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Border Crossings

The Impact of Migration on the New Hampshire House of Representatives

Michael E. Dupre
Dante J. Scala

This paper studies the political effects of population migration to New Hampshire. Data suggest that, although migration from Massachusetts caused significant “suburbanization” effects in New Hampshire over the last four decades, demographic changes have not yielded commensurate changes in voting behavior, or party registration in the state. But the New Hampshire House of Representatives reveals more impact from the dramatic population increase. Population migration has led to suburbanization of the composition of the 400-member lower chamber. Citizen-legislators native-born to New Hampshire now compose just slightly over a third of the House, a proportion far lower than that in other New England states. Also, levels of education among legislators have increased significantly. White-collar professionals and retirees now dominate the House delegations of both major parties. A review of selected roll-call votes over the past two decades reveals that party line voting on legislative bills has been on the rise in several significant issue areas. A more highly educated, white-collar citizen-legislature has not led to moderation and bipartisanship. Instead, House legislators are increasingly polarized over a series of ideologically charged issues.

New Hampshire, by far the fastest-growing New England state over the last four decades, provides an intriguing case study on the political effects of population migration. This article is an attempt to link changing demographics to verifiable shifts in the Granite State’s politics.¹ The present effort focuses on the impact of migration on the New Hampshire House of Representatives. Beginning with an overview of New Hampshire’s population increase, and then a brief discussion of its impact on party identification, attention will focus on an examination of the changing profile of both major-party delegations to the New Hampshire House. An analysis of selected roll-call voting in the House will follow. Finally, speculation on the implications of our research findings, including future research paths, will be addressed.

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New Hampshire's Population Increase

Since the 1960s, the U.S. population has increased 56.9 percent, from 179 million to 281 million. During this same period, population increase for the six New England states has been more modest, at 32.5 percent. New Hampshire stands out as the one exception. From 1970 to 1980, New Hampshire was the 13th fastest growing state in the nation. From 1980 to 1990 it was the sixth fastest growing state.² Over the last decade it ranked twenty-second in population growth nationally. The next closest New England state during the 1990–2000 period was Vermont, ranked thirty-eighth.³ As noted in Table 1, New Hampshire has led all New England states in population increase consistently over the past four decades. From 1960 to 2000, New Hampshire's population has increased 103.6 percent. The next closest state, with a population increase of 56.2 percent, was Vermont.

For each decade, from the 1960s through the 1990s, most of the population change in New Hampshire may be attributed more to net migration than natural increase. Population change due to net migration for each of these decades was as follows: 1960–1970 = 53.37 percent; 1970–1980 = 73.97 percent; and 1980–1990 = 57.40 percent.⁴ Net migration accounted for 46.54 percent of New Hampshire's population increase between 1990 and 2000.⁵

Richard Schaefer identifies three recent internal migration trends taking place in the United States:

- “*suburbanization*,” the movement to areas adjacent to central cities;
- “*sunning of America*,” the migration of peoples living in the north central and northeastern “snow belt” states to the southern and western “sun belt” states;
- and “*rural life rebound*,” the migration to rural areas.⁶

A look at New Hampshire's population increase suggests that the state was affected primarily by suburbanization, with eastern Massachusetts residents migrating across the state line to the two most adjacent counties, Rockingham and Hillsborough. Together, these two counties account for 61 percent of the population increase in New Hampshire over the past four decades. Although significant in terms of percentage, the numerical population increases for Carroll and Merrimack counties, together, only account for 15 percent of the state's population increase (See Table 2). Influx of population to rural Carroll County, and the smaller towns of Merrimack county, is likely explained as the attraction by individuals and families to a more rural setting.

