

**Cleveland State University**  
**Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs**  
**Educational Guide to Accompany**  
**YOU Should Run for Office**

Overview

The Ohio Center for the Advancement of Women in Public Service (OCAWPS) has created this DVD to encourage more citizens, especially women and minorities, to run for elective office. This accompanying educational guide provides supplementary materials for educators, trainers, and group discussion leaders to expand upon the themes developed throughout the program. The CD is meant as an auxiliary tool that provides recommended readings, discussion questions, and resources for additional information. The educational guide assists in broadening the discussion to include political science, Ohio history, public administration, women's history, African-American history, and campaigns and electioneering as well.

Copies of the educational guide might be printed from this CD for use with the video. Educators might assign selected readings prior to the showing of the DVD to prepare students for topics to which they will be exposed. The questions for discussion might be used to facilitate dialogue following the program. Additional resources are listed at the end of the educational guide for students who wish further information on the subjects they have seen.

There are nine section headings within the DVD. The educational guide has been designed around each of these section headings.

Program Description:

In the following program we will discuss some broad issues about running for office including what might motivate people to run for office and how they might behave once they are elected. Then we will focus on the actual process of becoming a candidate and running a campaign. At the end of each section we present topics for discussion. There are no right or wrong answers to many of the questions we pose. Indeed, different people might arrive at different answers to these questions based on their own life experiences. We do believe, however, that consideration of these questions will help stimulate the kind of thought that is necessary in reaching the decision to run for office.

## Program Objectives:

The objectives of the program are:

- Develop and refine the student's understanding of what it means to be an effective public servant
- Enhance individual appreciation of the depth, complexity, and demands of running for public office
- Introduce students to the concept of running for elective office
- Expose students to the impact of gender and race on the practice of leadership
- Develop familiarity with Ohio history and politics

## Program Outline:

### **A Woman's Place is in the House and in the Senate**

It took decades, even centuries to secure full voting rights for women and minorities. With the achievement of voting rights came an increased diversity in the pool of Americans who participated in the electoral process and sought public office. Even today, women constitute a majority of the American population but are much underrepresented in the United States Congress and the state legislatures, including Ohio. At the same time, black Americans are represented in legislative bodies at proportions close to or even higher than their overall share of the population. While progress has been made in increasing the number of women seeking office and getting elected to office, that progress has leveled off in recent years. Throughout American history the pool from which candidates came tended to be disproportionately white, male, and Protestant. Candidates tended to be older, wealthier, and have a background in business and law. Today the candidate pool has expanded and become more diverse, but much work remains in making elected office a reality for all of our citizens. Hence this video is designed to stimulate more women and minorities to consider running for office.

Topics for Discussion:

1. What barriers are there to women and minorities running for office?
2. Are these barriers different depending on the office being sought?

3. Why have women enjoyed less success than African Americans in winning a proportional share of seats in legislative bodies?

#### Recommended Readings:

Mathews, Glenna. (1992). *The Rise of Public Woman*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Moncrief, Gary, Squire, Peverill, and Jewell, Malcolm. (2001). *Who Runs for the State Legislature?* New York: Prentice Hall.

Ohio's Women's Policy and Research Commission. (1997). *Ohio's First Women: Elected Officials: 1895 – 1995*. Columbus, OH: Ohio's Women's Policy and Research Commission.

Watson, Robert, and Campbell, Colton. (Eds.). (2003). *Campaigns and Elections: Issues, Concepts, Cases*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

### **Representative Democracy**

When you are elected to a legislative body, you now become the representative of potentially thousands of citizens. For example, considering the General Assembly, the typical House district in Ohio has 110,000 residents, while the typical Senate district has 330,000 people. These constituents will often be very diverse. They will be Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. They will be men and women, young and old. They will often have very diverse ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds. They might have very divergent views on issues. How can you represent all of these citizens?

