

# Winning Woman Suffrage One Step at a Time: Social Movements and the Logic of the Legislative Process\*

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## *Abstract*

*We describe a theory of legislative logic. This logic is based on the observation that each succeeding stage of the legislative process has increasingly stringent rules and becomes more consequential. This logic unevenly distributes the influence of social movements across the legislative process. Social movements should have less influence at later stages where stringent requirements are more likely to exhaust limited resources and where the consequentiality of action will cause legislators to revoke their support. We apply the theory to a study of state-level woman suffrage legislation. We find that legislators responded to suffragists by bringing the issue of woman suffrage to the legislative forum, but once suffrage bills reached the voting stage, differences in social movement tactics and organization did not have as great an impact.*

Scholars of U.S. political change characteristically see policy adoption as a single, discrete outcome. In reality, policy change takes place over a sequence of stages, which makes possible varying levels of policy success. Bills must first be introduced (a major feat on its own), come to a vote, be passed by two houses, and (if a constitutional amendment) be approved via referendum. As Burstein and Linton (2002) noted, most studies of policy change tend to focus on the final

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stage of legislation while ignoring other critical moments in the legislative process (although see Burstein, Bricher, and Einwohner 1995; Soule, et al. 1999; McAdam and Su 2002). Whereas the usual method of inquiry depicts policy adoption as a dichotomous event, we assert that policy change might be alternatively conceptualized as a series of discrete outcomes.

This alternative conception has theoretical and methodological consequences. The conception of policy adoption as a sequential process allows us to determine *at which stages* social movements are most likely to influence the progress of a legislative proposal. The “usual suspects” of influential variables on policy passage may vary in their influence across the different stages of the legislative process. For example, social movements may be more influential at one stage of the legislative process than at others. Political scientists argue that lobbying groups are most successful at the agenda setting phase of policy-making (Bauer, Pool, and Dexter 1963; Milbrath 1963; Scott and Hunt 1965) rather than directly affecting voting decisions. Social movement scholars have also suggested that movements may be more successful at attaining some types of legislation than others (Schumaker 1975; Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Andrews 2001).

We posit a theory of legislative logic in order to better understand the effect of social movements on legislative outcomes. A growing body of literature has accumulated in recent years looking at social movements’ effects on legislative outcomes (Soule et al. 1999; McAdam and Su 2002). Indeed, many social movement theorists see policy change as a sign that movements have succeeded in attaining their goals (Giugni, McAdam, and Tilly 1999; McCammon et al. 2001). But this research pays less attention to *how* movements are successful. This study is an attempt to look more carefully at the pathway to social movement success, recognizing that a logic of legislation *conditions* the influence of social movements at different stages. Enhancing our understanding of legislative logic will improve our understanding of how movements and other interest organizations penetrate the policy arena by delineating the moments in the legislative process when movement activities are most influential.

Discrete time event history analysis is a common statistical method used by researchers to study policy adoption (see Burstein and Linton 2002 for a review). This method is extremely valuable for calculating the net effects of independent variables on a binary event that has a probability of occurring over a given span of time or spell (for examples in policy research see Soule and Zylan 1997; Grattet, Jenness, and Curry 1998). The event history analysis as applied to policy adoption tells us which independent variables have an influence on the rate of adoption and the estimated magnitude of those effects; however, it does not allow us to determine at which point in the legislative process certain factors are most likely to be influential. Alternatively, we disaggregate the legislative process into its constituent stages and determine the effects of social movement mobilization at each stage. We then compare the effects of social movement mobilization

across stages to determine at which stage(s) movements are most likely to have an impact. In order to do this, we disaggregate the process into four separate outcomes: bill introduction, bill voted (a roll-call vote is taken), bill passage in one house, and bill passage in the second house. Although other studies have looked at various legislative stages (Burstein et al. 1995; Soule et al. 1999; and McAdam and Su 2002 all looked at the earlier, agenda-setting stages in Congress for particular movement-related issues), no study has contrasted the magnitude of these effects across stages nor has any previous study made assertions about the differentiated influence of movements across legislative stages.

We use random effects sequential logit models to assess the effects of independent variables on succeeding stages of legislation. Following a theory of legislative logic, we contend that stages in the legislative process vary in rule stringency and consequentiality. This variation unevenly distributes the influence of social movements and other interest organizations on the policy-making process. We argue that social movements are more influential at earlier, less consequential stages of the process than at later, more consequential stages. Social movements may be more successful at raising the salience of an issue and getting a bill introduced than getting the bill passed. This differential level of influence is due to the fragmented nature of the legislative process and the corresponding logic of influence at each stage. The later stages of legislation may be more determined by political, structural, and cultural influences than by the direct action of social movements.

We explore the legislation of state-level woman suffrage<sup>1</sup> amendments between 1848 and 1918. The movement to grant women the right to vote culminated in the Nineteenth Amendment, but throughout the movement's history, most of the action took place at the state level. In fact, before 1919 fifteen states granted women full suffrage and several more adopted variants of partial suffrage (presidential, primary, municipal, etc). Starting with Wyoming in 1869, many western territories and states extended suffrage to women through constitutional amendments, thereby paving the way for legislation at the national level. Given the long history of successes and failures, this is an ideal case to test whether the logic of legislation fragments social movement influence on policy outcomes. Suffragists experienced multiple defeats and victories along the way to a constitutional amendment.<sup>2</sup> The majority of suffrage referenda resulted from the legislation of a suffrage amendment. McCammon, Campbell, Granberg, and Mowery's (2001) event history analysis of factors influencing state-level suffrage adoption makes an analysis of the impact of movement activities on state-level suffrage adoption timely. We draw from their findings and use some of their data to examine the impact of the suffrage movement on the likelihood of success at the different stages of the legislative process.