The Political Effects of New Hampshire's Increased Population

Research is abundant on the political consequences of population migration.⁷ An excellent and concise overview of the various studies relating to the political impact from population migration is provided in the introductory chapter of James Gimpel's *Separate Destinations*.⁸

Most studies addressing the political consequences of population migration tend to focus on what Gimpel refers to as the “electoral foundations” of the American political system.⁹ These studies look at migration's impact on political partisanship, voter turnout, and political ideology. The present study takes a different course of

Table 1

Population Overview, New England States, 1960 to 2000

	NH	ME	VT	MA	CT	RI	New England	USA
Population 1960	606,921	969,265	389,881	5,148,578	2,535,234	859,488	10,509,367	179,325,675
Population 1970	737,681	992,048	444,330	5,689,170	3,031,709	946,725	11,841,663	203,210,158
Population 1980	920,610	1,125,043	511,456	5,737,037	3,107,576	947,154	12,348,876	226,545,802
Population 1990	1,109,252	1,227,928	562,758	6,016,425	3,287,116	1,003,464	13,206,943	248,709,873
Population 2000	1,235,786	1,274,923	608,827	6,349,097	3,405,565	1,048,319	13,922,517	281,421,906
% Change 60-70	21.5%	2.4%	14.0%	10.5%	19.6%	10.1%	12.7%	13.3%
% Change 70-80	24.8%	13.4%	15.1%	0.8%	2.5%	0.05%	4.3%	11.5%
% Change 80-90	20.5%	9.1%	10.0%	4.9%	5.8%	5.9%	6.9%	9.8%
% Change 90-00	11.4%	3.8%	8.2%	5.5%	3.6%	4.5%	5.4%	13.2%
% Change 60-80	51.7%	16.1%	31.2%	11.4%	22.6%	10.2%	17.5%	26.3%
% Change 60-90	82.8%	26.7%	44.3%	16.9%	29.7%	16.8%	25.7%	38.7%
% Change 60-00	103.6%	31.5%	56.2%	23.3%	34.3%	22.0%	32.5%	56.9%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population 2000. Available at <http://www.census.gov/census2000/states/>.
 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population 1990. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>.
 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population 1970-Vol 1, Characteristics of the Population. United States Government Printing office, Washington, D.C.. Part 31,NH; Part 21 ME; Part 47,VT; Part 23 MA; Part 8, CT; Part 41 , RI; Part 1, USA Summary-Section 2, 1973. (Populations for 1960,1970).

Table 2

Population Overview, New Hampshire Counties, 1960 to 2000

	State	Belknap	Carroll	Cheshire	Coos	Grafton	Hills-borough	Merrimack	Rockingham	Strafford	Sullivan
Population 1960	606,921	28,912	15,829	43,342	37,140	48,857	178,161	67,785	99,029	59,799	28,067
Population 1970	737,681	32,367	18,548	52,364	34,291	54,914	223,941	80,925	138,951	70,431	30,949
Population 1980	920,610	42,884	27,931	62,116	35,147	65,806	276,608	98,302	190,345	85,408	36,063
Population 1990	1,109,252	49,216	35,410	70,121	34,828	74,929	335,838	120,240	245,845	104,233	38,592
Population 2000	1,235,786	56,325	43,666	73,825	33,111	81,743	380,841	136,225	277,359	112,233	40,458
% Change 60-70	21.5%	11.9%	17.2%	20.8%	-7.7%	12.4%	25.7%	19.4%	40.3%	17.8%	10.3%
% Change 70-80	24.8%	32.5%	50.6%	18.6%	2.5%	19.8%	23.5%	21.5%	37.0%	21.3%	16.5%
% Change 80-90	20.5%	14.8%	26.8%	12.9%	-0.9%	13.9%	21.4%	22.3%	29.2%	22.0%	7.0%
% Change 90-00	11.4%	14.4%	23.3%	5.3%	-4.9%	9.1%	13.4%	13.3%	12.8%	7.7%	4.8%
% Change 60-80	51.7%	48.3%	76.5%	43.3%	-5.4%	34.7%	55.3%	45.0%	92.2%	42.8%	28.5%
% Change 60-90	82.8%	70.2%	123.7%	61.8%	-6.2%	53.4%	88.5%	77.4%	148.3%	74.0%	37.5%
% Change 60-00	103.6%	94.8%	175.9%	70.3%	-10.8%	67.3%	113.8%	101.0%	180.1%	87.7%	44.1%

Source: New Hampshire Office of State Planning, Municipal Populations 1960-2000 Arranged by County, 2001. Available at <http://www.state.nh.us/osp/sdc/sdc.html>

direction, focusing on the extent to which New Hampshire's high rate of in-migration has affected its elected political structure, specifically the 400-member House of Representatives.

