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THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE SOUTH
A CASE STUDY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By
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The Ohio State University
1983

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DEDICATION

TO MY MOTHER
As the epitome of the spirit, pride and
determination that is the heritage of the
Black woman in America, I dedicate this
dissertation on the political behavior of
those women to my mother, Estella H. Curry.
For the support (both financial and emotional),
For being there for me,
For listening and encouraging me in everything
I've tried to do, and most of all,
For simply being "Momma" - I say,
THANK YOU and LOVE ALWAYS!
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The pursuit of this graduate degree has been an interesting, lengthy and sometimes rocky road. Often I have neglected to thank the people who have encouraged and supported me along the way. First, I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. William Nelson who has been my adviser and guide from the very first day of graduate work. He has stood by and encouraged me even when I, at times, lost my way and went off 'to find myself.' His confidence in me will be long remembered.

I wish to thank Dr. Frank Hale and the Minority Fellowship Program for affording me the opportunity to matriculate at Ohio State University. Special thanks also go to Dick Stoddard who took a chance on me the 'second time around' and who often provided the proverbial shoulder to cry on.

I would also like to acknowledge the members of my reading committee. Thanks to Dr. Kristi Andersen for always having an open door, for her help on editing and for providing an objective, listening ear in which I could test suggestions and ideas. To Dr. Aage Clausen who spent countless hours pouring over computer printouts and for patiently explaining the intricacies of statistical analysis to me, I say thank you. Many thanks to Dr. Herbert Weisberg for his critical review and comments. I realize that his timely response to my "frantic" pleas for advice were not always easily made from England.
Special thanks to my friend Lucy Lyons, without whose help the data would never have been coded and the computer program would never have been written. And to Mark Teare, without whose help the final drafts of the dissertation would have been solely delayed. Thank you both for the hours of unselfish aid and thanks for the 'humor'. Thanks also go out to Susan Hunter and the Political Science Polimetrics Lab.

My friends Virginia Marshall, Hendrick Spruyt and Ronald Anderson provided support, encouragement and hours of grateful and fun-filled distractions from my studies. Dave Brown will also be fondly remembered as a friend who took the time to always check on my progress and who asked poignant questions about by analysis which more times than not provided the impetus I needed to get going again. My father and sister are also thanked for their words of encouragement and emotional support through the years.

My appreciation to the Furman University Political Science Department and to Dr. Ernest Walters for providing me with my first job as an Assistant Professor which gave an extra incentive to finish the dissertation.

And finally, to my husband, William, who has waited patiently in Louisville, Ky. for me to complete my work here at Ohio State. I am grateful for his support and his unwavering faith in my abilities as a scholar.
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CONTENTS

DEDICATION ............................................................. ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ..................................................... iii
VITA ................................................................... v
LIST OF TABLES ......................................................... ix
LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................ x

Chapter                                                                 page

I. THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF BLACK WOMEN ......................... 1
   The Issue of Political Participation  ......................... 3
   Black Women in the Political System: an Historical
   Perspective .................................................. 10
   Review of Research on the Political Behavior of Black women 21

II. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS ........................................ 33

   Research Design ........................................... 35
   Selection of sample ....................................... 37
   Outline of dissertation ................................. 42

III. RALEIGH, N.C.: THE COMMUNITY SETTING ......................... 43

   The Black Presence in North Carolina .................... 45
   Political participation prior to 1960 ................. 47
   Political participation since 1960 .................... 48

IV. HOW BLACK WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF DECISIONMAKING . 52

   Participation in voluntary associations .............. 59
   Self-help associations .................................. 61
   Community Service Associations ..................... 66
   Social and Family Associations ....................... 70
   Religious Affiliation .................................. 75
   Electoral Participation ................................ 80
   Non-voters ................................................. 86
   Voters ........................................................ 89
Campaigns, pollwork and political rallies .......................... 94
Participation in Protest Activities ..................................... 97
Alienation and Apathy as Participation ................................. 106
Alienated or Apathetic .................................................... 110
Projected cost of participation ......................................... 114
Conclusion ........................................................................ 116

V. INFLUENCES ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: CONTEXTUAL, STRUCTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ...................... 122
Influence of Contextual Factors ............................................ 125
Influence of Structural Factors ............................................. 134
Influence of Psychological Factors ....................................... 150
Cynicism and trust ............................................................ 151
Feelings of personal and political efficacy ............................. 153
Group consciousness .......................................................... 165
Conclusion ........................................................................ 173

VI. BLACK WOMEN IN THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW ................................................................. 176
Toward an identification of relationships ............................... 179
Implications for Mobilizing the Black Community ................ 187
Suggestions for Future Research .......................................... 190

Appendix

A. LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE ........................................ 194
B. LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS BY INCOME LEVEL ............................ 198
C. LIST OF CAMPAIGN, RALLY AND PROTEST ACTIVITIES BY INCOME . 202
D. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE .................................................... 206

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................. 214

- viii -
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Black Student Involvement in the Protest Movement</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sex, Age and Race Comparison of Eligible Voters</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sex, Age and Region Comparison of Eligible Voters</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Type of Organizational Affiliation by Income Group</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Frequency of Voting in Presidential Elections by Income Level</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Breakdown of Participation in Presidential Elections</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Influence of Affiliation Factor on Participation in Presidential Elections</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Influence of Education on Participation in Presidential Elections</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Influence of Education on Campaign Participation</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Influence of Education on Rally Attendance</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Life Situation of Low and Middle Income Women</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Scalability of Traditional Efficacy Items</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Factors Associated with the Political Participation of Low Income Women</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter I

THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF BLACK WOMEN

The number of registered Black voters is estimated at nearly 6 million. Black women comprise over half of that voting bloc. Through participation in the electoral process Black American voters, who represent 37% of the Black population, have changed the shape and complexion of American politics. Usually voting as a cohesive group, Black voters have been credited with determining presidential elections, e.g. Jimmy Carter's 1976 election that drew 95% of the Black vote, (1) and with influencing the kinds of policy that the government pursues—Civil Rights legislation, the Voting Rights Act, welfare, social legislation, and so forth. (2) Since passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act the number of Black elected officials has increased from less than 500 to nearly 5000 in 1980 with 60% holding elected positions in the South. (3) So the Black electorate is not just a "paper tiger" but is a force to be reckoned with and listened to.

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(1) Joint Center for Political Studies data, 1978.
(2) See William Keech, 1968.
Through most of American history, politics has been 'man's business' with limited involvement by women. In addition, politics has also been 'white folks' business. As a consequence, Black women have been doubly excluded from the political arena. But in the last two decades Black women have made great strides in breaking down those barriers. In 1969 only about a hundred Black women across the nation had gained elective office. Today, Black females account for 12 percent of the 4,912 Black elected officials in the country. And about 45 percent of all Black women in elected offices are in the South.(4) It would seem that Black females have begun to overcome the dual barriers of sexual and racial discrimination, or as Githens and Prestage explain, to overcome "... a dual pattern of marginality, one resulting from a kind of suspension between two sets of norms related to sex and another related to race.(5)

Black women are not just Black or merely women. They are Black women, distinct from Black men and from white women, distinct because they alone face a dual marginality caught between two sets of norms. All dimensions of the roles they play in America are affected by this marginality. One cannot understand the dynamics of the Black woman's familial, social or political roles without examining how race and sex affect the performance of those roles. Thus the study of the political behavior and attitudes of Black women as a distinct bloc of voters takes on special interest.

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(4) Ibid., p. 366.
THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

To participate, as defined by Webster, is "to have a part or share in something, to take part". But to define participation in this very broad term is not enough for those of us interested in the "political". There must be further specification as to content. Are we to include in our definition behavior in any shared aim or goal, in anything common or are we to limit our discussion to a certain area of study? Returning to Webster, "political" is defined as "of or relating to government or the conduct of government". Shall we narrowly define the concept to include shared or common behavior that relates to government or the conduct of government as do other students of political participation?(6) Many political scientists would agree that behavior by individuals aimed at influencing governmental decisionmakers or the authoritative allocators of resources comes within the jurisdiction boundaries thought to circumscribe proper political science. There is perhaps less support for the argument that authoritative allocators need not be government specific. If we adopt the stance that government means those people or processes who are called upon or asked to allocate limited resources—whether material or nonmaterial—then we are not necessarily confined to local, state or federal agencies and processes. Organizations, groups and agencies that distribute goods and values are also viewed as authoritative allocators and behavior aimed at influencing these decisions is an acceptable focus of study. For example, authoritative

-------------

(6) See Milbrath, 1975; Verba and Nie, 1972; and Campbell et al., 1960.
allocators would include such organizations as the PTA, school administrative boards, the National Educators Association--groups that allocate resources to a distinct group, i.e. children, parents with school age children, educators, etc. Thus our definition is broader than that given by Verba and Nie and even by Milbrath. Verba and Nie are interested in acts that aim at influencing the government, either by affecting the choice of government decisionmakers or by affecting the choices made by those decisionmakers. (7) Milbrath, too, limits his analysis to behavior of citizens that affect government processes. But political participation, as defined in our analysis, stresses the importance of participation inside as well as outside the political arena. We are interested in the behavior of citizens that is aimed at influencing private institutions and government, either by influencing the selection of decisionmakers or the policies they pursue. The private sector is included because major decisions that affect citizens' lives are also made by private institutions. Participation in both the nongovernmental and governmental sphere, then, is essential if citizens are to have effective control over their own lives. (8) Additionally, opportunities to participate in the private sphere provide training and skills needed to participate politically. (9) The skills and learning experience provided by participating in the private arena is especially

(7) Verba and Nie, 1972, p.2.

(8) See Carole Pateman, 1970, on the significance of participation vis-a-vis private institutions.

useful for Black women who were traditionally kept out of governmental decisionmaking.

Broadening the concept "political participation" allows for not only an examination of behavior vis-a-vis the government but also an examination of participation in groups such as the YWCA, self-help community groups, and voluntary associations that distribute values and make decisions that affect the community, their clients or their members. But as Robert Salisbury once asked, how direct must the effort be in order to count? (10) Suppose a teacher joins the NEA to become eligible for a special teacher's disability insurance being offered to NEA members. Subsequently, the association leaders lobby Congress in support of a Department of Education. Was the teacher's participation political? The point is that much participation, whether political, social or instrumental, has political potential. According to Salisbury, "whether it (political potential) will be realized is problematic and depends upon circumstances that may arise after the initial participatory act rather than following from the intentions held at the time". (11) The point is well taken: auxiliary participation need not be excluded simply because its influence on decisionmaking cannot be directly assessed.

---------------------

(10) The following discussion is based on the article "Research on Political Participation", Robert Salisbury, American Journal of Political Science, XIX, 2, May, 1975.

(11) Ibid., p. 323.
There are several contrasting perspectives regarding the purpose of participation in a society. While this is not the place to sort them all out fully, we may distinguish three theoretical themes prevalent in the literature. First, political participation is regarded as a legitimizing act. Citizens participate in public and civic affairs through voting, rallies, marches, etc. thereby giving their tacit support to the regime, if not always to the regime's specific policies. This legitimizing function of participation is at the heart of democratic theory in the United States. Participation as a measure of public consent is related to system stability (12) therefore, we want—if not all—a broad segment of the population participating in that system so as not to threaten the continuance of the status quo. So participation is an indication of how widespread the consent of the regime is and for how many the system or the government is seen as legitimate. This is especially relevant for minority groups in subjugated positions in American society. For scholars who view participation as a legitimizing function, the level of a group's participation is a measure of the group's 'contentedness' with the present system. (This, of course, does not take into account unnatural barriers to Black participation). This view assures participation within the system, within prescribed and accepted boundaries. Most students of participatory democracy exclude participation outside the system, i.e. protest behavior because this

(12) Pateman, op. cit.
type of behavior does not support the theory of participation as a legitimizing function.

Second, participation is viewed as a teaching tool or an educational device through which "civic virtues" are learned. As John Stuart Mill wrote, "Among the foremost benefits of free government is that education of the intelligence and of the sentiments which is carried down to the very lowest ranks of the people when they are called to take part in acts which directly affect the great interests of the country."(13) Participation, then, is a learning process; those outside the system are not exposed to the norms by which consensus judgements on common goals are reached. If there is conflict in the system it will be between those citizens who know the norms of society and understand the common good by reason of their participation, and those who do not take part so therefore are unfamiliar with societal norms.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, participation has a crucial relationship to all other social and political goals. It is through the process of participation that societal goals are set and means to achieve them are chosen. Participation serves an instrumental purpose: maximizing the allocation of limited resources to enlarge the rewards and minimize the deprivations for oneself or one’s group. This approach assumes, according to Salisbury, that benefits are unequally distributed, that there is conflict over those inequities, and that political power is a principal route for gaining the leverage to achieve

(13) J.S. Mill, Considerations on Representative Government as quoted in Verba and Nie, 1972, p.5.
or block redistribution.\(^{(14)}\) This interpretation of participation has been behind the push for universal suffrage to include Blacks, women and young adults, to encourage maximum feasible participation in urban programs and in general to mobilize voting blocs in the electoral arena. It is through participation that members of the populace, especially those who are disadvantaged in society, can demand a share of the resources, make their choices known to decisionmakers, or call for a redistribution of the wealth. Unlike participation as a legitimizing act, participation as an instrument for obtaining and establishing goals does not have to be 'within' the system.

Political participation, as an instrument of the call for a redistribution of the wealth, is critical behavior for deprived groups. At issue here is the relationship between political participation and social and economic achievement. Through political participation deprived groups are able to communicate their needs to policymakers and to receive governmental and societal resources in the form of welfare and social legislation, civil liberty protection, and specific monetary allocations that may in time lead to a decrease in their relative deprivation. In this way deprived groups use political participation to open up social and economic channels of advancement. Effective participation, as a tool of status improvement, assumes (perhaps naively) that the political system is open to deprived groups and that policymakers are responsive to the demands of the group. This, of

\(^{(14)}\) Salisbury, op.cit., p. 327.
course, is not always the case. One of the great ironies of political participation is that groups who most need the outputs of society are least likely to participate. Individuals with low socioeconomic status (SES) and inadequate education are not as interested or as involved in politics hence less likely to participate. The very deprivations that political participation are suppose to overcome impede that participation. This Catch-22 situation of nonparticipation by deprived segments of the populace, argues Michael Parenti, is an understandly negative response to the conviction "... that politics cannot deliver anything significant."(15) Given this lack of motivation to participate it is a small wonder deprived groups have met with any success in influencing decisionmakers.

Black women are now participating in the electoral process at a rate just about comparable to Black men and whites and have been moderately successful (as evidenced in the previous discussion of Black elected officials) in influencing governmental decisionmakers and governmental policies. Political participation is at an all time high for Black women, having increased from less than 30% in 1920 when women were granted the right to vote to 66% in 1980. In the following section we examine the Black female's participation during this time period.

-------------


Published research on Black women is scarce and often contradictory, but the history of the political participation of Black women is a success story that invites scholarly investigation. Black women have always been active in addressing the social and political ills of their day. Several examples follow. In 1922, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People formed a women's group called the Anti-Lynching Crusaders to mobilize support for the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill. Led by Mary Talbert, president of the NAACP, the Crusaders made inroads on the consciousness of the nation. Partly in an effort to undercut the Crusader's campaign for federal legislation, southern governors took steps to prevent lynchings, and southern legislatures passed antilynching laws, which while virtually never enforced, did indicate a disavowal of mob violence upon which the women could draw.(16)

Early in the decade from 1916 to about 1923, Black women also participated in the Marcus Garvey Black nationalism movement. In support of Garvey's efforts to foster racial pride in the Black community, Black women held rallies, made speeches and published books on beauty tips and cosmetics for dark complexions.

During the early years of the women's movement, Black women did not participate in significant numbers. Nathan and Julia Hare expressed the common explanation: that the objectives of white women and Black women are somewhat reversed; Black females have tended to view all whites

regardless of sex as sharing a racist ideology.\(^{(17)}\) Rather, Black women preferred to participate in the Black social movement of the 1960's. There is no doubt that Black women were key figures in organizing the Black community. In 1962, SNCC staff member Charles Sherrod wrote that in every southwest Georgia county "there is always a 'mama'. She is usually a militant woman in the community, outspoken, understanding, and willing to catch hell, having already caught her share."\(^{(18)}\) Stories of such women abound. For providing housing, food and support for civil rights workers, their homes were fired upon and their lives threatened. Fannie Lou Hamer, a Sunflower County sharecropper who sacrificed her livelihood to emerge as one of the most eloquent leaders of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, was the most famous but by no means the only outstanding Black woman.

While Black women were active in political and social movements during this time, they were not active voters. A Black woman reared in the South who was sixty years old in 1972 probably was not allowed to vote until she was in her thirties, and possibly not until she was over fifty.\(^{(19)}\) Voting figures for these early years are difficult to find but Ralph Bunche estimated that before 1940 only 12\% of the Black population voted and no more than one-third of Black women voted.

Researching the problem for Gunnar Myrdal's \textit{An American Dilemma}, 1962, \textit{--------------------}

\(^{(17)}\) Julia and Nathan Hare, 1970, p. 65-68.


\(^{(19)}\) Baxter and Lansing, 1980.
he estimated that only 250,000 Blacks voted in the South in 1940. The
Commission on Civil Rights estimated that the total number of Black
electors in the South was double that figure by 1955.

In one of the first systematic studies of Black voting behavior,
Matthews and Prothro (1966) observed that in 1961 sixty three percent of
Black males and 47% of Black females were active(20) in the politics of
the South. This compares with 90% of the white males and 87% of the
white females who qualify as politically active under their definition.
In terms of voting alone, 47% of the Black males and 38% of the Black
females qualified as participants. While these statistics are for
Southern Blacks, the pattern was much the same elsewhere in the nation.
In the 1950s Black women participated in all regions at rates from 10 to
20 percent lower than those of Black men. The extreme disparity (closer
to twenty percent) came mostly from the failure of Black women to engage
in higher forms of participation, i.e. in activities other than voting.
But this lack of participation by Black women is quite understandable if
we assume that the Black culture shares the general belief that women
should be protected from unpleasantness. With the tradition of politics
as white people's business added to the broader tradition of politics as
man's domain, Black women had a double barrier to overcome. And often
the racial barrier was not merely an internalized restraint: voting or
attempting to vote in many Southern counties carried with it the very

(20) Their definition of politically active: all people who have voted,
or who have taken some part in a campaign, or who hold political
office or membership in a political group.
real threat of bodily injury. Hence Black women were much less likely than Black men or white women to take part in politics; this seems to have been true for most Black women regardless of education level. Unlike the overall national pattern of diminishing sexual disparity in voting as education increased, Matthews and Prothro observed that more Black men than Black women were active at every level of education and for all forms of political participation. (21)

While Matthews and Prothro used education as an index of social status, there is reason to believe that education is not the most valid indicator of class status in the Black community. (22) Pierce, et al. compared the 1969-70 participation levels of Black men and women in a southern town controlling for income, occupation and education. (23) Using income level as the measure of status, Pierce's data supported the hypothesis that among lower income Blacks the women participate more while at the highest level men predominate. The occupation control produced differences in contrast to those achieved with income. Only with education as the status measure do low income men participate more than low income women; and as education increased the difference disappeared. These results, then, give us mixed and inconclusive support for the general adage that men participate more than women, as well as the more narrow contention that sex differences in the political

(21) Matthews and Prothro, 1966, p. 68. See Table 4.1.
participation of Blacks are unrelated to class status.

One still wonders, though, if the results achieved by Matthews and Prothro are a function of their use of education as a measure of social status. Would their results and subsequent conclusions have been different if they too had controlled for occupation and income as well as for education? Or has there been genuine change in the participation rate between Black men and women? Pierce and his colleagues conducted their survey almost a decade later than Matthews and Prothro. Perhaps Black women have indeed increased their rate of participation to those almost (more or less) comparable to Black males as well as to whites. One can speculate that the activism and consciousness raising in the late 1950s and the 1960s both in the Black community and among women in general combined to stimulate interest and promote participation among Black women. However, we can only speculate as to whether genuine change has or has not taken place. Problems with consistency in the operationalization of concepts, the differences in time frameworks and the comparisons of separate communities which may differ in the degree to which Black men and women share political norms plague the attempt to understand sex differences in political behavior.

The tendency to "stay in their place" and out of politics described by Matthews and Prothro was not a characteristic of younger college Black women. Matthews and Prothro reported that student protestors were almost as often women as men: 48% of the students who personally took part in the sit-ins and freedom rides were female. About 57% of the
Black students enrolled in predominantly Black institutions at the height of the sit-ins were women; thus these young Black women participated at rates close to their proportion of the college student population. This is quite different from the overall 38% participation (i.e. voting) rate of Black women who comprise 58% of the Black population.

Matthews and Prothro, in their analysis, divided their student sample into three groups according to the extent of their involvement in the protest movement: those who personally took part in the sit-ins and freedom marches (25%), those who belonged to protest organizations but did not personally take part in the protests (14%), and those who neither belonged to protest organizations nor took part (61%). Table 1 demonstrates the differences between the sexes. If participation is defined as personal and direct participation, Black males were slightly more likely to be activists than were the female students. Perhaps these young adults also share the belief that women should be protected as much as possible from the rough and tumble world of politics and exposed as little as possible to the potentially dangerous sit-ins and freedom rides. If participation is defined less stringently as membership in protest organizations, women students were just as active as the men, if not more so. Regardless of which definition of participation one accepts, Table 1 highlights the point that the large gap in participation rates between adult Black men and women discussed earlier just did not exist among the young student protestors. (Perhaps
this is a further indication that the observed differences between adult Black male and female participatory rates were indeed a function of the use of education as the index of social status).

Young Black women seem to be more willing than their older counterparts to challenge the status quo and to be at the vanguard of the push to overcome the double barriers of racism and sexism. One source of evidence of the politicization of young Black women is the 1964 presidential election turnout statistics. As Table 2 makes clear, Black women up to age 54 voted at rates comparable to or higher than Black men. In 1968 the same pattern is observed. In the youngest cohort, aged 21-24, ten percent and 6% more women than men voted in 1964 and in 1968 respectively. Voting is just about the same for the middle cohorts. The change comes in the oldest cohorts of 65 to 74 years of age with men outvoting women by 9% in 1964 and by 19% in 1968.

If we examine the Black vote by region for 1968, we see that in the South the pattern is not quite the same as the national pattern. Black women still vote at rates almost comparable to Black men but it is only in the non-South that the youngest cohort has the advantage at eight percent (See Table 3). For the next two cohorts, both men and women in the two regions voted at similar rates. For the oldest age group the national pattern is reversed in the South with twelve percent more women than men voting, contrasting with seven percent more men voting in the non-South. This is quite different from the overall national pattern in 1968 with men outvoting women by as much as 19 percentage points.
Table 1

Black Student Involvement in the Protest Movement, 1960-62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Involvement</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Difference&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who personally took part in the sit-ins and freedom rides</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who belonged to protest organizations but did not themselves take part in the protests and demonstrations</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who neither belonged to protest organizations nor took part in the protests</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of difference in score (percent men minus percent women)

Table 2

A Comparison by Sex, Age, and Race of Eligible Persons Voting for President in 1964 and 1968 (in percent)\textsuperscript{a}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>1964 Black</th>
<th>1968 Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 - 34</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 - 64</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 74</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>1964 White</th>
<th>1968 White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 24</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 - 34</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>55 - 64</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 74</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{b}Percentage of difference in score (percent men minus percent women).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>North and West</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 44</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 64</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, let not these regional variations cloud the observation that young Black women are voting at rates higher to or comparable to Black men. To explain this pattern two general directions can be pursued. It could be understood as a decrease among men, explained by evidence of higher levels of alienation, or concern over the Viet Nam war, or even employment. (24) The second direction, the one we find most convincing, pursues the explanation of a relative increase among young women. These women are becoming politicized as evidenced by their activism in the protest movement of the 1960s and by about a 420% increase in the number of Black women officeholders from 1969 (when only 131 women were listed in the National Roster of Black Elected Officials) to 1982. The increase for Black men during this same time was about 306%.

The six decades from 1920 to the 1980’s have witnessed a general increase in the political participation of Black women. They, while perhaps not as aggressive in their participation as whites or Black men, almost always took part in the social and political movements of their day. Black women fought along side white women to obtain suffrage; they joined the Marcus Garvey race consciousness movement; and coeds joined other Black women in supporting the Civil Rights Movement. With increased voting by both Black women and men the number of Black female elected officials also experienced an increase. So since the turn of the century, Black women have been participating, albeit at low levels,

in societal decisionmaking.

In section three, we review political behavior literature for an examination of the research that has been conducted on participation by Black women.

**REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF BLACK WOMEN**

Any literature review on the role of women in politics should begin with the observation that there has been only a limited number of studies which compare male and female patterns of political participation. Until the last decade, the political behavior of women has been largely an unexplored area in the research of political science, despite the interest engendered by the political activity of the vocal and controversial suffrage movement. In 1955 Maurice Duverger's *The Political Role of Women* examined the nature of female political participation; Harold Gosnell's 1948 *Democracy: The Threshold of Freedom* presented sex-related differences in political behavior; and the unabridged 1960 version of *The American Voter* devoted one section of one chapter to female voters (or non-voters). Historically, very little systematic research has been done on the woman's role in the political arena; most studies have either ignored their participation or mentioned it only as an aside. Black women have been even more neglected because of legal barriers that kept them, as well as Black men, from participating in politics. One of the early studies of Black political behavior came in 1966 through Donald Matthews and James Prothro's study
of Blacks in the South, *Negroes and the New Southern Politics*. It should be noted that Black women and sexual comparisons in general were mentioned only in passing.

With the onslaught of the women's liberation movement, the social, political, economic, and sexual plight of women has moved to the forefront of social and political research. Voting, for minority groups in America, has always been one of the keys to political, social and economic change. It is only natural, then, that women should seek to mobilize and to turn to the ballot box. Thus the promise of a female bloc vote has engendered research aimed at assessing women's role in politics, their location in political structures and their behavior within them.

Githens and Prestage(25) have identified two phases of the current studies on female participation. The initial stage was basically descriptive and focused on the characteristics of the politically active and aware. This research stimulated further interest in three related questions: How did women who became involved in politics differ from women in general? Why did some women deviate from the established pattern of female noninvolvement? What were the constraints on political involvement? Initial research in this second phase argued that the political beliefs, attitudes and policy preferences and perspectives of women diverged markedly from those of men. Women were commonly thought to be more politically conservative than men, more

moralistic about political issues, more traditionalist in their beliefs, less interested in politics and generally less "political" (Lipset, Lazarsfield, Barton, Linz, 1954; Campbell, et al., 1960; Greenstein, 1961; Almond and Verba, 1965; Goot and Reid, 1975). But in more recent reviews of these commonly held beliefs about women, Judith Evans (1980), Baxter and Lansing (1980) and others (Hansen, et al., 1976; Fulfenwider, 1981,) have observed that women and men typically agree on a wide range of public policy issues. When male-female differences do appear on policy preferences, there is a pattern of consistency exhibited by women. Women seem to specialize in areas often called humanitarian by social scientists. This pattern of consistency is especially obvious in the area of war and peace. A number of studies have commented on the pacifist position of women. And on questions of the civil rights of racial minorities, women have been more supportive of efforts to achieve racial equality than men. Women are thought to be more liberal than men in their attitudes especially on policy preferences that directly concern women, e.g. on issues of sex-based discrimination and opinions on abortion. These recent studies have also indicated that the vote turnout differential between the sexes has disappeared and that men and women express similar levels of interest. But sexual differentials in the level of involvement in politics are still evident.

