of Congress. They include everything from in depth summaries of committee activity to reports on the interpersonal dynamics occurring between members of Congress. For this reason, insider publications are an excellent source for understanding how issues like committee effectiveness and gender affect leadership ascendancy. While insider publications offer a great deal of detail, the source with the greatest depth is still by far scholarly work from refereed journals. While scholarly work that focuses on biographical data about one of my four subjects is hard to find, academic literature contributes to theory building and quantitative analysis of variables that are central to my work.

There are several sources used to measure committee placement, particularly with respect to leadership ascendancy. Committee placement is a rather broad subject and there are several subcategories to measure for a complete picture of the role of committee placement and committee work on leadership ascendancy. First, it is important to measure the value of being on a certain committee with respect to leadership ascendancy. Second, it is important to measure the effectiveness of a member in committee.

In the Senate, the committees are ranked within the rules, therefore providing a reliable source of data on committee power and prestige. Data on committee power and

prestige in the house is mostly found in qualitative work such accounts of members Congress on the committee selection process and insider media. Of significant value is the work by David Price, a political scientist who was elected to Congress. In his work *The Congressional Experience* Price (2004) details at length the committee selection process, giving valuable information on the most sought after and powerful committees in the House of Representatives.

To measure the political savvy and effectiveness of a leader I will use the method employed by Tate (2003), in her work *Black Faces in the Mirror*. I will compare the number of bills the leaders I am studying have sponsored with the amount of bills passed by collecting information from the “Thomas” legislative search engine provided by the Congressional Research Service. The “Thomas” search engine is an online record of bills that have been submitted and considered by Congress. It includes records of the final disposition of bills and allows researchers to search bills by sponsor.

Ideology is the most easily quantifiable variable in this study. A variety of organizations provide ideological scores for member of Congress, and it is those scores that I will study to gain information about the ideology of members of Congress. Those scores include the Pool-Rosenthal rating, a neutral rating system developed by political scientists; the Committee on Political Education (COPE) rating, which is a rating system developed by the AFL-CIO; the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) rating, which is a left-leaning rating developed by civil rights activists; and the Conservative Coalition rating, which is a conservative leaning rating established by the Conservative Coalition. Using the ratings I will determine the mean and median ideological scores for their fellow Democrats at the time of their ascension and perform a comparative analysis.

The relative closeness of the leader's ideological scores to the mean and median ideological scores will provide evidence that will validate or eliminate the three theories of leadership and ideology being considered in this work.

To measure the impact of fundraising on leadership ascendancy I will compare the amount of money raised by those who ascended to the amounts raised by those who did not. For measuring the importance of fundraising to Congressional ascendancy I will use public records such as those kept by the Center for Responsive Politics and Federal Election Commission (FEC) reports on fundraising. The Center for Responsive Politics is a non-profit organization that tracks the fund-raising of politicians. The FEC, on the other hand, is a governmental entity charged with monitoring elections and tracking fund-raising on behalf of the government. All candidates must submit fund-raising reports to the FEC, making the FEC a valuable primary source for information on fund-raising. Additionally, there will also be information on this in mainstream and insider media.

Methodology

To develop and test hypotheses about Democratic leadership ascendancy in Congress, I have adopted qualitative research methods that complement the comparative case-study approach. These methods include historical analysis, textual analysis of interview data, biographies and autobiographies. Those sources will identify the causal conditions (or cross-case patterns) that provide important clues about the *scope* of necessary (or sufficient) conditions for the phenomenon under empirical investigation in this case, leadership ascendancy.

One main objective of this comparative case-study is to identify patterns across cases as I study each case independently. The cases have been purposely selected to explain how specific independent variables—gender, committee placement, campaign fundraising, ideology, bill passage success—influence leadership ascendancy in Congress. More specifically, the phenomenon of interest is Democratic leadership ascendancy in both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate via the comparative case-study method. This project starts with a relatively simple idea that the leadership ascendancy of four salient political actors in the U.S. Congress parallel each other sufficiently enough to permit comparing and contrasting them. I draw upon the concept of leadership, both formal and informal, to investigate the ascendancy of Senator Hillary R. Clinton, Senator Harry Reid, Representative Nancy Pelosi, and Representative Rosa DeLauro. I maintain that the above cases are in fact alike enough to permit comparative analysis as both Senator Harry Reid and Representative Nancy Pelosi are formal leaders, and Senator Hillary Clinton and Representative Rosa Delauro are informal leaders—all of whom are members of the Democratic Party. In my mind, the search for commonalities across these four cases should not prove too daunting.

The case study approach is most appropriate for the study of leadership ascendancy in Congress for several reasons. First, the ascendancy of my subjects is well documented and information about them is rich and plentiful. Second, the sample I am studying is fairly small, causing the familiar “small n problem.” The “small n problem” exists when the sample is too small to make generalizations. Therefore it is important to use a method like a comparative case study to provide meaningful results and insight into the matter being studied. Finally, there has been so much research and work done on

Congress and on leadership ascendancy that the norms and operating procedures of Congress as an institution are already known and readily available for study. This abundance of information enables qualitative comparative case-study research with a high level of accuracy possible and well suited to the task.

My research is mostly qualitative, but it is important to mention the quantitative methods used for some portions of the study. Measuring political savvy and effectiveness is, on its face, a difficult thing to measure but there are methods that can measure the political skill and savvy of a member of Congress by their ability to get bills and amendments they favor passed. Using “Thomas” to obtain the number of bills a member has sponsored in committee, I can compare that to the number of bills sponsored by that member that actually passed to obtain a rough measure of the member’s political skill compared to their fellow committee and party members. Specifically I will measure the ratio of bills that the leader being studied sponsored that actually passed for the four years prior to the leader’s ascendancy. Comparing the ratio of the future leaders to the ratio of their fellow Democratic members of the same committee an index will be developed to measure the future leaders effectiveness compared to their colleagues. If a member is achieving a higher percentage of bills they sponsor passed than their colleagues, then we can conclude that in general they possess more legislative skills than their colleagues.

Measuring committee placement, on the other hand, is more qualitative. In the Senate committee rankings are written into the Senate Democrats’ rules. The research will be simple in that it only involves ascertaining the rank of the committees to which the Senate leaders were assigned. For the House of Representatives, the research is more

complex since the committees are not ranked in the rules. In the House of Representatives committee seats are assigned by the party leadership and Steering Committee. The best method for evaluating the power and prestige of a committee is by researching insider media and locating other records that detail the selection process. The committees in which seats are the most sought will be considered the most powerful and prestigious committees.

As stated earlier, fundraising ability will be analyzed through the study of running records of Congressional fundraising maintained by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) and the Center for Responsive Politics. From those records I will be able to compare the selected leaders in the case studies to their colleagues in Congress in terms of fundraising. Additionally, research of insider publications will also yield information on the Political Action Committees (PACs) operated by the leaders that would not be readily obvious from FCC reports. The comparisons drawn from the fundraising seeks to determine if there is a relationship between being a top fund raiser and being a leader in Congress.

With respect to ideology there are several ideological scores, balanced across the ideological spectrum, which I will use to generate a median score for each of the leader I am studying as well as their colleagues. I will be testing the middleman, policy-deviant and utility-maximizing as they apply to the ascendancy of the leaders in my case study. My methodology will involve a comparison of the ideological scores of the leaders I have selected to the median and mean of the rest of their party. The data yielded should provide an idea of where the leader stands compared to the rest of their party and validate or invalidate one or more of the three theories of ideology and leadership.

Hypotheses

Committee Placement/Effectiveness

With respect to committee placement I hypothesize that those who have ascended into the leadership will have held a post on one of the more powerful and prestigious committees prior to their ascendancy. This is particularly true as the party leadership and committee leadership become more closely coordinated. In order to ascend a leader must establish a reputation and indebted other members of Congress to them, making membership on a powerful committee extremely important to leadership ascendancy.

Part of establishing a reputation on a committee is demonstrating one's political skill and ability to use the legislative process in committee. For that reason there will be a positive correlation between the legislative success index described in the methods section and leadership ascendancy. That is to say that those who ascend in the leadership are those that are better at getting bills passed than their Democratic colleagues on the same committee in the same year.

Ideology

The House of Representatives and Senate operate in very different ways with respect to certain procedures. The House of Representatives is a majoritarian body where independence and compromise are not as heavily emphasized as the Senate. Therefore the ideological model most closely followed in each body will differ.

In the House of Representatives the utility-maximizing model will dominate. Research indicates that leadership ascendancy in the House of Representatives is heavily

influenced by external political factors, such as satisfying the “base” and selecting leaders that will aid a party in obtaining or holding majority status. Therefore internal ideological factors will not be as critical in the House as they are in the Senate. This is not to say that internal ideological factors are irrelevant; ideological factors certainly play a role in leadership ascendancy in the House of Representatives. The role played by ideology is not a direct one though, and therefore, the policy-deviant model can be used to explain aspects of leadership ascendancy in the House of Representatives.

In the Senate the middleman theory will dominate, though there will be some influence from the policy-deviant model. The compromise and bi-partisan nature of the Senate as well as the emphasis placed on independence, requires Senate leaders to reach out to all members of their party and some members of the other party. This is particularly true when the threat of a filibuster exists; since 60 votes are needed to break a filibuster and neither party currently has 60 votes in the Senate. Therefore, almost all the ideological views will be accounted for in leader selection and the elected leader will be on or near the median ideological score. I mention the possibility of some influence of the policy deviant model because there have been several recent cases of senators such as Sen. Jim Jeffords and Sen. Zell Miller, who voted mostly with the opposite party on important issues and whose views were probably not often considered on internal party decisions and leader selections.

Fund Raising Ability

I hypothesize that there will be a positive correlation between fund-raising and leadership ascendancy. In practical terms this means that the members of Congress who

ascend into the leadership will be among the top fund-raisers in Congress. As the role of chief fundraiser becomes a larger aspect of the job description for a Congressional leader it naturally follows that fund-raising ability will be a factor when electing leaders.

Gender

As a starting point, I accept Hawkesworth's (2003) notion that Congress is in many ways, a gendered institution. Stereotyping and marginalization are certainly barriers to women in Congress. I hypothesize that there are socialization and structural factors that inhibit women's success in Congress. Hillary Clinton's experience with health care demonstrates the challenges that women face when originally confronting Congress. Though Clinton was not a member of Congress at the time she faced many of the same challenges women face when first joining Congress as a member. Therefore, women will arrive in Congress essentially as outsiders, making it especially difficult for them to "get their foot in the door" and ascend to the leadership.