Throughout history, there have been very different conceptions of the way an elected representative should do his or her job. Some have argued that a representative should vote his or her views and conscience, even if that goes against the preferences of the constituents. Others have argued that a representative should follow the wishes of the constituency, even if that goes against the representative's own best judgment.

There have also been controversies about who is best able to represent a district and particular constituencies. Some have argued, for example, that the interests of women can best, or even only, be represented by women. Others have argued that the interests of racial, ethnic, and religious groups can best be represented by persons from that same ethnic, religious, or racial group. Others have argued that sharing common demographic characteristics between the representative and the district is less important than the philosophical and ideological congruence between the legislator and the district.

## Topics for Discussion:

1. If you run and are elected to office, how will you define your constituency? Will it be those citizens who voted for you? Or will it be all voters? Or will it be all the residents of the district, regardless of whether they voted? Or will it be some other definition?
2. Do you think that women and minorities are better represented by members of their own group? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. How do you believe a legislator should vote when there is a conflict between a legislator's own views on an issue and the majority views in the legislator's district?

## Recommended Readings:

- Dolan, Julie, and Rosenbloom, David H. (Eds.). (2003). *Representative Bureaucracy: Classic Readings and Continuing Controversies*. New York: M.E.Sharpe.
- Madison, James. (1787). *The Federalist Papers, Number 10*. Retrieved July 7, 2006 from <http://www.yale.edu//lawweb/avalon/federal/fed10.htm>
- Rush, Mark and Engstrom, Richard. (Eds.). 2001. *Fair and Effective Representation? Debating electoral reform and minority rights*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Sonenshein, Raphael J. (1990). Can Black Candidates Win Statewide Elections? *Political Science Quarterly*. 105, 2, pp. 219 – 241.

## Running the Race

There are basically two pathways available to anyone who is interested in a career in elective public service: self-selection, *i.e.*, you want to run for office and inform the appropriate group or persons; and recruitment, *i.e.*, you are asked by others to run for a particular public office.

For historical, sociological, psychological, life cycle, and other reasons (which are discussed in the section on **Barriers**), women and minorities might be at a disadvantage in the aggregate in becoming candidates for public office. It seems generally true – as several women and minority speakers on the video make clear – that a genuine desire to serve the public, a strong belief in one's competence to do the job, and a willingness to take a chance where there is no guarantee of victory are very important traits that can significantly affect one's

chances for success in electoral politics. Historically, men have been more likely to bring these characteristics to an election campaign – and subsequent careers in public service – but as the video shows, in Ohio over the past thirty years, women and minorities have begun to close this gap.

Even if you are a “self-starter,” a decision to run for public office does require a fair amount of forethought, preparation, planning, and effort. A substantial dose of good luck and good fortune does not hurt either. The first step in the process of running for office is to familiarize yourself with the legal definition and requirements for the position. Is it a partisan or non-partisan position? What are the filing deadlines and petition requirements? Are there additional legal requirements to run and serve in a particular office?

There is a second way for people, including women and minorities, to become candidates for public office: they are recruited to do so. For all partisan offices in Ohio there is a corresponding Republican and Democrat (and sometimes minor party) party organization, one of whose major tasks is to find potential candidates and help get them elected to public office. These can be local, county, or state party bodies. If you are a “self-starter,” this is one of the first places you should go to express your interest in a race, or just to explore the possibilities that might be open to you. Such party organizations should have historical data on past races, knowledgeable people to discuss the district’s demographic and political make-up, potential costs of the campaign, potential primary or general election opponents, and other information that should prove very valuable to your campaign including potential volunteers, sources of funds, and the like. While you should not be automatically deterred if others have expressed an interest in running for the seat you are considering, you should carefully consider the strengths and weaknesses of any potential opponents.