A variety of explanations are usually advanced for observed differentiation in political attitudes and behavior. However, these arguments can be reduced to three: political socialization,
situational, and structural. The most prevalent, political socialization, holds that sexual differentiation in political attitudes and behavior is rooted in sex-role stereotyping, which transmits to women as well as to men clearly demarcated political roles. As a result of these attendant differences in types and degrees of politically relevant experiences, each (male and female) exhibits distinct attitudinal and behavioral political characteristics. (26) (Greenstein, 1965; Torney and Hess, 1967; Bem and Bem, 1970; Bardwick and Douvan, 1971; Lipman-Blumen, 1972). This explanation of sex role stereotyping also posits that, at best, women are taught that involvement in political phenomenon means participation only at the citizen level. Their role as a concerned citizen includes voting and being informed on the issues, especially the social ones that affect the community. These teachings often lead women into women’s clubs activities and into volunteer organizations which are consistent with female ascribed status.

Political socialization theory says something quite different for Black women. The literature teaches us that Black women are socialized to be more independent and more aggressive into what are normally thought of as masculine or public related roles (see Weitzman, 1978). Given this, we would expect, intuitively, that Black women’s participation rates should be at least comparable to those of Black men. Yet Black women have traditionally voted at much lower levels than other

racial/sexual groups. In their attempt to systematically describe the extent of Black political activism and then to explain the variations in that activism, Prothro and Matthews commented:

We might expect sex differences in political participation among southern Negroes to be even greater than among Americans in general. Negroes tend to be disproportionately clustered at the lowest status levels where the general deficit in female participation is greatest. (27)

True to their expectations, Prothro and Matthews discovered that differentiation in participation levels between Black men and women was more pronounced than for the white sexes. As education increased for whites the ten percent differential between the sexes decreased to almost no gap. While the gap between Black men and women did decrease from twenty percent as education increased, the gap did not disappear as for whites.

A frequent explanation for low levels of participation by both Black and white females is that by tradition women have taken care of the house, children and husband. Her environment and day to day household responsibilities left little free time to become involved in or even interested in politics. By staying in the house she has less of a chance to engage in and to be stimulated by political conversations and discussions (Verba, 1972; Pomper, 1975; Andersen, 1975). Thus the argument theorizes that "...it is the presence of children and the absence of an outside the home work role that inhibits women's political participation." (28) While this theory has not been examined as

thoroughly as has the socialization explanation, there is strong support for it (Tedin, et.al., 1971; McCourt, 1977).

Recent empirical studies, which indicate that in most forms of political activity -especially voting- women participate equally or at greater rates than their male counterparts of the same socioeconomic status, cast doubt on the validity of the situational theory (Welch, 1977; Lansing, 1974; Orum, 1966; Verba and Nie, 1972). These later findings suggest a structural explanation. Aggregate levels of participation are lower for women because they are least likely to be found in educational, occupational and social status groups we generally associate with high levels of participation. This explanation is relevant for Black women; the eleven million Black females in this country are the most disadvantaged group in the country in terms of their socioeconomic status. A high proportion of Black women are poor and unemployed and more than one fourth are heads of households who must support themselves and their children. It is no wonder that Black women have been less politically involved than other racial/sexual groups.

That assessment, until recently, has been quite true. Studies now indicate that since the 1952 presidential election Black females have increased their political participation, i.e. vote turnout, from 29% to 66% in 1980. (29) Pierce (1973) in a 1969-70 study of 300 Black men and


(29) During the same time period, this compares with 62% to 71% for white women; 72% to 74% for white men; and 46% to .66% for Black men. As you can see Black women in 1952 lagged behind Black men by 17 percentage points and in 1980 almost closing the gap.
women found few significant differences in participation levels; in fact, lower class women tended to participate more than lower class men when income was used as the measure of class. And according to Lansing (1977) the "voting records of Black women over the past decade show that the rate of increase in voting by Black women has been greater than that of any other sex/race group in the population."(30) Further observation of the trend by Welch, et.al. (1981) shows that in 1976 Black women still vote less than Black men but at similar rates with white men and women. The explanation given, "...that within the black community, male participation is encouraged more than female,(31) is counterintuitive and not at all in line with Black socialization research discussed earlier.

Consistent with Lansings's data of 1968 and 1972, Fulenwider (1981) observed that from 1972 to 1976 Black women became less trusting of public officials, less politically efficacious and evidenced growing signs of alienation, yet they continued to increase their vote turnout. However, contrary to Welch, Fulenwider found that Black women participation levels were still lower than those for white women in 1976. Both researchers used the same data base and similar measurements but obtained quite different results and different interpretations. While Welch emphasizes the increase in Black female voting from 1960 to 1976 to similar levels with whites and attributes the increase to

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positive characteristics of Black women, Fulenwider's emphasis focuses on the still existing gap between Black women and other sexual/racial groups. She explains that Black women are feeling "doubly oppressed" because of race and sex. Several factors contributed to feelings of relative deprivation and alienation. They include: rising expectation generated by the Civil Rights Movement that were dashed by the Nixon administration's policy of benign neglect; and, the feminist movement that highlighted sexual oppression. Such feelings may indeed exist among Black females but regardless of whether they "out vote" whites or Black men, these attitudes are co-existing with continued high levels of participation in the political system.

The Black female, then, represents an anomaly in terms of voting. The increase in voting of Black women, who not only represent the lowest socioeconomic group but also express negative attitudes toward the system, is incompatible with several canons of voting behavior theory. Traditional research has consistently demonstrated that the dependent variable (voting/non-voting) is influenced by income, education, social class, occupation, and affective attitudes toward the system. Certainly these variables should tell us that Black women should have the worst voting record. This is not the case. Perhaps variables traditionally used to explain political behavior and attitudes in the dominant culture are not entirely appropriate or sufficient in examining variations based on sex and race. Other demographic and social variables must be sought, for example, ethnic community, which considers community norms and
variations, political climate as a structural variable, and group identity/group consciousness. Clearly, existing explanations of subgroup political participation are weak and in need of theoretical formulation.

Indications that the literature is indeed turning in the direction of an examination of non-traditional variables can be seen in the 1980 studies of Texas women conducted by Janet Boles and Jeanie Stanley. The former examined the political activity of Texas women and found that they fall below the national average in voting participation, representation in political parties, strength of the feminist movement and in elective office holding. Boles suggests that the political inactivity of Texas women is partially explained by historical cultural definitions of prescribed feminine conduct. She further writes that while, "heir to the rugged, individualistic tradition of the Western frontier woman," Texas women also learn that southern ladies are "above all, lady-like, self-effacing, family oriented, intuitive, tactful, sweet, and outwardly submissive." Traditional Southern culture, states Janet Boles, "forces Southern women to present their participation in politics as an extension of their domestic duties." So, then, if women do become politically active, one might expect such involvement to be related to their family interests. Interests in


(33) Ibid., p.2.

(34) Ibid., p.2.
education, teachers, welfare, judicial rights, road repair and even campaigning are more often than not a natural outgrowth of their daily life experience and commitment to their families.

Although the Boles study provides an insightful overview of female participation in Texas and utilizes other than traditional variables to explain female activism, the cultural explanation is not substantiated. In what amounts to a replication of the Boles analysis but at the local level in a small East Texas community, Jeanie Stanley modified the Boles cultural explanation for lower female activity to incorporate experiential and occupational elements. (35) These East Texas women were also less interested and active in politics than male actors, but she attributes this inactivity primarily to what she calls "female lifespace" which is likely to include low status non-political occupational roles, as well as a physical and mental overload which limits their proclivity to engage in politically relevant activity. (36) She explains that, "although religious fundamentalism influences the attitudes of some women toward feminist issues, most women reveal attitudes complementary to female participation and equal rights. Politics, however, is judged less important than other life activities, or work and family responsibilities leave women too fatigued to develop political interest or capability." (37)

(36) Ibid., p. 1.
(37) Ibid., p. 1.
Working with a sample of both Black and white respondents, Stanley observed that the most politically active respondents were those in politically relevant occupations in which interest groups operate to inform them of politically important issues. Women seldom were employed in such occupations. So while it may seem simplistic, one explanation for sex differences in political interest and activism may well be traced to the tendency for women to be employed in low status jobs, including primary responsibilities for house and family management. What this suggests is that female political attitudes and behavior are more adequately explained by looking at their daily experience or "lifespace" rather than by a singular examination of attitudes or role models proscribed by their cultural heritage.

Political participation, as stated earlier in the chapter, can be an effective instrument in the redistribution of limited resources for a deprived group--participation that must take place in both governmental and nongovernmental arenas if the group is to have effective control of decisions that affect their lives. As a deprived group, Black women have participated in social and political organizations and in the electoral arena (once racial and sexual barriers were lifted) in an attempt to influence decisions that affect their lives as well as the lives of their families. But research into their political participation is deficient. Not much data have been collected on Black females and their attempts to influence public policy and decisionmakers. The following chapters represent an effort to increase
that data base and to build onto the knowledge that already exists on
Black women. The analysis focuses on 48 Southern Black women, how they
participate in the process of making decisions that influence their
lives and the reasons behind that participation.
Chapter II

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the limited knowledge that exists in extant literature on the political behavior of Black women. More specifically, we are interested in behavior that is aimed at influencing decisions that affect the lives of these women. Whether that behavior is directed toward governmental or nongovernmental decisionmakers and processes is inconsequential. One of the best ways to find out about the political life of Black women is simply to ask them about it, to make personal contact and engage them in indepth conversations. Personal interviews offer insight into the relationship between variables that cannot be so easily and fully examined with a large random sample. What we give up in numbers we more than compensate for in the obtaining of rich qualitative data. Focused interviews with a limited sample of Black women lends itself to an examination of contextual, psychological and structural factors that affect participation. With qualitative data, the concentration is not just on an identification of possible correlations between relationships but rather on an understanding of those relationships. The kinds of concerns and questions raised by this dissertation demand indepth interviews. We want to know, first of all, how the women in our sample
participate. That is, how do they communicate their ideas to policymakers? What activities do they engage in to meet their goals? Second, we want to identify factors that influence that participation. And, perhaps most important, we want to be able to understand the relationship between those factors and behavior.

The question may be asked about the ability of the results generated by data obtained from a study of a limited sample to be used to make statements about the population at large, or for "all" Black women. And of course one would have to acknowledge that a single case can constitute neither the basis for a valid generalization nor the ground for disproving an already established generalization. (38) A single case, however, can be used within the framework of established generalizations to test existing propositions. Political and community characteristics, norms and expectations may differ from one setting to another, but single case analyses allow for propositions and hypothesized relationships to be tested in different climates and under varying conditions thus confirming or infirming extant theories. The more "evidence" collected the more confidence we have in our theory; Lijphart writes that "... case studies can make an important contribution to the establishment of general propositions and thus to theory-building in political science." (39) The case study, then, serves the dual role of being able to both generate new hypotheses and to

(38) Arend Lijphart, 1971, p. 691.
(39) Ibid., p. 691.
refine and sharpen existing hypotheses.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Perhaps one of the paramount concerns of our analysis is to be able to suggest several hypothesized causal relationships. Hypothesized relationships assert that a particular characteristic or occurrence \( X \) is one of the factors that determines another characteristic or occurrence \( Y \).(40) Our research design must provide data from which we can infer that \( X \) does or does not enter into the determination of \( Y \). The optimum design would be a controlled experimental test of the hypothesis about the relation between \( X \) and \( Y \) with subjects being randomly selected for the group to receive the "treatment" or to the control group. However, hypotheses about the effect of attributes of individuals are not so amenable to controlled experimental investigation in the sense of manipulation of the "independent" variable. The alternative, then, is to achieve the desired variation, not by direct manipulation of the variables, (in this case, membership in a policy related organization), but by selection of individuals with the variable value 'membership in the organization' (experimental group) and with the variable value 'not belonging to the organization' (control group). Granted, this design does not allow us to rule out in advance that the observed causal relations were created by some other factor that is correlated with the presumed causal factor. We are faced with the

(40) Selltiz, et.al., 1960.
necessity of ruling out on an ex post facto basis (i.e. after the causal variable has already taken place) that other related extraneous factors may have caused the observed correlation. (41) For this reason the research must generate data from which it can be inferred whether two groups were or were not initially similar.

A micro-level study will allow us to collect the kinds of data from which we can infer that groups are similar or dissimilar. By focusing on a single setting, i.e. a racially homogenous neighborhood, community members can be intensively examined. Extraneous factors such as environmental and cultural factors as well as political factors can all be controlled since respondents of each group (control and experimental) will have been subject to the same stimuli. Community demographics, education and SES level can also be controlled. A study of the political behavior of Black women in Raleigh, N.C. will test extant hypotheses as well as generate others to develop a theoretical framework of individual and group political participation.

The dissertation will test the following hypothesized relationships:
* affiliation with voluntary associations influences activism in electoral politics
* membership in a policy related organization increases a woman's chances of participating in the political decisionmaking process

(41) Ibid., p. 91.
* women activists are involved in policy and issue oriented organizations within the Black community rather than in the same kinds of organizations outside the community

* women of higher socioeconomic status (higher levels of education attainment and occupation status) participate more in voluntary associations and in electoral politics than women of low socioeconomic status

* the life situation of a woman affects political as well as associational participation

* political efficacy, or the sense of one's ability to cope with politics, is intertwined with feeling effective in other aspects of one's life

* feelings of distrust and cynicism do not attenuate the political participation levels of Black women

* a sense of group consciousness with others who share the double oppression of racism and sexism exists among Black women

* low income Black women participate more than their socioeconomic status would suggest because of a sense of politicized group identity

Selection of sample

The women selected to be interviewed live in four South Raleigh neighborhoods. On the basis of census data reflecting median family income, three of the communities - Apollo Heights, Walnut Terrace and
Chavis Heights— are classified as low income housing developments. Family incomes averaged approximately $5,000 in 1980. Many of the families are headed by females who depend on Aid to Families with Dependent Children government benefits for financial assistance. Low SES, minimal education achievement and inadequate employment are all characteristic of these areas. The fourth community, Biltmore Hills, has a median family income of $15,000. Black professionals such as teachers, lawyers, government workers and working class folk live in moderately priced homes.

The first three neighborhoods on the southside of Raleigh were selected because, in addition to being low income and virtually all Black, they have been the breeding ground for several community organizations, most notably the Housing Authority Residence Council. The participation of women in these groups has been highly visible with one woman being asked by the mayor to join the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority in 1981—the first time a resident of the housing projects had ever been selected to serve on that Board in its forty-two year history. Biltmore Hills was selected because of two factors. First, because it too was racially homogeneous and exhibited middle to upper middle income characteristics that are typical of Blacks elsewhere. Through the "two-types" of communities we are able to make comparative statements concerning, for example, class, education, occupation and lifestyles. The second reason: Biltmore Hills is located on the same side of town as the low income housing projects. Ever
mindful of possible sources of contamination from "outside" forces, every attempt was made to control for extraneous influences. So all four neighborhoods are racially homogeneous and located in the same general area on the southside of Raleigh.

Once the communities had been chosen, it was necessary to identify members of the sample and to place them in the experimental or in the control group. The experimental group members, defined as those women active in a policy related organization or otherwise politically active, were selected from the community Residence Councils, neighborhood policy organizations made up of project residents. Once a list of organization members was obtained each was contacted by mail and by phone for an appointment to interview her for the study. While the Residence Council conveniently provided the author with a cost efficient manner in which to select respondents with the desired characteristics, it was only useful for the selection of low income active subjects. The Council is only comprised of members from the three neighborhood housing authority developments. Middle income active women who lived in the Biltmore Hills area were identified through an investigation of the local Black newspaper, The Carolinian, and through the "snowball" approach. That is, once one active woman was identified she in turn gave the name of another woman and so on. By the end of the fieldwork, twenty-three active middle and low income women had been interviewed.

To compare the attitudes and behavior of women who are active with women who have chosen not to be involved, a control sample of women who
were not active was interviewed. The non-active sample is comprised of women from the same neighborhoods, similar in demographic characteristics, exposed to the same extraneous community and social forces as the active group but are not members of any policy related organizations nor are they engaged in any other political activities.

The original sampling technique for selecting inactive respondents was to be a systematic sampling of each nth household. However, the general distrust and suspicion on "outsiders" and to survey takers in particular made this type of sampling all but impossible. Entrance into the home had to be made through introduction of a neighbor or friend. After spending several weeks in the various neighborhoods and gaining the trust and confidence of a select few (e.g. the president of the neighborhood residence council or the block captain) a "snowball" effect was achieved until twenty-five women were interviewed.

Respondents for both the experimental and the control groups are Black, female, at least eighteen years of age or older and have been a resident of their neighborhood for at least six months.

The interviews averaged two to three hours in length. There was an interview schedule (see Appendix D) which was the same(42) for both groups, but respondents were encouraged to say whatever came to mind during the course of the interview and were free to explain the feelings and attitudes behind their responses. The interviewer, too, was free to

(42) The members of the Residence Council were asked additional questions concerning matters unique to the Council and their participation in the organization.
probe and to follow up on comments made by the subjects. Since there was freedom to diverge from the interview schedule, each interview is unique. All the desired topics were covered in discussion with each respondent; however, there is some variation in the amount of time and depth with which each topic is covered. These topics include: 1) feelings about the neighborhood in which she lived; 2) her organizational affiliations; 3) knowledge of political and community leaders; 4) attitudes toward the local political system; 5) political behavior; 6) group identification; 7) attitudes toward the class structure; 8) attitudes on racial and sexual discrimination; and 9) demographic information. In addition, the active women were questioned about the extent and nature of their participation. All but two interviews are on tape. Interviewing took place from June to September of 1982.

The characteristics of the forty-eight respondents are as follows: They are all Black women and South Raleigh residents.

* All live in racially homogenous neighborhoods where 85 to 95 percent of the residents are Black: 33 live in subsidized public housing; 11 live in single family homes in a middle class neighborhood.

* Marital status is diverse: nineteen are married; three are widowed; nineteen are divorced/separated; and seven are single. Thirty-three have one or more children under eighteen.
* Their ages range from 19 to 81: seventeen are young adults; fifteen are middle age and sixteen are older adults.

* Three women have never worked. Fifteen are either retired or laidoff.

* Eleven have domestic or custodial work such as housekeeping, cleaning or cook.

* Nine have professional occupations such as teacher, school principal, school administrator, accountant, or counselor.

* Ten have white collar occupations such as secretary, aide, housing manager, bookkeeper.

* Their education distribution was: five had only grammar school education; ten had some high school; sixteen finished high school; seven had some college experience; four completed college; and six had completed graduate training.

Outline of dissertation
The following chapter, intended to provide a context for understanding the women of our sample, gives the background of Raleigh and the community setting in which they live, work and become active. Chapters four and five are the data chapters. The former begins the study with an examination of how the women participate and chapter five interprets and analyzes levels of participation with attempts to try to understand why some women become active and others not.
Chapter III

RALEIGH, N.C.: THE COMMUNITY SETTING

The city selected for study is the Southern capital city of Raleigh, N.C. Why a southern city? National survey data has indicated that Black women increased their vote in presidential elections in the last two decades. We expect Southern Black women to be at the vanguard of this "movement". It is in the South that Blacks, in general, have been most salient and effective in political participation. The Civil Rights and Black Power Movements both had their genesis in the South with Black women demonstrating and protesting shoulder to shoulder with Black men. If, as some analyst have suggested, there exists a "norm" of high political participation within the Black community, we would expect it to be evident in the South. Sixty-three percent of the nearly 14 million eligible Blacks in the South are registered to vote. (Fifty-two percent of Blacks in the South are female). Sixty percent of all Black elected officials hold office in the South with 240 or 9% in North Carolina. (43)

Raleigh, population 149,771, is the capital of North Carolina and the center of three governments - state, county and city; so government and politics are a central part of Raleigh's socioeconomic fabric. The

Raleigh-Wake County municipal governments have been strong, vital organizations, providing (along with the federal government) more than 29,000 people in the Raleigh area with employment in 1982. The economic stability that government offers the area has contributed to a good and varied job market and a low unemployment rate of 6.6% in 1982.

Raleigh's city government(44) is financially sound; a fact that is considered to be the result of stable, efficient government which is the continued aim of the mayor, city council and city administration.

Raleigh is governed by the Council/Manager system of government. An elected mayor, two at-large councillors, and five district councillors are elected every two years on a non-partisan basis to be responsible for translating the needs and views of the citizens into policies, ordinances and programs, which in turn are carried out by the city manager and his staff. The city manager is employed by the city council as administrative head of the city. This professional then hires city officers not appointed by the Council, prepares budgets, and advises the Council on city needs. This system of government combines strong political leadership from elected officials with professional expertise from the appointed manager and his staff.

Raleigh's mayor, Smeds York, presides at Council meetings, may choose to vote but has no veto power. The governing body sets policies, adopts the annual budget, determines the annual tax rate, maintains liaison with other governmental agencies, represents the city at official

(44) Information on the structure of government in Raleigh was obtained from the Research and Public Information Office, City of Raleigh.
functions, and appoints qualified citizens to serve on various boards, commissions and committees. These citizens, in turn, serve in an advisory capacity to the Council on many important and diverse community issues.

**THE BLACK PRESENCE IN NORTH CAROLINA**

Black Americans in North Carolina, as in the country at large, had a greater historical presence than has been admitted. Blacks from this state have succeeded as major writers, artists, businessmen and statesmen.

The Black community in North Carolina has a long tradition of producing exceptional business ventures. Even in the days of slavery, free and bound Blacks competed successfully in every aspect of the free market. Prior to the Civil War, Blacks in the state owned more than a million dollars worth of property, and were engaged in more than 70 occupations.

Lunsford Lane, a slave of the Haywood family in Raleigh, made enough money as a merchant that he was able to buy his freedom and that of his family. Thomas Day, a free Black cabinetmaker in Wake County, owned one of the largest furniture factories in the state during the 1850s. And Warren C. Coleman chartered the only Black-owned and operated textile factory in the country in 1901.

(45) Information on the Black presence in North Carolina was collected from the North Carolina Museum of History, Division of Archives and History, Department of Cultural Resources.
Though a number of Blacks managed to acquire an education during the slave period, Blacks in North Carolina were not educated as a people until after the Civil War. Perhaps because it was illegal in antebellum days, literacy assumed a mysterious quality for the slave, something vaguely associated with freedom from white domination. This mystique carried over after emancipation, and education became a cornerstone in every Black leader's platform for Black progress.

The first schools for Blacks in North Carolina were established as early as 1864 in the wake of the Union Army. Northern missionaries, charities and abolitionists founded and operated numerous schools in the state. By 1869 the Freedmen's Bureau supported 431 schools that enrolled some 20,000 students. Several Protestant denominations established grade schools and teacher training colleges; Shaw University, the first college for Blacks, is located in Raleigh.

Slaves in North Carolina reacted against their status, often violently from the earliest. Antebellum newspapers are full of advertisements for "Runaways." Escaped slaves tried to make their way north to freedom, to pass as freemen in a new county, or to hide away in the woods or swamps. There were several instances of attempted uprisings in the state.

North Carolina Blacks took an active part in the Civil War; thousands went over to the Union Army as it made its way through the state. The refugees made a significant contribution to Union victory by their labor and their soldiering. North Carolina Blacks served as medical aides, spies, recruiters and soldiers.
Political participation prior to 1960

The political experience of Blacks in Raleigh has been, with few variations, the experience of the South generally. Blacks did not play a significant role in antebellum North Carolina politics. In a land of slavery the servile class would obviously have no part in the conduct of government. Freed slaves, of whom North Carolina had some thirty thousand in 1860, were permitted to retain the privilege of voting until 1835, (46) but there is no evidence they voted in sufficient numbers to exert much influence on the outcome of elections. As long as slavery lasted Blacks were subject without question to the political rule of whites. But when slavery ended as a result of the Civil War, the North gave to Blacks, first, full civil rights and, a short time thereafter, free-exercise of the ballot. Republican rule in North Carolina during this time saw the support for participation of Blacks in state and local government. But whites outnumbered Blacks in a ratio of about two to one and at no time was there a likelihood of actual Black rule of the state in the sense of controlling the highest offices. (47) However, at times Blacks did hold the balance of power and whether, actively or passively, did exert a powerful influence on the political life of the state. (48)

(46) William Mabry, 1940, p. 3.
(47) Ibid., p. i.
(48) Ibid., p. i.
There were many Blacks in North Carolina ready to step into positions of leadership after the Civil War. Despite the repression and restrictions of slavery, numerous Blacks managed to educate themselves and even to acquire managerial skills and leadership abilities. Between 1865, when the first statewide meeting of free Blacks was called, and 1899, when North Carolina passed its own "Grandfather Clause" voting bill, more than 100 Blacks were elected to the state's General Assembly. Four were elected to the U.S. Congress.

Several of those legislators were delegates to the 1868 State Constitutional Convention which drafted the new state constitution that permitted North Carolina to rejoin the Union. With some amendments, that same constitution continues to serve the state today.

Political participation since 1960

From the early years of the sixties, the Black community, 24% of the population has been very active in the political life of Raleigh. The Raleigh-Wake Citizens Association (RWCA), a Black political organization active in the community since the late 1950s, organized to encourage Blacks to register and vote, and to seek job opportunities for Blacks. Both the NAACP and CORE have active chapters in Raleigh—especially on the two predominantly Black college campuses, Shaw University and St. Augustine's College. As elsewhere in the South during the 1960s, street marches and demonstrations were held, primarily directed at public accommodations such as hotels, restaurants and theaters, and implemented
to a great extent by students from Shaw and St. Augustine's, as well as by sympathetic students from North Carolina State and other white colleges. Student protesters were often joined in large numbers by Blacks living in near by low income neighborhoods and housing projects, e.g. residents of Walnut Terrace and Chavis Heights were almost always present en masse at downtown demonstrations. So the 1960s movement in Raleigh evidenced a broad base of support with both college students and community members, especially low income housing project residents.(49)

As a result of these protests,(50) mayor W.G. Enloe, established in May 1963 a biracial "Committee of One Hundred" to determine the course the city should take in dealing with the problems brought about by the demonstrations. Victor Bell, a local banker, was chosen as Chairman of the group, and over a six-week period a considerable amount of progress was made toward ending the municipal situation, which was concentrated in the downtown area.

The Committee met with Black leaders and with representatives of target business and on a voluntary basis, many downtown restaurants, one major hotel, and several motels opened their facilities to Blacks. It was agreed that the demonstrations would end, and that no publicity was to be given that any particular business had desegregated. A Mechanics Committee, headed by prominent Black leaders Dr. James Boyd of St. Augustine's College and Dr. Charles Lyons, Jr., Executive Secretary of

(49) Waynick, et.al., 1960, p. 139.

(50) This discussion of the demonstrations and the official reaction to the protests are taken from Waynick, et.al., 1960, p. 138-141.
the North Carolina Teachers Association, was to carry out the gradual
desegregation.

The Biracial Committee submitted its resignation, but recommended to
the new city administration and newly elected Mayor James Reid that a
permanent committee be appointed to assure continued communication at a
high level between leaders of the races of the community.