Scholars such as Arnold and King (2002), and Whicker and Whitaker (1999) though, stress the importance of committee placement for women. Both stress the importance of committee placement on powerful and traditionally male committees to women as a method of gaining credibility and establishing their status as insiders. Traditionally male policy areas include defense, economics and foreign affairs while traditionally feminine policy areas include children's issues, welfare and poverty (Kahn, 1996). In line with their arguments, I believe it is possible for women to move beyond outsider status after proving their toughness and savvy. I hypothesize therefore that women will ascend after they have established legislative credibility, particularly in

traditionally male policy areas. To obtain legislative credibility it will be important to have membership on a powerful, traditionally male committee, and do prominent legislative work on traditionally male issues. Once they have become insiders the effect of gender is not necessarily positive or negative. The utility-maximizing model, for example, might dictate that a woman will be chosen to ascend to attract the constituency of women to the Democratic Party.

In summary, therefore, the effect of gender for the leadership ascendancy of women initially entering Congress will be to inhibit ascent into the leadership. However, good performance on committee, or some other exemplary action, could move the women from being outsider to insiders. Once they become insiders, though, the effect of gender will be inconsistent and vary based on the individual and the situation.

“It was really quite profound. I realized the opportunity that I had, and it was poignant because it made me think, Why did it take this long? It sounds strange, but as I sat down, I felt that I was not alone. For an instant, I felt as though Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton—everyone who'd fought for women's right to vote and for the empowerment of women in politics, in their professions, and in their lives—were there with me in the room.”

– Rep. Nancy Pelosi (2004)

Nancy Pelosi

Nancy Patricia Pelosi has been called many things in her career; among them “airhead,” tough, compassionate and a natural vote counter. While she may or may not be easily reduced to the previous traits, it is sure that she is a unique Congresswoman who blends dedication to ideals with a back-scratching political style learned from her father. Despite her loss in 1985 in the race for Chair of the Democratic National Committee, Pelosi’s fortune changed when she received a deathbed endorsement from San Francisco Congresswoman Sala Burton. Pelosi’s campaign in the special election that resulted from the death of Sala Burton was a display of what she had learned from her father. She built a campaign and a coalition from the ground up, reaching across ideological and party lines (Barabak, 2003). Nancy Pelosi then came to Congress with a reputation as being a politically savvy and strong woman, an excellent fundraiser, and a liberal – though she would later refer to herself as a “non-menacing progressive”

(Barabak, 2003). How those factors combined and influenced her rise to House Democratic Leader is the subject of the next several sections.

Committee/Legislative Performance

For Nancy Pelosi to ascend into the leadership of her party she would need to prove that was able to work both the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and the more centrist elements of her party. She would also need to prove her ability to master a variety of policy areas, particularly those traditionally dominated by men. In order to demonstrate her political skills and ability to master diverse policy areas Pelosi would need placement on prestigious committees and must be able to greatly influence legislation and policy that comes out of that committee.

As the ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Committee subcommittee on Foreign Operations Appropriations as well as the longest serving member of the Intelligence Committee in the history of Congress, Pelosi was able to demonstrate her political savvy and command of the issues. Despite being from the left wing of her party both her fellow Democrats and Republican colleagues have noted her ability to reach across the ideological spectrum in committee and as leader. As former Intelligence Committee Chairman Porter Goss said “Does she have the ability to go beyond representing the left wing of her party? The answer is clearly yes” (2003).

Data collected on the passage of bills from Democrats on the Appropriations Committee in the last four years that Pelosi was on the committee demonstrate that as compared to her colleagues, she is able to get more bills that she sponsors passed. Over the course of those four years 21% of the bills and amendments she sponsored passed,

ranking her 4th out of 31 Democrats that served on the Appropriations committee during those four years. The high ranking confirms the anecdotal evidence presented by media sources and fellow members of Congress about Pelosi's political skill.

Serving on prestigious committees normally dominated by men also played a large role in her ascendance. As the ranking Democrat on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee she was able to exercise influence on a variety of foreign policy issues. Additionally she was the longest serving member of House Intelligence Committee in the history of Congress. Originally insulted as a "liberal dilettante" and "airhead" when she first ran for Congress (Barabak, 2003), she was able to gain the credibility needed to be leader by working on important issues of foreign policy and national security. This work was also critical for overcoming gender stereotypes she encountered, but I will discuss that in further detail in the section on gender.

Within her committee there are three examples of how she approached issues and legislative work that I wish to discuss as illustrations of her political savvy and ability to work within the legislative process. First, the controversy over China, trade, and human rights violations; second, her work on international family planning and abortion funding; and third, her work on pushing for an independent 9/11 commission.

Pelosi, has been a consistent advocate of conditioning trade agreements with China on improvements in their human rights record, and since 1993 has opposed several trade bills involving China (Pomfret and Slevin, 2002; Cranford, 1993). This case is noteworthy because it demonstrates how Pelosi reached across ideological lines to create a united opposition to increased trade with China. In her coalition against a 2000 trade bill was Barney Frank, the liberal and openly gay Congressman from Massachusetts, and

Chris Smith the staunch abortion opponent from New Jersey (Schmitt, 2000). The passage or failure of the numerous bills concerning China that came through Congress during Pelosi's career is not as important as the coalition she was able to create with ideologically diverse members of Congress. The way she was able to create and sustain a coalition would be a foreshadowing for her race for Minority Whip and then Minority Leader. During those contests she would be accused of being too liberal but would be backed by colleagues nonetheless who often mentioned her ability to work with diverse colleagues in issues such as trade with China. Her work on the issue of China in committee and on the floor was essential to her ascendancy because it laid the groundwork for her reputation for working well with the various elements of her party.

As ranking Democrat on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Pelosi had the difficult task of defending abortion funding for international family planning organizations. While controversy over funding for international family planning organizations is an annual event in Congress, the issue became even more contentious when Rep. Chris Smith of NJ proposed an amendment to the 1998 Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill that prohibited funding any organization that performed abortions (Cassata, 1997). The Senate bill did not contain similar language and President Clinton threatened a veto if the bill came to him with the Smith amendment – stalemate appeared inevitable (Cassata, 1997). Again demonstrating legislative flexibility, Pelosi teamed up with Republican Benjamin Gillman to offer a compromise amendment. The amendment would have allowed organizations that performed abortions to receive funds as long as they did not actively promote abortion as a method of family planning (Doherty, 1997).

The bipartisan Pelosi-Gillman amendment was rejected 218-210, though it cannot be considered a total failure. Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-AL) said “We have to come up with compromise legislation. I don’t know which direction we’ll take. The Pelosi amendment came awfully close” (1997). Pelosi’s compromise amendment was a part of a pattern of working with diverse colleagues and assuring those that doubted her ability to work with a moderate Democratic caucus. This case is particularly relevant because abortion rights have always been a cause she could be counted on to champion. Her ability to compromise on an issue that was a mainstay of hers’ and her liberal base in San Francisco is an important indicator of her legislative style. It is emblematic of how she reached across to the various elements of her party to win her race for Democratic Whip and Democratic Leader.

While the last two examples of her work on the floor and in committee were examples of Pelosi’s ability to build diverse coalitions, it is worth discussing a third case demonstrating her work on traditionally male issues. In 2002, Pelosi working with colleagues on the House Intelligence Committee pushed for the creation of an independent 9/11 commission to investigate the attacks of 9/11 (Milbank and Priest, 2002). Pelosi, and other several other Representatives and Senators were upset by what they perceived to be President Bush’s opposition to the creation of the 9/11 commission. The ensuing struggle featured Pelosi often in the spotlight discussing issues of terrorism and national security. Pelosi worked with Senators Lieberman (D-CT) and McCain (R-AZ) to decry the opposition to the 9/11 commissions, which originated from what she called the “invisible hand” of the White House (Dewar, 2002).

In September 2002, the administration conceded and agreed to the formation of the 9/11 commission (Milbank and Priest, 2002). The concession though must be attributed to the work of the Democrats and Republicans who worked together to pressure the President to create the commission – Pelosi among them. Her ability to credibly apply pressure on matters of intelligence stems from her longtime service on the House Intelligence Committee (Milbank and Priest, 2002). Her service on the House Intelligence Committee thus gave her the gravitas and credibility not only to pressure the President on the creation of an independent 9/11 commission but also to shake off gender stereotypes and proves she has the credibility needed to lead the Democratic party in Congress.

Placement on a prestigious committee and demonstrated legislative skill within committee provide the credibility and demonstrated skill that is especially important for women's ascendancy in Congress. Before running for Congress Pelosi was a fundraiser and leader of the California State Democratic Party, but had no experience as an elected legislator. She needed to demonstrate her ability to work outside the liberal base that she came from as well as prove that she could expand beyond policy areas traditionally associated with women. Her experience with trade issue with China and international family planning were essential to establishing the fact that she could, and often did, expand out of her liberal base to work with other members. A constant concern of colleagues and point of criticism for leadership rivals was her inability to keep the party united and in the mainstream. Her work in committee and on the floor proved that she could, in fact keep the party united.

Her work with China and also on the 9/11 commission also established her competence in all policy areas, particularly male dominated areas. For a woman to ascend into a leadership position she must demonstrate her ability to expand beyond just women's issue, and Pelosi did that. The prestige of Pelosi's committee assignments and the legislative skill she demonstrated were essential for her future ascendancy to Democratic Leader.

Ideology

A constant theme in Nancy Pelosi's ascendancy is the concern that she is "too liberal." Those who have competed against her for leadership positions such as Martin Frost, Harold Ford, and Steny Hoyer have all attacked her by claiming she could not unite a diverse party and represent mainstream America. Despite the attacks, Pelosi has been able to ascend, and it is important to attempt to interpret her ascendancy through theories of ideology and leadership.

Averaging the ideological rankings from the Leadership Council on Civil Rights, AFL-CIO, American Conservative Union, and the Poole-Rosenthal system Pelosi is on average the 32nd most liberal Democratic member of Congress out of 204. The median voter theory would dictate that the leader chosen be close to the median ideological position. Her extreme distance from the median position invalidates the median voter theory as a plausible explanation for the ideological factors in her ascendancy. The policy deviant model modifies the median voter theory by suggesting the members of the constituency out of the mainstream are not included in the calculation of the median. However, the policy deviant model cannot apply here because not only will removing the

most conservative Democrats not move her much closer to the median, but she is among the most liberal Democrats that would likely be removed when applying the policy deviant model.