## A Theory of Legislative Logic

Legislatures do not adopt a policy in a single, discrete moment. Yet research on policy adoption treats outcomes as if they do (see for example Soule and Zylan 1997; Grattet, Jenness, and Curry 1998; McCammon, et al. 2001). In fact, the road to legislation is a fragmented one. In order to make policy changes or constitutional amendments through legislation, advocates must be successful at multiple stages. First, a bill must be introduced by at least one member of the state Senate or House of Representatives (also known as the Assembly). After introduction, the bill is read for the first time and then sent to committee. Before a second reading, the bill must be returned from committee. If the committee is unfriendly to the proposal, it may hold the bill until late in the legislative session, thus effectively defeating passage. Many woman suffrage bills were killed this way. If the bill is reported without recommendation, usually it disappears from the agenda.

Following a second reading, a third reading and a roll-call vote are required. The rules are flexible enough that a speaker or chair can sit on the bill and not allow the bill to be read a third time. If it makes it to a vote, the bill passes only if the necessary constitutional majority votes for the bill. In the case of woman suffrage, because the bill proposed a constitutional amendment, the majority requirements for bill passage differed by state (51%, two-fifths, two-thirds, or three-fourths). If the bill passed by a majority, it moved to the other house where it had to undergo the same process.<sup>3</sup>

Political outsiders' accessibility to the policy-making process is likely limited due to the fragmentation of legislation. The political process consists of multiple "veto points" (Immergut 1992) and distinctive stages with differing levels of political access. Political institutional scholars have traditionally argued that the fragmentation of the polity provides minority interests more opportunity and access (see Steinmo 1986; Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992). On the other hand, perhaps the fragmentation of the legislative process hampers political access by distributing the impact of mobilization and creating multiple moments of legislator decision-making.

How does the logic of legislation affect the influence of social movements on policy-making? Do social movements have less impact at some stages of the process than at others? Qualitative work in political science suggests that lobbies are most influential at the early, agenda-setting stages of legislation (see Baumgartner and Leech 1998 for a review). Bauer, Pool, and Dexter (1965) found that interest groups often play roles similar to congressional staff. They help frame issues, weigh the importance of information, and draft bills, but their influence on voting decisions is minimal. While social movements attempt to have a broader impact (using outsider tactics in addition to insider tactics such as lobbying), their legislative role may be similar to that of traditional interest groups. Perhaps social movements are also more likely to affect legislation by

drawing attention to an issue, educating legislators, and provoking legislators to take some form of action.

We contend that the legislative process consists of its own institutional logic and that this logic differentially distributes the impact of social movements on legislation. The legislative logic is based on the observation that each succeeding stage *has increasingly stringent rules and becomes more consequential*. Earlier stages are governed by less stringent rules and are less consequential for legislators who support the bill. Bill introduction proceeds with relative ease and has fewer consequences for legislators who support the bill. In contrast, passing a bill is a rather rare, difficult, and momentous accomplishment, particularly in the case of constitutional amendments. While it is the case that the difficulty of passing a bill in part results from the additive nature of getting from bill introduction to bill passage, it is also true that ensuring that a sufficient majority of legislators will vote in support of the bill is a much more difficult accomplishment than introducing a bill. Bill introduction has fewer requirements—only one legislator needs to be persuaded to introduce a bill. Bill introduction is also less consequential, garnering less attention from other legislators or the public. Moving a bill from committee to a roll-call vote requires support and action from more than one legislator. Passing a bill requires even more support.

Although we argue that bill introduction is a less consequential outcome compared to legislative passage, its significance to movement success should not be underestimated. As Banaszak notes, bill introduction “was often a sign of progress, since it indicated that the issue had achieved a degree of legitimacy in the public debate” (1996:84). Others have argued that access, responsiveness, and agenda-setting are important outcomes, although not the final outcome of most movements (Schumaker 1975; Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Andrews 2001). Our main point is that legislators weigh the consequentiality of their decisions differently at each stage.

## **Social Movements and the Theory of Legislative Logic**

### DISTRIBUTION OF MOVEMENT INFLUENCE

Given our theory of legislative logic, at which stage are social movements most likely to have an impact? We posit that social movements should have less influence at later stages where stringent requirements are more likely to exhaust limited resources and where the consequentiality of action will cause legislators to revoke their support. A legislator may feel relatively safe introducing a bill without necessarily being committed to the bill’s eventual success. Action in earlier stages of the legislative process may be more susceptible to symbolic gestures on the part of legislators trying to appease a broad based constituency.

The fragmented legislative process allowed legislators to decouple their support of woman suffrage at the introduction stage with any real intent to see it succeed. Thus, active suffragist organizations may have been able to persuade legislators to introduce suffrage bills but were unable to gather enough support to see the bills passed. Rather than determining the fate of potential suffrage amendments by their targeted activism, suffragists likely served an agenda-setting function (see Schumaker 1975; Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Andrews 2001).

Suffragists were often frustrated by seemingly promising attempts at legislation that lost support in later stages. A leader of the California suffrage movement summed up the feeling of suffragists toward the insincere pledges of legislators:

As none of the lawmakers believed that his party or personal interests could be served in any way by our success, neither ourselves nor our measure was taken seriously. But we were “nice ladies” . . . and had to be pleased, so these polite statesmen administered to us from time to time doses of “soothing syrup” of their own special legislative brand (as cited in Solomons 1915:8–9).