On July 26, 1963, mayor Reid appointed another biracial committee,
the Community Relations Committee. It was composed of 15 members
representing almost every phase of the business and community life,
including members from the hotel and motel associations, the restaurants
association, major industry, the colleges, retail business, the banks,
state government, and the legal profession. The Committee was
unfortunately not directed to proceed with the immediate desegregation
of every facility in the city; but rather, by a careful study of the
many sides of the problem to determine what was best for the City and to
recommend this action to the community. Of course, this approach
further angered Black leaders who accused the city of delaying tactics.
In response, subcommittees were formed to work with various aspects of
community relations, and meetings were held with merchants to discuss
the progress of desegregation of all public facilities.

The Committee also met with student leaders from the various local
colleges and universities upon their return to Raleigh in the fall, and
advised them of the progress that had been made in the City and the
continuing long-range plans that were being carried out.
As a result of Black leaders working with local government officials and with the city council, by the end of 1964, all variety store and downtown drugstore lunch counters as well as six major and 20 minor restaurants, constituting one-third of Raleigh's licensed restaurants at the time, were desegregated. The public library system integrated and Blacks enrolled that year in previously segregated Needham Broughton High School and Enloe High School, as well as in other classes throughout the school system. All city recreational facilities, including the swimming pools, were opened to Blacks. And in municipal government, Blacks during 1964 served on several advisory boards and commissions. A Black also served on the City Council and was named by the Mayor as Chairman of the major public works and planning committee.

Since the 1960s Blacks have continued to be politically active. Several coalitions such as the Black Women's Democratic Caucus, the Black Democratic Caucus and Wake Advancement for Black Men, have been formed to help organize the community into a viable political force. And there is some indication that these coalitions have been successful. Sixty-five percent of Black registered voters participated in the 1980 presidential election. This compares to 70 percent for the white electorate. In fact, Black women in Raleigh out register and out vote Black males by at least a two to one margin. One of the first Southern Black mayors since Reconstruction, Clarence Lightner, was elected in Raleigh in 1973 largely through the almost unanimous support of Blacks.
Chapter IV

HOW BLACK WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF DECISIONMAKING

Politics, we argued in Chapter One, should be defined broadly enough to include those people or processes who are called upon or asked to allocate limited resources; organizations, groups and agencies that distribute goods and values to a captive audience are to be viewed as authoritative allocators. Thus, behavior aimed at influencing such decisions is acceptable for political study. Neighborhood groups and voluntary associations that make decisions affecting the community and their client members are particularly important for segments of the population that have been denied access to other means of participation in the electorate. Historically, linkages between the Black population and elected policymakers were either not available or, at best, very tenuous, depending on the "goodwill" of specific white officeholders. Until the decade of the sixties and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Blacks were prohibited from participating in the electoral process; subjected to conditions of deprivation, the response of the Black community included the creation of a mutual support system through involvement in their own community organizations. These voluntary community and religious associations flourished and grew in importance in Black culture--often serving as effective political and economic
bases for demanding equal access to the means of influencing the
distribution of societal resources.

The salience and importance of these organizations in the Black
community is enhanced by what Cohen and Kapsis call the "ethnic
community process."

(51) Discrimination produces a strong sense of
cohesiveness among members of an oppressed group. As a result of this
process, minority group members come to regard their community as a
salient reference group which in turn fosters organizational activity on
the part of its members." Both a sense of cohesiveness and a sense of
deprivation have led to norms within Black culture that encourage social
and political activism.

Women, too, have often been excluded from the political process—
more through tradition and societal pressure than through legal
obstacles since 1920. So Black women have been doubly excluded. But
Blacks and women have been able to participate in societal choices and
public decisionmaking through the electoral process for several decades
now. Is "history" still a valid excuse? Even though the electoral
process has indeed opened up to Black women, let us not forget that
traditions and old habits do not let go their hold so easily. Also, for
many Black women the "outside" world is often viewed with hostility and
with apprehension; the community support system of organizations thus
serves as a means to strengthen and reinforce the ego.

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(51) Cohen, Steven and Robert Kapsis. Social Forces, vol. 56.4, p. 1054,
June 1978.
Thus it is not surprising that the women of South Raleigh manifest an active pattern of organizational membership. Nearly two-thirds of the women interviewed reported affiliation with one or more clubs or organizations. These include affiliation with community service organizations, fraternal/social and family groups, with religious organizations and with professional and interest groups. Section one of this chapter examines these various organizations and how this mode of participation fits into their structure of needs and interests.

Another way in which powerless groups in American society have been able to improve their group status is to become active in the electoral process. Through voting groups are able to exert influence on the choices being made by public lawmakers, thereby obtaining resources to improve their relative deprivation. Down through the years both ethnic minorities and women have turned to the ballot box to improve their group's status. Since 1965, Blacks, too, have begun to use the electoral process more and more effectively. From 1969 to 1980, the number of Black elected officials in the United States and Virgin Islands increased 306 percent from 1,208 to 4,912. According to the Joint Center for Political Studies in Washington, D.C. the 4,912 figure is an increase of 6.6% over the previous year.

Black women, at the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder, have the greatest need for the limited resources of our society. And thus the greatest incentive to exert influence over those doing the allocating. In our sample of 48, forty women reported voting for president at some
time. Even in local elections almost half of the women we interviewed reported voting in every election for mayor and city councilman. But what of the other half that did not vote? In section two the discussion focuses on observed differences in electoral participation. Perhaps there are socioeconomic or age factors that distinguish those who vote, work in campaigns or at the polls and those who choose not to vote. Of the women we interviewed seven reported never voting in any election. How do these seven women differ (if at all) from the other women in the sample?

Participation in a protest march or demonstration is the final mode of activism that we shall discuss in this chapter. Of the 48 women, seventeen had at some time in their lives taken part in a protest activity. Protest behavior seemed rather more appealing to the women of middle income status; three of four middle income women had been involved in a protest movement while only one in four low income women had engaged in this behavior. The finding is counterintuitive. We might expect women without the skills often associated with voting to feel locked out of the electoral process and to resort to the use of protest methods in an effort to achieve their goals. On the other hand, college educated, middle income women who have achieved at least a modicum of success within the system should be the least likely to protest. Perhaps the answer lies within the Black culture. If we look at the history of protest movements, middle income Blacks were often at the vanguard of such movements. Indeed, the sit-in marches and
demonstrations of the sixties and early seventies were often facilitated and supported by college students. So we understand why middle income women might feel more "comfortable" than their lower income cohorts with protest behavior. In section three we more fully discuss the observed tendency for middle income women to engage in protest behavior.

The discussion thus far has centered around various ways in which particular citizens elect to influence decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their families. Membership in voluntary associations, voting, working in campaigns or picketing the welfare office are all inputs into the system. Whether the participation is directed toward community leaders, governmental agencies or elected officials, the behavior is a conscious act of involvement, an effort to be included in the decisionmaking process. Whether a woman who participates is or is not supportive of current policies, her desire to make her ideas and needs heard represents "active" or "positive" input. But what of the women who do not participate— who choose not to be active? In our sample, we observed five women who had no associational affiliations, had never voted in a presidential or local election, and had never taken part in any other electoral or protest activity. For all practical purposes they had totally excluded themselves from the process of making public decisions. Many students of participation would dismiss this group as unworthy of much discussion or analysis. The percentages are usually given and a brief discussion ensues lamenting the fact that there are indeed inactives (the tone of the oration usually tempered by
whether one views the proverbial glass as half full or half empty) and on various characteristics associated with being inactive. But for the most part, political behaviorist focus on the more positive aspects of participation, i.e. on the "active" modes, while the inactives are written off as simply apathetic or alienated. One can very well understand the rationale underlying the exclusion. To the extent that inactives are considered apathetic, they are viewed as analogous to sleeping dogs—best left to stay that way. They exert no influence and represent no threat to the status quo. If on the other hand the inactives are viewed as alienated, the concern is (or should be) greater. The alienated may desire greater influence vis-a-vis other groups and may seek to obtain it through unorthodox means. Alienation is not considered a mode of participation, but rather is viewed as a potential threat to system stability.

Lack of "active" participation and total exclusion from the avenues of influence may be itself a type of participation, an input into the system—albeit a negative input. Some may argue that this type of participation should be seen as an input only if one makes an intentional choice to use "passive" participation as a method of sending a message to policy-makers. The citizen must not only neglect to participate but must see that inactivity as meaningful behavior. That is, she must be aware that her inactivity will have an effect or influence on policies. But regardless of whether or not the behavior is a conscious, purposive choice, the effect is the same; it has an
influence on the decisionmaking process. Officials, faced with inactive segments of the population, must interpret this silence. The interpretation given then in turn has an effect on the kinds of policies to be pursued.

Some politicians argue that inactivity by segments of the electorate is symptomatic of a "politics of happiness": people do not bother to participate because they are fairly content with the way things are going. (52) They are satisfied with current policies and policymakers. The input, whether intentional or not, is one of tacit approval or support for the status quo—a "vote" for continuance of the existing agenda. Conversely, the "politics of happiness" may be nothing more than a cover for what Michael Parenti calls the "politics of discouragement." (53) Nonparticipation, for many people, often represents a feeling of powerlessness, a conviction that it is useless to vote or demonstrate, useless to invest precious time and energy—useless because nothing ever changes. (54) Their lives continue the same and remain unaffected by changing administrations be they Democratic or Republican, liberal or conservative. Politicians may interpret this discouragement as a lack of interest in the political system. Because there is no interest there is no need to give the group rewards or resources, i.e. to make policies to benefit group members. So whether nonparticipation


(54) Ibid., p. 200.
is believed to be symptomatic of a populace satisfied with the way things are going or whether it is viewed as a lack of interest brought on by discouragement with the system, nonparticipation is an input into the political system. In section four we let the women give their own explanations of why they choose not to participate.

**PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS**

The women of south Raleigh are associational beings. (See Appendix A for a list of organizations). Two-thirds of the women we interviewed reported membership in at least one voluntary association. The most frequently joined organizations were what we identified as service oriented, community groups with 40% of the total responses. These service oriented clubs seemed to fall into two categories: first, self-help organizations that confined their interests to the immediate neighborhood, and second, those associations that held specific interests outside neighborhood boundaries. The self help clubs range from neighborhood youth councils to Know Your Rights and Welfare Rights Organizations, to the Lyndhurst Community Club. What these organizations have in common is their raison d'etre. Their main purpose is to serve the needs and interests of their neighborhood residents. The Fourth Ward Floral Club, for example, transports and assists the elderly and handicapped with daily chores. The youth, crime prevention

(55) Respondents were asked, "What organizations or clubs do you belong to?" Probes for each club mentioned included: "When did you first join /organization/?" "Is this a political, social, religious, community organization or what?"
and drug awareness councils work closely with neighborhood young people providing recreation, programs and workshops to instill pride in the neighborhood as well as in themselves.

The second type of service organization, associations that are not restricted to neighborhood boundaries, include such organizations and councils as VISTA, the Citizen Advisory Council, the Urban League and Raleigh Woman's Club. Also included in this category are four task force groups: Wake Up for Children, Governor's Council for 2000, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Task Force, and Board of Child Watch. The women were either appointed by political or community leaders or self-selected to participate. Each of these organizations addresses a unique interest, issue or problem. For example, the Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) serves as an advisory body to the City Council. It provides a structure for two way communication between city government and its neighborhoods; more specifically, the CAC advises the government as to how community development funds should be allocated. Another example, the Governor's Council for 2000, appointed by the governor, was given the task of assessing the needs of the people of the state and after evaluating those needs to make policy suggestions for the coming century. For the most part these issue specific organizations involved people from all areas of the city and in the example of the Council, people from different regions of the state. The interests addressed were broader than just self help for the immediate neighborhood and its residents.
Self-help associations

Self-help clubs that concern themselves with assisting neighbors and with immediate neighborhood issues were, with one exception, located in the three housing projects. (See Appendix B).

Only one club, the Lyndhurst Community Club, was based in Biltmore Hills. While categorized as a "self help" organization, the Lyndhurst group was unique among such clubs. Doris, a classroom teacher and Lyndhurst club member, explained the purpose of the organization,

It's mainly a community organization but we do things for other people like cheer baskets at Thanksgiving and we rally when they have political campaigns. And of course we act as a Welcome Wagon when somebody new moves on our street. When we first moved over here, we were invited to come, given a gift and when somebody has a baby we have a breakfast or luncheon to celebrate.

So while its members are all from the same neighborhood their concern is to help less fortunate families, e.g. the sharing of food baskets at Thanksgiving. Lyndhurst residents also meet to discuss political candidates and issues. While the organization cannot make contributions to a campaign (local ordinances prohibit groups from donating to political campaigns unless they are registered with the Board of Elections), it nevertheless makes recommendations as to what candidates the members should personally support. In these two examples, the cheer baskets and political concerns, we can best understand what distinguishes this organization from those in the housing projects. The interests are broader in scope; the residents help beyond neighborhood boundaries and are concerned with city politics and municipal issues.
Perhaps it is because as Doris explained, "...there are no problems around here" that the club is free to address issues outside their neighborhood. As we shall see this is quite different from self help organizations in the low income neighborhoods.

Apollo Heights, Chavis Heights and Walnut Terrace all share some of the same community problems characterized by low income developments. A high crime and suicide rate, drug addiction, family quarreling and a sense of desperation permeate the areas. Indeed, when asked to identify the problems in their neighborhood, nearly half mentioned what they considered to be very serious problems - for example, "unattended and disrespectful children" (caused by a lack of or inadequate playground and recreational facilities); "outsiders disrupting the neighborhood"; "stealing and fighting"; "drugs"; "not being able to get parents interested in helping out"; and "apartment repairs and maintenance."

When a resident joins an organization it is most often to address one of these problems. Why go outside the neighborhood searching for a cause when the neighborhood itself requires so much attention? This feeling is reflected in the following comments from the presidents of the Walnut Terrace and Chavis Heights Residence Councils. The first comments are from Josephine, a 48 year old widowed Head Start aide with four children.

Most of the problems are from outsiders that come in and some of the things I feel we need would be more recreation for our children. That's the main thing.

A very serious problem. We've tried several things and you know I've talked with Father Calloway (Black city councilman) and I told him the needs that the children wanted. Maybe a
swimming pool. I know that's not possible but we have the basketball court. Maybe a tennis court. Just so many things right here need to be wanted.

Josephine's only associational affiliations are with the Residence Council and the Interproject Residence Council. She remarked, "I have time for anything else what with work and I have one in high school still at home; like I tell her take care of your own first." When asked to further elaborate on this last remark she reluctantly explained that she had been recently chastised by an elected Black official for not joining other organizations to help "the Black community" and to stop "thinking only of this project." Her reaction was to let middle and upper income Blacks tend to those concerns because "none of them come down here."

The following comments are from Jessie, a retired waitress, who was the first Black woman elected to chair a committee on the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC).

Drugs...drugs are very bad, a very serious problem. I really don't know what can be done. If I knew I'd be at the police station everyday. We have a youth program here. We tried to petition years ago; the petition worked. The petition was for a better neighborhood; to screen residents that they moved into the projects. That's where the problem was, screening but they said with Board regulations they could not do that much screening. This is partly why the neighborhood is the way it is. The Residence Council was always involved. We had to petition. You think people in McDonald Acres (upper middle income Black neighborhood) don't screen.

The implications of these two comments are two fold. First, it is apparent that the neighborhoods are plagued with very serious problems that have to be addressed by someone. What is clear, too, is that these
two "leaders" of their respective neighborhoods believe that the only ones who will do anything to correct these problems and to make life better for the residents are the residents themselves—in cooperation (some would say forced cooperation) with the Housing Authority. Second, there seems to be a certain amount of animosity between social classes. Or, more specifically, between Blacks living in the projects and those living in middle class neighborhoods. Josephine and Jessie, as their comments suggest, both seem to feel that middle income Blacks should take a greater interest in the Housing Projects. Cheer baskets at Thanksgiving are not enough for these two women and for other women in their neighborhoods. While Josephine and Jessie have adopted the attitude that middle income involvement in the Projects leaves much to be desired, women in Biltmore Hills (remember Doris and the Lyndhurst Community Club) feel proud that they were able to donate food to the less fortunate.

What we have here is a divergence of opinion as to the degree of involvement. Both middle and low income women are aware of the needs and deprivations that exist. Middle income women see their role as an auxilliary one, mainly to fill in the gaps by providing food and clothing. Other problems—drugs, crime, lack of recreation facilities—are the responsibility of the Housing Authority, city government and human services. By participating in city politics and electing responsible officials, middle income women feel they have taken care of their obligation to the less fortunate. Let us again turn to Doris for
her assessment of this discussion on the degree of involvement. Speaking of rallies and supporting Black candidates, she remarked that "...one of the reasons Johnnie (her husband who is a junior high school principal) and I supported Father Calloway was so he could get in there and help everybody. There's not much we need out here but he did promise to put a recreation center over in Walnut Terrace. You know what I mean." Personal involvement, then, beyond the perfunctory holiday donations is seen as unnecessary.

But personal involvement is just what Josephine has called for. Because the women of Biltmore Hills are usually not physically and personally active in neighborhood projects they are often thought to be uncaring. Through her participation in CAC over the last several years, Jessie has begun to realize that perhaps the goals of the two socioeconomic groups are not so dissimilar. She remarked that "...all of 'us' (Blacks from other south Raleigh neighborhoods) are together on this. This other woman, lives over in Biltmore, she worked with me to get a downtown non-profit housing corporation to remodel housing. That's the most prosperous and best thing I say that ever happened to this Community Advisory Committee." Organizations like the CAC that bring the residents of different neighborhoods together help to foster not only cooperative behavior among Blacks but also help to dispel negative attitudes that form when there is little or no interclass contact.
Earlier in our discussion we made the point that among our sample, only women (with one exception) in the projects participated in self help clubs. Another distinguishing characteristic of self help organizations is their parochial vision.

Residents of the housing projects complained of burglaries, drug dealers and users, loitering children with nothing to do, noisy neighbors, lack of resident participation, and so forth. There were never any "new" problems that were unique to one area. One would expect that a sharing of similar problems and objectives would dictate cooperation between the projects or a binding together of residents to force the Housing Authority to take steps to improve living conditions. This was not the case. While many of the same kinds of clubs and organizations existed in each project there was hardly ever interproject cooperation. (The only exception was the Interproject Residence Council). So the focus of each organization was local and specific to that housing project even though they addressed the same kinds of problems. And, quite often, clubs confined their interest to one block (housing unit of ten apartments) within the neighborhood.

**Community Service Associations**

Participation in voluntary associations that hold specific interests outside neighborhood boundaries offers one opportunity for low income women to "broaden their horizon". But only four of the 37 low income women interviewed reported membership in such organizations. Two of the
women had become involved with VISTA, CETA and the CAC through their participation in the Residence Council. The third respondent was not a member of the Council and had been selected by her pastor to represent the community in the Raleigh Women's Club.

Myrtle, the fourth respondent, was active not only in the Residence Council but also in the Foster Parent program and in the Prevent Blindness Association. Both are outgrowths of her keen interest in children. She explains that

well it goes back to the child that we uh sheltered for a while. She was looking for something that she wasn't getting at home. And we decided hey we got an extra bed she can come spend some time and spend some time and ended up she was awarded to us by the Court. And having her there we felt we needed to get involved in Foster Parent to see what other people are going through with and see what we had gotten ourselves in and to see how we could work our way out when there was a problem. So it's really like a support group. I feel like all children should be exposed to very tight living. I am interested in anything that has to do with health and children. I am a health related person. If somebody say there's a health group going on I'm right there to see what's going on. What it's all about is to try to prevent blindness. We're trained to take the eye test and to see if children have myopia and to be able to refer them to agencies.

While only four of the low income women held membership in organizations outside their own neighborhood, the women of Biltmore Hills were more inclined to join. Five of the eleven women interviewed reported they were active in such groups as the Urban League, the Governor's Council for 2000, the Board of Child Watch and the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Task Force. (Refer to Appendix B). These organizations are service organizations with tasks to perform outside the boundaries of any one specific neighborhood. Membership is city-
wide and often interracial. Women in these organizations meet, associate and work with a very diverse group of people—people with varied ideas and backgrounds and from different areas of the city. But they all have a common, unifying purpose and interest in the goals of the organization. Middle income women are afforded the chance, unlike the low income women, to increase their contacts and awareness beyond parochial interests.

Why is it that more middle income women join these organizations? Perhaps it is as we said before, that middle income women have few problems in their neighborhood so when they elect to participate they have to go outside the immediate neighborhood to select a cause. Or perhaps it is because they already have greater and broader interests (than just neighborhood problems) that they become active in these associations.

Brenda, a 30 year old personnel assistant for the Capital Broadcasting Company, was asked why she joined the Urban League.

because I was interested in what the Urban League was on a local basis. I was at the organizational end of the thing; I joined when it first was starting up back in 1980. It is more a community organization, nothing political. It was a very good thing to start off with; they had a lot of people. It was really even racially mixed which sort of surprised me. Most of the business centered around getting a director and raising funds. It wasn’t very exciting. And then the director they had gotten from San Francisco quit after only two months. Then it was more discussion about getting somebody else. Not very stimulating stuff. I thought we should be doing something for Blacks in Raleigh, like the national Urban League. I thought... I wanted to get a Meals-on-Wheels program going in the urban renewal area—you know, where Southside use to be. And a community non-profit child care center for the women over in that same area. But what surprised me, the whites who showed up wanted to do the same
things. It was really they wanted to help the urban renewal somewhat. But they kept on about the director. My friends and I quit going about the same time. I still have a membership card.

While Brenda was dissatisfied with the local chapter of the Urban League, her comments are nonetheless enlightening. Because of her already well-established interests and concerns for the Black community, Brenda was interested in the goals of the national Urban League. When a local chapter of the League was being formed she elected to become involved. While active in other organizations, the Urban League is her only community organization affiliation. She became a member in the hopes of helping poor Blacks in the urban renewal areas by establishing an affordable child care center and a meals program for the elderly. When asked why she focused her attention on the urban renewal area instead of on Biltmore Hills, she remarked, "Sure I'm interested in Biltmore Hills; I'm interested in all Blacks. But the only problem here is loud students. Sometimes living bourgeois you forget the struggle of the Black underclasses. And before we can prepare them for the Revolution, we have first got to feed, clothe and shelter them. Prepare their bodies first, then their minds." Brenda found it necessary to go outside the confines of her neighborhood in order to be effective and to meet her goals for involvement.

As Brenda explained, membership in the League was diverse and interracial. She was afforded the opportunity to associate and to work with different people thus broadening her perspectives. Through this social contact Brenda found, much to her surprise, that there was a
mutuality of purpose unrelated to race; her goals and interests were also shared by many of the white members. Membership in the Urban League for Brenda as well as membership in the other "task" oriented organizations serves an important function. Working with other citizens in the city to solve problems and to achieve common goals fosters understanding and furthers cooperation between citizens. Middle income Black women involved in this type of organization meet and socialize with not only other Blacks but with whites as well. Interpersonal relationships are developed and awareness of municipal problems and supportive contacts are increased.

**Social and Family Associations**

Let us now turn to a discussion of social/fraternal and family organizations with 24% of the total responses. (Refer to Appendix A for a list of organizations). The two social classes were equally as likely to mention they belonged to this type of club with 32% of the responses from low income women and 33% of middle income responses falling into this category. (See Table 4). The women in our sample join these clubs to socialize, to make new friends and to provide entertainment for their families, especially the children. The YWCA and YMCA offer sports, games, dances and cultural enrichment programs. The YWCA in Biltmore Hills serves the Southside area Black youth. Family membership is inexpensive thus providing both middle and low income families an affordable recreation and entertainment outlet. Two of the women in our
sample, Liz from Apollo Heights and Cora from Biltmore Hills, had become members of the advisory board of the YWCA. Through her work on the board, Liz became active in Child Watch whose purpose was to protect children returning home from school by providing recreational shelter for those children with working parents. So while Liz said she had no community organization affiliation, her YWCA membership provides her with an opportunity to become involved. Also, this points up the fact that it is often difficult to categorize organizations. While the YWCA is chiefly a sports and recreation family organization, it also often serves as a community resource organization.

Another youth oriented organization, Guys and Dolls, is mostly a middle income family club with relatively expensive yearly membership dues. Only families with children are allowed to join. Mary, a charter member of Guys and Dolls, explains

it's social but it's mainly for the development of children. It's a family organization and in that we try to do with children everything that they need to participate in so far as education, political, social. And it's a total developmental program. It's family oriented. You have to have children to belong. And you have to be able to afford it. But the development of all aspects of our children is important.

Mary further explained that the club also provides a social outlet for the adults with activities such as dances, yearly cruises, dinner parties, games, etc. Additionally, club members often meet to discuss political issues. They endorse Black candidates, make financial contributions and work in campaigns. The purpose of club political activism is two fold. The overriding purpose, of course, is to provide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N=# of responses</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Professional</th>
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<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIDDLE INCOME WOMEN</td>
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<td>N = 6</td>
<td>N = 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
campaign funds and aide to deserving Black candidates both at the local and state level. Second, as Mary explained, the club wants to foster political efficacy and awareness among children and young adult members. "Club projects include", explained Mary, "manning the polls during the last primary and working for Acie Ward (Black female candidate for district judge). The youngsters really enjoyed it. Even the Tiny Tots group handed out leaflets."

Guys and Dolls and the Y Associations are mostly family organizations with special focus on the children. But for the most part clubs mentioned by our respondents provided a social outlet for the women themselves. Most of the associational memberships listed are fraternal orders and Greek sororities. Greek sororities, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Alpha Bets (wives auxilliary of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity), Delta Sigma Theta and Zeta Phi Beta, were an outlet for the college educated, middle income women. (The only exception was Myrtle of Apollo Heights who joined the Zeta sorority while in college). Fraternal orders, Daughter of Isis, Order of Eastern Star and the C's of Lebanon, served the low income women of the sample. It is easy to understand why low income women were not members of the Greek sororities since the pre-requisite for membership is a college degree. Only one of our low income women had attended and graduated from college. What is not so easily explained is the absence of middle income women from the fraternal orders. It may be explained away as a peculiarity of our sample. Or if we assume that both sororities and orders serve the same purpose for
these women, that of providing a meeting place for like-minded women, then membership in either is sufficient. That is, if a woman belongs to the Deltas her needs for socializing with other women and feelings of sisterhood are satisfied. There is no need to belong to a fraternal order. Low income women, too, have this same need for sisterhood. Since they cannot belong to the Greek sororities they join similar organizations such as fraternal orders. The answer may also lie in the history of fraternal orders. Originally, fraternal orders were organized in the Black community in the 1920's and 1930's by working class Blacks. Laborers, clerical workers, railroad workers, domestics, post office workers, etc. were the main occupations open to Blacks before the college system was made available. These mostly urban workers formed fraternal orders as a communication network and as a support system within the community. Today, we may be observing a continuance of the tradition of working class Blacks joining fraternal orders.

While the main purpose of these fraternities appears to be social, they do however engage in community services and political activities. Ruth, a 55 year old hospital labor and delivery room assistant, explained that the Daughters of Isis met twice a month to distribute food to the elderly and "to take'em on errands and get'em out of the house." The same kind of services were also mentioned by the other organizations. The sororities, in addition, were politically active, especially the Delta sorority. Lecia, a 24 year old Delta member explained that
we had a carpool taking the elderly out to vote in the last election. And we published brochures endorsing different candidates and we distributed them among the students who were eligible to vote. We're a public service organization dedicated to advocating first of all the welfare of Black women and promoting sisterhood.