If the relevant political party organization does not have (or is dissatisfied with) candidates for particular offices within their jurisdiction, they might attempt to actively recruit such candidates. In doing this, the party chair or a recruitment committee or individual party members often turn to the usual or historical sources from which previous candidates were recruited. This is potentially a large obstacle for women and minorities to overcome since they might not be on the political party’s radar screen and might not even be aware that a search for candidates is underway. In recent years, however, some party officials have begun to understand that there are definite advantages to recruiting non-traditional candidates such as women and minorities. In this

environment, an initial disadvantage might actually help a minority or female candidate “get noticed.”

Since party organizations want to win elections, they tend to look for candidates with a good political name, someone who has already been active in lower office, a person involved in community, business, labor or issues organizations, or a person who can help fund his or her own contest. In short, they are often looking for someone who already possesses some of the attributes deemed helpful for winning political races. If the party organization is more sophisticated, they might have already researched and polled the district to discover voter attitudes and then attempt to recruit candidates who can appeal to those attitudes and/or other presumed important demographic components of the district.

As this process unfolds, some party officials might seek you out to make the case for why you should run for office. All candidates, not just women and minorities, should carefully and rationally listen to such presentations. Any decision to enter or not enter a race should be based not on ego or flattery from those wanting you to run, but rather on an honest and factual appraisal of the case being made.

In many cases the organizations trying to recruit you might promise to provide you with many of the key campaign services we will discuss shortly such as polling, issue research, media consultants, campaign staff, and the like. This can be an enormously important factor in leading you to decide to run. Sometimes these promises, however, while usually made in good faith, do not materialize for you as your campaign unfolds. Remember, there are no guarantees in politics, but it is certainly true – “nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Sometimes an initial opportunity for a public office might be filling a vacancy through an appointment to that office. A person who gains such an appointment can then run for re-election as the incumbent, thus easing the burden of fundraising, name awareness, issue promotion, etc. In searching for candidates to appoint to a vacant position, the appointing authority generally looks for the person who has the best chance to hold the seat in the next election. Whether you are a “self-starter” or a potential “recruit” the desired qualities should be very similar. You should stress why you would be able to hold onto the seat in the next election.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Do you personally know anyone who has run for public office? Do you know how they got started? Does their path have any relevance to your own situation? How so?
2. What would be the two main reasons why **you** would want to run for office?
3. What would be the two main reasons why **you** would not want to run for office?

#### Recommended Readings:

- Faucheux, Ronald. (2002). *Running for Office: the strategies, techniques, and messages modern political candidates need to win elections*. New York: M. Evans and Company.
- Maisel, L. Sandy and Buckley, Kara Z. (2005). *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Hershey, Marjorie Randon. (2005). *Party Politics in America*, 11<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Pearson Longman.
- One helpful source of information is the annual Guide for Candidates published by the office of the Ohio Secretary of State.

#### **Barriers**

Fortunately, if belatedly, the historical barriers that prevented or discouraged minorities and women from being active in the political process have now been removed. Gone are the poll tax, the literacy test, the legal suppression of female and minority electoral participation, and other legal obstacles. Some barriers still remain, however. For women, the traditional role of a mother has been mentioned as an obstacle to public service and has not yet been fully overcome. Having children, caring for children as they grow up, and tending the countless chores of running a household still put tremendous time, effort, and emotional demands on women, particularly if these responsibilities are not shared. Running for local office such as city council or school board can lessen the time required away from home, compared with service in the state legislature. Serving in an office “closer to home” often means more phone calls, meetings, and interruptions, all of which cut into valuable personal time. The women in our video come from different walks of life and different parts of Ohio. They have found a way to balance these demands. With the right support, you can do the same.