The “soothing syrup” of bill introduction was not enough to assure bill passage. In fact, once bills reached a second or third reading and moved to the floor for a roll-call vote, legislators often abandoned amendments, leaving them “half-orphan(s)” without political allies (Solomons 1915). We test the hypothesis that movements should be most influential in the bill introduction and voting stages and less influential at the passage stages by looking at the effects of suffragist tactics and the organizational capacity of the movement across stages of the legislative process.

#### TACTICS

Social movements employ different tactics for affecting political outcomes. McCammon et al. (2001) discovered that neither insider nor outsider tactics affected state-level woman suffrage adoption. Banaszak (1996), however, found that political lobbying (an insider strategy) influenced legislative success. Neither study provided support for the idea that disruptive (or outsider) tactics helped achieve success, and there is mixed evidence that insider tactics convinced legislators to support woman suffrage. We focus our attention on the influence of three tactics, the first two of which are clearly insider tactics: political lobbying, candidate campaigning, and cultural framing.

Suffragists developed a strong lobby outside of the traditional party system (Clemens 1997). The lobby may have been particularly useful in educating legislators about women’s political capabilities. Learning to “talk the language of men,” women were also educated through the use of the lobby (as cited in Clemens 1997:233). In addition to lobbying, some state suffrage organizations

campaigned on behalf of candidates friendly to their cause in the hopes of gaining more political allies.

Social movement scholars have theorized about the importance of cultural framing; in cultural framing, arguments are framed via dominant cultural ideologies in order to communicate effectively a group's political goals (see Snow and Benford 1988, 1992). McCammon et al. (2001) found that suffragists' attempts to frame the necessity of woman suffrage in terms of men's and women's separate spheres positively influenced state-level woman suffrage adoption. By communicating the importance of woman suffrage in a way that resonated with extant cultural sensibilities, suffragists convinced legislators and staved off criticisms of being disruptive radicals.

We expect that the influence of political lobbying, candidate campaigning, and cultural framing will be greater at the introduction stage of legislation and will be less influential at later stages.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Another predictor of social movement influence is the organizational capacity of a movement.<sup>4</sup> In order to create the changes they desire, social movements must be strong enough in numbers to matter to policy makers. Gamson (1975) argues that mobilization success is correlated with the degree of bureaucratization and centralization within the movement. Movements that have a strong organizational structure are perhaps more capable of carrying out a policy campaign (see Goldstone 1980) and should be able to influence legislators' perceptions regarding an issue.

The organization of the suffrage movement mirrored the federalist structure of governance (Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson 2000) in that it was differentiated hierarchically into national, state, and local levels (Dubois 1978). In some states the local clubs operated autonomously. National organizations were also involved, providing money and expertise (see Earl 1976). Szymanski (2003) demonstrates that local movements coordinated through centralized national organizations formed the heart of the Prohibition movement and that this centralized yet local effort created the coordination necessary for their eventual success. Suffragists used a similar kind of organization.

We use three indicators of social movement organizing. The number of suffrage organizations and the number of suffrage publications serve as indicators of local movement mobilization. In addition, the presence of a bureaucratized organization (organized with a hierarchical structure of offices and affiliated with a national organization) mobilized political resources at the local, grass-roots level and made resources from the national organization available. We expect that suffragists' tactics and their movement's organizational capacity should matter most at the introduction and vote stages of legislation but will have less influence at bill passage.

It is possible that insider tactics and organizational capacity may differentially impact success at any given stage. For example, lobbying may have more of an impact on bill introduction, and cultural framing may have more of an impact on bringing the bill to a vote. Moreover, the timing and intensity of tactics may change over the course of the legislative process as activists respond to intermediate successes or the possibility of sudden defeat. However, in this analysis we are only interested in assessing the overall impact of social movement mobilization at various stages using available indicators of tactics and capacity. The temporal granularity of available data does not allow a dynamic analysis of the changes in tactics across the various stages.

## Modeling the Legislative Process

### ESTIMATION TECHNIQUES

We model the effects of movement variables on outcomes in four legislative stages: bill introduction, bill voted (a roll-call vote is taken), bill passed in one house, and bill passed in two houses. The unit of analysis is state legislative session year. We estimate the likelihood that success will be attained at each legislative stage for any given year that the legislature is in session. A sequential logit analysis is an appropriate way to conceptualize the legislative stage process. In a sequential logit model, cases are only included in the analysis if they succeeded at previous legislative stages. For example, in order for a bill to be considered and voted on, it must first be introduced. Thus, after modeling bill introduction, we then estimate the likelihood that the legislature will vote on the bill selecting only the state legislative session years in which a bill has been introduced. Observations at each later stage are selected in the same way. *N* decreases at each stage as more cases are selected out due to failure at an earlier stage. Table 1 displays the outcomes from the different legislative stages across time. Note that reading down the columns of the table, each stage is a subset of the previous stage.

Only full suffrage bills (bills granting women full voting rights) are considered in the analysis. Partial suffrage bills (presidential, primary, etc.) are excluded from the analysis due to lack of equivalence. Logit models regress the binary outcomes on a set of social movement variables and a set of control variables.

This study uses cross-sectional time-series data. All sessions are prior to adoption of full woman suffrage in the state.<sup>5</sup> Although the first suffrage bill was introduced in 1854, we exclude cases from years earlier than 1866 due to missing data for some of the variables. Only sessions prior to 1919 are analyzed so that any effects resulting from the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment do not confound the results.