The only model remaining therefore is the utility maximizing model. The utility maximizing model states that there can be incentives to select a leader that overpower the tendency for a group to pick a leader with a median ideology. Simply being the only model left, though, does not make it correct. However, there is substantial evidence that the utility maximizing model is the most appropriate for which to interpret Pelosi's ascendancy. As the San Francisco Gate reported, supporters generally focused on two areas in which Pelosi offered a real advantage to the Democrats; attracting women to the party and raising money (Fram, 2001).

Rep. George Miller (D-CA), who ran Pelosi's campaign for Democratic Whip Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) both mentioned the importance of having a woman in the leadership of the party would have for attracting women to the party. Clearly Miller, Frank, and others who felt like them, believed there was an advantage to picking Pelosi in that the party will be more attractive to women (Fram, 2001). The other advantage is her fundraising ability. San Francisco and New York City are the top two fundraising bases for the Democratic Party and Pelosi makes full use of San Francisco's resources. Just for the 2000 election cycle she raised \$3 million, though Democrats are more hesitant to boast about that element of the advantage Pelosi could provide (Foerstel, A, 2001).

The twin advantages recognized by members of Congress and those who cover them reveal that there was utility to be gained by selecting Pelosi as Democratic Whip and then as Democratic Leader even though there were candidates for both positions who

were far closer to the median Democratic ideology. That points overwhelmingly to the applicability of the utility maximizing theory as the best explanation for the ideological factors in Nancy Pelosi's ascendancy. Needless to say then, the median voter theory and middleman theory are inadequate in explaining Pelosi's ascendancy.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a well known strength of Pelosi's and as the literature suggests, played an important role in her ascendancy to Democratic Whip and then Democratic Leader. Part of her ability to raise significant amounts of money comes from the fact that San Francisco, along with New York is among the richest source of money for Democrats and that her seat is very safe since she has not yet won a general election with less than 75% of the vote (Foerstel, A, 2001).

By most standards, the money Pelosi raised for her own campaigns is respectable but fairly modest. Compared to the sums raised by her colleagues for their own campaigns in 2000, 2002 and 2004 she averaged being the 101st best fundraiser in the House out of 204 members. As insider publications astutely point out though, her safe seat allows her to raise modest sums for her own campaigns and contribute vast sums of money to other candidates through Political Action Committees she creates. In 2000 Pelosi contributed \$1.3 million to fellow Democratic candidates and in 2002 traveled across the country to raise over \$30 million for fellow candidates and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (Allen, 2004). She does not always wait for other members of Congress to approach her, she has been known to offer assistance unsolicited – something which has undoubtedly helped her build her base of support in Congress. By

raising significant sums of money for other candidates Pelosi has been able to prove that by selecting her as a leader the party will gain a substantial advantage in fundraising. This advantage then seems to point to a clear link between fundraising abilities and leadership ascendancy.

Gender

Scholars agree that women, when they first approach Congress, are outsiders and subject to a certain level of stereotyping and discrimination (Hawkesworth, 2003; Whicker and Whitaker 1999; Guy, 1995). Whicker and Whitaker though have found empirical evidence of the ability of women to cross over from outsiders to insiders through committee work on traditionally masculine issues. That story, which is essentially my hypothesis, is an accurate representation of the career of Nancy Pelosi. Initially regarded as an airhead and traditional female liberal she was able to cross over into traditionally masculine issues of foreign policy and national security to establish credibility and become an insider.

The ability of women in the House Democrats to break into the leadership has always been difficult. In 1998 when Rosa DeLauro was defeated in the race for Chair of the Democratic Caucus, one fifth of all Democratic Representatives in Congress were women. Despite holding over one fifth of the seats in the Democratic Caucus, women were unrepresented in the Democratic leadership in Congress (Khachigan, 1998). Campaigning for the House, Pelosi was insulted as being soft and unintelligent – insults many perceive to have sexist connotations since it exploits a stereotype of a homely woman unable to compete with “the boys” on complex issues (Barabak, 2003). It is

almost impossible to consider a male opponent being insulted in the same way as Pelosi. Critics of her leadership style referred to her as “motherly,” “gushing” and implied that she was immature and somehow more fragile than the men in Congress. Pelosi acknowledged the difficulty she faced when she said “This is difficult turf to win on for anyone, but for a woman breaking ground here it was a tough battle” (2001).

To be fair, the discrimination she faced was not as debilitating as some stereotyping and discrimination that has occurred in Congress against women in the recent past. She was given opportunities to become an insider and prove her abilities equal to men. Those opportunities largely came through her fundraising prowess and as Whicker and Whitaker (1999) predicted, her work in committee.

Central to Pelosi’s becoming an insider was working and proving her proficiency in traditionally male issues such as international relations and national security. While Pelosi did champion traditional women’s concerns such as abortion rights, poverty and human rights she often did so in the context of and alongside her work on national security and international relations. For example, on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee she took on prominent issues in international relations, most notably US policy towards China. While her focus on China was largely focused on trade and defense, she also worked on international issues that would be considered more traditionally feminine such as human rights, 3rd world debt relief and international family planning. In her work on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Pelosi proved her abilities to take on issues of international relations and national security while at the same time pursuing traditional feminist concerns, such as international family planning and abortion rights.

Her expertise on national security issues was firmly established by her record long service on the House Intelligence Committee. Serving on the House Intelligence Committee allowed her to be at the forefront of the push to create the 9/11 commission and in a true sign of her insider status, delivered the foreign policy rebuttal to President Bush's 2005 State of the Union Address.

Her work on issues of international relations and national security helped bring her to insider status and make her election as leader possible. While gender was always an issue for her, once she had transitioned to insider status, gender took a more ambiguous role. Following her movement to insider status gender was discouraging some from supporting her and giving others an incentive to support her. Legislators such as George Miller (D-CA) and Barney Frank (D-MA) explicitly mention gender as a reason for support, believing that as a moral and electoral issue a woman should be chosen as a leader. While Miller and Frank represent Democrats whose support was related to gender, the effect of stereotypes and marginalization did not disappear and played an inhibitory role. In the case of Pelosi, the positive effects of gender outweighed the inhibitory effects and allowed her to ascend to Democratic Leader. Overall, her experience confirms the hypothesis that following conversion to insider status the role of gender is ambiguous and unclear in its level of acceleration or inhibition of ascendance.

“I worry about marginalizing women in the institution [Congress] ...It’s a very competitive place, and what you need to do is build coalitions, and since there are 29 women who don’t think alike, you build coalitions among women and you build coalitions among men. If you sit there and say, ‘I’m a woman, we’re in the minority here,’ then you’re never going to get anywhere in this body.”

– Rep. Rosa DeLauro, 1992

Rosa DeLauro

Throughout her entire life, Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) has shown an energy and determination to ascend that is unmistakable. In her position within the National Urban Fellows Program and Mayor of New Haven’s office DeLauro was able to demonstrate her political skill and energy, something that caught the eye of Representative and Senate Candidate Christopher J. Dodd. Dodd recruited DeLauro to be his campaign manager for his 1980 campaign, which he won. Following Dodd’s victory DeLauro came with him to Washington to be his Chief of Staff for seven years. Her time as Chief of Staff for Sen. Dodd would give her an inside perspective and lay the groundwork for the connections and credibility on which she would capitalize as a member of Congress.

Following her time in Washington with Senator Dodd, DeLauro worked as the Executive Director of Countdown ’87, which was a program to end US support for Nicaraguan contras. In addition to Countdown ’87 she ran EMILY’s (Early Money Is Like Yeast – it helps the dough rise) List, an organization that raised money for female, pro-choice candidates. Like her time in Washington, her work on Countdown ’87 and

EMILY's List laid the foundation for her work in Congress and fundraising. When DeLauro ran for Congress in 1990, the fundraising help she received from EMILY's list would prove invaluable.

In 1990, Representative Bruce Morrison left his seat in the House to run for Governor, and DeLauro ran for his seat. Raising significant amounts of money early, she was able to easily ward off opponents in the primary but faced a serious challenge in the general election. Even though she was in a Democratic district, her opponent portrayed her as a radical liberal, making the race close. However, DeLauro was able to draw on the local political roots she had in the New Haven and create a coalition of liberals, organized labor and traditional Democrats to win by four points. That would be the last serious challenge for election that she would face.

Committee/Legislative Performance

Committee assignment and performance has both helped and hurt DeLauro in her ascendancy to the leadership. She has been able to prove her legislative and political skill but has not crossed over into traditionally male areas of policy as much as Pelosi. However, her prestigious committee assignments and demonstrated effectiveness has certainly allowed her to transition into insider status and ascend into positions as both an official and unofficial leader Democrats in Congress.

Scholars, such as Arnold and King (2002), point out how important the assignment to powerful and prestigious committees is, especially for women. DeLauro was able to avail herself of the advantages of sitting on a powerful committee by obtaining a seat on the House Appropriations Committee. Compared to her Democratic

colleagues on the Appropriations Committee though, she does not pass many of the bills she sponsors. Of the 30 Democrats that served with her in the 108th and 107th Congress on the Appropriations Committee she is ranked 26th in terms of bills she sponsored that passed the House. That statistic is somewhat misleading though since DeLauro has proposed far more bills, and far more substantial bills than her colleagues. In terms of the number of bills proposed, DeLauro is ranked second of 30 Democrats in her committee. Furthermore, when compared to her colleagues, a higher percentage of bills proposed by DeLauro were of the substantial nature, as opposed to purely symbolic bills. Many Democratic members of her committee had higher pass rates because of easily passing symbolic proposals, such as those to name Post Offices. DeLauro, however, was proposing a continuous stream of substantial legislation concerning issues such as the child tax credit, which made it more difficult for her to obtain the high pass rate enjoyed by her Democratic colleagues on the House Appropriations Committee.

The above statistics attest to DeLauro's legislative activity. Often times she is the one out in front vigorously pressing for policies and legislation as an unofficial leader, as she did with legislation on gun control and abortion. Since that energy and leadership is a critical element of her legislative and committee performance, it is worth examining three examples of her most prominent legislative work: gun control, labor outsourcing, and abortion.

Since her arrival in Congress Rep. DeLauro has been active in urging the passage of more stringent gun control laws. As early as 1993, three years after her election, she was proposing legislation on gun control. The Hartford Courant identified her as one of the leading supporters of increased gun control in Congress (Gottlieb, 1993). Her

political skill and leadership on the issue, however, was most prominent in the passage of gun control legislation in 1999. Working with fellow Congressional women, Rep. Nita Lowey and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), DeLauro led the charge to adopt the most stringent gun control proposal in 1999 (Bruni, A, 1999). Of all the house Democrats supporting stricter gun control, they were out in front in terms of publicity and intramural lobbying. DeLauro led the fight to have stricter gun control amendments attached to an Appropriations bill, which was prohibited by the powerful Rules Committee (Bruni, B, 1999).