Another barrier that might affect anyone seeking public office is career disruption. This refers to the need to be absent from another career or profession in order to carry out the duties of your public office. While term limits for the Ohio General Assembly have lessened this problem's duration for some, it is not easy to fit the demands of public service into the requirements of another career. While some public offices hold meetings in the evenings, the Ohio General Assembly generally meets Tuesday morning through Thursday afternoon for several months during the year. Its location in Columbus makes travel time an additional burden for many. While some professions and backgrounds – law, insurance, real estate, labor union official – can more easily spare time for public service without severe disruption to the career path of the employee, other jobs are not so forgiving. Particularly for women and minorities, who have just reached the prime of their private sector careers, and in many cases are already serving as mentors and role models for other women and minorities in those areas it can be a daunting task to juggle the requirements for two careers even if elected state legislative service is theoretically “part-time.” This barrier too can also be overcome as the women and minorities in our video have shown.

#### Topics for Discussion:

1. How do the pressures and demands of public office differ from the pressures and demands of other careers?
2. Can holding public office be made more compatible with the demands of family responsibilities and obligations? How so?
3. If you do not run, who will?

#### Recommended Readings:

Evans, Gail. (2000). *Play Like a Man Win Like a Woman: What men know about success that women need to learn*. New York: Broadway Books.

Palmer, Barbara, & Simon, Dennis. (2006). *Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling: women and congressional elections*. New York: Routledge.

#### **Year of the Woman**

The Year of the Woman takes its title from the election of four women to the US Senate in 1992. Spurred on by the 1991 confrontational confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, which showed a US Senate Judiciary Committee panel of exclusively white males

harshly questioning an African American female, law professor Anita Hill, women decided to take their rightful place at the table. The harsh questioning included overtones of sexual harassment, insinuations into the private lives of women offering testimony, and the suitability of women serving in positions of power.

At the time, two women were serving in the Senate, Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas and Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, but neither was appointed to the Judiciary Committee. After watching the hearings Patty Murray of Washington state decided to run, as did two women from California: Barbara Boxer, a ten-year veteran of the US Congress, and Dianne Feinstein, the former mayor of San Francisco. In an unsurprising move for California, but record-breaking for the rest of the nation, both women were elected and California became the first state to be represented by two women in the US Senate. Patty Murray also won her race, as well as Carol Moseley Braun of Illinois, who remarkably defeated a two-term incumbent in her first run for the Senate.

Headline writers coined the term “Year of the Woman” after running a photo of the six women in the US Senate. Senator Mikulski responded, “Calling 1992 the Year of the Woman makes it sound like the Year of the Caribou or the Year of the Asparagus. We’re not a fad, a fancy, or a year.” Over the following decade the number of women members more than doubled, with fourteen women serving in the Senate in 2006.

According to the Boston Globe, however, the number of women seeking office in state legislatures declined over the last election cycle, a pattern in place since the historic Year of the Woman. The number of women running for state legislative office has dipped from 2,375 to 2,220 during the 2004 election cycle. Political analysts and female lawmakers attribute the steady decline to terms limits and social influences.

The fear among women’s advocates is that as fewer women run for local and state office, typically a springboard to federal campaigns, representation at the very top levels of government will stagnate or decline. Maine Senator Olympia Snowe remarked, “It’s the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I didn’t expect to be taking a U-turn.” Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida stated, “Even though we have made significant gains, it’s a mile wide and an inch deep. There has not been enough focus on building women leaders to replace us.”

Again, according to a 2005 article in the Boston Globe, women’s success in getting elected to a state legislature does not seem to be connected to

whether the state votes Democrat or Republican. According to statistics compiled by the Center for American Women and Politics, states that tend to vote for Democrats are not generally more expected to elect women to a state legislature than conservative-leaning states. Republican states including Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho all have a higher percentage of female state legislators than do Massachusetts and New York, for example. With a legislature that is 18.9 percent female, Ohio ranks 32<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in the representation of women in the Statehouse.

The pool of candidates is shrinking and the existence of term limits in seventeen states means that it is even more critical to bring new female candidates into the mix. Incumbents, whether female or male, are better positioned to win than challengers, but when incumbents are barred from running again, political parties and activists need to find more women ready and able to run for those jobs. Female lawmakers and political recruiters note the parties and elected women themselves need to work harder to recruit more women to run.