Minimal Changes in Party Membership

Using party membership as a measure of political change indicates that since 1970 Republicans have lost little political ground in this traditionally GOP state. As noted in Table 3, in 1970 Republicans accounted for 41.9 percent of registered voters. In three decades their majority has been reduced almost 4 percent. Over the same period, Democrats remain in the minority, increasing their share of voter membership by only 1 percent. Undeclared voters have increased their share by 3 percent. Traditional Republican strongholds of Belknap, Carroll, and Rockingham counties suffered the biggest losses in GOP registration. Republican losses were offset, however, by gains in traditionally Democratic Hillsborough county, the largest county in the state. Another large county, Merrimack, also experienced a small Republican gain. The largest Republican gains from 1970 to 2000 took place in Hillsborough county, which experienced a 130 percent increase in Republican registration (N=37,233 in 1970 and N= 85,910 in 2000). Republican losses in Rockingham County were a result of Democrats achieving a 266 percent gain, their largest increase in the state (See Table 4). No doubt, some portion of the Democratic Party's gains is a result of Rockingham's population in-migration from traditionally Democratic Massachusetts. The continued majority of the Republican party membership in New Hampshire lends some support to Gimpel and Schuknecht's argument that people who are mobile are more likely to represent upper socioeconomic categories, and therefore are more likely to identify themselves as Republicans.¹⁰

Table 3

Registered Voters, Percentage Republican, Democrat and Undeclared, by New Hampshire County, 1970 and 2000

County	Rep. 1970 (%)	Dem. 1970 (%)	Undec. 1970 (%)	Rep. 2000 (%)	Dem. 2000 (%)	Undec. 2000 (%)
Belknap	51.4	20.0	28.6	40.8	26.4	32.8
Carroll	64.3	9.6	26.0	42.6	16.5	40.8
Cheshire	44.3	18.7	37.0	33.2	29.3	37.4
Coos	34.6	36.2	29.2	34.5	29.1	36.4
Grafton	49.2	16.3	34.5	37.0	24.1	38.9
Hillsborough	33.1	37.9	29.0	38.3	29.4	32.3
Merrimack	45.7	18.1	36.2	47.9	21.6	30.5
Rockingham	49.5	19.5	31.0	35.7	25.3	39.0
Strafford	31.6	24.7	43.7	31.8	33.2	35.1
Sullivan	46.5	27.9	25.7	35.9	28.0	36.0
State	41.9	25.8	32.3	38.1	26.7	35.3

Source: State of New Hampshire, Manual for the General Court. Concord, N.H.: Department of State, 1971 and 2001.

Table 4

**Percentage Change in Party Membership by New Hampshire
County, 1970–2000**

County	Rep. Change 1970–2000 (%)	Dem. Change 1970–2000 (%)	Undec. Change 1970–2000 (%)
Belknap	51.1	151.7	118.8
Carroll	67.6	334.0	296.5
Cheshire	36.2	185.2	83.4
Coos	1.0	-18.8	26.0
Grafton	37.7	170.7	106.5
Hillsborough	130.8	54.8	122.3
Merrimack	135.3	167.3	89.3
Rockingham	103.2	266.6	254.5
Strafford	82.4	144.2	45.7
Sullivan	22.7	59.6	123.1
State	88.5	114.4	126.2

Source: State of New Hampshire, Manual for the General Court. Concord, N.H.: Department of State, 1971 and 2001.