When asked for their motivations, the triad of gun controllers consistently mentioned children and the effects of gun violence on children. So much was the battle for gun control becoming linked to children that the New York Times and CQ Weekly both reported that gun control was increasingly an issue linked to the choices of female voters. For that reason many men were becoming reluctant to take up gun control as a prominent issue (Bruni, A, 1999; Kirchhoff, 1999). For Rosa DeLauro, the battle over gun control was an important one where she gained credibility and reputation as a legislator. Her work on gun control, increasingly regarded as a feminine issue, however, did little help DeLauro make the transition to insider status. To transition she would need to take on more traditionally male issues, something I will discuss in further detail in the section on the effects of gender in DeLauro's career.

While DeLauro's efforts on gun control were promoted by fellow Democrats as appealing to women voters, her work on outsourcing and policy towards expatriate corporations allowed her to expand her leadership into areas dominated by men. In 2003 and 2004 DeLauro pushed for a cap on visas that allowed foreign workers to be brought

into the US. She also proposed legislation to prohibit the federal government from doing business with companies that leave the US to take advantage of tax havens (Martin, 2003; Wolfe, 2004). Once again, she was out in front as a leader in the movement to restrict outsourcing.

Her presence as a leader on the floor and in the press room allowed DeLauro to appeal to more than just women. She was able to appeal to everyone concerned with outsourcing, from organized labor to non-Democrats who were concerned about the issue (Martin, 2003). DeLauro's leadership on economic issues were thus vital in allowing her to better transcend gender obstacles within the House and move closer to becoming an insider. Her ability to take a leadership role in the legislative process and lead in a movement that appealed to a broad range of constituents allowed her to further transition to insider status within the Congressional Democratic Caucus.

The third example of Rep. DeLauro's legislative leadership involves her work on abortion rights, specifically the controversy of abortion rights within the military. As one of his first acts as President, President Clinton reversed a ban on abortions on overseas military bases for military personnel, permitting them as long as the service member paid for them herself (Cassata, 1995). Rep. Dornan (R-CA) then went head to head with Rep. DeLauro when he proposed an amendment to the 1996 Department of Defense Authorization Bill, to override Clinton's executive order and DeLauro offered a substitute amendment that would codify President Clinton's executive order into law (Cassata, 1995).

Rep. Dornan's amendment won passage by a vote of 226-191 while DeLauro's amendment failed by a vote of 194-224 (Cassata, 1995). DeLauro's amendment failed

but this outcome was not surprising. In 1995, when the vote took place, the House of Representatives was majority pro-life, which made it difficult to pass any bill in support of abortion in the House (Palmer, 1995). However, one cannot help but notice that the vote on DeLauro's amendment was closer than the vote on Dornan's, albeit by only five votes. But what we can learn from closeness of the vote on the DeLauro amendment compared to the Dornan amendment is that DeLauro was able to compete and demonstrate leadership and political savvy in her ability to keep a coalition together. The evidence of her ability to hold coalitions together is further demonstrated by her previous work as Chief Deputy Whip within the Democratic Caucus. Like her work on gun control, however, DeLauro's work on abortion is perceived by many to be a women's issue that offered limited abilities to cross over and gain insider status among her male colleagues in Congress. Additionally, her ability to hold a coalition together in the face of adversity was certainly important in demonstrating she had the legislative and political skills to ascend into the leadership.

As Congressional scholars have pointed out, placement on a powerful committee and demonstrated political savvy are essential to ascending into Congressional leadership positions. Assignment to the prestigious Appropriations Committee gave her the opportunity to demonstrate her skill and with her energetic leadership in committee and on the floor in the areas of gun control, outsourcing, and abortion she successfully proved that she had the skill and savvy needed to be a Congressional leader.

Ideology

To assess the affect of ideology on the ascendance of Rosa DeLauro the three theories of ascendance will be applied to determine which one is the most accurate descriptor of DeLauro's ascendance. For Pelosi, the utility maximizing theory was the most accurate descriptor, and it is the same for Rep. DeLauro for similar reasons. Before I can positively assert that the utility maximizing theory is the most accurate it is necessary to demonstrate that the middleman theory and the policy deviant model are not accurate descriptors of the impact of ideology on her ascendance.

Averaging the rankings of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the AFL-CIO, the American Conservative Union (ACU) and the Poole-Rosenthal rankings, Rep. DeLauro is the 22.75th (out of 205) most liberal member of Congress among Democrats in the 107th and 108th Congress. This clearly eliminates the middleman theory as a plausible explanation. For the middleman theory to be accurate DeLauro would have to occupy the ideological median, which in her case would be approximately the 102nd most liberal member of Congress. Being approximately 80 positions of the median, we can be sure that the middleman theory is not applicable.

Testing the policy deviant model, we can also see that it is not accurate in this case. Like Pelosi, DeLauro's perfect score from the LCCR and 96 out of 100 score from the AFL-CIO, 5 out 100 score from the ACU, and liberal rating from the Poole-Rosenthal system suggest that if the policy deviant model was to be applied she would move farther from the median. When the people who are more liberal than DeLauro were removed from the data set, as part of applying the policy deviant model, DeLauro moved farther from the median and closer to being among the most liberal Democratic members of Congress. As she moves closer to the top, she moves farther from the median, thus

eliminating the policy deviant model as an adequate explanation for the effect of ideology on her ascent.

Given the implausibility of the middleman theory and the policy deviant model it is now important to show that the utility maximizing model accurately describes the ideological issues in the ascendance of Rep. DeLauro. Like Rep. Pelosi, electing Rep. DeLauro into the leadership was perceived by other members of Congress as a move that could attract more women and money to the party. The influence of gender and the utility maximizing model on DeLauro's ascendancy is clear. Following her 108-97 vote loss to Martin Frost in a race for Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, women were completely excluded from the leadership, prompting Rep. Diane DeGette (D-CO) to say "We're mad as hell, we're now almost 60 women [in the House] and its important to have a voice in the leadership" (2003). The pressure from women within the party led Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt to create new positions, including Assistant to the Democratic Leader and Vice-Chair of the House Democratic Caucus (Foerstel, 1998). He encouraged DeLauro to run for Assistant to the Democratic Leader and endorsed her candidacy, which allowed her an easy win. In this case, DeLauro's advancement to Assistant to the Democratic Leader was linked to her gender. Gephardt, for a variety of reasons, decided the party would be advantaged if it included women among its leadership. In this sense, DeLauro provided a utilitarian advantage for the party.

In 2002 DeLauro again ran for Caucus Chair stressing the utilitarian advantages of her ascendancy to the leadership. She used her experience running EMILY's list to raise over \$1 million for other House candidates and often mentioned how she had organized Democratic "rapid response teams" and had markedly improved Democratic

Party communications (Lightman, 2002). Running against Robert Menendez (D-NJ), who was attempting to become the first Hispanic in the Democratic leadership, her utilitarian advantage was reduced. DeLauro's other advantage, fundraising, was eliminated because Menendez had also raised significant sums of money (Hernandez, 2001). Furthermore, the election of Pelosi as leader reduced the feeling that a woman *must* be elected into the leadership. In the end, DeLauro lost by one vote. Following her loss to Menendez, DeLauro was appointed Co-Chair of the Democratic Steering Committee, which has great influence over Democratic Committee Assignments in the House (Townsend, 2002).

Throughout DeLauro's career, utilitarian advantages in energy, gender, and fundraising have played a crucial role in her ascendancy. Her advantage in being able to attract women to the party came from two sources: her being a woman and her being a leader in the traditionally feminine issues of gun control and abortion. Her advantages in fundraising came from her experience running EMILY's List and ability to raise large sums of money for the party. However, the fact that her utilitarian advantages were not as strong as others such as Pelosi and Menendez made it more difficult for her to overcome her being more liberal than most of the Democratic Caucus and ascend into the leadership of the Congressional Democrats.

Fundraising

Utilizing her experience running EMILY's List and as Sen. Dodd's Chief of Staff, DeLauro has always been a top fundraiser among Democrats. It follows, therefore, that her fundraising prowess is often mentioned as an advantage she possesses in most

leadership contests. Like Pelosi, DeLauro's district is majority Democratic and she has not faced a close campaign since her initial campaign for Congress. As such, the amount of money she raises and spends on her own campaigns is not extraordinary. In 2004, for example, she raised \$725, 470 for her own campaign, which was lower than the median of \$809,715 for House Democrats in the 108th Congress. Since her reelection is relatively assured, she is able to raise significant sums of money for fellow Democrats, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and EMILY's List. In the 1998 and 2000 election cycles DeLauro raised over \$1 million for fellow House candidates to support their campaigns (Foerstel, 2002). The link between fundraising and leadership ascendancy is clear here. Rep. Gephardt's spokeswoman Laura Nichols, stated the connection well when she said "It's one of the considerations people make when they vote for leaders, members ask, what have they done for the party?" (1996). By raising significant sums of money for the Congressional Democrats, DeLauro showed exactly what she could "do for the party."

Gender

Like most women in Congress, be they widows who occupied a seat vacated by a deceased spouse or seasoned career politicians like Pelosi and DeLauro who were elected in their own right, DeLauro faced initial challenges when entering Congress. However, she was able to transcend the barriers to women in Congress and ascend into the leadership by crossing over to insider status within the House. To cross over to insider status she demonstrated legislative and fundraising skills. Nonetheless, her ascendancy,

however, has been difficult because she has not focused on traditionally male issues as much as other women who have ascended, such as Pelosi.

Despite having local connections and having raised over a million dollars for her campaign, DeLauro won her first race by only four percentage points. The race is significant because, as the Washington Post reported, it had a gendered quality. In a heated exchange over abortion on a radio debate, DeLauro's opponent said to DeLauro "Why don't you calm down?" and "Put a sock in it for a minute" (Finkel, 1992). Her opponent later on remarked that gender might have played a role in how he reacted to DeLauro, and the attitude is symbolic of the condescending and dismissive attitude women often face in Congress. Reacting to the debate, DeLauro's husband, who also happened to be President Clinton's pollster, recommended that she focus the campaign on the single issue of abortion, since the polls showed it would be highly effective in gaining support. DeLauro refused, insisting that she did not want to be caught in the stereotypical trap of just being a pro-choice woman candidate (Finkel, 1992).