Estimation techniques must take into account the time invariant unobserved

**Table 1. Summary of Success at Different Legislative Stages Across Time**

Legislative stage	Time Periods			
	1860–1879	1880–1899	1900–1919	Totals
Legislative sessions	576	504	435	1515
Sessions in which bills are introduced	55	104	181	290
Sessions in which a roll call vote was held	31	70	103	204
Sessions in which bills passed at least one house	16	39	60	115
Sessions in which bills passed two houses	6	22	39	67

*Note:* Totals do not match up perfectly with the number of observations in statistical models because of missing values in independent variables.

characteristics of states that affect legislative outcomes and therefore lead to correlation of errors within states over time (Stimson 1985). We use a random effects logit model that takes into account panel-level variance and adjusts standard errors appropriately. Random effects models treat unobserved time invariant heterogeneity across states as a random variable (Petersen 1993). The advantage to using a random effects model, compared to a fixed effects technique, is that it allows us to take into account variation both over time and between states.<sup>6</sup> We assessed all of the models with variance inflation factors (VIF) to detect multicollinearity in the data. This collinearity was not a problem with the regression models presented here. Because we expect that over time states were more likely to introduce, vote on, and pass suffrage bills, we control for temporal effects by including a year variable.

#### DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

The mobilization variables were collected by Holly McCammon and her associates from primary and secondary historical sources (see McCammon et al. 2001) except for the suffrage publication variable, which was collected by the authors using secondary and primary historical sources.<sup>7</sup> The authors collected the legislative data directly from primary sources. Researchers visited the legislative archives or state law libraries in each state and conducted primary historical research of legislative records' providing more complete information on the legislative history of woman suffrage bills than would have been the case if we had only relied on secondary histories.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Social Movement Variables*

We used six social movement variables. *Suffrage lobby* is a dichotomous variable measuring the presence of a suffrage political lobby. *Candidate campaigning* is a dichotomous variable measuring whether a suffrage organization campaigned

specifically for candidates who were sympathetic to the suffrage cause. *Separate spheres* is a dichotomous variable measuring whether suffragists framed their argument in terms of the distinct attributes possessed by women that make their contribution to politics needed. *Number of suffrage organizations* measures the degree of mobilization at the local level for woman suffrage in any given state for a given year. *Suffrage publication* indicates the total number of woman suffrage newspapers or other regular publications printed in the state. The presence of a *bureaucratic state suffrage organization* is a dichotomous variable indicating whether an organization is present that has a hierarchical leadership structure and is affiliated with the national organization (indicating that the organization is both hierarchical and centralized).

### *Control Variables*

Four sets of control variables account for other explanatory factors of woman suffrage adoption. The first set measures the presence of potential and actual political allies. *Total number of parties* measures the extent to which party diversity existed in a state and captures the presence of third parties. Historians have noted that the Progressives and Populist parties were important allies with suffragists since they were often more progressive and reform oriented than the Democrats or Republicans. Third-party populists are credited for legislative success in at least one state—Colorado (Marilley 1996). However, McCammon et al. (2001) found no effect for presence of third party in their analysis of state-level suffrage adoption. Using information from *Gubernatorial Elections* (1998), we calculated a count of the total number of parties registering votes during an election. The variable not only measures the presence of third parties in the political process, but also the extent to which a plurality of political views received electoral support. *Party endorsement* is a dichotomous variable indicating whether at least one of the major parties endorsed woman suffrage in their platform.<sup>9</sup> This variable was constructed by Holly McCammon and her associates from primary and secondary sources.

The second set of control variables measures *state structure*. Two measures serve as indicators of the institutionalized rules of the legislative process. *Legislative majority* is an ordinal variable measuring variation in the percentage of legislator votes needed to pass a constitutional amendment. This variable ranges from 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest percentage (75%) and 1 being the lowest (51%). *Sessions required* measures the number of sessions required to move a passed bill on to the ballot for referendum. In some states, bills proposing constitutional amendments had to be passed by two consecutive legislative sessions. Often a suffrage bill was passed in one legislative session but failed in the second legislative session. *Political openness* measures a latent cultural willingness to expand democratic rights (see Berry 1994; Savage 1978; Huber, Ragin, and Stephens 1993). The measure is based on the political openness score constructed by Clemens (1997) and was derived

from several sources to construct a time-varying variable (Kettleborough 1923; Merriam and Overacker 1928; Ranney 1978; Heckelman 1995).<sup>10</sup>

The need to control for such variables is supported by our own analysis (Cornwall et al. 2004), McCammon and Campbell's research on state-level woman suffrage adoption (2001), and the social movement literature theorizing about the importance of political opportunity structures for movement mobilization and success (see Amenta, Carruthers, and Zylan 1992; Tarrow 1994; McAdam 1996; Soule et al. 1999; McCammon et al. 2001; Soule and Olzak 2004).