Whether fraternal, Greek, family or child oriented, all of the respondents reported that their members were all Black. There were no interracial social clubs. As one young woman pointed out, "It's alright to work with them but when it comes to partying down-LATER!"

**Religious Affiliation**

Closely related to social and family club affiliation is church participation. Church membership, a much discussed trait in Black social behavior literature,(56) was reported by all but eight women (two middle income and six low income). Church and religious associations (See Appendix A) accounted for 20% of the total responses. While almost all of the women are involved in some kind of church activity, whether in a Bible Study Group, as Sunday school teacher, choir director, or as a Baptist Training Union (BTU) member, church affiliation seems to be more the method of participation for low income non-Council members. Of the sixteen responses, eleven were religious or church related affiliations. Usually church membership was the only associational contact. The church, then, plays a vital role in being the only group contact (excluding their jobs) these women make outside their own

(56) Drake and Clayton, Lenski, Washington have observed comparatively high rates of church membership and involvement in religious activities among Blacks.
neighborhood. Through the church both community and political work is made possible. One respondent from Walnut Terrace explained that through her association with Women Aglow she had become involved with young neighborhood teenage girls who were having family problems. She and several other Aglow members meet weekly (in the social hall of the church) with teenagers to discuss problems and to provide a support system for the girls so "...they can begin to use the inner strength God gave them and begin to shine and glow like God intended all his people."

Women Aglow was unique in the time and effort that it expended on this project, but it was not so different in its belief that the church should take an active role in the community. All of the religious groups reported at least some community involvement, the only difference being that of degree. The commitments ranged from providing food baskets during holidays to assisting the elderly to providing support groups for troubled Black teenagers.

Historically, Black churches have been an important tool in the fight for political equality. This is especially true of Black churches in Raleigh. Rev. George Ward, president of the NAACP, is a Baptist minister; the former Wake/Raleigh Community Action president was an elder in the Methodist AME Zion Church and Father Arthur Calloway, rector of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, is currently serving on the city council. Ministers and their congregations endorse local and state as well as national candidates. Issues relevant to the Black community are regularly discussed during Sunday sermons and prayer meetings. Often,
there is a political message intermingled with the spiritual words.

Sarah, a retired beautician, illustrates the point.

Sometimes Rev. Ward gets to preaching 'bout Reagan and how he's gonna take us aback 'fore Martin Luther King and the deacons is saying Amen and everybody gets to joining in and 'fore long he's gotcha believing. And he should know cause he was marching with King downtown when they wouldn't even let us go down to the ah to the hotel down there. Not even to the old Walgreens. So when he ah starts to preaching 'bout Reagan and how he's against King- yea I listens.

Suppose 'bout the only time I went to a rally was where Martin Luther King passes to Raleigh for his march to Washington. All the churches had to put up the marchers and feed them. I betchá we was here cooking all that day. And then we all had a meeting talking 'bout why they was on they way to Washington. And last month Rev. Ward asked all us to come hear Acie Ward cause she was the coloured woman for judge. I came to that but I was ah late.

Sarah lists membership in First Baptist Church as her only associational affiliation. Yet through this membership she has been involved in community affairs and has engaged in two separate political rallies. Like Sarah, many of the low income non-Council members were affiliated only with the church. This, however, does not mean they are not involved in other community service self help activities or even in political events. It is important to understand that religious affiliations are an essential part of these women's lives, providing recreation for the children, an outlet for them to socialize with their friends and offering an opportunity to help others in the neighborhood as well as satisfying their spiritual needs. Hanna, a middle aged respondent who works as a cook in a restaurant, explained what her church group, Helping Hand, means to her.
After working with whitey from about six o'clock 'til it's dark, I just wanna come back here (Walnut Terrace) and rest. After supper with the kids I go down on Monday and Wednesday to Helping Hand. Just to help some of the old people. And to see my friends. You know it just makes me feel something. And God likes that. Then going back out to the K&W (restaurant) just aren't quite as bad.

The quote illustrates several points. Helping Hand, for Hanna, provides a refuge from the oppressive forces found in white society—more specifically, at the K&W restaurant. After working in what she perceives to be a hostile and uncomfortable environment, she seeks support and nurturing from others like herself. This seems to also have been the case for many of the other women in our sample who more often than not entered into organizations with Black and female membership. This is especially true of the religious, social and self help organizations. Regardless of social class or occupation these Black women sought out others like themselves. Even middle class women who belonged to interracial, professional organizations(57) such as the Association of Classroom Teachers and the North Carolina Teachers Association exhibited the need for support that can only be obtained from others who share similar life experiences. Myrdal and Orum's compensation theory(58) suggests that many Blacks, like Hanna and the other women in our sample, enter into voluntary associations primarily as a means of adjusting to the structural barriers they confront in society. Black voluntary associations such as Helping Hand, Guys and

(57) Professional organizations received 8% of the total responses. See Appendix A for a list of organizations.

(58) Gunnar Myrdal (1944); A.M. Orum (1966).
Dolls and Daughters of Isis serve as mechanisms for ego-reinforcement which cannot be obtained elsewhere in a racist milieu. Unlike Myrdal and Orum, we see this "escape into Black voluntary associations" as positive behavior rather than pathological. It is positive behavior for relatively deprived groups to establish a network of support within their own community especially when such support has been denied in society at large.

Hanna's quote also illuminates another purpose that is served through membership in Black voluntary associations. Hanna participates "just to help some of the old people. And to see my friends." One can infer that one of her goals is to help people in the neighborhood. One of the ways to maximize that goal (and to be with friends at the same time) is through collective behavior. But are Hanna and the women of our sample aware of the utility of organization? Each respondent was asked whether or not she thought Black women should organize and work together as a group or work as individuals in order to get things done. Thirty-eight of the 48 women thought that collective behavior was the better method of getting things done. As our data makes clear, they are aware of the utility of organization as a means of achieving group goals. And for members of the Residence Council, they see their own involvement as having such results.

(59) The question asked was, "Some people feel that Black women should organize and work together as a group in order to get things done. Others feel Black women should not organize in this way. They should work as individuals improving themselves and making their ideas known. How do you feel?" The same questions was asked for Blacks.
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

During the summer of 1982, Raleigh was very much alive with political fervor and activism. The Raleigh-Wake Community Action (RWCA) committee, Black Women Democratic Caucus, Wake Advancement for Men and the Black Democratic Caucus had formed a "coalition" to organize Black neighborhoods to turnout and support several Black candidates who were in heated primary battles for municipal, state and judicial positions. The two most contested campaigns were for county sheriff and district judge. John Baker, a retired professional football player and local Black legend, was running for his second term as sheriff against Tracy Bolling, a white candidate. Bolling was supported by the white community and several white city councilmen who remarked that, "we were caught with our pants down last time, but not this election." (60)

Baker's first term was made possible by the almost unanimous support of the Black electorate and through the inadvertent "help" of white voters. Opposing Baker in the 1980 election were two white candidates who offered white voters a choice. The white electorate split its vote between the two white candidates thereby leaving unchecked the solidarity of the Black vote to elect John Baker as sheriff. In the 1982 election, however, Baker faced only one challenger; the Coalition set about warning the Black community of the danger of losing the election if there was not a high turnout on June 29.

(60) Personal comments made to city councilman Father Arthur Calloway in June 1982 as related to the author by Father Calloway in a personal interview.
The second primary contest took place over the selection of district judge. Acie Ward, a Black female lawyer and assistant dean of North Carolina Central University School of Law, was pitted against two white candidates: Wake County assistant district attorney Mike Payne and private attorney Joyce Hamilton. Ward had been appointed by Governor Hunt to serve as judge in the newly created district judge seat; this was her first election. The Black Women Democratic Caucus actively campaigned for her by trying to mobilize Black women in Raleigh who outnumber Black men in registering to vote by a two to one margin.

In addition, Black voters were also being urged by the Coalition to demonstrate political savvy and sophistication by supporting several white candidates, most notably John Massey, candidate for county commissioner. Massey, if elected, would support John Baker's proposed budget request while the incumbent, J.T. Knott had been against the Baker budget.

Much was at stake in this primary election: reelection of a Black sheriff and the election of a Black judge in a state that has the largest proportion of Black prisoners per 100,000 population in the nation.\(^\text{61}\) Black leaders in the community had banded together in order to deliver a cohesive electoral force. Desiree White, president of the Black Women Democratic Caucus, remarked that,

For the first time in a long time we all realized the utility of unity, of organization and of coalition building. The Woman’s Caucus was surely going to support Acie. We hadn’t had a Black woman running for such an important office. There

was Judge Greene that we helped elect, but a Black woman never before. At first we feared that WAM (Wake Advancement for Men) wouldn't support Acie, nor the Caucus (Black Democratic Caucus) at large but it never became an issue. All the Black organizations here and in the county formed the Coalition.

With Black leaders mobilized to organize the Black electorate and with so much at stake, how successful were the leaders in getting Blacks to the polls? According to Wake County Board of Election statistics, 47% of registered Blacks voted in the June primary compared to 34% turnout for the white electorate. For the first time in the political history of Raleigh, the Black turnout rate exceeded that of whites. This "success" also translated into electoral successes. Incumbent John Baker easily retained his seat as sheriff. Acie Ward, too, was victorious but did not win a clear enough majority to escape a run-off election. (62) John Massey, white candidate for county commissioner, also was elected.

The three (63) neighborhoods in our sample also exhibited relatively high levels of turnout for an off year primary election. Walnut Terrace had 703 registered voters. Of these, 249 or 35% voted in the primary. Chavis Heights reported a turnout rate of 44% with 572 of 1,296 voting.

(62) Acie Ward subsequently lost to Mike Payne by a 2 to 1 margin in the July runoff election. Black turnout of 33% still exceeded that of whites by 12 points.

(63) Apollo Heights is not included. Of the 1,475 registered voters in that district, 353 were white. It was therefore impossible to distinguish this third of the voters. The author decided that rather than contaminate the statistics it was best to exclude the district. The districts that included Chavis Heights, Walnut Terrace and Biltmore Hills reported 17, 21 and 28 whites respectively.
With one of the highest turnout figures in the city (only one other district reported a higher turnout rate of 59%), Biltmore Hills reported that of its 1,670 registered voters 56% actually voted.

Nearly half of the women interviewed reported they had voted in the June primary. Why did almost half of the women vote in an off year election? Sarah explained, "Lord, they 'bout worried me to death 'bout voting. They came knocking on the door seems like everyday. And even on Sunday they was no peace. Rev. Ward preached 'bout how hard Martin Luther King died for us to vote and 'bout this colored woman". Brenda, an active member of the Black Women Democratic Caucus, also shed light on the primary participation, "Blacks hadn't been this organized since we elected Clarence Lightner several years ago. The Coalition was formed by WRCA and we divided up the city for canvassing Black neighborhoods. It was complete because on election day we were carpooling all day and I think the turnout was over 50%." It would seem that the political climate was conducive to participation. Several attractive and popular Black candidates were running for office. Black leadership was unified in their support for candidates and was very effective in getting the word to the Black community to vote. Also enhancing the turnout rate is the community norm or expectation of voting. Many Blacks accept voting as an obligation, a civic duty that must be performed. So a favorable political climate plus the community norm of participation led to a turnout rate of 48%.
This expectation of electoral participation through voting is further reflected in our data. Each respondent was asked how often she had voted in local elections and for president. Of the 48 women only 7 reported never voting in either type of election. (One middle income woman had never voted for president but had voted in a local election. One low income woman had never voted in a local election but had voted for president. See Table 5). So voting is the rule rather than the exception for the women in our sample. Before discussing the rule (the voters of our sample), let us first turn to an examination of the "exception", to women who have never voted in a presidential or local election.

(64) Each respondent was asked, "In the elections for president since you have been old enough to vote, how often would you say you have voted - every election, most, about half, less than half, never?" The same question was asked about local elections for mayor and councilman.
Table 5

Frequency of Voting in Presidential Elections by Income Level

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<th></th>
<th>Every Election</th>
<th>Most Elections</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LOW INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WOMEN N = 21</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<td>42%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td><strong>MIDDLE INCOME</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN N = 6</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=# of women
Row Percentages
Total Percentages

CD Ln
Non-voters

Voting behavior research has indicated time and again that citizens who are young or very old, who are poor and uneducated are the least likely to participate in the electoral process. These are the disadvantaged in society who often lack the skills, motivation, or desire to vote. These characteristics also distinguish the non-voters in our sample. The seven women who had never voted were residents of the housing projects. Four of the women were unemployed; three were dependent on AFDC and the fourth lived on Social Security benefits. The other women worked as waitress, food server in a cafeteria and as hospital housekeeper. Their incomes are meager yet are the sole source of support for the family; all but one are head of their household. So contrary to what some researchers have suggested,(65) being head of the household did not "spill-over" into electoral participation for these seven women. What does receive support, however, is the observation in extant research of the attenuating affect small children have on the participation rate of the mother. Five of the women have pre-schoolers who are at home during the day. Small children who must be taken care of are time consuming, leaving little time or energy for political involvement—even voting. Their existence is one constantly concerned with children, household chores and survival. Time and energy therefore must be guarded very jealously. There is often no "space" for political interest, a point 

(65) Lansing, Marjorie and Matthews and Prothro
that is further supported by the lack of political knowledge and interest the women express. Level of political knowledge was tested in a very general way with questions about the name of the mayor and the kind of job he was doing and questions concerning the governor. (66) As a group, non-voters were distinct from voters in the level of political information. None of the non-voters were able to name the mayor correctly or say what kind of job he was doing for the city. This compares with 18 out of 41 of the voters who lacked this information. Awareness of the governor was somewhat higher. Four of the seven non-voters knew his name but were unable to give any other information. Voters, again expressed more awareness, 35 correctly identified the governor and were able to make comments about his performance in office. Lack of political knowledge is further reflected in the women’s inability to name Black leaders in Raleigh. John Baker, sheriff, is the only name mentioned by six of the women; the seventh woman was able to identify two others, Ralph Campbell who is former president of WRCA and a member of her church and Father Calloway, city councilman and rector of the church.

Because of time constraints and family obligations these women also expressed a low interest in politics and government. Asked how often

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(66) Respondents were asked, "We are interested in how well known the community leaders are in different places. Have you heard anything about the mayor, like is he a good mayor, a poor one, or about average. Or haven't you heard anything about him?" "Do you happen to remember the name of the mayor". "Does the name of the governor come to mind?"
they follow what's going on in government, (67) comments ranged from "every now and then" to "haven't been interested" to "try to forget it". The voters of our sample, on the other hand, while not overwhelmingly interested on a daily basis, did express greater levels of interest, especially during elections. This lack of interest among non-voters seems not to be merely a function of education. The non-voters' level of education attainment is not that much different from the voters -- as discussed later.

Time and energy drain is further reflected in the lack of participation or involvement in voluntary associations. Only two report such affiliation, in Helping Hand and in Unmarried Mothers. The others were not involved at all -- not even in a church or religious organization. (We return to a more complete discussion of these women in section four).

One of the things we know about the voting cycle is that a young adult is least likely to vote. As people approach middle age and become settled in the community, voting reaches a peak gradually declining among those over 60. We divided our sample into three life stages: young adults ranged from ages 19 to 34; middle age from ages 35 to 49; and older adults from ages 50 to 81. Each stage contained about an equal number of respondents with 17, 15 and 16 respectively. Of our seven non-voters, five were young (ages 19, 23, 24, 29, and 30), one

(67) Respondents were asked, "Some people seem to follow what's going on in local government and public affairs whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. How about you? How often do you follow what's going on in government?"
middle age of 47 years and one older adult of 74 years. Of the young adults, then, almost a third had never voted (non-voters). But more than age seems to be affecting their voting (or non-voting) behavior. Non-voters also had slightly lower levels of education with one high school graduate, three who had not completed high school and one with two years of college. Compared with the education of the voters (three young voters reported not finishing high school, four were high school graduates and five had completed college), non-voter levels were lower but not by very much. But the slight difference in education levels plus the fact that nonvoters evidenced several other characteristics associated with non-participation contributed to nullify their voting behavior. A profile of the women demonstrates the point. They were 1) young in age, 2) low income, 3) less educated, 4) had small children at home to care for, 5) worked in low, unstimulating occupations, and 6) were not involved (save one) in voluntary associations. Women that reported one, two or even three of these same characteristics were able to overcome those factors enough to go on to vote. But the cumulative effect of the characteristics seems to be so overwhelming as to negate political participation.

Voters

Let us return now to a discussion of the "norm", to the voters in our sample. Forty-one of the respondents reported voting in either a presidential or local election since they have been old enough to vote.
The voters are low income as well as middle income, high school graduates and college graduates, active and inactive in voluntary associations.

While most have voted at some time, there is a difference among the women on the frequency of voting and in the type of election. Income seems to make a small but important difference in the frequency with which women vote. Low income women are just as likely to say they vote in every presidential election (21 of 37) as are middle income women (6 of 11). But the figures may be a product of our sample. Remember that half of the low income women (18 respondents) were selected from the Residence Council and are therefore "active". What we may be observing here is the influence of club affiliation on voting. Middle income women vote more often; they report a higher percent saying they vote in most or about half of the presidential elections. Ten of the eleven middle income women vote more than half the time while low income women report 27 of 37 voting more than half the time. (See Table 5). The pattern is much the same in local elections for mayor and city councilman. The same number of middle income women (10) and low income women (27) reported voting more than half the time. But the frequency of voting in every local election is less for the low income group. Six women from the middle income group report voting in every presidential election as well as in every local election, but only 17 from the low income group reported voting in every local election. This is a loss of four women from the presidential election which suggests that the
falloff in voting is greater for the low income group in local off-year elections. Income then makes a difference, albeit a small one, in whether or not one selects to vote in a less salient (non-presidential) election.

More important than income, activism is closely associated with vote frequency. Twenty-three of the respondents are classified as actives, active in policy related organizations such as the Residence Council, active in community or political activities. Twenty-five women are classified as inactives, i.e. they are not politically active and their affiliations are confined to religious, social or family clubs that are not involved in community or political affairs. The differences in vote frequency between the two groups is great; nineteen members of the active group reported they voted in every presidential election while only eight of the inactives reported they voted that frequently. (See Table 6). From our data we can make the observation that women who are associated with a policy related organization are more likely to vote in every presidential and local election. This is especially true for low income women who belonged to the Council. They were frequent voters, reporting voting in, if not every election, most elections regardless of the salience of that election. Low income women without affiliation in organizations concerned with community or political issues were not likely to vote more than about half the time in presidential or local elections. Participation in organizations promotes awareness of community issues and stimulates the woman to seek resources to correct
or address those concerns. Several members of the Residence Council stressed the importance of being involved in the Council on their electoral participation. Deborah, treasurer of the Chavis Heights Council, explained that

I always used to vote for president cause that was the most and biggest vote. Even before I joined the Council I voted for Kennedy and then Johnson and I believe Humphrey after that. Anyway, I get all mixed up but every president I voted for. Didn't think much of other times though. But the Council wanted to get this center some equipment and things so we voted for the Canon woman for mayor and Mr. Meyer that said we could have it. . . . That's been years ago but before then I didn't pay much vote to the other times. Now I'm there all day working at the polls.

For Deborah, Council involvement stirred interest in local politics to accompany her already established interest and participation in presidential elections. Another respondent, Joyce, identifies the Council as the catalyst for her vote in both presidential and local elections.

When I moved out here they asked me to join the Council. And I found out that you have to watch those jokers. You have to make them listen to you downtown. So I started voting for city mayor and council and then for governor. By that time it was for president and I voted for the first time because I was old enough.

And finally, Kaye remarked that

Guess it started with my work at the Council many years ago, before you were born. We couldn't even vote back then but we could ask the whites on the Authority to make things better. So I was already pretty interested by the time the vote got around to us.

The more active a woman is in voluntary associations the more likely she is to vote in every election. Belonging to two or more
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<th>N= # of women</th>
<th>Active</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
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organizations significantly increases the chances of voting in most elections. Four of the five women active in two organizations voted in every presidential election; five of seven active in three clubs and nine of ten active in four clubs or more reported voting in every election. The same pattern is observed for local elections. So activism, and the interest it engenders in community affairs, often acts as a stimulator to vote more frequently -- especially in less salient elections; that is, as a catalyst for the electoral behavior of low income women.

The number of organizations is not related to the voting behavior of our middle income women who are frequent voters regardless of levels of activism.

Campaigns, pollwork and political rallies

Twenty-three women in our sample reported they had at some time been involved in campaign and/or poll work which ranged from stuffing envelopes for former Black panther Larry Little, to transporting voters to the polls to working as precinct judge. (See Appendix C). Polling activity was almost always confined to the woman's immediate neighborhood since the precinct polling place was often located in her neighborhood. This is especially true for Walnut Terrace, Chavis Heights and Apollo Heights. Polls were either in the community center (Walnut Terrace) or in school buildings (Chavis Heights and Apollo Heights) within the projects. (The polling area for Biltmore Hills was
also a school building but outside neighborhood boundaries.) Many of the low income women volunteered comments on the influence the proximity of the booths had on their willingness to work at the polls. Because the polls were in the neighborhood and within walking distance there was not a problem of accessibility or of transportation for the women. So the "cost" of working at the polls was minimal. Additionally, working at the polls afforded the women an opportunity to socialize with other neighbors who came to vote. Stella, who has assisted voters at the polls as precinct judge and voting machine operator for several years, illustrates the point that precinct work is often a time of meeting and chatting with friends.

Lord, last month at the primary I saw Annie Johnston. Thought she was dead; hadn't seen her in years. In years. And we just carried on and on. And she didn't even vote either we got so carried away ... she came back later and said she had forgot to vote first time. (Laughter).

Campaign involvement for our women was confined to working for Black candidates, most notably for Clarence Lightner and John Baker. Several Council members were active in organizing their neighborhoods to support Lightner's 1973 bid for mayor; they passed out campaign literature, helped to register their neighbors and held meetings in his behalf. More recently Council members campaigned among their neighbors for John Baker in the 1982 June primary. For many, Baker was a former classmate from the days of segregation when J.W. Ligon was the only high school open to Blacks. They were helping a personal friend, someone they knew; there was a certain amount of racial pride evident in their campaign.
work and feelings for him. This was also true for the middle income women who worked in Baker's and Lightner's campaign. Often they were personal friends of Baker and especially of Lightner and his family who belonged to many of the same social and family clubs as the women and the same fraternities as their husbands.

Being involved in voluntary associations has an influence on whether a woman will engage in campaign or polling activities. Of the women who belonged to policy related organizations, 15 of the 23 reported participating in campaigns and at the polls. Compare this with only 8 of the 25 inactives who participated in these activities. One of the reasons that membership in a policy related organization has an effect on a low income woman's participation in electoral politics (other than voting) is that affiliation with these groups often brings her into contact with community issues. She has a source of information that makes her aware of neighborhood, community and city issues and makes available or salient to her methods of addressing those issues. It is often through her club that she is asked to attend a rally, join a campaign or to help out at the polls; she is a part of that network which communicates the necessity of political participation. Voluntary affiliation does not, however, have the same influence on the middle income women who were involved in campaign and precinct work regardless of voluntary association affiliation. For them, it is not necessary to be affiliated with a club to be a part of the "network"; other avenues not open to low income women are often available to them. Through
personal friendship and contact with candidates and often through their career or profession they become aware and involved in issues they want to address.

For the low income women, poll participation was almost an exclusive activity of Residence Council members. Several of the women informed this author that it was the responsibility of the Council to staff polls on election day. Democratic Caucus and WRCA officials use the Council as contacts within the neighborhoods to make sure the precinct is adequately staffed. Council members are therefore "tapped" to be involved in political activities other than just voting.

Compared to women in campaign and poll activities, more women report having attended a political rally of some kind, whether to support a candidate, to oppose Reaganomics or to support Civil Rights. The most often mentioned rally was in support of both Black and white political candidates. (See Appendix C).

**PARTICIPATION IN PROTEST ACTIVITIES**

Demonstrations, marches and sit-ins are non-traditional methods of making demands on the political system, methods often used by powerless groups in society who have no other means of making their voices heard. Groups lacking in conventional political resources often step outside the traditional boundaries of political discourse by taking their demands directly to the public. Protest behavior by powerful groups is forceful behavior that pushes that group's concerns into the forefront.
of public consciousness. Once group concerns are in public view
decisionmakers must attempt to address those issues either with material
or symbolic rewards. Ethnic minorities, women, Blacks and students have
used protest behavior to not only force decisionmakers to meet their
demands but also to capture public sentiment and support.(68)

Politically powerless groups are not the only groups to use protest
behavior. Groups that have access to political resources (for example
labor unions and professional organizations such as the North Carolina
Educators Association) frequently use non-traditional tactics. Group
members march and demonstrate as a show of force and solidarity. They,
too, want to make their issues and concerns known to the public and to
policymakers. Whether the group is a relatively powerless one or has
political clout the use of protest behavior serves to capture the
attention of the public, particularly the media, thereby forcing
lawmakers into action.

Many of the women in our sample reported they had used non-
traditional methods of participation. Seventeen of the 48 women
interviewed reported some kind of protest behavior. The activities
mentioned fall into four broad categories: marches and demonstrations
in support of Civil Rights issues in the 1960's and early 1970's;
protests for salary and wage increases through labor unions and
professional organizations; demonstrations in support of welfare rights;
and student demonstrations to support local college issues. The most
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(68) See Michael Lipsky, 1968, for a discussion of how powerless groups
can effectively use "Protest as a Political Resource".
often mentioned protest activities were those that took place during the
decade of Civil Rights activism. Nearly a third of the responses were
related to Martin Luther King's visit to Raleigh in 1963. King spent a
week in the capital city that year working with Black community leaders
to end segregation in local businesses -- especially in downtown hotels
and restaurants. The week of organization ended with sit-ins at the
Woolworth restaurant and Southern Hotel and with a march through the
city to the steps of the capitol building. Seven respondents
participated in either the sit-ins or the march. Other Civil Rights
activities included demonstrations against job discrimination and in
support of school integration; the march on Washington in 1963; and
protests of King's death in 1968. (See Appendix C for a more complete
list of activities).

The second type of protest behavior most often mentioned were
activities that demanded higher salaries and pay increases. Two of the
low income women reported taking part in marches sponsored by their
unions for better wages. Most responses, however, came from the
teachers in our sample. Several had taken part in marches to the state
capitol to try to persuade lawmakers to raise state teacher's salaries.
The North Carolina Education Association and the Association of
Classroom Teachers were sponsors of various marches. Doris, an active
member of both the NCEA and ACT, explained the importance of these
marches.

You know in North Carolina teachers can't have a union or go
on strike but our professional organizations are a lobbying
agent for us. ACT helped to elect and supported Jim Hunt who
promised a pay increase and support for education. You know North Carolina teachers are ranked 48 in teacher’s pay. Now you know that’s disgraceful. People on welfare in New York city make more than we do. After everything else failed ACT called for a statewide march to confront Hunt. It took two marches with nearly 20,000 teachers and their families but we finally got a raise. Not as much as we wanted but a raise anyway.

One older woman who had been teaching for several years said she never believed in marches or in protest activities but because "... the NCEA sponsored the rallies and we needed the raises so badly", she decided to "... go down there and march on the capitol. Guess that makes me a revolutionary."