Throughout her Congressional career, DeLauro would be affected by the stereotype of the weak, emotional, liberal that her opponent portrayed her as. Over the course of her time in Congress, however, she has been able to overcome the force of most of those stereotypes. Through her energy and skill in legislating, even though her most prominent issues tend to be traditionally female, she has been able to debunk the stereotypes and prove she can be tough, savvy, and effective legislator. Unlike the online biography on Pelosi's website which discusses the Intelligence Committee and national security as being among her primary concerns, DeLauro's website focuses on education, children's issues, gun control and abortion, all of which constitute traditionally

feminine issues that have inhibited her ascendancy. For example, other Democratic members of Congress that voted for her opponent in the Caucus Chair race, Martin Frost, cited that he was perceived as being more moderate and able to represent of a broader range of members and issues (Foerstel, 1998). Even her advantage in fundraising was tilted more to women's issues since she gained a lot of her experience in fundraising while raising money for pro-choice women candidates for EMILY's List. DeLauro, though facing difficulty was still able to ascend as an unofficial leader due to her strengths. Before her first caucus race, she had established a reputation as a Chief Deputy Whip and fundraiser. Her colleagues knew she was a talented legislator, and the insider credibility she had gained allowed gender to turn around and work in her favor in the race for Assistant to the Democratic Leader. While, her work as Assistant to the Democratic Leader gave her more credibility as a leader, her main issues were still traditionally female and she once again lost the race for Caucus Chair in 2002. Despite that loss she continued to ascend to be Co-Chair of the Democratic Steering Committee (Townsend, 2002).

As my hypothesis predicted, gender initially inhibited the ascendancy of DeLauro. Until she could cross over from outsider to status to insider status she would be plagued by the stereotypes and other symptoms of gendered institutions that Hawkesworth (2003) points out in her work. By demonstrating her legislative skill as a leader, in committee and on the floor, she was able to make the transition to insider status. Her ascendancy has still been difficult because she has not been able to fully transition to insider status since most of her most prominent work is on women's issues. Her continued focus on

women's issues continues to exacerbate the negative effects of feminine stereotypes and inhibit her ability to ascend.

“We were living in an era in which some people still felt deeply ambivalent about women in positions of public leadership and power. In this era of changing gender roles, I was America’s Exhibit A.”

– Sen. Hillary Clinton, 2003

Hillary Clinton

In 1992 William J. Clinton was elected President, placing Hillary Clinton in the role of First Lady. As First Lady she chose not to stand by silently and instead took an active policy role. Most prominently, she chaired the National Task Force on Health Care Reform, and it was there that she faced Congress and the full force of gender issues in politics. Though I will discuss it in further detail later on, Clinton’s near calamitous experience with health care both demonstrated the gendered nature of Congress as well as paved the way for Ms. Clinton to be credible as a lawmaker and leader when she would run for the Senate on her own.

In 1999 Clinton decided to run for Senate, and that is where the in depth case study begins. Clinton became the first First Lady to win elective office and the first woman to win a statewide election in New York. Senator Clinton had always been a controversial figure, both in New York and across the country. As an active First Lady she acted contrary to perceptions of the proper role of a First Lady. Despite this controversial background an active first lady, Senator Clinton went on to become an unofficial leader of the Senate Democrats.

Committee/Legislative Performance

As a public figure and former first lady, Hillary Clinton came into the Senate with expectations that her primary focus would be education, health care and child welfare issues. She was a self-proclaimed moderate and had already done much on domestic issues such as health care and social spending. However, in order to be a leader more is required than a reputation and media prominence. To ascend, a Senator requires a powerful committee assignment and a record of effective legislating.

In the Senate all committees are ranked by their power and prestige. The most prestigious are the “Super-A” committees, followed by the A and B and then C committees. According to Democratic rules, Super A committees include the Finance, Appropriations, Armed Services, Foreign Relations and Commerce Committees (Senate Committees). Freshman Senators do not usually acquire seats on a Super-A committee immediately. For Hillary Clinton, it took two years before she obtained a seat on the Armed Services Committee. Clinton, understanding the power of committee assignments, surprised many when she sought a seat on the Senate Appropriations Committee early on. Both insider media and mainstream media reported that her rise as an unofficial leader in the Senate began to take shape approximately two and half years into her term. This suggests that her powerful committee assignment may have had a part in her rise as an unofficial leader of the Senate Democrats.

Given her powerful committee assignment on the Senate Armed Services Committee, it is important to examine her success in committee and as a legislator in the 107th Congress when she served on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. The average sponsored bill pass rate for a Democrat on the committee was

16%, Clinton's was 12%. In the 108th Congress Clinton's rate as compared to her Democratic Colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee was once again lower than the average, 13% as compared to an average of 20%. These results can be misleading though since she is a new member on the committee and her lack of seniority is likely to adversely affect the amount of influence she can wield on legislative bill passage in committee. Despite the previous lackluster figures, veteran Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) has on occasion called Clinton a "workhorse" as opposed a "showhorse" (Harris, 2002). Additionally, the mainstream and insider media have both reported that she is a major player and unofficial leader of the Senate Democrats. To examine how she is leading the Democrats in the Senate, it is useful to examine two specific initiatives that she led in the Senate: funding homeland security and extending unemployment benefits.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 Senator Clinton has been a prominent voice on Homeland Security among Democrats. She repeatedly pushed for increased funding, proposing \$7 Billion in grants for first responders in early 2003. Following her proposal, the Senate compromised and settled on a similar proposal that provided for \$3.5 Billion in grants (Kady II, 2003). Besides New York, Clinton has continually pushed for increased homeland security spending and protection for other American cities. In January 2003, Clinton said "We have relied on a myth of homeland security, a myth written in rhetoric, inadequate resources and a new bureaucracy instead of relying on good old-fashioned American ingenuity, might and muscle" (Hicks, 2003). At the conference where she made that proclamation, she announced a four point plan for security issues that included establishing a task force of public officials and business

leaders to create security standards for various industries and the creating of a “counter-terror technology fund” (Hicks, 2003).

Her work on homeland security moved her legislative career forward by reinforcing her credibility as a moderate with expertise on issues of security and national defense. Up until that point she had been known for her work and expertise on domestic issues, namely health care and children’s issues. Her work on issues perceived to be traditionally less female such as terrorism and national security, helped establish her credibility as a legislator that could work on a diverse range of issues. As with the other female leaders, her ability to address traditionally male issues was vital to her ascendance as an unofficial leader. By working on national security as a front runner, she was able to assert and establish her leadership among the Senate Democrats.

The second issue, the extension of unemployment benefits during the recession of the early parts of President Bush’s first term also helped to establish her credibility. Working with Republican Senator Don Nickles, Senator Clinton proposed an extension of unemployment benefits to the 750,000 people poised to lose them in January of 2003 (Swindell, 2002). Drawing on the economic record of the Clinton administration, she led the attack on the Bush administration on the issue of unemployment benefits, saying “In the recession of the early 90s, we increased benefits five times. Today, our unemployment rate has soared to 6%, and Congress and the President have extended benefits only once – and once is not enough” (2002)

By taking a leadership role on the issue of extending unemployment benefits Clinton asserted her role as an unofficial leader among the Senate Democrats. On this key issue for Democrats, who were attempting to attack Bush on his economic record,

many Senators coalesced around Clinton's proposal. Not only was Clinton taking a leadership role among the Democrats, she worked with Republican Senator Nickles to gain bipartisan support for the bill, further demonstrating her skill as a legislator and credibility as a leader, especially since she was able to obtain passage of a similar proposal of hers passed again in January 2004 (Downey, 2004).

While Clinton gained credibility for her ability to reach across ideological lines, the issue of extending unemployment benefits was not as clearly beneficial in helping transcend gender obstacles. Unlike terrorism and national security, the issue of unemployment benefits is not exactly a male or female issue. As an economic issue it has male attributes, but as a social and poverty related issue it has female attributes. Thus, while Clinton may have gained credibility for her ability to hold together a diverse coalition through her work on extending unemployment benefits, the issue was not one that allowed her to gain credibility on male issues.

On March 5th 2003 the *Washington Post* published an article entitled "Clinton Develops Into a Force in the Senate" (VandeHei, A, 2003). That article was published shortly after her work on the first extension of jobless benefits and reflects the transition she made when she was able to assert her leadership on that bill. The assertion of leadership was among the first signs of her ascendancy and relied not only on her bipartisan work and political leadership but also on her work on homeland security. Her work on homeland security established her reputation as a hard working moderate and gave her the credibility to overcome gender barriers that remained and ascend to a position of unofficial leadership among the Senate Democrats.

Ideology

As discussed earlier, differences between the House and Senate would affect the impact of ideology on the selection of leaders. As an institution the Senate rules and culture place a larger emphasis on compromise than the rules and culture of the House of Representatives. On that basis, I hypothesized that the Senate would be more likely to choose a Senator based on the middleman or policy deviant theory since both of those theories are based on the emergence of a leader through ideological compromise. That said, Senator Clinton claims herself to be a moderate “New Democrat,” and a member of the Democratic Leadership Council. As a self-proclaimed “New Democrat” she came with the expectation of moderation and she did not disappoint, the ideological data shows her to be generally in the middle of her party.

Viewing her ideology in the context of three theories, the first one with which to compare her scores is the middleman or median voter theory. Of the 48 Senators she served with in the 107th and 108th Senates she, on average, ranked as the 17th most liberal. In this calculation I did not count the LCCR scores since over half the Senate Democrats of the 107th and 108th Democrats scored a perfect 100 and the measure was therefore not highly discriminating. The median voter theory is therefore a closer predictor of the ideological forces behind the ascendance of Clinton than of any of the House leaders studied thus far, but being ranked 17th when the median is between 24th and 25th makes the ranking far from satisfactory.

The policy deviant model posits that when determining the relevant median voter in a leadership election, those Senators that lie far out of the mainstream would not be counted in determining the median ideology. To apply the policy deviant model to

Clinton's ascendancy it is first necessary to determine which Senators are policy deviants and should be eliminated. Since the LCCR scores are not useful for the Senate they will not be a factor in these determinations. Nor shall the Poole-Rosenthal rankings be used since the scores utilized by this paper are the ranking of Senators and thus do not measure the magnitude of differences between Senators. That leaves the AFL-CIO and ACU scores as the determinant of policy deviancy.