#### Topics for Discussion:

1. What would be some of the reasons fewer women are running for elective office? What are some of the reasons fewer women are winning elective office?
2. What are some of the issues that might compel women and members of minority groups to run for office?
3. Why have we not had a female President of the United States?
4. Do you think we will have another Year of the Woman when a female is elected President of the United States?

#### Recommended Readings:

Cook, Elizabeth, Thomas, Sue, and Wilcox, Clyde. (Eds.). (1994). *The Year of the Woman*. New York: Westview Press.

Mikulski, Barbara, et al. (2000). *Nine and Counting: The Women of the Senate*. New York: HarperCollins.

Thomas, Sue, & Wilcox, Clyde. (Eds.). (1998). *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present and Future*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Delli Carpini, M. and Fuchs, Ester. (1993). The Year of the Woman? Candidates, Voters, and the 1992 Elections. *Political Science Quarterly*, 108, 1. pp. 29 – 36.

## Advantage: Women

Here is an article from the website Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting from the website <http://www.fair.org>

### *The New Handicap: Being Male*

The hype about women as "outsiders" has spawned the myth that women politicians have a distinct advantage by virtue of their gender: "The Republicans facing Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer for California's two Senate seats start with what could be a new handicap--they're men," reported USA Today (6/4/92). Sexism in politics, it seems, only hurts men this year.

Reporting on the supposed "gender advantage" and descriptions of women's candidacies as a "flood," "wave," or "avalanche," have already provided an excuse for defeated men. As Gray Davis, who lost to Dianne Feinstein, suggested, "This might not have been the best year to be a man." (Los Angeles Times 6/4/92)

Some reports have implied that women's candidacies somehow lack the legitimacy of men's, as exemplified by a Washington Times headline (4/13/92) that asserted: "Women Crowd Race." The New York Times (5/29/92) suggested insufficient gratitude on the part of women toward men who had previously defended their interests: "Old Allies Pushed Aside" ran the subtitle.

Rarely did press accounts acknowledge the obstacles women political candidates continue to face in raising money and securing endorsements, both because they are women and because they generally don't have the benefits of incumbency. Both Carol Moseley Braun and Lynn Yeakel, for instance, ran in the primaries without the backing of the Democratic Party. Even articles that reported the fact that their opponents raise more money touted these women's political "advantage."

Still more exceptional was reporting which discussed the ways that sexism undermines women's effectiveness once in office. USA Today (4/1/92) published a survey of women in Congress that found "deep frustration tempered by a reluctance to criticize publicly the men whose cooperation they depend on day to day." Reporters Leslie Phillips and Patricia Edmonds summarized their findings: "Even if [women] win, victory will be far from a dream come true.... No woman has been elected to a leadership position in Congress. No woman holds a full committee chairmanship, the source of real

power. The lack of seniority is to blame. But so too is the male culture on Capitol Hill."

*Conclusion: What About Next Year?*

It is a trivialization of women's political involvement, as candidates and as supporters, to suggest that it is merely a trend or an anomaly, the result of a unique "confluence of factors" that might never recur.

Analysts like Ruth Mandel of the Center for the Study of American Women and Politics at Rutgers University point out that women are now positioned to run for, and win, higher offices, not because of some sudden burst of interest or opportunity, but because of years of hard work and slow, steady gains at the local and state levels. In a May 28 Newsday interview, Mandel emphasized what the press usually missed, that "no single year is the year of the woman candidate."

While the press was declaring its 1990 version of the Year of the Woman a bust, for example, because the predicted Congressional victories did not materialize, women won more than half of the 85 statewide seats for which they competed. The media's inconstant attentions, then, both over hype women's potential gains and downplay real progress.