The last set of variables control for different aspects of *cultural change*. Two measure changing gender practices and norms as an indicator of the tension between the cultural environment and extant policy. These variables are included to reflect differences in the "gendered opportunity structure" as discussed by McCammon et al. (2001). Following their lead, we assume that as women moved into "traditionally male domains, and the social order between the sexes began a transformation," assumptions about women's place in society broke down, paving the way for suffrage adoption (2001:53). *Percentage of women in nonagricultural employment* measures the extent to which women engage in occupations more common to a public setting.<sup>11</sup> *Women employed in professional occupations as a percentage of women in nonagricultural employment* measures the extent to which women are employed in higher-status, more autonomous jobs. Both of these variables were collected from census reports ranging from 1870 to 1920.<sup>12</sup> They are linearly interpolated to fill in measurement gaps. Other scholars studying policy adoptions have found that policy makers tend to mimic the actions of proximate legislatures (Grattet et al. 1998; Soule and Zylan 1997; Zylan and Soule 2000). *Percentage of states in a region with woman suffrage* measures the potential for the diffusion of suffrage ideals. This measure varies over time and is lagged yearly.<sup>13</sup>

We also controlled for opportunities for success at each legislative stage. A bill is more likely to make it through committee if there are many woman suffrage bills introduced in that session. As the number of suffrage bills introduced increases, we would expect that the likelihood that a bill passes out of committee is also greater. In some instances where a bill was introduced in each house, both bills were voted on separately. The likelihood that a bill will pass is also a function of the total number of bills that make it to a roll-call vote. We therefore included two variables to control for this endogenous effect. The *number of woman suffrage bills introduced* should positively affect the likelihood of success at the committee stage, and the *number of woman suffrage bills voted* should increase the likelihood of success at the passage stage.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 2. Sequential Logit Models Measuring the Effects of Independent Variables on Four Legislative Stages**

Variables	Bill Introduced		Roll-Call Vote		Bill Passed in One House		Bill Passed in Two Houses	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Constant	-71.6*** (20.69)	-71.4*** (19.81)	92.5** (32.62)	64.6* (30.46)	134.2** (46.77)	111.3** (44.17)	29.9 (77.33)	23.1 (67.7)
Social movement								
Political lobby	1.80*** (.21)		.58+ (.35)		.32 (.51)		.94 (.97)	
Candidate campaigning	1.18** (.38)		.09 (.54)		.09 (.73)		.23 (1.01)	
Separate sphere framing	.36 (.32)		.41 (.49)		.71 (.56)		.81 (.87)	
Number of suffrage organizations	<.001 (.002)		.004 (.004)		<.001 (.002)		.007 (.005)	
Suffrage publication	.005 (.14)		-.33 (.21)		-.49 (.28)		-.44 (.41)	
Bureaucratic suffrage organization	.77* (.37)		1.28* (.51)		.86 (.58)		.88 (.66)	
Political allies								
Total number of parties	.47*** (.12)	.46*** (.12)	.33 (.18)	.29 (.18)	.47* (.21)	.41* (.20)	-.18 (.31)	-.11 (.29)
Party endorsement	.64** (.23)	.96*** (.21)	.43 (.35)	.56 (.33)	.41 (.43)	.50 (.40)	-.21 (.58)	-.22 (.53)
State structure								
Legislative majority	-.04 (.13)	-.14 (.13)	.26 (.22)	.21 (.22)	-.31 (.25)	-.29 (.24)	.33 (.39)	.38 (.35)
Sessions required	.46 (.25)	.32 (.25)	1.19** (.44)	1.06* (.43)	-.38 (.47)	-.46 (.46)	.88 (.66)	.83 (.61)

Political openness	-.28 (.17)	-.26 (.16)	.39 (.27)	.48 (.26)	1.04** (.37)	1.06** (.36)	.44 (.55)	.49 (.50)
Culture								
Percent of women that are professional	-.04 (.03)	-.03 (.02)	-.03 (.05)	-.008 (.04)	.09 (.05)	.08 (.05)	.003 (.08)	.03 (.07)
Percent of women in nonagricultural work	.10*** (.02)	.14*** (.02)	.14** (.04)	.14** (.04)	.17*** (.05)	.15** (.05)	.08 (.08)	.09 (.07)
Percent of regional states adopting suffrage	.02* (.01)	.02* (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Other controls								
Year	.04** (.01)	.04** (.01)	-.05** (.02)	-.04* (.02)	-.07** (.03)	-.06* (.02)	-.02 (.04)	-.02 (.04)
Bills introduced/voted			.45* (.22)	.47* (.22)	.52 (.52)	.56 (.51)	1.24** (.47)	1.36** (.44)
Log-likelihood	-451.50	-514.30	-163.94	-172.71	-101.75	-105.30	-53.21	-56.66
LRT versus full model		125.6***		17.54**		7.10		6.89
<i>N</i>	1143	1143	306	306	183	183	95	95
+ <i>p</i> < .05 (one-tailed test)    * <i>p</i> < .05 (two-tailed)    ** <i>p</i> < .01    *** <i>p</i> < .001								

## Results

Models 1 and 2 (see Table 2) report the results of a logit model estimating the effects of the independent variables on bill introduction. Model 1 is the full model and contains both the control variables and the social movement variables of interest. Of the movement variables, three (total number of organizations, suffrage publication, and separate spheres framing) are not significant. The other three (bureaucratized organization, political lobby, and candidate campaigning) are significant and positive, when controlling for other important explanatory factors. The likelihood ratio test comparing Model 2 (the reduced model) to Model 1 (the full model) reveals that including the social movement variables improves the fit of the model.

Models 3 and 4 report the results of a logit model estimating effects on roll-call vote selecting for state session years in which a bill was introduced. Note that the original  $N$  of 1143 has been reduced to an  $N$  of 306. In Model 3, the only social movement variables that are statistically significant are the presence of a bureaucratic movement organization and a political lobby. The likelihood ratio test comparing the full model to the reduced model indicates that including the movement variables in the analysis improves the fit of a model. This finding suggests that once a bill has been introduced, the presence of a bureaucratic suffrage organization and political lobbying increased the likelihood that a bill will come to a vote.