The ACU ratings increase smoothly from the most liberal Senator, Sen. Boxer (D-CA) and increases by no more than 3 points from one Senator to the next until it reaches the 44th most liberal Senator, Sen. Pryor (D-AR) when it increases by 8, from 22 to 30. This leads me to conclude that the policy deviants are those ranked 44th and lower in their ratings. Eliminating those, Clinton moves from being ranked 21st among 48 to 21st among 42 according to the ACU and places her almost directly into the median. Utilizing the AFL-CIO scores, the median score is a 90 and the highest possible rating is 100. So, if we thus count as every Senator with a rating from 80 to 100 (equidistant points from 90) as being in the mainstream, we eliminate the Senators ranked 39th or lower. Clinton then moves from being ranked 12th among 48 to 12th among 39, or four positions closer to the median. On average then, both scores come closer to the median when the deviants are removed. The data shows that the policy deviant model is more accurate when compared to the median voter model and better in describing the ideological forces behind Clinton's ascendancy.

Because of the nature of the utility maximizing theory it is hard to conclusively discount it as an explanation for the ascendancy of Clinton even though there is evidence that the policy deviant model is accurate. This is especially true in this case since the

utility maximizing theory can work in combination with two previous theories. There appear to be utilitarian advantages to selecting Clinton as a leader. However, since her ascendancy was gradual and involved no decisive event such as an election there is no definitive commentary from her fellow Senators on the impact of apparent utilitarian advantages she could have presented to the party. For example, her ability to fundraise is, of course, a well documented advantage to picking her. Gender, though is not as clear an advantage since her fame and prestige existed before she arrived in the Senate and thus any utility her gender could have provided to the party was already there. The effect of the prestige of being a former First Lady could also provide a utilitarian advantage, but ascertaining the magnitude of the advantage is difficult.

In summary, the policy deviant model seems to be the clearest descriptor of the impact of ideology on the ascendance of Clinton. Despite that, it is impossible to discount or assess the impact of the utility maximization theory. The removal of policy deviants led to the selection of a leader who was very close to the median, suggesting that the policy deviant model is correct. Yet, the impact of gender and fundraising had unclear levels of influence on the ascendancy of Clinton, which prohibits the drawing of any definitive conclusions on the relative importance of the utility maximizing theory. An additional difficulty faced in the study of the utility maximizing theory is the lack of a defining moment in her ascendancy such as an election. When an election occurs there is ample reporting in the insider and conventional media on the important factors in the ascendancy of the leader. Without this decisive event, there are fewer explicit discussions of reasons other Senators would support Clinton as an unofficial leader in the US Senate.

Fundraising

Senator Clinton is a top fundraiser for the party, which is consistent with my earlier findings. Unlike Pelosi and DeLauro, though, Clinton's election was not assured, forcing her to raise significant sums of money for herself before she could contribute to other Democratic candidates. Her campaign spent over \$40 Million in the race against first Rudy Giuliani and then Rep. Rick Lazio (R-NY). In addition to that, her leadership PAC "HillPac" has raised millions for fellow Democrats (Tomasky, 2001; VandeHei, A, 2003).

Given her prestige and connections from her days in the White House, Clinton's fundraising prowess came as a surprise to no one. In the first two years of her Senate term alone, she raised approximately \$1.4 million for other Senate candidates. At \$500,000 per plate fundraisers and on her national book tour she is raising vast sums of money for Democrats. By raising these large sums of money Clinton is able to accrue the prestige and support that goes along with being "good for the party" (VandeHei, A, 2003). By raising large sums of money for the party organization as well as specific Democratic candidates, Clinton increases her support among fellow Democratic Senators.

Gender

Clinton (2003), in her autobiography (Clinton, 2003), notes the existence of what she calls a "double bind." She was torn between the constraints of the traditional roles of First Lady, wife and mother and the roles of policy maker and political figure. Unlike other women in this study, Clinton had already collided with Congress previously and

brought the issue of gender to the forefront. When she chaired the task force on health care, Mary Ellen Guy (1995) wrote about the challenges Clinton faced when confronting Congress over the issue of health care. The gendered nature of Congress, the health care profession and the role expectations of the first lady made Clinton's foray into health care policy a difficult and turbulent one. For example, Guy notes how male members of Congress and the male doctors and CEOs who run the health care industry marginalized and discounted the views and efforts of Clinton.

Hillary Clinton is unique in that she encountered the difficulties women typically face when confronting a gendered institution such as Congress before she was elected to Congress. Even during Clinton's Senate campaign, feminist Gloria Steinem (2000) wrote about how Clinton was receiving (in her opinion unfair) criticism from feminists and non-feminists alike for a perceived attempt to use the prestige of her husband to gain election and political gain for herself. According to Steinem (2000), Clinton's credentials qualifications to serve as a Senator were often overlooked in the face of criticism. Certainly, she pointed out, fewer people criticized George W. Bush for what could have been perceived as an attempt to use the prestige and connections of his father to run for President.

By remaining in the spotlight and ever so vocal on issues of public policy, Clinton was able to transition from outsider status to insider status within the halls of Congress. She had already confronted the "double bind" of gender stereotypes and moved beyond them. Clinton tackled masculine issues such as health care and homeland security before she was able to fully transition to being an insider and ascend into the leadership. Her fundraising ability and political skills bolstered her credibility and facilitated her

ascendancy by allowing Clinton to transition to insider status in Congress. I think Clinton summed up the gender challenges she faced best in her autobiography when she wrote “It was becoming clear to me that people who wanted me to fit into a certain box, traditionalist or feminist would never be entirely satisfied with as me as me” (2003).

“I can’t picture Harry [Reid] on the Sunday morning shows every Sunday. I don’t think that’s his strength. His real strength is inside baseball, knowing the Senate, knowing the procedures.”

– Sen. Joseph Biden, 2004

Harry Reid

Harry Reid’s political career began in 1971 Reid when he ran for Lt. Governor on a ticket with his political mentor and former high school gym teacher Jim O’Callaghan. Reid won the race for Lt. Governor and in 1974 Reid ran for the US Senate against Republican Paul Laxalt and lost. Following the loss, O’Callaghan named Reid as chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission at a time when organized crime heavily influenced the gaming industry. In 1999 Reid described the experience, saying “they puts bombs on my car, there were threatening phone calls at night, people tried to bribe me and went to jail.” Throughout his chairmanship Reid won a reputation for having, as Parade Magazine called it “integrity and guts.”

In 1982 Reid left the Nevada Gaming Commission to pursue the equally vicious, though less violent, Washington politics. That year he ran for and won a seat in the House of Representatives, where he served for four years. In 1986, Reid ran for and won the Senate Seat he had lost in 1974. As a Senator he became known for his toughness, congeniality, and mastery of floor procedure. He became known as a moderate and a fierce fighter after his work on the Yucca nuclear storage facility. The reputation he

developed through his work led to his election as Senate Minority Whip and ultimately his election as Senate Democratic Leader in 2004.

Committee/Legislative Performance

For Sen. Reid, or any Senator, to ascend he or she must demonstrate their legislative skills. Unlike women in the Senate, Sen. Reid was not under the same pressure to excel in traditionally male areas such as foreign policy and defense. Nonetheless, he had to prove himself as an individual Senator among the larger assembly. To prove himself he secured membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee and used that position to achieve legislative success. Through his legislative work, most prominently, his work on nuclear waste disposal on Yucca Mountain, he has been able to demonstrate his legislative skills.

Senator Reid, prior to ascending to Senate Democratic Leader, served on the Senate Appropriations Committee, which has the highest ranking that could be given to a Senate committee, it is a Super-A committee. Serving on a Super-A committee provides a Senator with a high level of influence and prestige corresponding with the power and prestige of a Super-A committee. While serving on the Senate Appropriations Committee, Reid chaired the Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Energy and Public Works.

In addition to a powerful and prestigious committee assignment it is also necessary to demonstrate legislative skill and political acumen. Of the Democrats that served with him on the Senate Appropriations Committee in the 107th and 108th Congresses (2000 – 2004), Reid ranked 4th out of 15 in the proportion of bills he

sponsored that passed the Senate. This high ranking provides evidence that in addition to a powerful and prestigious committee assignment Reid also possessed the necessary level of political and legislative skill to ascend. While the ranking does provide evidence of political and legislative skill it is necessary to examine prominent cases of his legislative work to provide further insight into Reid's level of legislative skill. To gain further insight into Reid's work as a legislator I will examine his work on the Yucca Mountain nuclear disposal plan, and his work on abortion since his position on abortion rights has attracted a great deal of attention with respect to his ascendancy.

Though Reid lost the battle to stop nuclear waste from being shipped to a facility in Nevada, Reid's colleagues in the Senate were impressed by the effort. Sen. Torricelli (D-NJ), who voted with Sen. Reid even though New Jersey depends heavily on nuclear power, said "there's enormous feeling for Harry Reid within the party" (Murray, 2002). Furthermore, President Clinton's former Chief of Staff and lobbyist for Nevada, John Podesta, said if it weren't for Senator Reid "I don't think we'd have 10 votes" (Murray, 2002). While Reid may have lost the battle, demonstrated he had the skills necessary to ascend into the leadership.

The issue of nuclear waste disposal came to the forefront on July 9th, 2002 when the Senate voted to enact a plan that had been in preparation for 20 years. The plan was to ship nuclear waste from sites all over the country to a central repository in Yucca Mountain, which is within 100 miles of Las Vegas and the California border. After Bush endorsed the plan the Governor of Nevada exercised his option of vetoing the plan after which the House and Senate could override the veto of the Governor (McCutcheon, E, 2002). In the summer of 2002, Reid went to work to prevent the Senate from overriding

the decision of Nevada's Governor. Since many other Senators and their constituents wanted the waste out of sites in their state the battle to prevent the shipping of waste to the Yucca facility would not be easy.

Reid used a combination of personal persuasion and parliamentary maneuvering to turn a long shot into a fairly close vote. Using personal persuasion he was able to increase support for his cause by discussing the potential for terrorist attacks on the large amounts of nuclear materials being shipped across the country. Reid's speech to a Democratic lunch before the vote was noted by the media as being critical to persuading colleagues on the fence, such as Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) to join him (Murray, 2002). Politically, his use of other issues and the structuring of the final vote allowed him to come away with a respectable defeat. Reid's position as Senate Minority Whip gave him considerable influence over other Senators' bills which he was able to wield in the fight against the establishment of the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste site. Reid used his support for Ethanol and Amtrak to attract support from Midwesterners and Easterners. When the final vote came, Reid structured the vote to give him a respectable defeat, since he knew he did not have the votes to win. He structured the final vote so that the only recorded vote was a procedural vote that would allow the Senate to vote on overturning Nevada's decision. This allowed Senators to support Reid and vote with him on the procedural vote and then vote against him in an unrecorded voice vote on the actual proposal. By letting Senators have it both ways Reid was able to give himself a respectable defeat without alienating many of his colleagues (Murray, 2002).