Changing Profile of the New Hampshire House of Representatives

While population increase has not yielded significant shifts in New Hampshire voters' party affiliation, it has apparently changed the state political institution closest to the people, the lower chamber of New Hampshire's citizen legislature, the 400-member House of Representatives.

When compared to the lower chambers of the other five New England states, the New Hampshire House of Representatives exhibits a number of distinguishing characteristics. For one, with 400 elected members, it is by far the largest of all Houses in New England — the third-largest legislature in the English-speaking world, as a matter of fact. The members of this citizen-legislature receive an annual salary of only one hundred dollars. At 58.5 years, the median age of its members is slightly higher than in the other New England states; just over a third of its membership is retired. Another unique characteristic is the scarcity of lawyers; at 3.5 percent, it claims the lowest percentage of elected representatives of the New England Houses whose members are attorneys. Finally, reflecting the effects of in-migration to the state, just slightly over a third of its elected members were born in state.

The following is a brief overview of the major shifts in the statewide composition of the New Hampshire House membership, with particular attention focused on differences between native-born and nonnative-born House members.¹¹

A comparison between native and nonnative House members reveals a couple of shared similarities, and a few differences. No differences exist between native-born and nonnative-born legislators relative to party membership or age distribution. Religiously, nonnative-born legislators are more likely to be Protestant. When it comes to gender, education, and occupation, the data support earlier research on differences between native and nonnative-born legislators. Nonnative-

Table 5

**New England House of Representatives: A
Comparison of Selected Characteristics, 2001^a**

	NH	ME	VT	MA	CT	RI
Size	400	151	150	160	151	100
Type ^b	Citizen	Citizen	Citizen	Professional	Hybrid	Citizen
Salary 1999 ^c	\$100	\$10,500	\$536/w	\$46,410	\$21,788	\$10,768
Gender	70.4% M 29.6% F	72.8% M 27.2% F	69.3% M 30.7% F	75% M 25% F	69.5% M 30.5% F	76% M 24% F
Party	35.4 % D 64.6 % R	57.0% D 42.4% R 0.7% Oth	38.9% D 53.0% R 6.7% Oth	84.8% D 13.3% R 1.9% Oth	66.2% D 33.8% R	86%D 14% R
Birthplace Home state	35.4%	68.2%	50.7%	57.0%	47.3%	67%
Med. Age 2001	58.5 yrs	52.0 yrs	54.0 yrs	50.0 yrs	50.5 yrs	46.0 yrs
Age Range	20-87 yrs	22-79 yrs	26-79 yrs	30-74 yrs	27-77 yrs	29-77 yrs
%BA +	56.7%	35.1%	67.2%	88.6%	58.6%	NA
% Attys.	3.5%	5.3%	7.2%	26.5%	12.8%	26%
% Retired	37.6%	22.5%	3.6%	---	2.7%	9%

Sources: ^aThe Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001); Project Vote Smart. (2002): Available at <http://www.vote-smart.org/index.phtml>; Respective New England states' websites.

^bKeith E. Hamm and Gary F. Moncreif, "Legislative Politics in the States," in *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*, 7th ed., ed. Virginia Gray, Russell L. Hanson, Herbert Jacob (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1999), 145.

^cThe Book of the States, 2000-2001 Edition, Volume 33 (Lexington, Ky.: The Counsel of State Governments, 2000), 83-84.

born New Hampshire House members have a higher percentage of women, are better educated and therefore more likely to hold white-collar positions.¹²

In 1981, Republicans comprised 61 percent of the House; in 2001 Republicans maintained control with 65 percent of the seats. While no significant differences in the party composition of the New Hampshire House is apparent for the last twenty years, there are more subtle changes in the social characteristics of the representatives from each of the major parties. A comparison of the Democratic and Republican membership on six demographic characteristics reveals less salient, but quite discernible differences between the two delegations, especially between the native and nonnative membership. We will first provide a profile of the Democratic membership and follow with a comparison to the Republican membership on the six demographic characteristics.