Moreover, even as it might temporarily benefit candidates and their fundraising efforts, much of the "Year of the Woman" coverage lumps and labels women's political concerns and, at its worst, threatens to deepen the same tired old stereotypes that hold women back.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Do you think that women have a political advantage when running for elective office? Is this media hype or actual advantage?
2. Do you think minorities have a political advantage when running for elective office? Is this media hype or actual advantage?
3. How do issues at the local, state, and national level determine the advantages for women and minorities?

Recommended Readings:

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- Conway, M. Margaret, Steurnagel, Gertrude, & Ahern, David. (2005). *Women and Political Participation: cultural change in the political arena*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Washington: CQ Press.
- Dulio, David, and Nelson, Candice. (2005). *Vital Signs: Perspectives on the Health of American Campaigning*. Washington: Brookings Institution.
- Springer, Kimberly. (Ed). (1999). *Still Lifting, Still Climbing African American Women's Contemporary Activism*. New York: New York University Press.

### **Buzzword: Money**

Unless you are fortunate enough to end up in an uncontested race – which does happen occasionally, but seldom to first-time candidates – you will need to marshal all of your talents and resources to win the election. In some cases, both partisan and nonpartisan, you might need to win two contested elections: the primary election where the candidate is officially nominated to run and the general election that decides who will win the seat.

What does it take for a woman or minority candidate to win election? Generally, it takes the same things any nominee would need, but it could also take something more or something different. Many campaign manuals suggest the following items are necessary for electoral success: (1) a motivated and energetic candidate, (2) a campaign organization, (3) a winnable district, (4) some relevant campaign issues, and (5) the resources, including money, to get the message out to potential voters.

The size and scope of your campaign organization will vary depending on the size and complexity of the district in which you are running. Nevertheless, there are some common ingredients to most organizations – a scheduler, a volunteer coordinator, a fundraising chair and committee, and a campaign manager. For larger and more expensive campaigns, one would add a pollster, media consultants, issue researchers, and others. Keep in mind however, that almost all campaigns have a limited budget, so for example, the campaign manager often becomes the scheduler, volunteer coordinator, and issue researcher. Except for the small campaigns for local office, the largest percentage of your campaign budget should be reserved for media such as television, radio, and direct mail.

Often the biggest challenge is raising money and spending it wisely. It is a very daunting task for most candidates to raise money for their own campaigns and this is often more so the case for women and minorities. As shown in the video, however, it has been successfully done. Fundraising is

difficult but it is not impossible. The financial demands of a race in Ohio can range from a few hundred or a few thousand dollars for a local race such as township trustee, school board, and suburban city council to a million dollars or more for state Senate and statewide candidates.

In most cases, unless you are individually wealthy, a candidate will need financial help. A good finance chairman/chairwoman and a diverse finance committee offer the best chance for success. The make-up of your committee should mirror the district. The group should attempt peer-to-peer contact with realistic goals and pleasant, if persistent, follow-up to maximize your chances for success. It might help women and minorities to view this effort as similar to a United Way campaign (with which many women and minorities have much experience), businesswoman-to-businesswoman, doctor-to-doctor, farmer-to-farmer, teacher to teacher, etc. Realistic goals and manageable assignments will make the job easier.

Keep in mind that the need to raise money stems from the need to get your qualification for office and your reasons for running out to the voters. In almost all cases candidates have to be directly involved in fundraising, often making the personal request. Potential donors often want to size up candidates personally to see if they can make a convincing case for themselves. As you seek contributions you should steadfastly refuse to make any commitments in return for financial help. Not only is this against the law and unethical, it never stays a secret and any disclosure of such a “deal” will come back to haunt you and your campaign.

Some candidates can lessen their dependence on money and their need to raise huge amounts. If you have a popular political name, if you have been very active in community service, church, volunteer, business, or other activities in your community which have already introduced you to many voters, and/or if you have already worked on campaigns for other candidates for public office, you already have a head start on getting your name out. Therefore, you will need less money from others and because of your many contacts will probably have an easier time raising the money you do collect.