In addition to his efforts on the issue of nuclear waste disposal, Reid had received a great deal of attention for his position and work on the issue of abortion rights. The

issue of abortion has always been prominent in debates over the ascendancy of Sen. Reid who opposes abortion rights while the majority of Democrats in Congress support abortion. As a Senator, Reid supported a non-binding resolution opposing *Roe v. Wade* as well as the “Partial Birth Abortion” ban and has made no secret of his opposition to legalized abortion (Wallsten and Curtius, 2004). The ascendance of Reid raised the issue of his position on choice to the forefront. Some Democratic leaders, such as Rep. Pelosi supported Sen. Reid despite their disagreement over choice, citing instead his considerable legislative skill. Other supporters of the Democratic party committed to preserving abortion rights, such as Gloria Feldt, the President of Planned Parenthood, opposed the ascendance of a leader against abortion rights (Wallsten and Curtius, 2004; Feldmann, 2005).

Despite his opposition to a position held by most Democrats in Congress, Reid has not alienated his colleagues. For example, Sen. Boxer (D-CA) is amongst his closest allies despite her pro-choice position. Reid has been able to ascend because he can hold together ideologically diverse coalitions within a party in which he is one of the more conservative members. For example, the vote on Yucca demonstrated Reid’s ability to retain a position in opposition to most other Democrats but still hold together an ideologically diverse coalition to accomplish legislative goals. While there is no single bill that is definitive in terms of his work on abortion, it is important to note that his work on abortion has not alienated his colleagues and inhibited his ability to achieve legislative success.

To ascend into the leadership a Senator requires placement on a powerful committee and a legacy of legislative success. By securing a seat on the Senate

Appropriations Committee, a Super-A committee, Reid was able to obtain the committee placement needed to ascend. His demonstrated skill from his work on the Yucca facility was also necessary for him to ascend. His work on Yucca displayed his ability to use personal persuasion and Senate floor procedure to achieve legislative success. Importantly, his legislative success came despite his disagreement with most Democrats over the issue of abortion rights.

Ideology

Harry Reid is ideologically to the right of the median Senate Democrat. The extent and influence of ideological factors, such as his relative conservatism as compared to fellow Senate Democrats, will once again be measured using the median voter, policy deviant, and utility maximizing theories. The median voter theory suggests that the elected leader should be the Senator with an ideology that is the median among the Senate Democrats voting for the leader. This is not the case for Senator Reid. Among the Democratic Senators that served in the 107th and 108th Congress the Poole-Rosenthal ranking places Reid as the 35th most liberal Senator among the 48 Democratic Senators, the AFL-CIO ranked Reid 24th and the ACU ranked Reid as 40th out of 48. Once again the LCCR scores were not taken into account since the majority of Democratic Senators scored a perfect 100 according to the LCCR. On average, Reid was the 33rd most liberal Senator out of 48. Harry Reid on average does not come close to being on the ideological median, and thus the median voter theory cannot be an accurate descriptor of Reid's ascendance to Senate Democratic Leader.

For Sen. Clinton, the policy deviant model was fairly accurate in describing the ideological conditions in her ascendancy. The same, however, cannot be said for Sen. Reid. Sen. Reid is more conservative than the median Senator, so by applying the policy deviant model more conservative Democrats than liberal Democrats are eliminated, pushing Reid farther to the right of the median. For example, if we apply the policy deviant model to the ACU scores the same way we did for Sen. Clinton, Reid moves from being 40th of 48 to the 40th of 42. If we apply the model to the AFL-CIO scores in the same way we applied it to Sen. Clinton, Sen. Reid then moves from being 24th of 48 to 24th of 39.

In this case, both the middleman and policy deviant models are inadequate in describing the ascendancy of Reid. Instead there are utilitarian advantages to electing Reid as leader. The existence and dominance of utilitarian factors in the ascendance of Reid makes the utility maximizing theory a plausible descriptor of Reid's election as Senate Minority Leader. Unlike the leaders studied thus far, Reid was not likely to attract women to the party in large numbers. The reality is that Reid's utilitarian advantage comes in his attracting moderates from Republican states, commanding the floor of the Senate, and raising large sums of money.

The election of 2004 left many Democratic Senators and strategists concerned that Democrats were perceived as being weaker on "values" and unable to connect to middle-America. Sen. Reid was often supported as a cultural moderate who could combat the perception that Democrats were weaker than Republicans on "values" issues such as abortion and gay marriage (Stolberg, 2005). As fellow Senator, and ardent Reid supporter, Barbara Boxer (D-CA) said "I believe very strongly that the moderates of our

caucus ought to have some sway. I have noticed in the past that all the gravitas has slipped to the left. All one has to do is look at the map to know that you can't win a presidential election that way" (2004). Her views are typical of the many Senators who overwhelmingly supported Reid in his drive to become Senate Democratic Leader. For sure there were some liberal members of the party that seemed to view Reid's moderation as unattractive. Most other Senate Democrats felt that elevating a moderate from a Republican state would provide the utilitarian gain of an electoral advantage for the Democrats nationally.

As a floor leader, Reid is known to spend more time on the floor than almost any other Senator and to have strong command of the archaic and complex Senate rules (Nagourney and Hulse, 2004). For example, during the battle over the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste disposal proposal Reid demonstrated both his command of parliamentary procedure and his personal persuasion skills to surprise many with the closeness of his defeat. By impressing his colleagues with his legislative skills, Reid asserted to them that electing him as leader would provide utilitarian gain in the form of greater legislative success.

In addition to his other utilitarian advantages Reid has also established himself as a top fundraiser among the Senate Democrats. While I will go into further detail into Reid's fundraising later on, it is important to note that his PAC fund, the Searchlight Leadership Fund, has raised a great deal of money for fellow Senate candidates. By raising large sums of money for the party Reid created a utilitarian advantage to electing him leader in the form of increased fundraising.

In summary, the utility maximizing theory of leadership selection once again appears to be the most accurate descriptor of the rise of a contemporary congressional Democrat. Sen. Reid is not on the ideological median, so the median voter theory cannot describe his ascendancy. He is further off the median when the policy deviant model is applied, so the policy deviant model cannot describe his ascendance. The advantages he could provide in electoral attractiveness of the party to moderates, floor leadership and fundraising, however, provided the utilitarian advantage he needed to be elected leader.

Fundraising

Of the utilitarian advantages related to electing Sen. Reid as leader, fundraising was among the most prominent. Though, while Reid did raise significant sums of money prior to his ascendance, he did not raise as much as other leaders such as Sen. Clinton and his predecessor Sen. Tom Daschle (D-SD). Reid's PAC, the Searchlight Leadership Fund, raised \$574,000 in the 2004 cycle and in both the 2002 and 2004 cycle distributed approximately \$300,000 to other Democratic candidates (Kane, 2005). While that is a large sum of money, it does not compete with Clinton's PAC, HillPAC, or Sen. Daschle's (Reid's predecessor) DASHPAC. In 2004 Daschle's DashPAC contributed approximately \$560,000 candidates despite his being a highly endangered incumbent. Reid's pace of fundraising, according to Roll Call is increasing and should match or exceed expectations of his fundraising abilities as Democratic Leader (Kane, 2005). By raising large sums of money and proving that he could continue to raise even more money Reid satisfied a necessary condition for ascendance, being a top fundraiser.

Gender

Thus far I have contended that female leaders, in order to transition to insider status, must prove their competence in traditionally masculine issue areas such as defense and foreign policy. The other side of that argument is that there is less pressure on men to prove themselves in those areas. In this case, Sen. Reid is not as well known for foreign policy and defense issues as he is on domestic issues such as social security reform and the environment. While female leaders have had to do more to distinguish themselves in traditionally male areas, Reid has not established his reputation on the basis of issues that are traditionally masculine, and as a male has not suffered as a result. When Sen. Reid and Rep. Pelosi gave the response to President Bush's State of The Union Address in February 2005, it was Pelosi who spoke on national security, while Reid spoke about social security and domestic budget issues instead.

The appropriations process is still to some extent male dominated and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are still considered traditionally male committees. Social security, social spending, and the environment, though, do not have the explicitly masculine characteristics possessed by issues such as national security and defense. Reid and DeLauro, in that sense, both did not focus as intensely on traditionally male issues the same way Pelosi and Clinton did. Yet, Reid ascended much more like Pelosi than DeLauro. That suggests that issues inhibiting DeLauro's ascendancy, and accelerating Pelosi's ascendancy - their ability to use traditionally masculine issues to transition to insiders did not affect Reid. He did not have to focus on male issues to transition and was thus not affected the same way DeLauro was by his choice of traditionally non-masculine issues.

Conclusion

This thesis aims to answer basic questions about leadership and women in Congress. Most prominent among those questions is what factors enable or inhibit members of Congress, specifically women, from ascending in Congress? In answering that question, the paper seeks to examine the ascendancy of four Democratic leaders through the lens of theories relating leadership ascendancy and gender in Congress. By examining committee placement and performance, ideology, fundraising, and gender it is possible to identify commonalities among Democratic leaders. Based on those commonalities, we can assess the influence of certain variables on the success of leadership ascendancy and test the validity of the theories.

The subjects of this case study have all ascended in different ways and with different degrees of success. Of the leaders, Sen. Reid and Rep. Pelosi rose with the least setbacks as compared to Sen. Clinton, who faced moderate difficulty then and Rep. DeLauro, who faced the most difficulty in her ascendancy. Sen. Reid and Rep. Pelosi both steadily ascended to their current positions by possessing several positions of leadership before becoming Democratic Leaders of their respective chambers. For example, both served as Democratic Whip in their respective chamber before becoming leader. Furthermore, both won election as leader with a strong majority. They have earned credibility and insider status to such a degree that their ability to lead was not in question. They won election and leadership posts without as many setbacks as the other leaders in this comparative case study.

While Reid and Pelosi ascended smoothly after climbing several successive rungs up the Congressional ladder, Clinton and DeLauro faced more difficulties. Sen. Clinton faced skepticism and the perception that some of her colleagues might not take her desire to legislate seriously. Particularly after her collision with Congress over health care, Clinton was a controversial figure in Congress and she had to overcome perceptions that she was a “showhorse” in the Senate and prove that she was a “workhorse.” Over time, she took on masculine issues, legislated effectively and earned the credibility and respect needed to ascend. DeLauro, on the other hand did not focus on masculine issues as much and thus had a more difficult time transitioning to insider status. Unlike Pelosi and Reid, DeLauro faced several defeats in her attempts to ascend up the Congressional ladder, losing two races for Democratic Caucus Chair.