And lastly, Cecelia remarked that "... actually I was surprised that the older teachers at my school took part. I guess that when it affects your pocketbook you get out there. I know I did. But Lawrence and I had done this kind of thing in college." This is a good point; even women who had previously thought negatively about the use of non-traditional methods of influence were persuaded to march. Perhaps this can be attributed to two reasons: first, the act was given legitimacy by the support and endorsement of the professional organization; second, the issue dealt with, as Cecelia called it, "the pocketbook," with economic issues that directly affect living standards.

The third category of activities were in support of welfare rights and benefits. Four Council members had organized and participated in the "take-over" of the Human and Welfare Services offices in January of 1982. The Welfare Rights Organization had been discussing with the agency the undue hardship the periodic delays in AFDC checks had on
welfare recipients. Kaye explained, "every few months the checks would be late so in January we was getting nowhere with the welfare agency. So we just marched down there and sat there until them checks was issued." According to Kaye, the checks were issued within a few hours.

The last category of activities took place while the woman was in college. Local college issues included demonstrating for a traffic light at a dangerous intersection on campus, disrupting Daniel Moynihan's address at graduation ceremonies and marching to keep Black colleges from becoming part of the University of North Carolina system. These activities were all mentioned by the young middle income women.

Which of the women in our sample were most likely to participate in protest activities? The eight middle income women account for most of the women with only three not engaging in protest behavior. Compare that with the nine of 37 women of low SES. The middle income women felt more comfortable with protest behavior having first taken part in such activities most often while in college. This feeling was important for the middle aged cohorts who were in college during the heyday of protest activity. They all attended Southern Black colleges during a time when Black institutions of higher learning were engulfed in confrontations and protests. Only one woman, however, reported actually going to a restaurant counter and sitting there. That role was usually thought too dangerous for female students. More of the women had marched in larger demonstrations where the chance of personal injury was not as great. As students they became accustomed to using non-traditional methods of
meeting objectives so that when they left college and took their places in society they were already familiar with one way of influencing the political system. And for many, they were acquainted with protest methods before they were familiar with voting.

Young middle income women who attended college after the "turbulent sixties" also reported protest behavior while in college -- but of a very different nature. Their activities (with one exception) were to support local college issues such as disruptions at graduation ceremonies and demonstrations for a stop light on campus. The one exception, while still a college issue, involved 13 of the traditionally Black universities and colleges in North Carolina. Three women said they were involved in this march to preserve the Black identity of the colleges.

The college experience provides a conducive environment in which students can experiment with protest behavior. (69) College students, according to Keniston (1968), are in a transitory stage of life; at the end of adolescence and just on the brink of adulthood. These young "adults" are not yet involved in the institutions of society, in particular, the institutions of occupation and family. They are detached from organizations and have no long lasting commitments in society. This is the time they are most receptive to new and perhaps radical ideas and behavior. (70) As students they have few material

(69) Lipsky's article (1968) suggests that college students, as a powerless group, could effectively use protest as a resource to obtain their goals.
possessions that can be threatened, e.g. no home, jobs or social status
that can be taken away in retribution for their activities. Of course
students can be expelled but college administrators are often tolerant
of student activities, at least more tolerant than perhaps employers
would be. So many students leave their college days already aware of
the utility of protest behavior.

In a study of Black student protestors during the Civil Rights
Movement, Matthews and Prothro observed that the protestors tended to be
students at the better (i.e. private or larger, urban) Black colleges
located in communities where white hostility to the protests was likely
to be relatively mild. (71) The two Black colleges in Raleigh are private
institutions. Financial dependence on private philanthropy (largely
Northern) differs from financial dependence on a southern state
legislature, thus the college administrators and faculty may have been
more tolerant of protest behavior than state supported institutions
threatened with faculty firings and school closings. Also, Raleigh
whites, while opposing the civil rights efforts of students, were not as
violent or as vocal in their objections as other urban areas in the
South.

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(70) See Kenneth Keniston, 1968, especially chapter 8 for a discussion
of youth's involvement in protest movements. Other readings
include D. Gastwirth, 1965; and Solomon and Fishman, 1963.

Many of the middle income women in our sample were teachers in public schools in North Carolina. And as teachers, they were members of the North Carolina Education Association. (Some were also members of ACT; membership was not compulsory as it was in NCEA). These professional organizations serve several purposes. North Carolina teachers are prohibited by law from forming a union and are prohibited (as state employees) from striking. The NCEA and ACT serve as quasi unions -- working as a liason between teachers and administrators, providing a support system for its members; and, most importantly, negotiating with lawmakers in contract disputes. The two professional groups are highly respected and influential. When they called for a march, members responded. Lawmakers understood the influence and political clout the associations have at their disposal. A powerful voting bloc, teachers in the state have claimed and been granted credit for the election of governor Hunt in the last election. So when teachers marched en masse the legislators listened and finally voted a pay raise. For a few of the women, especially the older cohorts, one of the reasons they agreed to participate in the march was because of the NCEA endorsement. The act was therefore "safe". But for others protest behavior was no stranger. They had marched in the sixties in college and felt comfortable.

Nine of the 37 low income women also reported having engaged in some kind of protest activity. Of the nine, seven were members of the Residence Council and their protest activity took place as part of that
club membership. Four were quite "active" in protest behavior having organized the sit-ins of the welfare agency and participated in at least one or two other protest activities (either in a march to demand an increase in union wages or to protest the lack of modernization in apartments or in the Martin Luther King march).

The final concern with protest behavior is the degree to which participation in protest behavior is related to participation in traditional activities, i.e. in electoral politics. Do those who participate in protest acts also engage in traditional behavior? Or, do they bypass the traditional route? The data from our sample show that "protestors" do not confine their efforts to nontraditional behavior. In fact, 12 of the 17 protestors reported voting in every presidential election; 10 of the 17 voted in every local election. While the majority of the women do not engage in protest acts, most of those who do participate in protest behavior have either previous or parallel experience with the more traditional processes. The protestors use protest behavior in addition to voting and not instead of voting.

The use of traditional means of participation by Black protestors has not yet been fully researched. But in a 1969-70 study of 300 Black respondents in New Orleans, Pierce and Carey observed that "protestors" did not confine their efforts to nontraditional behavior. None of the Blacks identified by Pierce and Carey as "high level protestors" were below the median level of traditional participation. In other

(72) Pierce and Carey, 1971, p. 208-209.
words, Blacks actively involved in protest activities were equally as active in traditional acts such as voting and working in campaigns. Clearly the current study of Raleigh women and the New Orleans study suggest that protesters are not depressed or withdrawn from the system but may instead be quite efficacious and believe it is expedient and necessary to use all avenues—whether inside or outside accepted norms of behavior—to achieve their objectives.

ALIENATION AND APATHY AS PARTICIPATION

Young. Low SES. High school dropout. Parents without partners. Unemployed or employed in unstimulating jobs. These are the characteristics of four of the five women in our sample who were not part of the process of public policymaking. The fifth, a middle age woman, shares the same characteristics as the younger women with the exception of having no small children. These women reported no voluntary association affiliation; they were not involved in community, church or political activities, had never voted and had not participated in a protest activity. They had totally excluded themselves from public decisionmaking. Elvira is typical (with the exception of two years of college education) of the non-participants. She is a 23 year old, divorced mother of a two year old. Elvira must provide for herself and her child on a fixed income. Elvira has not always been unemployed; she worked as a cook two years ago but was laid off after only seven months. Since that time she has been unable to find a suitable job. So she must
depend on AFDC. The two-year-old is her life. She has immersed herself in his safety and well-being. In fact, one characteristic of Elvira and of all the nonparticipants is that they describe themselves in terms of children and household tasks. When asked to tell the interviewer something about themselves, they made comments such as, "just a woman raising children" or "I have two children, nothing" or "just trying to make it for my babies". These comments are different from the other women in our sample who described themselves more in personality terms such as "not conceited", "a good personality and able to get along with everybody" or "a good Christian".

Elvira also reported that she had hardly any interest in political issues or events; she only paid attention or watched the news "every now and then". This lack of interest is further reflected in her inability to correctly name the mayor or governor. She was only able to identify John Baker as a prominent Black leader. If the news broadcast did not have immediate relevance for her she was not interested. The only time she reported she was interested in the news enough to watch every day was in January 1982 when there were delays with the AFDC checks and when several Black children were abducted from their yards last November.

Several comments made by Elvira illustrate her life.

Clubs? . . . none right now because of transportation. That's the only reason. Transportation problems.

When he get in school I think it may be a little bit easier. I'll have time to do something for myself.
Right now, see I gotta support him and that's my first thing so . . .

To have a big separate rent and try to support a kid it's kind of hard.

I feel so useless sometimes just sitting around wanting to do something but I don't wanna go out there and make no chump change 3.75 an hour. I think I'm worth more than that.

Like Elvira, Barbara is also divorced. She is 29 years old with two children, a three and six year old. She has a 10th grade education. Barbara worked as a clinic aide at Wake Memorial Hospital a few years ago but has been unemployed for six years now. Her survival is also dependent on subsidies from the government. Barbara's lifestyle is much like Elvira; both are young parents without partners and unemployed. Their concerns, too, are much the same -- survival of their family.

Barbara commented,

I'm not doing (anything) because I've got two children right now. Right now all I want me is a job. I can't afford to go to work and pay a sitter so I'm trying to wait on school as a permanent sitter for myself. I won't have to get 'em anything cause that's a state law.. And they gone go to school. She'll be seven in September and my baby's three. So she'll get to go to Headstart next year if Reagonomics don't take all of them out.

Even though Barbara and Elvira do not have job responsibilities outside the home, there is still no space in their lives for political events. They evaluate themselves and their existence in terms of their children. It is as if their lives are "on hold" until the children are at least of school age and not the total responsibility of the mother for every hour of the day. Childraising is all consuming and made all the more difficult by the lack of a partner to help share the burden, both financially and emotionally.
One can imagine that if the time constraints were restrictive for Elvira and Barbara who were providing for their children without outside employment, then the demands on a working mother must be tremendous. Louise, a 30 year old food server, is the single mother of three children (ages 12, 10 and 7). She has a ninth grade education. Louise explained why she had never voted, "I don't have much time with three children and I work. On Saturday and Sundays, too. I didn't even register".

The one woman who was not a young adult was Hattie, a 47 year old Wake Hospital housekeeper. She, too, is a divorced parent but her youngest is 20 years old and no longer lives at home. We might expect that a woman at Hattie's lifestage would be more active. She has no small children to take care of, and plenty of time to devote to activities outside the home. Unlike the first three women Hattie did not mention time constraints or being tired, but she did describe herself as being "sickly". She explained that she was not involved in voluntary associations because,

ain't none of them worth it. I don't wanna be bothered with them groups. All they want is your money anyway. Even the church. Always begging for money. Ain't worth it that's all.

And the reason she never voted,

ain't worth the bother. They gone do what they want to do anyhow. Just a lot of useless bother. Won't nothing change I'll still be sitting here no matters what they do. I never voted and don't plan to. Don't ask me nothing else on voting no more.
Hattie's reasons for not participating are somewhat different from those given by Elvira and Barbara. The emphasis is not on childraising but rather on disenchantment with the people around her; this includes her neighbors (note her comments on clubs and the church) and elected officials. She was not satisfied with her life, disliked the neighborhood and avoided her neighbors. When asked to name important Black people or Black leaders in Raleigh, she replied, "ain't none. None of them ain't important. They never helped me none. I had to do for myself. Ain't no important Black people. Them that calls themselves leaders ain't. I'm important."

**Alienated or Apathetic**

Of the five women Hattie is the only one that we identified as alienated -- alienated from her immediate environment as well as from the political system. She had only a few friends outside the family circle. In the interview Hattie was quite hostile and somewhat suspicious of the purpose of the interview. It was this general distrust of people that manifested itself in her attitudes about public officials and Black leaders. Hattie's feelings toward public officials are not without a basis. She explained that several years ago she became seriously ill and was no longer able to work and as a consequence lost her home, was unable to pay her bills thereby developing a bad credit record. She turned to several governmental agencies for help but for Hattie the aid was too little too late. She also turned to
community leaders for financial assistance which they too were unable to furnish to Hattie's satisfaction. Because of this she is bitter and blames the lack of community and government assistance for her plight.

Hattie stands alone in her hostile feelings toward public officials and community leaders. The other four women are more benign in their attitudes toward the political system; they were not as distrustful as Hattie and no different from the participants in their levels of trust and attitudes toward lawmakers. Not many of the women in our sample were that trusting of governmental officials. In response to the question, "How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government to do what is right -- just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?", 34 of the 48 women said you can trust them "only some of the time". Three of the five nonparticipants responded "some of the time" and two volunteered the answer "never". Additionally, about half of the 48 women agreed with the statement "I don't think local officials care much what people like me think." Four of the five nonparticipants agreed. Overall, then, the level of trust and confidence in public officials is not that high for most of the women in our sample. But the point is that the nonparticipants do not distinguish themselves by their attitudes toward officials. They are no more distrustful of officials than participant respondents.

The feelings and attitudes towards public officials of the five nonparticipants are reflected in responses given to the question, "If you had some complaint about what the local government was doing and
took that complaint to the mayor or to a city councilman, how do you think the official would react?" For example, Barbara thought that,

He may would listen you out. It depends on the depth of the situation you went for but I'm not familiar with that I don't know what he would do. Whether he would try to do something. He probably would listen. Take some action I don't know.

And Elvira responded that,

You wouldn't find people like living in a subdivision like I'm living in now to take something they really disagree about to the ah higher government but I think they would react. I think they would listen. And I think they might act on it. If you went straight up there yourself. And saying well I know this because I've been through this and I've experienced this and I've analyzed this I think they'll listen.

These two comments are representative of the attitudes of the non-participants (except Hattie). They assume that elected officials will at least listen to them if they take their demands directly to them. We can infer, then, that these women believe that elected officials can be turned to for a redress of grievances, that they are there to assist them. They seem to be willing to give local officials the benefit of the doubt, especially since they have no experience in actually seeking the direct aid of a mayor or city councilman. Hattie, on the other hand, does have such experience. She said,

I went up there twice to see somebody, anybody. Never saw a soul. Too busy; ain't got time. Even with the vote (although she has never voted) and putting them into office you know once they get there they change. And we've only put 'em there by voting so they don't care. They won't do nothing for you.

She has experienced rejection and as a consequence believes that local officials will not listen, will not respond. Her experience has
alienated her from the decisionmaking process. But she is the exception. Most of the women prefer to believe that the door to their mayor and councilmen's office is always open, a belief that demonstrates that the women are not alienated from the political system but rather feel it is responsive to their needs.

Other evidence that they are not discontent is provided by perceptions of racial discrimination in public agencies. All five of the women had had contact with welfare and employment agencies. Perceptions of discrimination in these agencies were not that evident. Only two of the women agreed with the statement, "most officials and agencies I deal with treat Blacks unfairly."

If the women are not disenchanted are they then apathetic toward the system? Apathetic, according to Webster, means "having little or no interest or concern". The five women certainly expressed little interest in political events and issues and were not concerned with politics. But it is an apathy that is born out of the irrelevancy of the "political" to their daily lives. No matter what happened in the political world, their world continued unchanged. They still had to provide for their family, raise their children and perform household tasks. These things do not change with the political winds. It is understandable they are not interested in what does not concern them, in what seems irrelevant. However, when political events were relevant they did take an interest, e.g. several expressed concern with Reagan's budget cuts and what affect those cuts would have on daycare centers, on
AFDC benefits, and so forth. They are not apathetic when it comes to events and issues that directly effect their life situation.

Yes, the five women are apathetic — apathetic toward events they perceive has having hardly any effect on their life situation. This perception is perhaps a product of low levels of educational attainment and thus lack of cognitive skills needed to understand the impact political events and issues have on daily existence. But even more simply than a lack of education, one's life situation or environment may constrain that perception. There is not much time to devote to what they may consider the 'esoteric' or to events outside their world. Neither is there much energy left after caring for children all day and working in a tiresome job; the evening cannot be spent on events and issues that are perceived as irrelevant. They are apathetic, but it is important to understand that it is an apathy caused by time constraints and energy drains.

Projected cost of participation

Rather than contributing nonparticipation to feelings of apathy or alienation it is most likely that the five women did not participate in political events or in voluntary associations simply because their net projected costs of participation far exceeded what they perceived as their projected benefits. (73) Their costs of participation include such -------------

(73) The idea that people participate because of perceived costs and benefits has an extensive history in the literature, especially that on voting. Susan Welch, Philip Secret, "Sex, Race and Political Participation"; Anthony Down, An Economic Theory of
items as 1) cost of transportation to club meetings or to the registration office; 2) time lost from a job, (e.g., Louise who works everyday including Saturday and Sunday); 3) time lost out of the daily routine; 4) cost of having someone to babysit or to do household chores while voting, registering or attending club meetings. Costs of participation also include less tangible costs such as the fear of humiliation and embarrassment over the unfamiliarity of the electoral process. For example, Louise is illiterate so would require assistance at the polls. Benefits, as well as costs, are also both tangible and intangible. (74) Tangible benefits could be cash or other monetary payments. But more likely are the intangible benefits such as believing she has fulfilled a civic duty, peer group approval, belief that she is contributing to a desired public policy, and so on. (75) The calculus of the projected costs and benefits is heavily influenced by structural considerations. For example, one's income determines the importance of the financial costs of participation. These women were low income and living on fixed incomes. Money spent on anything but necessities would be costly. One's education influences the attitudes one has about civic duty, about likely outcomes of participation. Only Elvira had completed high school so it is doubtful many of the women give 'civic duty' much


(74) Welch and Secret, op.cit., p. 16.

(75) Ibid., p. 17.
consideration in their decision to participate in political events. And finally, peer group pressure would be slight since most of the women associate with friends that share similar life styles and values. For these women the projected net costs (time, energy, humiliation) of participation far exceeded the projected net benefits. And for them the only relevant benefit would be a change in their life situation.

CONCLUSION

Overall, our analysis has been mostly a description of the types of participation Black women are involved in with explanations of why some become active and others not.

The women in our sample are associational beings; two-thirds of the 48 women belonged to some kind of voluntary association. Both low income and middle income women were just as likely to join a club or organization; however, we did observe a class difference in the types of organizations joined. Low income women were most likely to report they belonged to self help community based organizations, organizations that drew their members from the neighborhood and addressed immediate neighborhood problems. Many of the same kinds of clubs that addressed similar problems existed in each of the three housing projects. While organizations shared similar purposes and were dependent on Housing Authority administrators to achieve their goals, rarely was there interproject cooperation or a pooling together of resources and manpower. Self help organizations confined their activities and membership to their particular neighborhood.
Middle income women, on the other hand, were most likely to be affiliated with community organizations that drew their members from various neighborhoods and focused its goals on issues outside any one particular neighborhood. Organizations like the Governors Council for 2000 or the Adolescent Pregnancy Task Force may indirectly benefit a specific neighborhood but the main goal is not to aid any one neighborhood. Only four low income women reported affiliation in such organizations, i.e. in organizations outside their immediate neighborhood. So low income women channel their efforts into self help neighborhood organizations while middle income women participate in broader community clubs. Each socioeconomic group pursues different goals and were seldom afforded the opportunity to work together which led to misunderstandings and hostilities between the classes. Several low income women expressed dismay that more middle income Blacks did not join in their neighborhood activities and projects; while middle income women felt that involvement in low income neighborhoods other than providing holiday food baskets to the needy and supporting municipal issues that benefit the projects was unnecessary. Both socioeconomic groups were aware of problems that existed in the housing projects but differed on the proper degree of involvement the other should have in solving those problems. While leaders in the projects may desire more input from other Black neighborhoods, it may be more fruitful for them to first concentrate efforts on increasing participation among project residents. One of the primary complaints made by women involved in
neighborhood activities was the lack of cooperation and participation of
other neighborhood residents and the lack of interproject cooperation.
Certainly each neighborhood has its problems but residents must be made
to realize that those problems are not unique; they are not isolated
and that there exist a broader support system than can be found within
neighborhood boundaries. Their interests may be best gained by joining
forces with other residents who share the same aims and objectives. If
the principal goal is to force the Housing Authority to address
grievances, administrators would be more inclined to respond to the
pressures and influences of its client members rather than to
"outsiders" who stand to gain nothing. Also, it follows that the
various south Raleigh projects should cooperate. Project residents
banding together could exert a great deal of influence over Authority
administrators who are ever wary of uprisings and demonstrations.

The two socioeconomic groups live in separate neighborhoods. They
join separate community organizations and separate social clubs with low
income women affiliated with fraternal orders and middle income women
joining sororities. Interclass interaction was therefore limited with
only four low income women involved in organizations outside their
neighborhood. Middle income women were observed to be more diverse in
their organization membership. Task forces and service oriented
organizations as well as professional organizations enhanced their
contact with the "outside" world. Comparatively speaking, the amount of
contact low income women have with the "outside" world is minimal. They
live with other low income housing residents, fratinize with their neighbors in community based clubs and come into contact with others mostly through their jobs. It is no wonder their interests are parochial ones. Their world is a self-contained existence with people who are in the same life situation. It is fairly typical that among any distinct group, whether low income Black women, upper class whites or Jews-the tendency is to be self-contained. The difference among poor people is that they often do not even group together, that is they tend to be more isolated as individuals. And it is at this point that the low income women of our sample differ. They are associational beings but within their own socioeconomic group.

What are the consequences of participation in voluntary associations? After joining that first club or organization for whatever reason-whether asked to join by a friend or joined to council neighborhood teenagers-women became more involved and interested in other community affairs and in other ways of helping the community. What we have is a "snow-ball" effect with one associational membership leading to another and another with three per women the average number of affiliations. Low income women who were most involved in community organizations (two or more affiliations) were also more active than other respondents in electoral politics. They reported voting more frequently in presidential and in less salient elections, participating in campaigns, attending rallies and working at the polls. It was through club memberships that many of the low income women were asked to attend
political events or to help out at the polls. Club affiliation was not as important for middle income respondents who participated in electoral activities regardless of club membership.

Twenty-three respondents were classified as actives, i.e., either held membership in a policy related organization or were involved in community or political activities. What distinguished the active respondents from the inactives? Here, too, there were socioeconomic differences. The observed differences are relevant only for the low SES women; there were no discernible patterns that distinguished middle income actives from inactives. Low SES activists considered problems in their neighborhood serious enough that some action had to be taken on their part. This "initiative" was most often enhanced by someone (usually a friend already a club member) personally asking her to join the organization. These two characteristics (identification of serious neighborhood problems and personal contact) are lacking for the inactives who, while able to identify problems in the neighborhood, felt that problems were not very serious or that there was nothing that could be done about them. In addition, inactives associated with other inactives and were hardly ever personally asked to join an organization or to help solve a community problem. Inactives often knew of and could name leaders and "doers" of the community but rarely associated or socialized with them.

Five women in the sample did not participate in any organization or political activities, yet we concluded they were not alienated just
unconcerned with what they consider to be irrelevant political events. While time constraints and energy drains were the "causes" of the apathy, they (with one exception) still have a basic belief in the system that decisionmakers are responsive to their needs.

And finally, we conclude the chapter with a political profile of the women of south Raleigh:

* she is accepting of what life hands her and makes the best of those life situations
* she is comfortable in her neighborhood and receives positive, ego-strengthening strokes from socializing with others like herself
* she, more often than not, participates in electoral politics
* if she elects to use protest behavior as a means of achieving goals she does so in addition to and not instead of participating in electoral politics
* she is not alienated from the political system but rather believes it is responsive to her needs.

* For the low income woman: she has not much experience, other than job related, in the outside world and avoids contact with the dominant white culture and

* she is willing to participate in social and political activities if personally asked, especially if she is made to realize that it will benefit the neighborhood, improve her life chances or the life of her children.
Chapter V

INFLUENCES ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: CONTEXTUAL, STRUCTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Contemporary research on political participation of individuals has focused primarily on identifying factors that influence levels of participation. One factor, socioeconomic status (SES), is shown to be a strong predictor of participation; several reasons are usually given to explain this observed relationship between SES and participation. The most obvious reason is that differences in SES are related to other demographic and attitudinal differences. The more affluent are likely to have higher levels of education and higher status occupations which provide an opportunity to interact with others in social and political groups. They are more exposed to mass media and as a consequence are more likely to have developed attitudes and beliefs that encourage participation. (76) Income, education, occupation and social network are all structural factors or resources that are used by individuals to fulfill basic human needs. But a resource too often overlooked in explaining participation (especially the participation of women) is 'life situation'. Job demands, household responsibilities or the presence of small children influence the availability of energy and time that can be devoted to a role outside the home, whether that role is


- 122 -
political or social.

A second set of factors, psychological predispositions, have also been identified as influencing levels of participation. These personal factors include political efficacy, attitudes toward government and decisionmakers and even feelings of self-esteem. According to Milbrath (1977) the feeling of political efficacy is one of the most widely discussed concepts in political science; the concept is used as a predictor and/or correlate of a wide variety of behaviors, among them political participation in conventional and unconventional modes. This relationship between sense of efficacy and participation, again according to Milbrath, is among the most widely documented ones. It has been consistently observed that persons who evidence a sense of political efficacy participate at a higher level than those who lack such feelings. Additionally, attitudes toward the system, such as feelings of alienation, cynicism and distrust are also associated with participation. Although the data is inconsistent, depending on time and place of study and on type of respondent, political alienation and distrust appear to have a negative effect on conventional modes of participation and a stimulating effect on unconventional or extremist action. A review of the relevant literature supports the contention that the likelihood of radical action against the government will be highest when the level of trust in political institutions is low. (77)

While psychological predispositions such as political efficacy, alienation, distrust, cynicism and self-esteem are often strong predictors in a general theory of participation, they may not be as effective in explaining participation rates of minority groups. As discussed previously in chapter one, Black women evidence high levels of cynicism and low feelings of efficacy but continue to participate at higher levels than these variables would predict. Clearly, other psychological factors are needed in a theory of minority group participation. Verba and Nie (1972) and Miller, Gurin, et al. (1981) have suggested that what is needed is another attitudinal variable, group identification. The concept is similar to party identification in that it is a feeling of identity with a group rather than with a political party. Group identification is a sense of belonging, plus an awareness of the salience of one's group. Like party identification, evidence indicates that persons who exhibit strong group identification are more likely to be active in social and political activities.

Over the past 30 years, studies have produced substantial knowledge about how an individual's personal characteristics such as social class, psychological predisposition and attitudes are related to the decision to take part in the public decisionmaking process. These factors, structural and psychological, have been (and still are) strong predictors in a general theory of the determinants of political participation. Not so much knowledge, however, exists on the ability of these factors to predict the participation of minority groups in the population.
While sociological and psychological factors have received much attention in the literature, most analyses have neglected to study the effect of community context on individual activity rates.\(^{(78)}\) Individuals are all too often cut off from their environment and examined as if they lived in a vacuum. The neglect of context has been a serious oversight in studies on Black participation. The analyses in this chapter uses all these factors (contextual, structural and psychological) to explain why some women in our sample decided to participate and others choose not to. Simply, what we want to achieve is an understanding of Black female participation and an understanding of factors that influence that participation.

