The Changing Role of Women

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A major political party has for the first time ever, a woman, Hillary Rodham Clinton as the front runner for President of the United States. So much has changed regarding the role of women in politics and in society. The first time Gallup asked the public about a woman in the White House was in 1937 when only 1 in 3 said they would support a woman presidential candidate. Today, much has changed and 95% of voters would support a well-qualified woman to lead the free world.

If your party nominated a generally well-qualified person for president who happened to be...a woman, would you vote for that person?

Note: The 1937 asking read: "Would you vote for a woman for President if she qualified in every other respect?"

Sources: Gallup, NORC, CBS and NBC/Wall Street Journal (accessed via iPOLL)

Men and women have come to accept the notion that the two genders are equally suited for politics, although women have led this trend. Overall, in the mid 1970s only half of the population disagreed that men were better suited emotionally for politics; today three-quarters of the population disagree.
Tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women.

Sources: National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey 1972–2012 (accessed via iPOL)

Attitudes regarding the role of women in the household has shifted over nearly four decades alongside the rise in dual-income and single parent households. The NORC General Social Surveys document a flip from 1977 when the public found a majority, 65% agreed that the man should be the achiever outside of the home while 34% disagreed. The latest GSS shows only 31% agree and 68% disagree.

It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family?

Source: General Social Survey (accessed via iPOL)
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These data are available at the public opinion archives at the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut. The iPOLL database permits in-depth analysis of the American public in the aggregate.

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Related Articles from Roper Center's "Public Perspective" Magazine

- "Living Female" Public Perspective, July/August 2000
- "When Rudy Meets Hillary" - Gender Differences In Politics Public Perspective, August/September 1999
- "Women's Status - A Century of Enormous Change" Public Perspective, April/May 1999
- “Whatever Happened To The Year Of The Woman?” Public Perspective, August/September 1996
- "When Do Women Vote For Women?" Public Perspective, September/October 1992
- "The Gender Gap in Political Knowledge" Public Perspective, July/August 1992

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