Table 6

	Native born (%)	Nonnative born (%)
POLITICAL PARTY		
Republican	63.8	63.8
Democrat	36.2	36.2
AGE		
Under 40yrs	10.3	6.2
40-54yrs	29.4	29.5
55-69yrs	35.3	39.6
70 + yrs	25.0	24.7
GENDER		
Male	80.1	64.8
Female	19.9	35.2
EDUCATION		
HS or less	23.4	13.5
Some College	26.2	21.3
BA/BS	29.8	33.6
Grad/Prof	16.3	29.9
NA	4.3	1.6
OCCUPATION		
White Collar	34.0	48.0
Blue Collar	9.9	4.9
Homemaker	1.4	4.1
Retired	45.4	34.8
Other	4.3	4.5
NA	5.0	3.7
RELIGION		
Protestant	33.3	43.0
Catholic	39.7	25.8
Other	2.1	4.1
NA	24.8	27.0
	N = 141	N = 244

Source: The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

New Hampshire House Democrats: Better Educated, Older, and More Female

Of the two major party delegations in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, the profile of the Democratic Party delegation has changed the most drastically (Table 7).

Place of birth. The percentage of home-grown Democrats, once a majority of the delegation, has decreased significantly over the past two decades. In the 1981-82 session, 53.8 percent of the 156-member delegation were born in the state of New

Hampshire; that percentage fell to 50 percent by the 1991–92 session, and was at a twenty-year low of 36.2 percent (fifty-one legislators in all) in the 2001–02 session.

Contrary to popular perception (and fear on the part of some older New Hampshire natives), home-grown Democrats were not replaced by legislators born in neighboring Massachusetts, but by persons born in other states. Only 13.5 percent in 1981–82, and 16 percent in the 2001–02 session were born in Massachusetts. In the 2001–02 session, 46 percent of the Democratic House members were born in states other than New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

Age. In the 1981–82 session, 35 percent of the Democratic delegation (forty-seven legislators in all) were under forty years of age. Since then, legislators under forty have virtually disappeared from the party; in the 2001–02 session, only 4.6 percent of the party's 141-member delegation is younger than forty years old. Over the same period, Democratic legislators seventy years and older have tripled, increasing from 8.2 percent in the 1981–82 session, to 26.7 percent in the 2001–02 session. Democratic legislators forty to fifty-four years of age have also doubled over the past two decades, from 17.2 percent to 35.1 percent.

In the 1981–82 session there was no significant difference in age between native-born and nonnative-born Democratic House members. In the 2001–02 session, nonnative Democratic representatives overall are slightly older than their native-born counterparts (See Table 8).

Gender. While the Republican delegation to the House has become increasingly male-dominated (see next section), the Democratic delegation is marked by its gender parity. Of the 141 Democrats in the 2001–02 session, seventy-one are male and seventy are female. Gender equality in the delegation is another outcome of the last twenty years. In the 1981–82 session, roughly two-thirds of the Democratic delegation was male; and as late as the 1995–96 session, men composed nearly 60 percent of the delegation. Nonnative-born members account for much of this new gender parity in the Democratic House delegation; for both the 1981–82 and 2001–02 session years, females comprised the majority of nonnative Democratic House members.

Education. Across the board, levels of education have increased significantly in the Democratic delegation. In the 1981–82 session, roughly three of ten Democrats (forty-eight in all) in the House had no more than a high school education. Twenty years later, that percentage had dwindled to 15 percent (twenty-one legislators).

The majority of House Democrats now possess a bachelor's degree or a graduate / professional degree. The latter, in particular, has grown by leaps and bounds over the past twenty years. In the 1981–82 session, only seven members (4.5 percent) of the Democratic delegation possessed a graduate or professional degree; in the 2001–02 session, nearly three out of ten Democratic legislators (forty-one in all) hold such an advanced degree. As with gender parity, nonnative-born legislators have especially contributed to this overall increase in education.