**INFLUENCE OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS**

Matthews and Prothro (1966) observed in their analysis of Southern Blacks that community characteristics had a strong influence on the participation rates of Blacks. They write that "individual attributes are important, of course, but their importance is circumscribed or facilitated by the general characteristics of the places where the individuals live".\(^{(79)}\) In our sample, the woman's place of residence is the immediate environment in which she must learn to exist. She is affected by community characteristics and its problems.

\(^{(78)}\) Notable exceptions are James Carlson, 1976, unpublished dissertation; and Matthews and Prothro, 1966, chapters 5 and 6.

\(^{(79)}\) Matthews and Prothro, 1966, p. 133.
The setting for all but eleven of the women is low income public housing neighborhoods. These housing units were built in 1940 to provide housing for low income groups which require public assistance in order to secure adequate facilities within their capacity to pay. Through the years these areas have suffered through and survived urban renewal, lack of property upkeep, teneous administration and poor financial support from the government. These areas are often victims of social problems, vandalism, drug trafficking and crime. Yet with the problems, the spirit of the people shines through. The human impulse to seek unity and protection in numbers in quite evident in the housing projects. For example, an Emergency Loan Program was inaugurated in 1981 by the Interproject Residence Council. The program is designed to provide short term interest free loans to residents who are experiencing financial difficulty and are without family or friends who can help out. In this environment of both problems and comfort and support, what are the concerns of the women who live there? What are their perceptions of the problems that exist in their neighborhood?

Each respondent was asked what she liked the most about her neighborhood. Of the 36 low income women, (one woman refused to answer this series of questions concerning the neighborhood thereby reducing the low income sample size from 37 to 36 for this analysis) 27 were able to identify aspects of the neighborhood that they liked. Most of the comments focused on four points: nice, friendly neighbors; quiet neighborhood; convenient location; and low rent. There is general
agreement among the women that the neighbors are friendly, "know each other and get along." It is interesting to observe that women who responded that the neighborhood is quiet were women we classified as inactives and were less likely than actives to see problems in the neighborhood. Of the 11 responses that mentioned the area is quiet, nine came from inactive women. The active women, on the other hand, stressed the "good location" of the neighborhood and that it is "easy to get to town from here". All of the 'convenience' responses were from active women.

While most of the women were able to make positive statements about their neighborhood, they also were aware of the problems. (Only nine of the 36 women said there were no problems.) What influence does the perception of a neighborhood problem have on participation, that is, on participation in community or policy related organizations? Women who did not perceive neighborhood problems were the least likely to be active. Of the nine women who could identify no neighborhood problems, only one was active. Reversing the causality somewhat we observe that women not active in organizations were least likely to perceive neighborhood problems; 10 of the 18 inactives identified some problem compared with 17 of the 18 actives (Council Members) who could do so. But even among the ten inactive respondents there was no general agreement as to what the problems were. Only two problems were mentioned by more than one respondent: "disruptive kids" with three responses and drugs with two responses. The remainder of the 'problems'
seem only to be troublesome for the individual resident and are not shared by other neighbors.

Active women shared more than just the ability to identify neighborhood problems. There was striking agreement on just what those problems were. Of the 17 respondents, eleven agreed that disruptive children with no place to play were problems. Two respondents mentioned drug related concerns. The remainder of the four responses were more of a personal nature. But for the most part, there is consensus on what the neighborhood concerns are. How can we account for such a high level of agreement? All of the active respondents, you may recall, are members of their respective project Residence Council. It may be that the Council to some extent identifies problems for its members.

Kathleen McCourt (1977) in a study of working class women and grass roots politics observed that women in the same community organization often name the same problems. She writes that,

they have, after all, shared work around those concerns. It is, however, unlikely that the organization does all the defining for the women. A minimal prerequisite for joining an assertive community organization oriented toward change is the perception of a problem and a perspective that views that problem as both shared and amenable to resolution through group effort, that is, a political rather than a personal perspective. (80)

Seventeen of the 18 active women perceived a neighborhood problem, but so too did several of the inactives. What is the difference? As McCourt points out, not only must there be perception of a problem but also the perception that the problem is shared and can be solved. The

(80) McCourt, 1977, p. 92-93.
women were asked whether or not they thought the problem they mentioned was a serious one and what could be done to solve it. By far the majority of the women - active and inactive - thought their problem was a serious one. But of the inactives, only three thought the problem could be solved. The other seven felt that either nothing could be done or that the solution was out of their control. Cassie's comments are typical of the remarks that nothing could be done.

rowdy kids playing all in the streets and trampling over your flower bed. Makes me mad but there's nothing to do. Nothing nobody can do 'specially when the mother can't control their own and don't care anyway. Sure it's serious, very serious. But what's to do?

And Shamina is typical of women who feel that the problem is out of their control.

Dope is a very serious problem. Sometimes I worry about the young ones. I'm just glad mine are grown and out away from here. We need undercover cops, that's all. We can't get involved with that. Nothing I can do. It's for the police.

Active women overwhelmingly believed that the problems they mentioned could be solved through community or group action. Fourteen of the 17 active women reported they had worked with others in the neighborhood to help solve the problem. Laura's comments are typical.

After school children would just stand on this corner drinking, cursing and carrying on. I just got fed up with it and went to the block meeting and said listen we got to do something 'bout them kids on the corner. Everybody kept saying yeah, yeah but didn't do nothing. Then one of them got stabbed. I got them to open up the Center earlier in the day so they could go down there after that.

So the distinguishing characteristics of actives are the perception of a problem in the neighborhood and the perception that that problem can be
solved or addressed through group action. Additionally, active women tended to respond more negatively (but only slightly more so than inactives) to the question of the responsiveness of local decisionmakers. Half of the active women felt that if they had a complaint or problem the mayor or city councilman would not take any action to help. An additional four believed they would be responsive only if a group rather than an individual made the demands for action.

What this suggests is that active women not only perceive a problem but also believe that it is a shared problem and that there is a need for action. Active women also expressed a more general interest in community issues and not just on its problems. There is little doubt that membership in the Council helps the women focus their interests and makes them understand, as mentioned before, that their concerns are shared concerns. There is the possibility, however, that these women were already interested in community issues and realized that they could be addressed through group action. To explore this possibility, each respondent was questioned on her interests in community and political issues before affiliation with the Council. Thirteen of the 18 women reported they had always been interested in issues that affected the neighborhood. Jessie, president of the Chavis Heights Council, remarked that she joined the Council because she was "interested in the community, after all, I live here." She said she "always was interested and politically aware; no one had to ask me. I asked them." While Jessie reports prior interest in and awareness of community issues she
does say that after joining the Council she is even "more aware of political activities" and subsequently has joined several other policy related organizations as a "way to voice my opinion." These remarks were typical of the 13 women who were interested prior to Council participation. But the Council did serve to heighten their interest and activity in the community.

Jessie, as her remarks indicate, was a 'self-starter'. She had an interest and decided to join the Council without being asked to join. Six others of the 'already interested' actives were also self-starters. Several were charter members of the Council; one remarked with pride "I was a charter member . . . just trying to change things, make things better for neighborhood." The other actives who expressed prior interest needed an extra push to get them active. One woman who fell into this group was asked why she joined the Council. She commented,

I became interested, got involved. This friend of mine who was treasurer of the Council at the time she asked me to pass out some of them, what do you call it, pieces of paper for a meeting to sale candy for the new Center that burned down. She asked me and somebody's got to do it . . . Now I'm more into it and keep an ear open for different programs.

Myrtle was also always interested, but someone had to ask her to join before she became involved in the Council. She remarked that now she is even more active and interested in "anything pertaining to my neighborhood, money or funding for community building."

There are five active women who expressed no prior interest before joining the Council. All had realized there were serious problems in the neighborhood but really were not that interested until they were
asked to get involved. The newly elected president of Apollo Heights Council reflects how she first became involved.

Well, the Council sent pamphlets around and a member came by to ask me so I joined. Guess I always knew there wasn't no where to play for the kids but you know how it is. You just figure somebodys else's gonna do it.

The importance of being personally asked to join an organization cannot be understated. Eleven of the active women had been contacted which was the spark that moved them into action. The importance of being contacted reinforces Lee Rainwater's (1971) findings. Examining working class women (mostly white women) Rainwater observed that the women often expressed a desire to belong to groups and would join if someone asked them. McCourt (1977) also observed the importance of being personally contacted. She observed that the

need for friendly contacts to welcome people into new social situations hold true for most people, but the fact that voluntary associations are fewer in working-class neighborhoods means that working class women will be less likely to be part of a social network that includes organizationally active people.(81)

It is essential, then, that organizers and members of community organizations provide the impetus that helps the woman realize that individual concerns and dissatisfactions can be addressed and solved through group action.

Until now the discussion has centered around the low income women of the sample. The middle income women live in Biltmore Hills which, as mentioned before, is a relatively problem free neighborhood. All eleven

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(81) McCourt, 1977, p. 103.
of the women liked their neighborhood and spoke in positive terms. "Nice neighbors", "quiet neighborhood" and "close to job" were mentioned as attributes of the community. Seven women were able to identify problems in the neighborhood. But of those mentioned only one problem - loud neighbors - received more than one mention. The problems are mostly idiosyncratic and there is no agreement on what the problems are. In addition, the seven women considered the problems as not very serious and could be solved either individually or believed it was unsolvable. The perception of problems in the community was no different between the actives and inactives; both were as likely as not to mention neighborhood problems. Active women, therefore, had not become active or involved in organizations because of concerns with problems in their immediate place of residence. The five actives reported already being interested in political issues and community concerns outside their own neighborhood. They were self-starters and did not have to be asked to join an organization. Here again we observe that the political participation of middle income women is not influenced by the same kinds of factors that influence low income women. Place of residence-perhaps because of the differences in neighborhood problems- does not have an influence on participation. Recall from the discussion of the previous chapter that middle income women were more inclined to belong to associations outside the neighborhood. We suggested that one of the reasons was because of the lack of neighborhood problems. For these women, the 'immediate environment' must be broadened to include municipal and community factors.
INFLUENCE OF STRUCTURAL FACTORS

The resources a woman has available to meet basic human needs for herself and her family are determined by structural factors, that is by her life situation. Life situation, to a large extent, is determined by level of income or by socioeconomic status. The more affluent woman usually is better educated and has a higher status occupation. She, then, is able to provide for basic needs and the needs of her family in a more or less routine manner. This frees her to think about and to become involved in social and political activities. Throughout the analysis of how Black women in South Raleigh participated in the decisionmaking process, the distinction was made between social classes. We observed that, in general, the kinds and numbers of organizations affiliated with was largely determined by income level. Low income women belong to fewer organizations than the middle income women and tend to favor neighborhood associations. Electoral participation, too, was distinguishable by class. The more affluent participated at higher rates in campaigns, voting and in working at the polls. Middle income women were also more active in protest behavior. Low income women, however, who belong to the Residence Council plus one or two other organizations were able to overcome the 'economic' factor and to 'out' participate other women.

One of the observations made in the discussion of associational affiliation was that affiliations had an impact on electoral participation --especially on the frequency of voting in presidential
and local elections. Women who belong to no organizations vote less frequently than women who belong to two or more organizations. Four of the five women active in two organizations voted in every presidential election; five of seven women in three clubs and nine of ten in four or more clubs reported voting in every election. The same pattern is observed for local elections. It may be argued, however, that this relationship between number of organizations and vote frequency is a spurious one. That is, the more prosperous women can afford to belong to more organizations; therefore, the number of associational affiliations may be an indirect measure of income. So the relationship may rather be the relationship between income level and frequency of voting.

To test this possibility, we examined the distribution of organization membership and voting behavior in each income level. With income held constant, the affiliation factor remains an independent factor in voting behavior. (See Table 7). This factor, moreover, had its greatest influence in the low income group and least influence in the high income group. Women in the low income bracket who belonged to two or more organizations 'over participate' -- more so than other low income women. The effect is even more dramatic for women of this group who belonged to three or more associations. Of course, the two factors (participation and organization affiliation) may also be having an interactive affect on each other -- both influencing and accentuating the other. For middle income women, there was a tendency to vote anyway, regardless of organization membership.
Table 7

**Influence of Affiliation Factor on Participation in Presidential Elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW INCOME WOMEN</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three or More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=# of organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Frequency(^{a})</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every election</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most elections</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}\)Some categories do not sum to 100\% because of rounding error.
The income factor is still important in determining voting participation of Black women, but the quantitative and qualitative affiliation factor is also an independent factor (that is, has an affect on participation independent of the income factor) in that determination. Low income has an attenuating effect on female participation but it is through affiliation in a policy related organization (qualitative) plus membership in one of two other clubs (quantitative) that she is able to overcome the effect. These findings are consistent with results of other studies conducted on Blacks.(82)

Closely related to socioeconomic status is education. In our sample, middle income is almost synonymous with higher education. Nine of the 11 middle income women have college degrees and one has some college experience. Compare this with only six low income women who have some college experience and only one who is a college graduate. It is interesting that six of the low income women with college experience are all members of the Residence Council. Although education is closely related to income, it was still observed to have an effect on participation in associational affiliation, especially among low income women. The better educated women reported more associational affiliations than the less educated; they were more involved in social and neighborhood clubs. In general, low income women with higher levels of education are more active than the less educated women. Six of the seven women with college experience are members of the Council while at

(82) See, for example, McConaughy and Gauntlett, 1963; and Cohen and Kapsis, 1978.
the lowest level of education attainment only five of the 15 are active.

A widely documented research finding is that individuals with higher levels of education tend to participate in political activities at a higher level than those with less education. This finding also receives support in our study. While the pattern is not consistent, there is evidence that education has an impact on voting, working in campaigns, attending political rallies and participating in protest activities. Table 8 displays the influence of education on the frequency of voting in presidential and local elections. As education level went up so too did frequency of voting in both types of elections. But education has greater effect on voting in local elections. Women with grade school education report voting in local elections less frequently than women with, for example, high school education. Less than a third of the least educated voted in every local election as compared with over half of the high school graduates. In addition, the least educated are more likely to report having never voted in an election -- whether local or presidential.

This same pattern is observed in Tables 9 and 10. Education tends to increase a woman's chances of working in campaigns and of attending political rallies.

Why does education have an impact on political behavior? The most important reason is that differences in educational attainment are associated with differences in other social characteristics and

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Grade School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Some College</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every election</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most elections</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Participation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade School</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade School</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally Participation</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade School</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
psychological attributes. Women with higher educations are more likely to possess greater information about government and politics, to be more exposed to mass media coverage of politics, to occupy higher status jobs and to feel more efficacious. (84) (These last two characteristics are discussed later in the chapter). Indeed, 3 out of 5 high school graduates correctly identified the mayor of Raleigh and could comment on his job performance. Only one of 5 grade school women could do so. All of the college graduates possessed this information. Knowledge of Black community leaders is also greatest among the more educated. Three out of 5 women with some college or with college degrees identified more than one Black leader and was aware of the Raleigh-Wake Community Action Association. Grade school and high school graduates were least able to identify the RWCA, a more difficult test of political knowledge. In terms of media exposure, the more educated the woman the more often she reported following what's going on in local government and public affairs: 3 of 4 grade school women reported never to seldom following such events while only 1 of 5 college graduates reported following public affairs that infrequently.

It may be argued that the relationship between education and political behavior is a product of the correlation between education and income. To see if this is indeed what is happening we analyzed the relationship between education and vote frequency controlling for income. With income held constant, the more educated low income women

(84) See Milbrath, 1977, for a discussion of these factors on political participation.
continued to vote more frequently than their less educated peers in both presidential and local elections. The percentage of women who participate in every presidential and local election rises continuously with level of education. We observed that less than a third of the grade school women vote in every election; over half of the high school graduates; and about two thirds of the women with some college vote in every election. The one woman who has a college degree voted in every election.

While voting in every and most elections is affected by education attainment, the results also demonstrate the importance of voting for these Black women. Nearly three fourths of the least educated low income women had voted in at least half of the elections. Four of the 15 women with two of the characteristics most associated with attenuating vote behavior (low income and low education) report voting in every election. What distinguishes these four women? All were members of the Council so council membership is having a positive effect on participating in elections, especially in the less salient local election. All four of the grade school educated women voting in every local election are Council members. As we have discussed before, membership in a policy related organization acts as a stimulator for women whose social characteristics suggest they are least likely to participate.

Earlier in this section, the point was made that occupation status was closely related to both income and educational attainment; the more
affluent and better educated women occupy higher status occupations. Middle income respondents with college degrees report employment in professional occupations, (85) while low income women with grade school education report custodial and domestic type employment. (86) Women with high school degrees and some college experience were most often either laid off or worked as aides. (87) What influence does occupation have on participation? Several studies report that persons of higher occupational status are more likely to participate in politics. (88) Lane (1959) suggested that higher status occupations exhibit characteristics - such as the development and use of social and intellectual skills that might carry over to public service and the opportunity to interact with like-minded others - that facilitate political participation. (89)

The relationship between occupation and participation receives some support in our study. Professional women are the most politically active group; 5 of the 9 women are affiliated with a policy related organization and participate more frequently in electoral politics than

(85) Professional occupations include teachers, school principal, communications consultant, attorney, school counselors and computer analyst.

(86) Custodial jobs include janitors, hotel housekeepers, restaurant fast order cooks; domestic employment consisted of housecleaning and babysitting chores.

(87) Jobs in this group included social service assistant, housing project manager assistant, teaching and office aides, and museum guard.


(89) Lane, 1959, p. 334.
other occupation groups. Women employed in custodial jobs, on the other hand, are the least politically active; none are associated with a policy related organization or involved in any other community or political activity. In fact, three of the seven report never voting in an election. Perhaps the employment most antithetical to political participation is custodial work. It provides few opportunities (i.e. freedom of schedule) for political involvement and requires no skills (verbal or otherwise) that can be transferred to politics. The jobs are time consuming and unstimulating. It is no wonder that this group of women is the least active and account for more than a third of the inactives.

The participation of these two occupational groups supports the expected relationship between occupation and participation. The participation of women with professional jobs may be accounted for through Lane's 'transference of work skills' explanation but it cannot explain the participation of women who are not employed in jobs that facilitate participation. Low income women are employed as custodians, domestic workers or aides. Of these occupations, 3 of 4 domestic workers were active followed by 2 of 4 women aides. Clearly, these kinds of jobs do not facilitate political participation.

Among low income women, 13 of the 18 actives are without jobs; they were either laid off, retired, or never worked. Not only are these unemployed women active in the Council but they also vote more frequently, participate in campaigns and work at the polls more often
than women who work. Low income women are usually employed in jobs that are more physically demanding and more energy draining than are professional occupations. Low status jobs usually have a fixed work schedule, making it difficult to be free for meetings. And after work, weariness and fatigue may prohibit participation. It may well be that the availability of time and energy to devote to participation is crucial in determining the level of involvement.

The availability of time and energy is to a large extent determined by the life situation of a woman. Not only does her job impose constraints on or facilitate participation, family obligations also have an effect on space that is available for a role outside the family, whether social or political. Women with 'empty nests' or with children that are not at home during the day and have no job responsibilities have the most favorable life situation; there is time and energy for roles outside the home. Women, on the other hand, with small children to care for and who have outside employment exist in a life situation that is least favorable to participation outside the family circle. Several studies on female participation have observed the effect the presence of young children, family and job responsibilities have on political activism.

The women of South Raleigh were rated on the conduciveness of their life situation to political participation. Each woman was rated according to occupation, maternal/marital status and number of children
at home under 18 years of age. (90) Scores on the latter two of the three variables ranged from 0 to 2 with 2 representing the most unfavorable condition. Occupation scores ranged from 0 to 4 with 4 the most restrictive occupation. (91) Therefore, a woman's composite score of the three factors could range from 0 (most favorable situation) to 8 (least favorable). Women with composite scores of 0 to 3 were rated as having favorable life situations and those with scores of 4 or over rated with life situations unfavorable to political participation.

Women who scored within the favorable range are more likely to be in policy related organizations; and they vote more frequently in local and presidential elections. Of the 26 women who scored in the favorable range (0 to 3), half are active. Contrast this with only a third of the women in unfavorable life situations who are members of the Council.

(90) Stein Rokkan, in comparative studies of the political participation of women in Norway, found the life cycle variable 'age of the woman's youngest child' to be useful. He argues that participation is harder for a woman with a child that is age two than for a woman with a child of four years; harder still for a woman with a four year old than a six year old, and so on. In our sample, women with children under the age of seven (school age) were least likely to participate. But women with five year olds were no more likely to participate than women with three year olds. Women with ten year olds were no more likely to participate than women with eight year olds. So rather than age of youngest child (once the child reaches school age), the number of children under age 18 still at home had more of an effect on the chances of participation for the mother.

(91) Maternal/marital status was scored 0 to 2: women who had no children under age 18, were coded 0 regardless of marital status. Married mothers with children under 18 were coded 1. Single, divorced, separated or widowed mothers with children under 18 received a score of 2. Number of children under age 18 was also scored 0 to 2: no children under age 18 received a score of 0; one child under 18 coded 1; two or more children coded 2. Occupation ranged from 0 to 4. Women with no job responsibilities outside the
These results indicate that one of the reasons middle income women participate more than low income women is that higher income women enjoy a slightly more favorable life situation. Middle income women are in professional jobs, married and tend to have fewer children under age 18 at home than lower income women. (See Table 11). Members of the Residence Council also tended to have better life situations than other low income women. Thirteen of the 18 Council members have scores that are in the favorable category while only 8 of the 19 inactive low income women have a favorable life situation.

One explanation of Black female participation routinely given in the literature suggests that because Black women have traditionally occupied more active roles in their families than white women, they tend to 'over-participate' when given the opportunity. It is assumed that their familial role (of aggressiveness as some have asserted) spills over into the political arena; that the combination of head of household and job employment increases participation. While this explanation continues to receive wide colloquial support, it has received uneven support in actual research findings. (92) Among the women of our sample, this combination of situations is the least conducive of conditions for participation. Of the eight women who had children under age 18 but no spouse and who were employed, five were inactive and voted less frequently. Rather than increase participation, these two conditions

family were scored 0; professionals 1; aides 2; domestic workers 3; and custodial workers 4.

### Table 11

**Life Situation of Low and Middle Income Women**

#### LOW INCOME WOMEN

N = # of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Maternal/Marital Status</th>
<th>Children Under 18 yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no employment</td>
<td>single w/o children</td>
<td>no children - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>married w/o children</td>
<td>one child - 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aides</td>
<td>married w/ children</td>
<td>two or more - 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestic work</td>
<td>single w/ children</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>custodial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MIDDLE INCOME WOMEN

N = # of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Maternal/Marital Status</th>
<th>Children Under 18 yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>single w/o children</td>
<td>no children - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aide</td>
<td>married w/o children</td>
<td>one child - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>married w/ children</td>
<td>two or more - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>single w/ children</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are the most debilitating. Clearly, the women without jobs or in jobs conducive to participation and women who are not single parents are the most active. Women who have space and time in their life for a new role participate more than women who are constrained by the demands imposed by job and children.

**INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS**

Personal factors, such as attitudes, beliefs and personality traits, have been related in research to political behavior. Three such factors serve to organize the discussion in this section: attitudes toward the government and decisionmakers, feelings of personal and political efficacy, and sense of group consciousness. Baxter and Lansing (1980) in a national study of the political behavior of women, observed that from 1972 to 1976 Black women became less trusting of public officials, less politically efficacious and evidenced growing signs of alienation. These feelings continued into the 1980 election. If the Baxter and Lansing observation is indeed correct, these less than favorable attitudes toward the political system are co-existing with continued participation in that system.

Baxter and Lansing also suggest that one of the explanations of Black female participation is that of group identity or what former Congresswoman, Shirley Chisholm, has called the 'double whammy.' Sense of group identity may substitute for the higher social status that impels citizens into political participation; it may represent an
alternative mechanism for political mobilization. If the relationship between group identification and political participation is operating, then group members who are aware of their status as a deprived group should be more politically active than citizens who have similar socioeconomic levels but do not share the group identity.

Cynicism and trust

As discussed in chapter four, the level of trust and confidence in public officials evidenced by the women of South Raleigh is relatively low. In response to the question, "How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?", thirty-four of the 47 women believe you can trust them "only some of the time". (One woman did not respond to the question). Myrtle's comments are typical.

How much of the time can you trust them? Those jokers? What were the choices again? ... Well, I guess if you had to trust them, hey maybe some of the time. And that's only because Father Calloway (Black city councilman) is down there. And Jessie remarked, "You can't never trust them; long as you're looking at them maybe. Maybe not Father Calloway but he's only one."

While the majority of responses were negative, there were nonetheless several positive or trusting responses. Thirteen women believe government officials can be trusted either "most of the time" or "just about always". Estella's remarks are representative of the more trusting responses.

Oh, I guess you can pretty much trust them most of the time. Father Calloway's there and he keeps an eye on them. The
councilmen and the mayor know we're watching out for them. So yes you can trust them (pause) to a degree.

The less affluent women are the most distrustful of public officials. Of the 36 low income women, twenty-eight responded that you can trust government officials only some of the time. Middle income women were slightly more likely to trust officials; about half gave a trust response. This tendency for low income women to distrust local officials may be a function of education attainment. Remember that the least educated of our sample are also women of low income. Several studies have shown that lower SES positions, especially lower levels of education are positively correlated with distrust.\(^{(93)}\) The distribution of feelings of distrust among levels of education suggests that education plays a strong role in such feelings. The most distrustful group is the least educated group of women; eleven of the 14 women with grade school education expressed feelings of distrust for the local government. As educational attainment increased so too did feelings of trust in the government and in officials. College graduates were the most trusting with half of the 10 women giving the trust response. The pattern remains even after controlling for income.

Among this sample of women, feelings of distrust make little difference in whether or not they will participate. Women who do not trust the government still vote in both presidential and local elections; seventeen of the 27 who expressed feelings of distrust

\(^{(93)}\) Agger, Goldstein, and Pearl, 1961; Templeton, 1966; Aberbach and Walker, 1970.
report voting in every presidential election and 13 of 27 vote in every local election. Women who had never voted, however, were more likely to express feelings of distrust; six of the seven nonvoters in presidential elections expressed such feelings. So rather than ignore a political system she distrusts, she continues to vote. On the face of it, this seems to be counterintuitive. But perhaps this continued participation is evidence of political savvy. If you distrust a public figure, what better way to keep him "honest" and liable to his constituents than to keep a watchful eye by taking active part in the political arena. In addition, continued participation may also be an attempt to rid the decisionmaking process of officials they distrust.

**Feelings of personal and political efficacy**

The concept, political efficacy, is employed as a predictor and/or correlate of political participation. Developed by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, efficacy is the feeling that individual political action can have an impact upon the political process— that participation is worthwhile. A high sense of political efficacy has been shown to be correlated with voting.(94) But the relationship between sense of political efficacy and voting among Black women receives uneven support. Survey data from the 1968, 1972 and 1976 election show that Black women, in comparison to Black males and whites, held the lowest sense of political efficacy. Yet the voting record of 

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Black women during this same time period shows a rate of increase greater than that of any other group.