Models 4 and 5 show the effects of independent variables on bill passage in one house. None of the social movement variables were statistically significant at this stage, and a likelihood ratio test confirms that the inclusion of movement variables does not significantly improve the fit of the model. Finally, in models 6 and 7 we regress the odds of passing a bill in two houses on the independent variables. Similar to the previous stage, we find that none of the social movement variables are significant (nor do they improve the overall fit of the model), although the effect of political lobbying increases greatly. It appears that social movement variables do not have significant effects on the passage stages of the legislative process.

Direct interpretation of the statistical significance as an indication of the difference of effects between stages is tricky because it is possible that the lack of significance at a later stage is merely due to loss of statistical power in the final models. Therefore, we also compare the size of social movement coefficients with the confidence intervals of earlier stages (those that had a larger  $N$ ) to assess to what extent the lack of significance is due to loss of statistical power. In this approach, we should expect that  $b_{later\ stage} \sim b_{earlier\ stage} -/+ (1.96 * SE)$ . Table 3 shows comparisons of coefficients to confidence intervals of preceding stages. Three social movement variables have significantly different effects at later stages. The effect of having a suffrage publication is more negative at the voting and passage stages compared to its effect at the introduction stage. The effect of political

**Table 3. Comparisons of Coefficient Size across Stages of the Legislative Process**

Social Movement Variable Coefficients	Model 3 versus Confidence Interval of Model 1	Model 5 versus Confidence Interval of Model 1	Model 5 versus Confidence Interval of Model 3	Model 7 versus Confidence Interval of Model 1	Model 7 versus Confidence Interval of Model 3	Model 7 versus Confidence Interval of Model 5
Political lobby	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Candidate campaign		Yes		Yes		
Separate spheres frame						
Number of organizations						
Suffrage publication	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Bureaucratic organization						

*Note:* Yes indicates that coefficient was significantly different from coefficient of earlier stage coefficient, using the 95% confidence interval as criteria.

lobby is also significantly different at the voting and passage stages compared to the introduction stage. The effect of candidate campaigning is only significantly different at the final two passage stages. The results from Table 3 temper the earlier findings and thus suggest that only some of the suffrage movements' efforts (publishing newsletters, lobbying, and candidate campaigning) were less likely to impact success at later stages. We cannot determine, however, that the effect of a bureaucratic organizational form changed over the legislative process.

### Discussion

The results presented here indicate that the effect of the woman suffrage movement on legislative action was greater in earlier stages of the legislative process. Suffragists appear to have been most successful at increasing the salience of the issue through the use of a political lobby and candidate campaigning. Legislators were willing to respond to organized suffragists by bringing the issue of woman suffrage to the legislative forum, but once suffrage bills reached the point at which they were to be voted, differences in social movement tactics did not have as great an impact. At this point, the effect of the movement itself was diminished in favor of other influential variables.

These findings support the theory of legislative logic and are consistent with qualitative research in political science on the effects of lobbies on legislation. Earlier stages (namely the bill introduction and roll-call vote stage) have less stringent rules and are less consequential to legislators. As rules become more stringent, support from more legislators is needed to move a bill on to the next stage. As stages become more consequential, legislators weigh their actions

more seriously and are less likely to respond to outsider groups (such as social movements) than they are to other political and cultural factors. The result of legislative fragmentation is that movements and other interest groups find more access, or their voice is more audible, when the stakes are small. Legislators may attempt to pacify movements by introducing bills that will likely never receive strong support in a roll-call vote.

If movements are successful at getting an issue on the agenda but less successful at changing the opinions of legislators to vote in a desired way, what other factors are important in legislative voting patterns? Given that our theory only pertains to social movement access, we can only speculate regarding the size and direction of the effects of the political opportunity structure (POS) variables and cultural indicators. A few findings do strike us as interesting however, and are worthy of some post hoc explanations.

Of the political ally variables, we found that both the total number of parties and party endorsement positively affected the odds of introducing a bill. However, neither was influential in bringing a bill to vote, and only the total number of parties influenced the odds of passing a bill. The effect (or lack of effect) of party endorsement is not strange given the extremely apathetic view most parties held towards woman suffrage. The historical context of woman suffrage legislation was one of patronage politics and of distributive, rather than redistributive or ideology-oriented, party strategies (Skocpol 1992). Because party agendas were set with local interests and leaders in mind, woman suffragists never secured the long-term endorsement of a major party (at least not for a significant period of time), and thus suffrage was rarely able to receive bloc support in legislation. When Democrats or Republicans endorsed woman suffrage in their platforms, they may have done so in fear of alienating their progressive constituents, and therefore neither party became ideologically unified on the issue. After experiencing several disappointing bill defeats in a legislature dominated by a Republican majority that officially endorsed the cause, suffragists in Massachusetts decided that seeking party endorsement was no longer a fruitful use of resources. The state association advised that it was "worse than useless to 'stand by the Republicans' or any other party while we are deprived of the only means of enforcing a political opinion" (Stanton et al. 1985:280).

State structure did not have a significant effect at the introduction stage; only sessions required significantly influenced the voting stage; and only political openness affected the bill passage stage. The effect of sessions required is positive and reflects the fact that once a bill passed one session (in states that required consecutive passage), a bill was much more likely to be voted on the following year. The effect of political openness is not as straightforward. Political openness, as a measure of a legislative legacy in democratic progressiveness, is a very strong indicator of legislative willingness to pass woman suffrage bills. Democratically progressive states were much more likely to pass woman suffrage bills, holding

constant other controls. However, political openness does not predict bill introductions or committee passage. It is possible that political openness works harmoniously with the activity of social movements. After social movements did the work of increasing sensitivity to the issue, states that were more democratically progressive were the most likely actually to do something for suffragists.