Occupation. Despite the significant changes in level of education, there were no corresponding changes in the occupation profile of Democratic citizen-legislators. Legislators with white-collar occupations made up roughly 40 to 45 percent of the delegation throughout the last two decades. Blue-collar legislators did drop from 14.1 percent of the delegation in 1981–82, to single-digit percentages through the 1990s, rising to 10.6 percent of the delegation in the 2001–02 session. In both 1981–82 and 2001–02, the nonnative-born make up a higher proportion of white-collar Democrats in the House than the native-born.

The most significant shift appeared in the number of retirees who joined the Democratic delegation. In the 1981–82 session, the number of retirees stood at forty-four, or about 28 percent of the party delegation. Ten years later, that number had grown to sixty-one, nearly 50 percent of the delegation. During the 1990s, the

Table 7

**Profile of New Hampshire House by Political Party,
1981–82 & 2001–02 Sessions**

	1981–82 SESSION			2001–02 SESSION		
	Rep. (%)	Dem.(%)	Both Parties (%)	Rep. (%)	Dem.(%)	Both Parties (%)
BIRTHPLACE						
NH	42.9	53.8	47.2	35.0	36.2	35.4
MA	22.9	13.5	19.2	30.4	16.3	25.4
Other	30.8	25.0	28.5	30.0	46.1	35.7
NA	3.3	7.7	5.1	4.7	1.4	3.5
AGE						
Under 40yrs	13.6	35.1	21.8	9.7	4.6	7.9
40-54yrs	25.5	17.2	22.3	26.7	35.1	29.9
55-69yrs	45.0	39.6	42.9	40.3	33.6	37.8
70+ yrs	15.9	8.2	13.0	23.3	26.7	24.5
GENDER						
Male	70.4	67.3	69.2	81.3	50.4	70.4
Femal	29.6	32.7	30.8	18.7	49.6	29.6
EDUCATION						
HS or less	20.8	30.8	24.7	17.5	14.9	16.5
Some College	32.1	30.8	31.6	23.0	21.3	22.3
BA/BS	37.1	23.7	31.8	31.9	31.9	32.1
Grad/Prof	2.1	4.5	3.0	22.2	29.1	24.6
NA	7.9	10.3	8.8	5.4	2.8	4.5
OCCUPATION						
White Collar	40.8	41.7	41.2	45.1	38.3	42.7
Blue Collar	11.7	14.1	12.6	4.3	10.6	6.5
Homemaker	4.6	2.6	3.8	3.1	3.5	3.3
Retired	38.3	28.2	34.3	38.9	35.5	37.7
Other	3.8	10.9	6.6	4.7	4.3	4.5
NA	0.8	2.6	1.5	3.9	7.8	5.3
RELIGION						
Protestant	64.2	21.2	47.2	44.0	29.1	38.6
Catholic	17.5	59.0	33.8	27.6	34.0	29.8
Other	0.4	2.6	1.3	2.7	4.3	3.3
NA	17.9	17.3	17.7	25.7	32.6	28.3
	N = 240	N = 156	N = 396	N = 257	N = 141	N = 398

Source: The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

number of retirees ranged from a low of forty-three (in the 1995–96 session) to a high of fifty-eight (1993–94; and 1999–2000), and in 2001–02 stood at fifty, about 35 percent of the delegation. Although a slightly higher proportion of retired Democratic House members are native-born, the difference between retired native-born and non-native-born Democratic retirees is not statistically significant (See Table 8).