A sense of political efficacy is part of a general personality syndrome which includes such traits as life satisfaction and personal control. Persons that are unsatisfied and insecure in their personal lives (i.e. personally ineffectacious) usually express a low sense of political efficacy and disaffection from the political system. (95)

Respondents were asked "How satisfied would you say you are with your own life today?" Over three-fourths of the women said they are satisfied with their life; low income women were just as likely to say they were satisfied as middle income women. However, of the 12 women who are dissatisfied, nine are of low income. The three middle income women who are dissatisfied made a distinction between their personal life and their professional life. In general the complaint was over job placement and "on the job" personality conflicts. Not only are most of the women satisfied with the current status of their lives, they also feel they have control over that life and what happens to it. In response to the question, "In general, do you feel you have much control over the events in your life or is it pretty much left to things outside your control?", thirty-four of the 48 women felt they had control of their life. But there are SES differences. Low income women are more likely to express feelings of control than are the more affluent women. This seems, on the face of it, to be counterintuitive. But here again

middle income women make a distinction between their personal and professional life. Half of the 12 middle income women expressed dismay at the lack of control in their careers. Doris, a public school teacher, explains that,

As far as my professional career, it is outside my control. Well, for example, it's difficult to get a promotion, you know, a job promotion. To me things are very political in Raleigh. But as far as self, I can do, you know, just about what I want to do but you can't do too much without finances. And if you just keep a low income job then you can't do anything.

And Cecelia, guidance counselor, also made the distinction between the two areas of her life.

I'd have to answer that on two levels. Personally, I'm satisfied. Professionally, I want to get into the process of making changes. Personally, I have control. Professionally, I have control to an extent. For example if I want to make changes like pursue another degree the only thing that would stop me would be myself. But, for example, I just tried to pursue a transfer which would lead to something better and I had a lot of problems. I had no control in that.

Several studies have indicated that women who express personal control over events in their life are also most likely to be more active in social and political activities. This observation receives somewhat ambiguous support among the women of South Raleigh. Women who feel in control of their life are just as likely to be active in a policy related organization as inactive; half of the 34 personally efficacious women are active and half inactive. But of the half that are active a greater proportion, 3 out of 4, express feelings of personal control. So belonging to a policy related or community organization such as the Residence Council seems to increase a woman's sense of control over her
own life. This is quite understandable; the Council is active in correcting the problems of the neighborhood and in addressing issues that affect life in the Housing projects. Through participation in the Council, members develop the sense that they are having some effect or control over what is going on in the neighborhood, and therefore in their lives. Perhaps, participation in community and policy related organizations and feelings of personal efficacy feed on each other, producing a circularity of effects. Participation increases their sense of personal efficacy and their sense of personal efficacy, in turn, probably increases their participation. (Dahl, 1961, hypothesized a similar relationship between political efficacy and political participation).

Responses to social indicator questions (life satisfaction and control over life events) are often used in research studies as a measurement of affection or disaffection with the political system. Baxter and Lansing write that "responses to social indicator questions—in which black women systematically describe unsatisfying and insecure lives—suggest the roots of the disaffection of black women from the political system, a disaffection expressed elsewhere in our data as low feelings of efficacy and low trust in government."(96) The women of our study, in comparison, overwhelmingly describe satisfying and secure lives but earlier in the study also expressed low trust in government officials. What this paradox suggests is that the women in our sample

do not make the connection between their personal lives and the political system. This observation is further supported by the low and sometimes negative gamma correlations between the social indicators and the trust in government officials items. (97)

A sense of personal control or personal efficacy is also frequently used as a "predictor" of political control or of political efficacy. Persons expressing personal control feel more politically efficacious than personally insecure individuals. (98) What relationship does personal control have with political efficacy among the women of our sample? Before addressing the question, a discussion of the political efficacy items is needed.

Popular operationalization of the concept, political efficacy (developed by Campbell, Gurin and Miller, 1954), taps the belief that institutions are responsive to citizen pressure. The scale contains four agree/disagree statements. A disagree response is the efficacious response: 1) People like me don't have any say about what the local government does (99) 2) I don't think local officials care much what people like me think; 3) Voting is the only way that people like me can

(97) Gamma coefficients between Trust item, "Local officials don't care", and personal satisfaction is -.16 and -.04 for personal control. Gamma coefficients between the second trust item, "How often trust", and personal satisfaction is .31 and .08 for personal control.


(99) Reference to local government is not part of the traditional efficacy scale. It was included for the purposes of analysis with this current sample of Black women.
have any say about how the local government runs things; and 4) Sometimes local politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on. The relationship between these scale items and participation is widely documented; study after study have indicated that persons who feel efficacious participate at a higher level than individuals without such feelings. But Milbrath warns that the relationship of race to political efficacy should be interpreted cautiously.(100)

Before relating the political efficacy scale to the participation of women in our sample, the items of the scale were intercorrelated. As Table 12 indicates, the gamma correlations among the items are small correlations (with one exception) and in one case a negative correlation. This indicates that the items are not measuring a single dimension but rather may be measuring several different attitudes. To further test the fit of the efficacy index to our sample, a Guttman scale analysis was conducted. To aid in evaluating the scalability of the items, the coefficients of reproducibility and scalability were used.(101) Both the coefficients vary from 0 to 1. A general guideline

(100) Milbrath, 1977, p.80.

(101) The Guttman scale analysis is a means of analyzing the underlying operating characteristic of three or more items in order to determine if their interrelationships meet several special properties. The most important of these 'special properties' is that the index must be unidimensional, that is, the component items must all measure movement towards or away from the same single underlying continuum. For a discussion on Guttman scales, coefficient of reproducibility and scalability see Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2nd Edition, Norman Nie, et. al., 1970, p. 529-533.
to the interpretation of the first coefficient is that a coefficient of reproducibility higher than .9 is considered to indicate a valid scale. Note that for our sample, the coefficient of reproducibility is only .80. The second measure, coefficient of scalibility, should be well above .6 if the scale is truly unidimensional and cumulative. In this case, the coefficient is .50. Both these measures indicate that the traditional efficacy items just do not fit with our sample; they are not measuring an underlying continuum. We suggest that the traditional efficacy items may not be appropriate for minority groups of the population who have had a very different kind of political socialization than whites. Perhaps one of the reasons the caveat - that race and sense of efficacy have to be interpreted cautiously - exists is because of the inappropriateness of the scale itself. Of course, one could argue that our sample only consists of 48 women which increases the chance of measurement error and decreases the generalizability of the results. However, Baxter and Lansing also suggested the inappropriateness of the scale for minorities. In a national study of the political behavior of Black women, they observe that,

Measures (political efficacy index) developed in the 1950's to be applied to predominantly middle-class, white Americans have a poor fit for Black citizens whose socialization and lifestyle have been very different from white America.(102)

An example of that difference in socialization is evident among the women in our sample. One of the efficacy scale items, "Voting is the only way" seemed to be interpreted somewhat differently by many of the

Table 12

**Scalability of Traditional Efficacy Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Voting Only Way</th>
<th>Politics So Complicated</th>
<th>People Like Me</th>
<th>Local Officials Don't Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting Only Way</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>-.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics So Complicated</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Like Me</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Officials Don't Care</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
women. Several comments will illustrate the point.

Oh I agree with that, you has to vote. Yes, you got to vote.

Voting is very important. This younger generation they
don't know what we went through to get this right to vote. So
yes I agree with that.

You don't remember how it was like not to vote. We didn't
have no colored judges and colored mayors like now. Back then
we sat in the back of the Walgreens, too. It's a shame more
of us don't go out and vote. Look what voting's got us.

What do you mean? Sure you got to vote. What do you think
all that was about in the sixties?

The right to vote for the Black community was a hard fought battle and
obviously an achievement these women are proud of. For many of the
women, the question seems to be measuring the importance of voting and
not personal feelings of political competence.

The two items in the efficacy index with the highest correlation were
"People like me" and "Local officials don't care." The gamma
correlation is .88. The association makes intuitive sense; both
questions refer to a sense of helplessness in the political system, a
feeling that they are powerless to influence their government. A third
of the women agreed with both statements thereby feeling the most
helpless. But 56% of the respondents agreed with at least one of the
items. This sense of political powerlessness should not be interpreted
as an inadequacy among the women, rather we suggest that this powerless
feeling is a perceptive assessment of their political status, of their
inability to influence many issues that affect their lives. The
feelings are a reflection of the reality of the political system where
decisionmakers are not accessible and where the number of issues that they can affect is limited. These feelings, then, are a rational response to an often insensitive political system.\textsuperscript{(103)}

But here, too, is a paradox. While the women believe that local public officials are not responsive to them, they still strongly support the act of voting. The women appear to be holding contradictory beliefs: one must vote even though it will not make a difference in the decisionmaking process. Perhaps one must vote, not because it will make a difference, but because it is a matter of racial pride or racial duty— similar to civic duty.

Now that we have determined that at least two of the items measure a sense of political efficacy we can return to an analysis of the relationship between political and personal efficacy and between political efficacy and political participation. Because both of the items ("Local officials don't care" and "People like me") are so highly correlated (.88) they appear to be measuring the same attitude. An efficacy index was created using these two items. Fifteen responants agreed with both statements; 12 agreed with at least one of the statements; and 21 disagreed with both statements.

As discussed earlier, several studies have suggested that a sense of personal control often means an individual will express political efficacy as well. What is the relationship of the two factors among the

\textsuperscript{(103)} Lane, 1962, and Almond and Verba, 1963, as well as others have suggested that there may be, in fact, little relationship between sense of political efficacy to actual efficacy.
women of South Raleigh? Of the 34 women who expressed personal control over their life, about as many agreed with the items in the index as disagreed. Women who express no control over their personal life also split about equally among the three index categories. Women who are personally in control are no more likely to be politically efficacious than women who express no control. Personal efficacy has not yet spilled over into the political arena. This also further supports the observation made earlier that these women just do not associate their personal lives with the political system.

Feelings toward the political system have been demonstrated to be distinguishable by socioeconomic status. The evidence is overwhelming that feelings of political efficacy are disproportionately found among those with higher objective social position, i.e. higher education and higher income. (104) This relationship also held true for the women of our sample. Women with low objective social positions were the least efficacious; fourteen of the 37 low income women agreed with both statements in the index while only one of the 11 middle income women agreed. Women of low education also were more likely to feel inefficacious; eleven of the 15 women who had grade school education were the most inefficacious agreeing with both items in the index while only one of ten college graduates was that inefficacious. As education level increased, so too did feelings of efficacy.

While feelings of political efficacy are strongly related to socioeconomic position, such feelings are weak and tenuous indicators of political participation. Women who either disagreed with both items or disagreed with one of the items were just as likely to be active as inactive in a policy related organization. But for the most inefficacious group (women who agreed with both items in the index), only four of the 15 were active in a policy organization. In terms of electoral activism, feelings of effectiveness in the political system did not influence the frequency of voting in presidential or local elections. The inefficacious voted as frequently as the efficacious. But voting is mostly a 'spectator' activity and efficacy generally shows a stronger relationship with 'gladiatorial' activities--campaigning, protesting, and attending political rallies.(105) According to Milbrath, "this is to be expected, for spectator activities do not depend on personal motivation to the same extent as more demanding activities do".(106) We might expect then that women who felt they had some influence over decisionmakers would participate more in gladiatorial activities than women without such feelings. In one of the activities--protesting--efficacious women do not distinguish themselves from the inefficacious. But in two of the activities--attending a political rally and campaigning--efficacious women are distinctly more active. Fifteen of the 21 women who disagreed with both items had attended a

rally and 11 of the 12 who disagreed with one of the items had also attended a rally. The results were also similar for campaign work. So women who believe they can influence decisionmakers are more likely to have taken part in a campaign or in a rally to support a candidate or to discuss some issue of concern.

For the most part, however, feelings of powerlessness in the political system - which a majority of the women express - are not associated (for the women of this sample) with participation in that system. These feelings coexist with continued support and participation in the decisionmaking process which supports the idea that they are participating out of a sense of obligation, rather than from a feeling of accomplishment. One explanation might be that norms within the Black community support their participation, but that participation then results in a belief that the impact of that involvement is weak. (107)

**Group consciousness**

A sense of identity with a subjugated group of which one is an objective member is often suggested as an explanatory variable for the participation of that group's members. Verba and Nie argue that group identity represents an alternative mechanism for political mobilization; group members who are aware of their status as a deprived group should

(107) Pierce, Avery and Carey, 1973, also observed that "women have less confidence (than Black men) in their ability to understand or influence politics and express "greater cynicism toward the system" yet they continued to participate at rates equal to Black males and white females.
be more politically active than citizens who do not share the group identity. (108) For Verba and Nie group identification as a mechanism of mobilization to political activity is a singular and linear model. Simply, feelings of closeness to and awareness of belonging to a deprived group is enough to motivate otherwise uninterested citizens (especially low income individuals) to political participation. Accepting that the relationship between the two variables does indeed exist, we argue that common identification with others in one's socioeconomic stratum (no matter how strong the identification) is a necessary but not sufficient enough cause to motivate people to act politically on these attitudes. (For example- studies with Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans and native Americans (109) observe that these groups all have strong group identity but did not participate at levels unexpected from their SES).

Before establishing that there is a relation between group identification and participation, we must first determine if group members are politicized. Miller, et. al. (1981) list three components of politicization that must be present: polar affect, polar power and system rather than individual blame. Polar affect (110) (a preference for members of one's own group and a dislike for those outside the group), polar power (expressed dissatisfaction with the group's current


(109) Ryan, 1975; Antunes et.al., 1980.

(110) Definitions of polar affect, polar power and system blame are from Miller, et.al., 1981, p. 496-497.
status, power, or material resources in relation to that of the outgroup), and system blame (belief that the responsibility for their group's low status in society is attributable to inequities in the social system and not to individual failings) form a political ideology whereby members see themselves as a cohesive group, are dissatisfied with their status in society and believe that collective action by their group will help change that status.

Miller, et.al. observed that identification with a subordinate group promotes participation only when politicized, that is, group identification with any of the other components listed above. The strongest interactive relationship combined group identification, polar power and system blame.

The women of our sample live in predominantly Black neighborhoods defined by socioeconomic level. Most of their friends live in the same neighborhood and as discussed earlier there is infrequent fraternizing among social classes as well as limited association with whites. There is a certain amount of positive affect expressed by the women toward their group; the majority are overwhelmingly proud to be Black and to be Black women, although most were uncomfortable with the distinction made between being Black and being a Black woman. A retired woman's remarks are indicative of the responses.

I don't get this between Black and Black woman. We are all Black and the white man treats us all the same. I am Black. And proud of it.
There is a sense that their color is more important than their gender—being female is subordinate to being Black. Asked the question, "Which do you think has hurt you the most, being Black or being a woman— or have both affected you just about the same?", women either responded that neither had hurt (21) or that being Black had hurt. None mentioned that being female had hindered them. For the majority of these women, the "double-whammy" is not perceived to be an influence in their lives.

While the women of our sample live together with other Blacks and while they prefer the company of other Black women (polar affect), it is evident that they just do not voluntarily think of themselves in group terms. When asked the question, "Which of these groups do you think agree with your ideas, interests and feelings about things?" and the follow-up question, "Which one do you feel most close to?", many did not fully understand the question. Several comments were like the following:

Nobody thinks alike. Everybody's an individual.

I reckon my children would think like me but after that I don't know.

I don't like to be put in no group. Nobody ever agrees or cooperates. It's the individual.

Really, I guess I don't feel close to none of these, just my grandchildren cause they come by to see me everyday. So I guess I feel close to young people.

What do you mean close to? I am Black.

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The survey questions used to measure each of the conceptual components of group consciousness are listed in the Appendix.
But when 'forced' to make a decision all but one of the 48 women were able to identify a group they felt most close to. Four groups received 46 of the 47 responses. The group with the most "close to" responses, age, is quite a surprise. Seventeen of the women feel most close to either young people or to old people. It is also interesting that all 17 responses came from low income women. But some of these answers may be in response to a misunderstood question. Again, several comments illustrate the point.

Well, I work with young folk down at the Center and I understand them. So I guess young people.

Young people, they is our next generation. Our next Black leaders. It's young people. Got to support them.

I spend a lot of time with older people. You know going by to see them and taking them things. Yes, I feel close to older people.

Well, my grandparents is old now and I goes by to check on'm every day or so, take'm the newspaper. Stuff like that.

Not only do low income women feel close to young people and old people, they also identify with people in their own socioeconomic group. Eight women feel most close to low income people. None of the middle income women express identity with a social class group.

Middle income women do, however, express more of a sense of racial consciousness than low income women. Of the 11 middle income women, seven closely identified with other Blacks and four felt close to Black women. Compare this with only four of the 36 low income women identifying with Blacks and only six identifying with Black women. But

(112) A list of groups is included in the Appendix.
this sense of feeling close to a racial/sexual group appears to be more a product of education than of economic status. The better educated women of the sample are more inclined to identify with Blacks and Black women. Twenty-one women expressed sexual/racial consciousness. Of those 21, fourteen had at least some college experience. If a sense of group consciousness does indeed exist among our sample, it exists among the better educated— who are also mostly middle income.

In general, the women do not use 'Black women' or 'Blacks' as a reference group. They are aware and proud of their color and of their sex but do not think of themselves as a distinct group. There is very little identity with other Black women. Perhaps it can be suggested that a sense of consciousness, of belonging to a cohesive group is a luxury afforded one through education. Low income, poorly educated women may be too caught up in day to day survival to see the forest for the trees.

While only 21 of the 47 women expressed sexual/racial identity, there was almost unanimous dissatisfaction with the current status of Blacks and Black women (polar power). Forty-one believe that Blacks in general do not have enough influence vis-a-vis other groups in society. About three-fourths of the women also are dissatisfied with the status of Black women. Doris, a classroom teacher, explained,

You know Barbara Jordan jumped out there and had us all keyed up and Shirley Chisholm. But where are they? Where is Barbara Jordan? Where is Barbara Jordan? Shirley Chisholm? You don't have 'em any more. They'll stay out there and make you think you're going somewhere for two or three years but that's the end of it.
But many felt that while Black women are not influential in the outside world, they were influential in the family and in the Black community. Jessie, president of the Chavis Heights Residence Council, remarked,

> You know we don’t have too much influence in the politics. Not apart from the Black men anyway. But you know we have power right here (Black community). We has to raise the children, see to it they stay off drugs and stay off the street. And it’s us women that gets things done here in the neighborhood. ’Course we could use more influence but we do have a lot here. Let’s just say the potential is there for it, we just gotta use it more.

Not only are the majority of women dissatisfied with the current status of Blacks/Black women, three out of four support the belief that many qualified Black people with the same skills as whites are denied equal opportunities for jobs and advancement. They believe that the responsibility for the group's low status is attributable to inequities in the social and political system (system blame).

Part of their discontent with the group's status and the placement of responsibility for that status on the system, is the belief that collective group behavior is the optimal way to change that status. Thirty-seven women agreed that the best way for Blacks to get things done is to organize and work together as a group. The number of women who agree is slightly less when asked if Black women should organize as a group. The typical feeling is expressed by a Council member.

> I think we should stick together. Black men and Black women. We ought to organize together 'cause we want the same thing. Black women should stick by Black men and Blacks (men) with us.
As you can see from this discussion, a majority of the women express a political ideology whereby they are discontent with their status vis-a-vis other groups in society, blame that status on the system and believe that collective action will help improve their lot in society. But while they express such an ideology, the essential element in group consciousness is missing for more than half. Recall that only 21 women closely identified with being Black or being a Black woman. Having met the basic requirement for politicized group consciousness, how many of the closely identified are actually politicized? That is, how many of the identified women are dissatisfied with the group's status, blame the system and favor collective behavior. With these added requirements, the number 21 drops to 16. Only a few women, then, have a sense of group polarization in society.

According to Miller et.al., not just group consciousness but politicized group consciousness promotes participation—especially for lower income citizens. With this in mind, we expected the most active women in community organizations and in electoral politics to be among the 16 politicized women. This was not the case. Women who expressed a sense of politicized group consciousness were observed among both the actives and the inactives. Politicized group consciousness is not related to participation. But perhaps the criteria of politicized group identity established by Miller are too stringent. Let us return to the less restrictive Verba and Nie model—feelings of belonging to a deprived group is enough to motivate one to political participation.
Here, too, we find no support for the suggested relationship. A sense of group identity did not necessarily lead to participation. Women who expressed a sense of group identity with Blacks or Black women were just as likely to be active as inactive. Among this sample of women we find no support for the relationship between group identity—whether politicized or not—and participation. The anomaly may be attributed to the small sample size or to the 'uniqueness' of the women of South Raleigh. Further research will further develop this hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

Through the maze of variables that are said to influence political behavior, only a few are related to the participation of the women of South Raleigh. The environment of the immediate neighborhood was observed to have an effect on the participation of low income women. More specifically, dissatisfaction with some neighborhood problem thought to be serious seems to be an antecedent to participation in the Council. The problems in low income neighborhoods primarily focused on disruptive children caused by a lack of recreational facilities. This problem is viewed by the active women as one that can be resolved by collective action. While perception of a shared community problem seems to be an antecedent to participation, it is not in itself a sufficient enough condition to spark membership in the Council. The impact of personal contact with someone from the group was a necessary factor for a majority of the active low income women. The importance of personal
contact cannot be overstated; neither can the woman's social network be overlooked.

A social network that consists of family and friends that are supportive of participation outside the family is conducive to the adoption of a new political and/or social role. A network that includes friends who are themselves active also increases the chances that a woman will be personally contacted to become part of an association.

Community or environmental factors, such as serious neighborhood problems, influence the decision to participate in voluntary associations, especially in the Residence Council. And as has been evident throughout the analysis, affiliation in the Council leads to increased levels of participation in electoral politics—especially in the frequency of voting in local elections, in working at the polls and in attending political rallies. Association in a policy related organization such as the Residence Council acts as a stimulator for those women whose social characteristics suggest they are least likely to participate in the decisionmaking process.

Contextual factors, such as the environment of the neighborhood and structural constraints such as life situation as determined by income, education, number of children, etc. have been demonstrated to have an influence on participation for the women in our sample. The influence of psychological factors, on the other hand, is not so clear and straightforward. Ambiguous results and interesting paradoxes were observed. These Black women do not associate their personal life with
the workings of the political system. Sense of personal control and life satisfaction do not spill over as expected into the political arena. Women who felt in control of the events in their life felt no less helpless in the political system. But perhaps it is unrealistic on our part to expect that personal control should determine political efficacy. These women may be quite perceptive and accurate in the assessment of their status in the policymaking process. They distrust the system but are not alienated from it. Feelings of distrust exist in the face of continued support for and participation in that system. Therein lies the paradox. The women, even though distrustful and "helpless", continue to vote and participate in other electoral and non-electoral activities.

There also exists among the women the framework of a political ideology whereby they are dissatisfied with their status, blame the system for that status and believe that collective behavior is needed to improve that status vis-a-vis other groups in society. Nonetheless, a sense of group consciousness does not yet exist. Strides have first to be made toward a realization that they are part of a group. A sense of "belonging" to a group—whether that identity is for Blacks or Black women—is sorely missing. The beginnings of such a realization is observed among the more educated women. As with most ideas and movements that start among the more affluent members of a deprived group, this too must precipitate downwards to include the masses of women who are not yet so well situated in society.
Chapter VI
BLACK WOMEN IN THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW

When all is said and done, what has been the contribution of the analysis as discussed in the preceding chapters? The question can be addressed on several fronts. First, in the way of a more general contribution, the study has increased the knowledge that exists on the political behavior and attitudes of Black women. Recall that in chapter one the point was made that existing research on Black women in the political arena is sorely lacking. Much has been written on Black women as actors in the social arena, i.e. as mothers and as participants in the social fabric of the Black family. Research has also been done on her role in the economic survival of the Black community as well as on her role in the broader economic sphere. But relatively little attention has been given to her as an actor in the political decisionmaking process. Especially lacking has been research and analysis of non-elite Black women, of working class, poor Black women as political beings. This study of Black women - more specifically, of low income women - has contributed much needed (and long overdue) information on Black women and their participation in political decisionmaking. With an analysis that has focused on a small number of women we have been able to begin the process of understanding the participation of these women in decisions that influence and affect their lives.

- 176 -
More specifically, the study has contributed significantly to two areas of concern in the field of political participation: to an understanding of how Black women select to have an input into decisionmaking; and to an identification of relationships between Black female participation and structural and contextual factors. In the analysis of how the women in our sample participate, the discussion focused on the associational behavior of the women. Nearly 75% of the respondent's social network included association with others outside their immediate family circle. Middle income women tended to join broader based community service organizations while the low income women of the sample evidenced a propensity for joining self help organizations that focus on immediate neighborhood problems. Unlike many economically and culturally disadvantaged groups in society who are often isolated as individuals, the women of South Raleigh do associate with others in organizations and clubs. But it is association with others who are within their own neighborhood and socioeconomic group. The general theme is one of homogeneity (or segregation if you like), racial as well as economical homogeneity. The women sought companionship and support through affiliation in organizations with memberships of women who are most like themselves. Women who live in the low income housing projects almost always sought out clubs whose members were also Black and low income. Most often these were clubs based in the neighborhood and that catered to the needs of the neighborhood residents. And the women of Biltmore Hills, too, tended to segregate themselves and to socialize
with other women who had similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Very few of the voluntary associations were interracial or economically mixed. No where was this more evident than in the racially and economically distinct memberships of religious and social/fraternal organizations.

The methods by which these women chose to participate demonstrate a basic loyalty and belief in the present status quo. Their actions support the inference that they believe their goals can best be achieved by working within the existing decisionmaking framework. Whether those actions be through participation in community and social associations or through voting, it is safe to assume that the women of South Raleigh accept as legitimate the existing social and political structures. Almost all were voters; middle income women and low income women that were tapped into the political communication network through affiliation with the Residence Council were also active in other electoral activities such as campaign and pollwork and rally participation. Even those women who had used protest behavior as a means of demonstrating their needs were also supportive of and had participated in the more acceptable forms of decisionmaking.

Only five of the 48 women chose not to participate at all; however, we concluded that the reason for this isolation was not one of alienation from the political system but rather was one of a more benign nature. Simply, the five perceived their net cost of participation (in voluntary associations as well as in electoral politics) to far outweigh their projected net benefit from such participation. Here again we find
further support for the idea that the women still have a basic belief in the politicoeconomic system.

TOWARD AN IDENTIFICAITON OF RELATIONSHIPS

Let us move now to the contributions that have been made in the second area of concern— an identification of factors related to the political participation of Black women. In general, traditional structural factors explained the overall participation of our sample. Women with higher SES, education and occupation status were more likely to participate in electoral politics, in protest behavior and to belong to voluntary associations. But these factors may rather be indicators of a life situation that is conducive to political participation. James Davis, in a discussion of human nature in politics, listed five categories of human needs: physical (food, water, sex, sleep, etc.); safety (order, predictability of the environment); love, affection, belongingness; self-esteem; and self-actualization. Some of these needs, especially the physical ones (according to Davis) rise and fall in strength cyclically. At times of great physical need, one becomes completely absorbed in filling that need. It is only when these needs can be satisfied somewhat routinely that the individual can turn to social and political behavior.(113) The resources a woman, like other individuals, has available to help meet basic human needs is predicated on level of income or socioeconomic status. The more affluent women are

(113) See Davis, 1963, chapters 1 and 2.
more likely to be able to provide for these needs in a more or less routine manner. Higher levels of income free her from the day to day worries of survival. Less affluent women, on the other hand, do have to worry about fulfilling basic needs. There is less free time for social and political activities.