Women and minority candidates should not be deterred from running for office because they do not think they can raise the required funds. They should carefully think through their entire network of friends and acquaintances and divide the task up into manageable pieces. Remember, all of the people seen in our video were successful in overcoming this seemingly impossible barrier. Furthermore, while raising money will always be

challenging, it usually becomes easier after you win your first race. In Ohio as elsewhere, most incumbents win re-election in large measure because they build on their established networks of friends and supporters, become better known in their districts through their accomplishments in office, and thus become the favorite in the next campaign. Despite the often-asserted claim that “money buys elections,” it is far more accurate to say, “money follows winners.”

It is important to remember that the candidate with more money does not always win. In the video, Betty Montgomery, then a state senator, beat the incumbent Ohio attorney general, even though she was outspent by two to one. Keep in mind that many other factors affect the outcome including the political climate at the time you are running, the quality of your campaign and its messaging, and your own commitment to running the best possible race.

#### Topics for Discussion:

1. How do you feel about raising campaign contributions from family members, friends, neighbors, and other close associates? Why do you feel this way?
2. How do you feel about raising campaign contributions from political action committees, lobbyists, and other groups and individuals that you do not know very well? Why do you feel this way?
3. What will your family and close friends and associates think about your running for office?

#### Recommended Readings:

Bimber, Bruce, and Davis, Richard. (2003). *Campaigning Online: The Internet in US Elections*. New York: Oxford University Press.

La Raja, Raymond. (2003). State Parties and Soft Money: How Much Party Building? In J. Green & R. Farmer, (Eds.). *The State of the Parties*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lubenow, Gerald. (Ed.). 2001. *A User's Guide to Campaign Finance Reform*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Sorauf, Frank J. (1993). *Inside Campaign Finance: Myths and Realities*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

### **Rewards of Public Service**

There are many reasons why people might decide to run for office. In the ideal world, such decisions would be based on giving back to one's

community or contributing to the resolution of some public policy problems that concerns the candidate. Thus, a person might run for school board to improve the performance of her local schools or run for city council to advocate strong public safety measures. A person might run for state legislature because of concerns about health care for the poor and elderly or run for Congress because of worries about the national debt. A person might not have one special issue that motivates her to get involved. Instead, the decision to run might reflect a general desire to be involved in the life of one's community and contribute to better policy making.

There are many other reasons why people run for office that perhaps are not as noble as the ones discussed above, but are certainly legitimate. For example, some people want to get elected in order to make a name for themselves and enhance their business prospects. Other people want to run because being in public office satisfies a personal need for prestige and power. Yet others run because they have been pressured, even conscripted, by friends to serve their time as part of their public service obligations. Obviously for many citizens there are mixed motivations in the decision to run for public office and become a public servant.

#### Topics for Discussion:

1. How might the reasons that lead women and minorities to run for office differ from the reasons that lead white males to seek office?
2. Would we want a legislature composed only of citizens who brought their own personal issue agendas with them?
3. What kinds of factors make a legislative body more attractive or less attractive to potential office seekers?

#### Recommended Readings:

- Cooper, Terry L. (1988). *The Responsible Administrator*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Mosher, Frank. (1968). *Democracy and the Public Service*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stivers, Camilla. (1993). *Gender Images in Public Administration: legitimacy and the administrative state*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

## **See Dick and Jane Run**

One of the most important choices you make as a candidate is what issues you want to make central to the race. That is, why should voters choose you over the opposition? What is it about you that makes you a good candidate for office, that is, what are your belief systems, values, and opinions? While it is crucially important to determine what voters in your district feel are the relevant issues, it is just as important to know where you stand. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, Jr., if you don't know where you stand, you'll fall for anything.