Of the cultural variables, the most influential variable was the percentage of working women in nonagricultural occupations. We find it interesting that this was the only variable to be influential at all stages of legislation. This finding offers strong evidence that variation in gender relations, norms, and rules had a strong impact on legislators' decision-making. Not only did it increase awareness of woman suffrage, but it also increased the likelihood of support at the passage stage.

The women's occupation variable may be a latent indicator of public opinion regarding women's role in society. Although we cannot measure opinion on the suffrage issue directly (given the lack of data on public opinion during this time period), we speculate that, as women gained more access to work outside of the domestic sphere, public opinion shifted in favor of giving women more public presence. Although we do not think this means that women necessarily achieved a significant level of equality at this time due to public employment, their presence certainly challenged the previously dominant logic of separate spheres (Cott 1977). Insofar as changes in the gendered opportunity structure represent shifts in opinion (McCammon et al. 2001), our findings suggest that public opinion has a steady effect on decision-making throughout the legislative process, even as social movement influence declines. This would support theoretical claims that public opinion is an important determinant of policy outcomes (see Burstein 1999; Burstein and Linton 2002). Future research should consider this important theoretical claim in more detail.

It is also interesting that states in regions with other previous adopters of woman suffrage were more likely to introduce bills but not more likely to bring these bills to a vote or passage. Although very little is empirically known about how ideas are transmitted from state to state, theorists often see emulation as a kind of adaptive strategy that maintains legitimacy and cultural fit (Strang and Meyer 1993; Strang and Soule 1998). We find that the effect of diffusion may create more salience on an issue and not directly affect the vote of state legislators. Hence, legislators are not more likely to vote on a bill just because other states in their region have done so, but the high level of salience on a policy issue that is produced by regional adoptions may create an environment more suitable for its discussion. Given the post hoc nature of this explanation, future theoretical work could take seriously the idea that diffusion may occur differentially throughout the legislative process.

## Conclusion

We have suggested a theoretical perspective and offered a methodological tool for understanding the effects of social movements on policy change. Statistical results support our contention that social movement access to the legislative arena is differentially distributed according to the stringency of rules and consequentiality of the corresponding legislative stage. The findings suggest several implications for future research on policy change and social movement outcome.

First, we believe sequential analysis of legislation provides insights not apparent when using other quantitative methods. In the study of movement outcomes, quantitative studies usually track the rate of passage over time and estimate the effects of various factors on that rate. While this approach helps us understand the long-term dynamics of policy change, it may oversimplify the causal relationships. For example, findings may indicate an association between social movement activity and movement outcome but offer little insight into the actual ordering of social movement activity and the legislative process. Though the association is generally robust, the finding tells us very little about how social movement mobilization or other interest group behavior actually produced the outcome. An analogy demonstrates our point. When making a cake one should not only know which ingredients to add to the mixture but also the specific order in which ingredients should be added. Without knowledge of both the ingredients *and* of the sequence in which they should be added, the final product would probably be less than desirable. Similarly, understanding the legislative process in more detail demystifies policy change and more clearly specifies the mechanisms whereby change occurs.

As we seek to specify the mechanisms whereby change occurs, we need also to consider the “processes and mechanisms of [movements’ political] impact” (Andrews 2001:90). For example, movement scholars have suggested that more attention should be given to agenda-setting or the agenda responsiveness function of movements (Schumaker 1975; Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Andrews 2001). The theory of legislative logic suggests that more attention should be given to the intermediary legislative steps as well. We were unable to explore the differential impact of tactics and organizational capacity at any given stage, which leaves an important question unanswered. We need a clearer picture of how well movement organizers are able to read the political climate, respond to potential defeat, and adjust their tactics to the legislative process.

But we offer more than a methodology. The theory of legislative logic conceptualizes the legislative process as fragmented by multiple stages of decision making. Because these stages vary in their level of stringency and consequentiality, the underlying factors that contribute to legislative outcomes will differ by stage. Later stages require increasingly more legislative support or the reform cannot survive and move on to the next stage. As the degree of support needed increases, social movements may find that their voices are drowned out by more

decisive structural or cultural elements. Succeeding stages of legislation are also more consequential to lawmakers. Legislators may be more willing to appease mobilized interests at early stages of legislation but back off in their support when the stakes are high, leaving bills “half-orphaned.” At more consequential stages of legislation, political, structural, and cultural forces have greater impact on moving bills forward.

Together these two factors, stringent rules and consequentiality, form the logic of the legislative process—a process that is more fragmented than social movement scholars have heretofore conceptualized. Rather than increasing political access, this kind of fragmentation may limit the access of political outsiders and contribute to the inertia of political institutions. Moreover, policy reform or constitutional revision may also depend upon favorable cultural and structural conditions.

The theoretical assumptions made by policy and social movement theorists are not quite as straightforward as they seem. Our findings call for more careful interpretations of the relationship between movements and policy outcomes. The findings mirror Rosenberg’s (1991) contentions that judicial decisions are less influential than previously thought and that courts only make significant reforms when other barriers—cultural or structural—have been removed. Courts then are simply following the trend or “officially recognizing the evolving state of affairs” (1991:338). As with courts, legislators may be more likely to pass legislation once cultural practices appear to be well ahead of previous policy. Legislation is enacted to make sense of culture.