This discussion of the relationship between fulfilling needs and level of income assumes that one measure of 'freedom from worry' is socioeconomic status. High SES persons are usually well educated and thus are in higher paying, physically less demanding occupations -- all factors that encourage participation. In addition, high status occupations and lifestyles also provide a network of social contacts conducive to such participation. So determining who will participate may simply come down to a question of who is most free to think about and to engage in social and political behavior.

But among the sample of women constrained by structural factors (i.e. women of low socioeconomic status), we identified several factors that helped to overcome those constraints; factors that provide a conducive environment for participation. Figure 1 represents a conceptual scheme or model of these factors. The diagram is not meant to suggest the direction of the relationships (some relationships may very well be interactive); nor is the diagram meant to suggest an additive relationship. It is merely a visual aide to illustrate the factors that we recognize as "associated" with the participation of Black females in our sample.
Figure 1

Factors Associated with the Political Participation of Low Income Women
In the analysis of why some women became active and others not, several factors were examined. Four of these factors demonstrated to be more important than the others: 1) interest in neighborhood issues; 2) perception of a serious neighborhood problem; 3) personal contact; and 4) favorable life situation. These factors are associated with participation in the Residence Council; members of the Council, for the most part, distinguished themselves from the other low income women by demonstrating these characteristics. Almost all of the active low income women expressed an interest in neighborhood issues even before they became members of the Council. So a certain amount of interest in the community may serve as a foundation from which to evaluate and to be concerned with neighborhood problems. Mere perception of a neighborhood problem, in and of itself, however, did not seem to be sufficient enough reason for participation. In addition to the perception of a serious problem, women who became active also thought that the problem was a solvable one. With a fair amount of interest in and concern for the neighborhood, these characteristics may very well serve as a reservoir of potential participation, or rather a resource upon which community and political leaders can draw upon to motivate participation. Many of the active women seemed to be "ripe" for participation (i.e. were interested and knew of community problems that should be addressed) and were just waiting to be personally directed toward organized participation. The catalyst that stimulated many of the active women into participation was their social network of friends and relatives.
which included someone who was already involved in community or political activities that could show them how and where to channel their desire to participate.

The fourth factor associated with participation in a policy related organization is a favorable life situation or the availability of time and energy to devote to activities outside the home. It is at this point that the structural factors (income, education, occupation) appear to have its closest association. Women in less demanding occupations (determined largely by level of education attainment) and with minimum family responsibilities (determined by the presence of a spouse and the absence of small children to care for) exist in an environment that is most conducive to the adoption of social and political roles.

While the data do not allow us to make statements about which (if any) of the four factors are necessary and/or sufficient causes of participation, we can, however, say that these four factors seem to be antecedents to participation in a policy related organization for the women of our sample. Membership in the Residence Council was identified as the single most important factor related to participation in electoral politics for low income women. It is through the Council that these women become tapped into the network of political communication. Through Council membership they are made aware of political events such as rallies and are asked to take part in stuffing envelopes and in working at the polls.
Often associated with participation in the Council was the realization that individual problems are seldom "idiosyncratic" but are shared problems that can best be addressed through group action. Through the Council there is support for and a mechanism for problem solving so it is not surprising to observe that also related to Council membership are feelings of control over one's personal life. Council membership is important, then, not only because it enhances electoral participation, but also and perhaps most importantly, because it tends to be associated with a set of attitudes that may broaden the member's perception of her place in the politicoeconomic system and may predispose her to further participation in other associations.

Throughout the analysis it became apparent that several of the psychological factors did not have the expected hypothesized relationship with political participation. For example, based on extant research, we hypothesized that feelings of personal control and satisfaction with life would be related to feelings of political efficacy. We expected these personal feelings to spill over into the political arena. For the women of this sample, however, the data proved otherwise. Sense of personal control and life satisfaction did not influence participation in the Residence Council nor participation in electoral politics. In fact, factors associated with the personal lives of the women were not effective "predictors" of participation. This, then, suggests that these women do not themselves make the connection between their personal lives and the politicoeconomic system. For a
majority of the women, the events in their lives are not perceived as influenced or determined by decisions and events in the political arena. This perception may be a realistic assessment of their life in an environment of abject poverty. Day to day struggles of providing the necessities of family survival are rarely directly affected (or alleviated) by political events. These women are so caught up in survival that they have not the time nor the energy for theorizing about what the causes of their plight may be.

It was observed, too, that feelings of distrust for public officials and a sense of political ineffectiveness are not associated with participation. This finding is consistent with what other researchers (see Baxter and Lansing, 1980) of Black female participation have observed—that feelings of distrust and political inefficacy coexist with continued participation. The relationship remains an interesting paradox and one that needs further exploration. As suggested previously, measures often used to explain the participation of white groups in society may not be appropriate for use with other populations in society.

What we hypothesized as an appropriate measure of participation—sense of group consciousness—proved to be an "educated woman's concept" and not very predictive of political participation. In general, the women do not use groups (Black or women) as an ideological reference point. There is awareness of being Black and female, but it is only a classification or more specifically a description of who they
are. They do not use these characteristics as a reference around which to organize an ideological construct. If there exists a sense of identity with a group it is with one's social class, an identification with other low income or poor Black people. Because many of the women did not express a sense of group identity with other Black women, we found no support for the relationship between sense of group identity and participation.

These results are different from what other researchers have observed. The most obvious explanation for the difference in result findings may be the small sample size of this study. A sample of 48 increases the chances of measurement error and decreases the chances of much variation. However, the sample was not a random sample of Raleigh women and thus not dependent on the characteristic (group identity) falling into the sample simply by chance. We were aware of the possibility that group consciousness as a general population characteristic may not exist in great enough proportions that random sampling would identify enough individuals to be included. Half of the sample, therefore, was drawn from a population that we expected would most likely exhibit a sense of group identity, i.e. from women active in the Residence Council. If a sense of group identity does indeed exist among the women of South Raleigh, we would expect it to be exhibited by women active in a policy related organization. But even among the population that should most likely be identified, there was not much group identity with other Black women. So the explanation of small sample size is not all together acceptable.
An explanation we find more acceptable attributes the results to the inappropriateness of the questions used to measure the concept. Many of the women had difficulty understanding the questions used to assess each of the conceptual components of group consciousness. The questions in this study are University of Michigan Survey Research Center measures traditionally used by researchers. However, if the confusion of our respondents to the questions is indicative of the responses in other populations, then it is strongly urged that these "traditional" measures be re-evaluated and perhaps even completely revised.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MOBILIZING THE BLACK COMMUNITY

Black women of South Raleigh are not a monolithic nor a homogenous group; they are of two distinct and separate classes that do not intermingle or associate with each other in voluntary organizations. There exists a certain amount of animosity and misunderstanding that can be attributed to this very lack of association. Both low income as well as middle income women believe they each have divergent interests with no common goals. Lower income women often expressed the belief that middle income women were insensitive to their needs and to their way of life. Only on those rare occasions when the two groups found themselves working together on city projects did they begin to realize that their goals and interests were indeed similar. Because of this lack of communication it will be difficult to mobilize 'the Black community;' that is, a ground of commonality is needed so that there
will be some rallying point of common endeavors around which the two
groups can work together. For example, in the days before the passage
of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the
entire mindset of the Black community was focused on "equality of
opportunity" through a breakdown of legal and extralegal barriers to
participation in the political decisionmaking process. Since the
earlier goals of the Civil Rights Movement (against legal segregation)
have been achieved, the struggle now has turned to economic parity viv-
a-vasi other groups in society and to efforts to ensure "equality of
results" rather than simply "equality of opportunity". These goals of
the present phase of the Movement have not been as successful as a
rallying point for Blacks. The 'dragons to be slayed' are not as
obvious as were the concrete laws and statutes that could be addressed
and overturned in the fifties and early sixties.

Middle class women, who tended to join broader based community
service organizations, were afforded the chance (through such
organizations) to meet and associate with others in their social class.
But low income women were more encumbered by parochical vision. Not
only do they not come into contact with women outside their own
socioeconomic status, but more times than not they only associate with
others that live in their immediate neighborhood. These women must be
made to realize that there is a broader support system than exists
within the confines of immediate neighborhood boundaries. What is
needed are more organizations similar to the Interproject Residence
Council that bring low income project residents together in a spirit of cooperation. In addition, more organizations with interclass membership, such as the Citizens Advisory Council, that bring individuals from different neighborhoods and backgrounds together to work on shared urban and civic issues are a necessity in mobilizing the Black community.

One of the strategies essential to mobilization must be cohesive organizational structures. If we are to increase the political participation of these women, personal contact is crucial. Through personal contact, organizations within the community will have to make participation relevant to the woman's life situation and to her immediate environment while at the same time seeking to broaden her perspective. This puts quite a burden - albeit a necessary one - on Black political and social organizations that must have tight and effective grass roots structures if this is to be accomplished.

While the women are aware of and understand what their problems are and can articulate them, there is still a tendency to see those problems in very narrow terms. They do not perceive issues that concern and affect them as shared or as "group issues". Neither do they see their problems or their life as being affected by or as part of a larger political and economic system that may be operating counter to their interests and needs. They are individualistic. If gains toward collective behavior are to be made, these women (especially low income women) must be resocialized to realize that their concerns are shared ones and are usually influenced by the politicoeconomic system.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter has attempted to draw together the major themes of the dissertation and to present an overall view of the factors that may lead to participation and the results of that participation. The study of a specific community, south Raleigh, has been speculative with its main purpose to identify and propose hypothesized relationships.

What follows is a list of suggestions for future research:

1. Closer examination of the influence of feelings of personal control on political efficacy and the relationship of both on political participation

2. A reformulation of group consciousness measurements

3. Top priority should be given to research on the appropriateness of psychological measures developed in the 1950s for middle class whites for usage with Blacks and other disadvantaged groups. Especial attention must be given to the four items traditionally used in the political efficacy scale. It was quite evident that among our sample of women the efficacy items just did not have the expected relationship with each other nor with other variables. The strong correlations among these items and with other social and political indicators (as evidenced by high and positive gamma and Pearson r correlations) that we expected based on extant research were often disappointingly low and sometimes negative rather than positive correlations.
One of the reasons for this lack of correlation was the inappropriateness of some of the items used to measure that construct. At least one of the efficacy statements had a very different meaning for our Black respondents. Based on statements made by several respondents, we are confident in the assertion that the interpretation of this question was for many very different from the interpretation given to it by the majority of middle class whites. The item "Voting is the only way" seemed to measure one's feelings about the importance or necessity of voting rather than the intended measurement of personal feelings of political competence.

Additionally, not only must we as social scientist be ever sensitive to the variations of cultural interpretations of our measures, we must also reexamine the interpretations we give to certain beliefs - especially when those beliefs exist in a culture foreign to our own. For example, an agree response to the efficacy item "Local officials don't care" is interpreted as an inefficacious response. However, for several of the respondents in Raleigh, this statement, while true, was the very reason they continued to be active and to vote. Jessie's comments make clear this rationale. She remarked that, "Sure they don't care. You got to make them care. That's why you got to get out there." For her as well as for others, this statement was simply a realistic statement of a political situation and not a measurement of any personal competence.
Research into the political behavior of middle class whites has suggested that feelings of cynicism and distrust are highly related to nonparticipation. Yet among our sample (as well as other studies) these 'negative' feelings coexist with continued participation and support for the political system. Such feelings among minority and disadvantaged groups who have not much reason to trust decisionmakers to do what is best for them is understandable. And it also makes sense that they should be the groups most active in the political process to protect their own interests. So a reexamination of the hypothesized relationships that exist between various psychological variables and participation is called for - a reexamination that is sensitive to cultural biases that exist both on the part of the respondent as well as on the part of the researcher.

4. Given the results of this study, we suggest that future research on the political behavior of Black women emphasize structural and contextual factors, especially the influence of the life situation variable. Also, a woman's social network figured prominently in her decision to participate and to become active in both community and electoral politics. This implies that less emphasis should be placed on psychological factors and more concentration be placed instead on the more fertile research area of the influence of structural and contextual factors.
5. And finally, there must be further testing of the observed relationship between factors of our sample for generalizibility to other populations of not only other Black women but also for other populations; testing of model for identification of factors that are necessary and/or sufficient causes of participation.
Appendix A

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE

I. Community Service Organizations - 40% of the total responses

Self-Help Neighborhood Organizations
Interproject Residence Council
Chavis Heights Residence Council
Walnut Terrace Residence Council
Apollo Heights Residence Council

Welfare Rights Organizations
Know Your Rights Organization
Lyndhurst Community Club
Tenants Organization
Walnut Youth Council
4-H Club
Drug Awareness Council
Apollo Heights Council Board
Chavis Heights Council Organization

Broader Focus Community Organizations
Adolescent Pregnancy Task Force
Head Start Board
Urban League
Governor's Council for 2000
Board of Child Watch
Wake Up for Children
Vista
Citizen Advisory Council
CETA Council
Foster Parent Club
Prevent Blindness Association
Raleigh Women's Club

II. Social, Fraternal and Family Organizations - 24% of the total
North Carolina A&T State Alumni Association
Guys and Dolls
Young Women's Christian Association
Young Men's Christian Association
Cameo Bridge Club
Bowling Club
Senior Citizens
Unmarried Mothers
Raleigh Union Lodge
Alpha Bets
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority
Phi Delta Kappa Honor Society
The C's of Lebanon
Order of Eastern Star
Daughter of Isis
American Legion

III. Church and Religious Organizations - 20% of the total

Episcopal Church Women
Episcopal Church
Young Episcopal Churchwomen
First Baptist Church
First Gospel Community Service
Circle A
United Gospel Church
Usher Board
Church Choir
Martin Street Baptist Church Choir Director
Martin Street Sunday School Superintendent
Deacons Wives Club
Bible Study Club
Women Aglow
Baptist Training Union
Cosmopolitan Baptist Church
Christian Education Study Group
Helping Hand
Good Samaritan Baptist Church
Hargett Street Baptist Church

IV. Political Organizations - 8% of the total

Wake County Black Womens Political Caucus
Raleigh Community Action
Raleigh Democratic Party
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

V. Professional Organizations - 8% of the total

North Carolina Teachers Association
Political Action Committee for Education
National Association of Negro Women
Association of Classroom Teachers
Practical Nursing Association

VI. Interest Group Organization - 1% of the total

National Abortion Rights Action League
Appendix B

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS BY INCOME LEVEL

I.

Organizations Listed by Low Income Women (non-council members)

- Raleigh Women's Club
- Raleigh Union Lodge
- Unmarried Mothers
- Senior Citizens
- Good Samaritan Baptist Church
- Deacon Wives Club
- Bible Study Group
- First Baptist Church
- Women Aglow
- Hargett Street Baptist Church
- Baptist Training Union
- Helping Hand
- Cosmopolitan Baptist Church
- Christian Education Study Group

II.

Organizations Listed by Middle Income Women

- Lyndhurst Community Club
- Adolescent Pregnancy Task Force
Head Start Board
Urban League
Governor's Council for 2000
Board of Child Watch
Wake Up for Children
North Carolina A&T Alumni Association
Guys and Dolls
YWCA, YMCA
Alpha Bets
Delta Sigma Theta
NARAL
Phi Delta Kappa Honor Society
Cameo Bridge Club
Episcopal Church Women
Episcopal Church
Young Episcopal Church Women
First Baptist Church
Wake County Black Women Political Caucus
Raleigh Community Action
Raleigh Democratic Party
NAACP
North Carolina Teachers Association
PACE
National Association of Negro Women
III.

Organizations Listed by Residence Council Members

Interproject Residence Council
Chavis Heights Residence Council
Walnut Terrace Residence Council
Apollo Heights Residence Council
Welfare Rights Organization
Tenants Organization
4-H Club
Drug Awareness Council
Bowling Club
The C's of Lebanon
Order of Eastern Star
Daughter of Isis
American Legion
Superintendent of Sunday School Martin Street Church
Practical Nursing Association
Day Care Association
Know Your Rights Organization
Apollo Heights Council Board
Board of Child Watch
VISTA
Citizen Advisory Council
CETA Council
Foster Parent Club
Prevent Blindness Association
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority
Senior Citizens
First Gospel Community Service
Circle A
United Gospel Church
Usher Board
Church Choir
Martin Street Baptist Church Director of Choirs
Appendix C

LIST OF CAMPAIGN, RALLY AND PROTEST ACTIVITIES BY INCOME

MIDDLE INCOME WOMEN

Campaign Activities (also includes work at the polls)

Primary 1982 poll work
Transported voters to polls
Voter registration
Stuffing envelopes
John Baker's campaign
Dan Blue's campaign
Distribute brochures at polling areas

Rally Activities

Support for Governor Hunt in 1980
1970's voter registration in Washington, D.C.
Negro Women's rally in Washington in 1981 on Reganomics
Support for George Greene for Judge in 1980
Support for local candidates in 1970 and 1982
Support for handicap rights
Angela Davis rally
Endorse candidates for North Carolina Education Association
Association of Classroom Teachers rally
Primary election 1982 - support for Black candidates
Protest Activities

March on state capitol to demand increase in state teacher's salary

March on state education department to demand an increase in teacher's salary

1960's march on state capitol to protest the integration of Black colleges

1974 march on state capitol to save Black colleges from becoming part of the University of North Carolina system

1960's march for integration

Local college and campus issues

March against Moynihan; disruption of graduation ceremonies while he was speaking

LOW INCOME WOMEN - (COUNCIL MEMBERS)

Campaign and Poll Activities

Tally votes in the June 1982 primary

Work at polls as precinct judge

Voting machine operator, assist voters

Precinct work

Registration drive 1979 and 1980

Assist at the polls

Rally Activities

Support for Lightner

Delegate to the state Democratic Convention

Support for Acie Ward

Attended state Democratic convention as precinct chairman
Support for Black candidates in local elections
Rally to oppose Reaganomics
Support for several 1970 candidates
Support for Jim Hunt
Support for candidates in the 1960s
National Tenants Association rally in Washington

Protest Activities
Protest Martin Luther King's death while in college in 1968
Protest against lack of modernization in apartments
Protest of union wages - job related
March for Civil Rights (King march, sit-ins)
Welfare Rights march to protest the delay of AFDC checks
Welfare Rights demonstration to protest treatment of welfare recipients

LOW INCOME WOMEN - (NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS)

Campaign and Poll Activities
Stuffed envelopes for Larry Little
John Winters campaign 1972
Work at polls

Rally Activities
Support for Kennedy
Support for Clarence Lightner
Senior Citizens rally for increased benefits
Support for Acie Ward
NAACP rally through the church to support busing
NAACP rally to support Civil Rights issues in the 1960s
Rally to nominate and discuss candidates for local elections

Protest Activities
March on state capitol to protest job discrimination
Martin Luther King march on Washington in 1960s
Appendix D

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

To begin, I'd like to ask you a few questions about yourself and your neighborhood.

1. First, how long have you lived in /neighborhood/?
2. Where did you live before moving here?
3. Would you say that most of your friends live here?
4. What do you like the most about your neighborhood?
5. What would you say are some of the problems here in /neighborhood/?
   (PROBES FOR EACH PROBLEM MENTIONED)
   a. Do you think this is a very serious or not very serious problem?
   b. What do you think needs to be done to solve the problem?
   c. Have you ever worked with others in /neighborhood/ to try to do something about this problem?
      If yes, with whom?

LET'S GO ON TO SOMETHING ELSE.

6. How satisfied would you say you are with your own life today?
   If not satisfied - what are some of the reasons you aren't satisfied?
7. Do you feel you have much control over the events in your life or is it pretty much left to things outside your control?
   (PROBES - In what ways, etc.)
8. How would you describe yourself? How do you see yourself?
   a. Which of these characteristics do you feel is most important in getting you where you are today?
   (PROBES - In what way?)
9. What organizations or clubs do you belong to?
   a. When did you first join /organization/?
   b. Is this a political, social, religious,
10. IF OTHER THAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION
Did you have any political activities through /organization/?
11. Why did you join /organization/?
12. Did someone ask you to become a member?
13. Have you ever held an office in the club?
14. How does /organization/ meet?
15. What does the club do?
16. Are you an active member, that is, do you regularly attend meetings?
17. Were any of your friends members of /organization/ before you became a member?
18. Do you get together with other club members other than at regular meetings?
If yes - for what purpose?

IF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION MENTIONED ASK QUESTIONS 19-22.

19. Have your ideas and feelings about politics or government changed since you joined /organization/?
If yes - in what way?
20. Since joining /organization/, have you become more interested in community or political affairs?
If yes - in what way?
21. Have you become more active in community or political affairs?
If yes - in what way?
22. Has your life changed in any way since you joined /organization/?
If yes - in what way?

23. What clubs or organizations have you belonged to in the last past five years but aren't a member of now?

REPEAT QUESTIONS 9-22 FOR EACH CLUB BELONGED TO IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS
24. Why aren't you a member now?

THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ARE TO BE ASKED OF MEMBERS OF THE RESIDENCE COUNCIL ONLY.

Let's talk about the work of the Council.
25. Do you see the Council as a political organization? If yes - in what way? If no - what kind of organization is it?
26. How important is the work of the Council?
27. What would you say are some of the things the Council tries to get done?
28. What do you consider the greatest accomplishment(s) of the Council? Weaknesses of the Council?
29. Have your ideas about politics or government changed since you joined the Residence Council? If yes - in what way?
30. Since joining the Council, have you become more interested in community affairs? If yes - in what way?
31. Have you become more active in community or political affairs since joining the Council? If yes - in what way?
32. When did you first join the Council?
33. Why did you join the Council?
34. Did someone ask you to become a member?
35. Have you ever held an office?
36. How often does the Council meet?
37. Are you an active member, that is, do you regularly attend meetings?
38. Were any of your friends members of the Council before you became a member?
39. Do you get together with other club members other than at regular meetings? If yes - for what purpose?

END SET OF QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED ONLY OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Let's talk about something else.

40. We are interested in how well known the community leaders are in different places. Have you heard anything about the mayor, like is he a good mayor, a poor one, or about average. Or haven't you heard anything about him?
41. Do you happen to remember the name of the mayor?
42. Have you heard anything about the Raleigh-Wake Community Action Group? If yes - what kind of things?
43. Does the name of the governor come to mind?
44. Who would you say are some of the important Black people in Raleigh?
45. Are you familiar with the /neighborhood/ Residence
Counil?
If yes - how important is the work of the Council?
(PROBE for level of information)

46. Do you happen to know the name of the president of the Residence Council?

Here are some statements we've heard from people when they discuss local politicians. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

47. People like me don't have any say about what the local government does.
48. I don't think local officials care much what people like me think.
49. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the local government runs things.
50. Sometimes local politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
51. How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government to do what is right - just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?
52. If you had some complaint about what the local government was doing and took that complaint to the mayor or to a city councilman, how do you think the official would react?
(PROBE - Just listen to you? Take some action?, etc.)
53. Some people seem to follow what's going on in local government and public affairs whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. How about you? How often do you follow what's going on in government?
54. Do you remember whether or not your parents were active in politics?
55. In the elections for president since you have been old enough to vote, how often would you say you have voted - every election, most, about half, less than half, never?
56. In the local elections for mayor and councilman since you have been old enough to vote, how often would you say you have voted - every election, most, about half, less than half, never?
57. Have you ever participated in a protest march or demonstration?
If yes - when? for what purpose?
58. Have you ever attended any political meetings or rallies?
59. Have you ever worked in a campaign, at the polls, or in any other political activity? If yes - when?

THIS IS A LIST OF SOME OF THE GROUPS PEOPLE TALK ABOUT. HAND R LIST.

LIST OF GROUPS

Blacks
Whites
Black women
women
farmers
Moral Majority
conservatives
liberals
middle class people
low income people
young people
middle age people
old people

60. Which of these groups do you think agree with your ideas, interests and feelings about things?
61. Which one do you feel most close to? next closest to? least close to?
62. If Black women not mentioned - now, how about Black women, do you feel close to them at all?
63. Do you feel you do things now that are important to do for Black women? If yes - what kind of things?
64. Do you feel you do things now that are important to do for Blacks? If yes - what kind of things?
65. Other than the groups we've discussed, do you belong to any of these groups but don't feel close to? Show R list again. If yes - Why don't you feel close to /group/ even though you say you belong to the group?
66. Do you think there are any advantages that come with being a Black woman?
67. Is there anything you don't like about being a Black woman?
68. Do you think there are any advantages that come
with being Black?

69. Is there anything you don't like about being Black?
70. How much influence do you think Black women have in American life today?
71. Do you think Black women should have more influence than they have now?
72. How much influence do you think Blacks have in American life today?
73. Do you think Blacks should have more influence than they have now?
74. Some people feel that Black women should organize and work together as a group in order to get things done. Others feel Black women should not organize in this way. They should work as individuals improving themselves and making their ideas known. How do you feel?
75. Ask the same question for Blacks.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE CAUSES OF POVERTY.

76. People say that some people are poorer than others because they just aren't hard working enough. Others believe that people are poor because they don't have the same chances others have. Which would you agree with? Why?

LOOK AT THESE STATEMENTS AND TELL ME WHICH YOU AGREE WITH. (SHOW R STATEMENTS)

LIST OF STATEMENTS

1a. Because of how society works, many hardworking people are prevented from doing well in this country.

OR

1b. In this country, anyone who works hard enough can get whatever they want.

2a. It's lack of skill and abilities that keep many Black people from getting a job. It's not just because they're Black. When a Black person is trained to do something, he or she is able to get a job.

OR

2b. Many qualified Black people can't get a good job. White people with the same skills wouldn't have any trouble.

3a. It's lack of skill and abilities that keep many women
from getting a job. It's not just because they're women. When a woman is trained to do something, she is able to get a job.

3b. Many qualified women can't get a good job. Men with the same skills wouldn't have any trouble.

Let's move on to something else.

77. Do you think men and women are paid the same when they work at similar jobs?
78. Do you think that when a man and a woman both work at the same job they should get paid the same? (PROBE - Why is that?)
79. A lot of people today talk about the low paying jobs most women have -
   a. Why do you think many women have low paying jobs?
   b. Is it the same for Black and white women or is there a difference?
80. As you know some people in society believe that women and Blacks are treated unfairly. How about you, have you ever been treated unfairly on your job or at work because you are a woman?
   If so - in what way?
81. How about other than at work, have you ever been treated unfairly because you are a woman?
82. Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or on your job because you are Black?
   If yes - in what way?
83. How about other than at work, have you ever been treated unfairly because you are Black?
84. Which do you think has hurt you the most - being Black or being a woman, or have both affected you just about the same?

Here are some statements. Tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following:
85. It's easier for a Black man than a Black woman to get a better paying job.
86. Most important family decisions should be made by the man of the house, if there is one.
87. Most officials and agencies I deal with treat Blacks unfairly.
88. Most officials and agencies I deal with treat women unfairly.
   It's easier for a white woman than a Black woman to get a better paying job.
AND NOW JUST TO COMPLETE THE INTERVIEW, I HAVE JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU.

88. Are you working now outside the home?
   If yes - what is your job?
      what do you do at work?
      how many hours per week do you work?
   If no - have you ever held a job outside the home?
      If yes - what did you do?
         when was it that you worked?
         for how long?

89. Are you now living with your mate, or are you widowed, divorced, separated or single?
90. Not counting yourself, how many people live here?
91. How many of them are under eighteen years old?
92. In what year were you born?
93. What is the highest grade of school you have completed?

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Now that the interview is over, is there anything you want to add or have any other comments?

Personal comments and interview notes:
BIBLIOGRAPHY