The nature of the ascendance of the leaders in question can be related to the variables being studied. In some cases, variables like committee and legislative performance as well as fundraising ability were strong predictors for leadership ascendancy. All four legislators had seats on powerful and prestigious committees and reputations for legislative skills. Their legislative skills and proven ability to hold together ideologically diverse coalitions was related to their ability to establish their credibility and effective leaders. Additionally, all the leaders proved themselves as skilled and prolific fundraisers. Fundraising prowess helps build a base of support and is necessary to prove that one’s leadership will be good for the party.

In terms of ideology, there was little commonality. While, DeLauro and Pelosi tended to be to the left of the median, Clinton was a centrist and Reid was to the right of the median. Only Clinton came close to possibly validating a theory of ideology other

than the utility maximizing theory. Utilitarian advantages in the form of attracting various constituencies, such as women, to the party, and fundraising were critical the leader's ascendance.

Gender also affected the ascendance of all four leaders differently. The difference in how gender affected the ascendance of the leaders varied according to their approach to legislative work and priorities. Women leaders who focused on masculine issues were able to gain credibility and more easily make the transition to insider status. DeLauro, for example, was not able to focus on male issues as much as Pelosi and Clinton and thus had a more difficult ascendance than Pelosi and Clinton. On the other hand, Reid focused little on issues that are traditionally male, yet has experienced a very successful ascendance. To get a full appreciation, though, for the nature of the relationship between the selected variable and leadership ascendancy it is necessary to examine them in closer detail.

Nancy Pelosi

The first case study presented was that of Nancy Pelosi. As I mentioned earlier, Pelosi's ascendance has been a smooth and successful one which can be related to the variables and hypotheses presented. In her legislative work she possessed all the necessary conditions for ascendance. She served on the powerful House Appropriations Committee and House Select Intelligence Committee. Furthermore she chaired the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee. The influence and prestige she accumulated on committee is matched by the data concerning her sponsored bill pass rate. Among the 30 Democrats that served with Pelosi on the House Appropriations

Committee in the 107th and 108th Pelosi's pass rate for sponsored bill was 2nd. Pelosi's ability to work with and get bills passed with an ideologically diverse coalition and party was also essential. Leading an ideologically diverse coalition on the issue of trade with China is one example of how she was able to prove she could lead a diverse caucus on important issues. As a top fundraiser in the House of Representatives, she satisfied the necessary condition of being a talented fundraiser, raising millions for the party.

Pelosi, though, faced challenges as a woman entering Congress. In order to overcome those challenges she had to transition from outside to insider status, and to do that she would need to prove herself on traditionally male issues. Pelosi's ascent was among the most successful of the cases studied because of the success with which she addressed traditionally masculine issues such as defense and international relations. Pelosi received a great deal of attention for her work on terrorism when she pushed for the 9/11 commission and international relations when she confronted the issue of trade with China. Following her transition to insider status gender turned to more of an asset than a liability. Pelosi became a symbol for those who thought women should have a greater voice in the Democratic Party and in Congress. That energy helped propel Pelosi forward into key leadership posts.

Ideologically, neither the median voter nor the policy deviant model could explain Pelosi's election as House Minority Leader. Not only was Pelosi not in the ideological median position, but the application of the policy deviant model would have pushed her even farther away from the median position. The remaining, and most accurate, explanation is the utility maximizing model. Pelosi's ability to attract women to the party

and raise large sums of money provided utilitarian advantages that propelled Pelosi into the leadership despite how she is more liberal than most of her colleagues.

Rosa DeLauro

The factor most differentiating DeLauro from the other case studies is gender. By not sustaining the focus on traditionally male issues that Pelosi and Clinton did, DeLauro faced difficulties in overcoming her initial outsider status. Her focus on traditionally female issues such as children's issues, gun control, and abortion rights made it difficult for her to overcome the stereotyping and marginalization that women often confront. As a result she had difficulties in ascending. Though gender did assist her ascendance at some points, such as when she was invited to run for Assistant to the Democratic Leader, it often inhibited her ascendance. DeLauro's experience indicates two things: focus on masculine issues is important and that gender can work both as an accelerator and inhibitor for women that have at least partially transitioned to insider status.

Nonetheless, she possessed all the other necessary conditions to ascend. With respect to fundraising, she built on her work in EMILY's List, DeLauro raised the large sums of money needed to ascend in Congress. With respect to legislative and committee work she fulfilled the necessary condition of serving on a powerful committee, the House Appropriations Committee. While on that committee she achieved legislative success and credibility in policy areas such as abortion, and gun control. Her legislative success in those areas is noteworthy but lacked the emphasis on traditionally masculine issues to allow DeLauro to transition to insider status.

Being more liberal than the median representative, the median vote theory could not explain her ascendance as an official and unofficial leader. Furthermore, the extent of her liberalness makes it so that the application of the policy deviant model causes her to move even farther off the median. The policy deviant model could therefore not be an accurate descriptor of her ascendance. The remaining, and most plausible explanation, is then the utility maximizing model. By leading on an issue popular among women voters, gun control, and raising large sums of money DeLauro possessed critical utilitarian advantages to her ascendance.

Hillary Clinton

When Hillary Clinton arrived in the Senate there was little doubt about her ability to raise money. With the prestige and connections of a First Lady, she would raise the money needed to ascend without much difficulty. The difficulty for Clinton would be overcoming the challenges of gender and demonstrating the willingness and ability to work with the Democratic caucus. While Clinton never obtained a high bill passage rate, and only recently obtained a seat on a Super-A committee she has demonstrated legislative skill. Her legislative skills were exhibited when she worked with ideologically diverse colleagues on the issues of terrorism, homeland security, and the extension of unemployment benefits. By leading an ideologically diverse coalition of both Democrats and Republicans, she demonstrated her skill and established the legislative credibility to ascend to a position of unofficial leadership.

Clinton was able to overcome the obstacles of gender through her membership on a traditionally masculine committee, the Senate Armed Services Committee and her work

on traditionally male issues. Both prior to, and during her service on the Senate Armed Services Committee she was vocal on the issue of terrorism and homeland security. By working on traditionally male committees and the above issues Clinton transitioned to insider status and ascended to unofficial leadership among the Senate Democrats.

The most unique aspect of Clinton's case study is her ideology. While none of the other case studies demonstrated any evidence of the validity of the median voter theory or policy deviant model, Clinton's case study seems to closely follow the predictions of the policy deviant mode. While this does not necessitate that the policy deviant model applies, since it is impossible to determine if the cause of Clinton's rise is the policy deviant model or utility maximizing model, it is unique in that it is at least possible to apply the policy deviant model.

Harry Reid

As the only male in the case study Harry Reid provides a point of comparison for gender issues in ascendance. Like the women in the case study, Reid sat on a powerful committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, and was noted for his legislative skill, particularly with respect to the Senate rules. While Reid was not as effective a fundraiser as Pelosi or Clinton, he was a talented fundraiser and thus joined the women in the case study as a successful fund raiser for the party. Reid diverged from the women in the relationship between his legislative work and his ascendance. While the women had to establish credibility in male dominated policy areas to ascend, Reid was able to ascend with far less a focus on traditionally male issues. For example, DeLauro's ascendance was made more difficult due to her concentration on such traditionally feminine issues as

children's welfare and poverty alleviation. Pelosi's ascendance was helped by her expertise on such traditionally male issues as terrorism and national security. Yet Reid's ascendance was not inhibited by his minimal focus on traditionally male issues.

The other divergence Reid makes is from Sen. Clinton is on the issue of gender. While Clinton's ideology indicated the possibility of the policy deviant model being applicable, Reid's model provides no such evidence. He is among the more conservative Senate Democrats and the application of the median voter theory and the policy deviant model is not consistent with Reid's ascendance. Instead, there appears to have been other utilitarian advantages to electing Reid as the Democratic Leader. According to his colleagues, his ability to attract moderates to the party and achieve legislative success appear to have been prime factors in his ascension.

Final Thoughts

This study does not claim to provide conclusive empirical truths or be the definitive study of leadership and gender in Congress. Instead, it aims to take the first set of prominent women leaders in Congress and examine their ascendancy as a way of getting a preliminary perspective on the applicability of theories of gender and leadership. It is impossible to state that this study has covered all the sufficient variables to ascend, however, utilizing the comparative case study format we can, therefore, draw important lessons about the necessary conditions to ascend in Congress. This study could then begin to develop a broader base of scholarship in the field based on observation and empiricism.

That said, the results of this study do not yield all the answers, but rather can form the basis of future questions. When there is a critical mass of female leaders within Congress, a more quantitative empirical investigation of gender and leadership could and should be attempted. For now, it is necessary to acknowledge several limitations imposed by the format of the study and nature of the subjects being studied. First and foremost, the n is insufficient to make conclusive generalizations. There simply are not enough women in positions of leadership in Congress. Second, I was unable to directly interview the subjects of the case study or members of Congress, making the accumulation of data secondhand and derived from a variety of sources. Third, the study only studied Democrats. Two factors affected the decision to study Democratic leaders: the greater number of women leaders in the Democratic Party and the differences that exist between the parties. Since differences between the parties (for example culture, ideology, and majority/minority status) would make a comparison between Democratic and Republican leaders difficult I selected the party with the most women to choose from and studied only that party.

There still remain numerous questions to be answered concerning this field of research. Future research in this field might consider: Is the ratio of bills sponsored to bills passed a useful measure of legislative skill? Is there an empirical correlation between that and leadership ascendancy within Congress? What is the effect of ideology on leadership ascendancy in the Senate? Is it primarily a function of which ideological groups the party wishes to attract to the party or is the middleman or policy deviant model applicable? Is there a fundraising threshold that members must cross to ascend or

does the amount of money you raise actively affect the odds of ascending into the leadership? Are the findings generalizable to women leaders from both parties?

In this paper, I have touched on the broad theme of leadership and leadership ascendancy in Congress. The character of leaders that ascend and the method by which they ascend, in Congress or any organization, speaks volumes about the character of the institution and the ways in which the institution will behave. There is little reason to believe that values and attitudes towards race and gender exhibited in the selection of leaders would not manifest themselves in the laws and policies enunciated by Congress. By beginning to uncover the changing nature of leadership and the selection of leadership within Congress I hope, then, to inspire new questions about the changing nature of Congress itself. To capture the changing nature of Congress I suggest that it is often helpful to view Congress from the “top-down.” By “top-down,” I do not mean only considering the leadership and their actions in studying Congress, but rather studying the leadership and how they ascended as a way of gaining insight into the culture, ethos and values of Congress. From this “top-down” perspective, we can see Congress for what it is and the values, priorities, strengths, and weaknesses which with it tends to the business of the people.

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