Even though campaigning might seem endless to the candidates, the actual election campaigns, especially for local and state legislative office, are relatively short and often low priority items in the daily life of most voters. With the limited time and resources you and your campaign will have to spend, it is not realistic to expect that you will get voters to change their minds on issues if they already have an opinion. If the issue is new or has changed significantly, then you have a real chance to educate voters who have not yet taken a firm position. In any event, it is very important to accurately gauge voter opinions, often by means of polling and focus groups, rather than assume that all voters agree with your position. Your qualifications and your stand on key issues – your message – will be crucial ingredients in your prospect for success.

Topics for Discussion:

1. What qualities do you most admire in elected officials?
2. Identify four personal characteristics you would need to possess in order to run for office.
3. Who do you feel is the most rewarding aspect in being an elected official?
4. What motivates you to run for office?

## **References:**

The Boston Globe. (2005). *The Year of the Woman*.

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting from the website <http://www.fair.org>

## **Additional Resources**

### **Women and Politics**

Ohio Center for the Advancement of Women in Public Service  
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs  
Cleveland State University  
[www.urban.csuohio.edu/womenscenter/](http://www.urban.csuohio.edu/womenscenter/)

Eagleton Institute of Politics  
Center for American Women and Politics  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
[www.cawp.rutgers.edu](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu)

Association of College and Research Libraries  
American Library Association  
Women's Studies Section  
[www.libr.org/wss/wsslinks/politics.html](http://www.libr.org/wss/wsslinks/politics.html)

Women and Politics Institute  
School of Public Affairs  
American University  
[wandp.american.edu](http://wandp.american.edu)

Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
[www.mccormack.umb.edu/cwppp/connection.jsp](http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/cwppp/connection.jsp)

Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics  
Iowa State University  
[www.iastate.edu/~cccatt/](http://www.iastate.edu/~cccatt/)

League of Women Voters  
Nonpartisan political membership organization encourages informed, active participation of citizens in the election process.  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

National Council for Research on Women  
<http://www.ncrw.org/>

## **State Government**

Ohio General Assembly  
[www.legislature.state.oh.us/](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/)

Ohio Secretary of State  
[www.state.oh.us/sos/](http://www.state.oh.us/sos/)

Legislative Service Commission  
Vern Riffe Center for Government  
9<sup>th</sup> floor, 77 High Street  
Columbus, OH 43266-0342  
(614) 466-3615

Ohio Women's Policy and Research Commission  
30 E. Broad Street, Suite 2701  
Columbus, OH 43266-0920  
(614) 466-5580

## **State Government Associations**

National Conference of State Legislatures  
Offers a variety of services to help lawmakers tailor policies that will work for their states and constituencies.  
[www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org)

Council of State Governments  
It is the only regional network available for identifying and sharing ideas with state leaders.  
[www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org)

American Legislative Exchange Council  
The American Legislative Exchange Council advances the Jeffersonian principles of free markets, limited government, federalism, and individual liberty among state legislative bodies.  
[www.alec.org](http://www.alec.org)

## **Applied Politics**

The Bliss Institute  
University of Akron

The Bliss Institute was founded in 1986 in an effort to promote citizens' knowledge and participation in the political process.

[www.uakron.edu/bliss](http://www.uakron.edu/bliss)

The John Glenn Institute

Working with National Education for Women to cultivate young women for roles in politics and policy.

The Ohio State University

[www.glenninstitute.org](http://www.glenninstitute.org)

American Political Science Association

Networking a world of scholars interested in politics and policy.

<http://www.apsanet.org/>

Emily's List

A political network for pro-choice Democratic women. *Early Money Is Like Yeast* (EMILY)

[www.emilyslist.org/](http://www.emilyslist.org/)

### **Political Parties**

Ohio Democratic Party

[www.ohiodems.org](http://www.ohiodems.org)

Ohio Republican Party

[www.ohiogop.org](http://www.ohiogop.org)

Ohio Green Party

[www.ohiogreens.org](http://www.ohiogreens.org)

Libertarian Party of Ohio

[www.lpo.org/](http://www.lpo.org/)

For specific information on running for office in your district, contact the local County Board of Elections.