Suffragists were “outsiders” to the political process. Does outsider/insider status account for the results reported here? Political scientists have argued that the main function of interest group lobbyists is to assist legislative decision makers set the policy agenda (see Baumgartner and Leech 1998; Bauer, Pool, and Dexter 1965). Perhaps social movements and interest groups are more similar in this respect than previously thought. Future research should investigate the extent to which the influence of social movements and interest groups are differentially distributed across the legislative process. Conceivably, the “insider” nature of interest groups, especially business interests, may afford greater influence across legislative stages.

This study also enhances our understanding of the ways in which movements most effectively influence legislative decision-making. We have found that some forms of movement organization may be more effective than others. The number of movement organizations in a state was not associated with success at any stage. Instead, bureaucratic movement organizations and movements using lobbying and candidate campaigning were associated with success at the introduction stage. In many cases, local grass roots organizing may be insufficient to produce positive legislative outcomes. Interests that organize following the example of other more established political players may be better equipped to affect change. The results indicate that suffrage organizing produced positive outcomes and

that the influence of suffrage organizing was integral to the eventual success of the movement.

While woman suffrage legislation may have been exceptional in some ways, the long road to success has provided a rich source of information about the many difficulties and pitfalls of movement organizing and legislative defeat. The suffrage movement serves as an interesting case against which others can be compared. As a methodology, sequential analysis may be helpful in understanding change in other policy arenas. One of the most closely studied policy areas, welfare state legislation, has not paid sufficient attention to the variation in successes and failures across the legislative process at the state level. While pouring over archival data and extracting all of the bills introduced on a subject is a painstaking (and expensive) project, the richness in detail produced allows more careful analysis of the legislative processes whereby political transformation occurs.

## Notes

1. We use the common language of the day “woman suffrage” rather than women’s suffrage.
2. State-level suffrage adoption was achieved via multiple paths: (1) legislating a suffrage amendment (24 states legislated a suffrage amendment, but only 11 of the referenda were successful); (2) passing an amendment at a state constitutional convention (6 states held referenda as a result of amendments proposed at constitutional conventions; only 2 referenda were successful); and (3) placing an amendment on the ballot via voter initiative (6 states held referenda as a result of voter initiatives; only 2 were successful). Some states attempted to grant women the right to vote via multiple methods. A total of 54 referenda were held in the various states.
3. Once a bill proposing a constitutional amendment passes both houses, the amendment must be approved by the voters in a referendum, unless, of course, the Governor vetoes the bill. Obviously, our theory of legislative logic will not apply beyond the legislative process. However, in future analysis we hope to explore the factors that influence voter support and referenda success (see also McDonagh and Price 1985).
4. Although McDonagh and Price (1985) did not find that organizational capacity affected adoption of referendums, McCammon et al. (2001) showed that social movement organizations’ capacities to raise funds for the campaign significantly affected adoption of state-level suffrage.
5. Territorial bills are excluded from the analysis due to differences in legislative process and incomplete data. Bills introduced in territories did not require referendum success and thus may have affected other legislative outcomes. We also left out legislative sessions where the constitution specifically denied legislatures constitutional revision capabilities. In most of these cases, amendments could only be made during state constitutional conventions.
6. We also performed a Hausman specification test in order to determine whether the random effects model was a better fit than the fixed-effects model.
7. Most of the information about suffrage newspapers came from the *American Newspaper*

*Directory* (1871, 1886) and the *American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (1913, 1916). A complete list of sources can be obtained by request from the authors.

8. We located a total of 582 full suffrage bills introduced in territorial and state legislatures between 1848 and 1918. Banaszak (1996) reports 418 full suffrage bills between 1870 and 1920. She culls the bills from historical records of the suffrage movement. We visited state archives and libraries in 48 contiguous states and searched the legislative journals for both the House (Assembly) and Senate to identify both partial and full suffrage bills.

9. Note that party endorsements are not equivalent to suffragist endorsements of parties. While suffragists may have been wary of endorsing any particular party (in fear of partisan retaliation), they gladly accepted endorsements from any of the major political parties and saw these endorsements as a visible sign of the growing acceptance of suffragists in the body of institutionalized politics. We thank one of the anonymous reviewers for drawing our attention to this distinction.

10. We only use three of the four indicators used in the original political openness measure proposed by Clemens (the Australian ballot, mandatory direct primary, and popular initiative and/or referendum). Clemens included whether or not the state had granted women the right to vote.

11. This is measured as the difference between the number of women working in agriculture and the total number of working women, divided by the total number of women over the age of 10.

12. This variable is based on 1890 and later census categories. Data from 1870 to 1880 were recoded to be consistent with later classifications. Professional occupations included teachers and college professors, musicians and artists, trained nurses, authors, scientific and literary persons, clergy and charitable workers, journalists, physicians, and surgeons. For a full report of the changing employment patterns of women between 1870 and 1920, see Hill (1929).

13. We considered a diffusion measure based on bill introduction, roll-call vote, and bill passage activity in the surrounding states. However, our search of primary sources suggested that legislators were not very aware of the intermediary suffrage activity in other states, especially in the early years of the suffrage movement. The records kept by national suffragists were not very accurate, as suggested by our own logging of bills recorded in the legislative journals. Newspapers did not report the day-to-day workings of the legislature. Newspaper accounts and debates were more likely to reference the success or failure of a referendum than the success or failure of any given bill.

14. One reviewer also noted that this effect could indicate the extent to which woman suffrage was gaining legitimacy among lawmakers. Many bills introduced in a single session suggest that lawmakers are already predisposed to vote favorably for the woman suffrage amendment.

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