Table 8

	1981–82 SESSION				2001–02 SESSION			
	Native Dems (%)	Non-native Dems (%)	Native Reps (%)	Non-native Reps (%)	Native Dems (%)	Non-native Dems (%)	Native Reps (%)	Non-native Reps (%)
AGE								
Under 40yrs	35.0	35.8	19.2	8.3	8.0	2.5	11.6	8.3
40-54yrs	16.3	18.9	23.2	27.5	48.0	27.2	18.6	30.3
55-69yrs	38.8	39.6	40.4	49.2	18.0	43.2	45.3	37.9
70+yrs	10.0	5.7	17.2	15.0	26.0	27.2	24.4	23.4
GENDER								
Male	77.4	53.3	77.7	64.3	66.7	40.9	87.8	78.1
Female	22.6	46.7	22.3	34.7	33.3	59.1	12.2	21.9
EDUCATION								
HS or less	33.3	31.7	22.3	20.2	29.4	6.8	20.0	17.4
Some College	38.1	26.7	35.0	31.8	19.6	22.7	30.0	20.6
BA/BS	21.4	28.3	37.9	38.8	29.4	33.0	30.0	33.5
Grad/Prof	3.6	6.7	1.9	2.3	17.6	36.4	15.6	26.5
NA	3.6	6.7	2.9	7.0	3.9	1.1	4.4	1.9
OCCUPATION								
White Collar	33.3	51.7	38.8	43.4	29.4	44.3	36.7	49.7
Blue Collar	17.9	6.7	14.6	7.8	15.7	8.0	6.7	3.2
Homemaker	1.2	5.0	4.9	4.7	2.0	4.5	1.1	3.9
Retired	33.3	25.0	38.8	39.5	39.2	34.1	48.9	35.5
Other	14.3	8.3	2.9	4.7	5.9	3.4	3.3	5.2
NA	...	3.3	7.8	5.7	3.3	2.6
RELIGION								
Protestant	20.2	26.7	67.0	65.9	19.6	35.2	41.1	47.7
Catholic	72.6	48.3	19.4	17.1	54.9	22.7	31.1	27.7
Other	...	6.7	1.0	6.8	3.3	2.6
NA	7.1	18.3	12.6	17.1	25.5	35.2	24.4	21.9
	N = 84	N = 60	N = 103	N = 129	N = 51	N = 88	N = 90	N = 155

Source: *The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982*, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; *The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002*, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

Religious affiliation. The Democratic House delegation, once dominated by Catholics, has become much more balanced in terms of religious affiliation. In the 1981–82 session, nearly six of ten Democratic legislators (ninety-two in all) declared themselves as Catholics; that percentage increased to 62.1 percent in 1983–84. Since then, however, the number of Catholic, Democratic legislators has shrunk dramatically, to only 34 percent in the 2001–2002 session.

Members of the delegation who declared themselves Protestant have increased slightly over the last twenty years, from 21.2 percent in 1981–82, to 29.1 percent in the 2001–2002 session. The largest increase, however, has been in those who do not list any religious affiliation — a rise from 17.3 percent in 1981–82, to 32.6 percent in the 2001–2002 session. The shift in religious affiliation is a reflection of an increasing proportion of nonnative-born Democratic representatives, less inclined to fit the traditional ethnic, Catholic profile more commonly found among native-born Democrats.

House Republicans: Older, More Educated, Male-dominated

Place of Birth. In 1981–82, legislators born in New Hampshire made up 43 percent of the Republican delegation, nearly double the 22.9 percent born in neighboring Massachusetts. Over the next twenty years, the numbers of “home-grown” and Massachusetts legislators have gradually balanced. Currently, 35 percent are native-born, while 30.4 percent were born in neighboring Massachusetts. Republican legislators born in other New England states (including Massachusetts) have outnumbered native-born GOP legislators since the 1989–1990 session. While the percentage of Democratic New Hampshire House members born in Massachusetts is much lower than popularly believed, the percentage of Republican House members born in the Democrat-dominated Bay State is considerably higher. In 2001–2002, 30.4 percent of the GOP delegation reported Massachusetts as their birth state, in comparison to 16.3 percent of the Democratic House delegation. Suburban migration to the two southern counties bordering Massachusetts appears to be the primary explanation for this. In the 2001–2002 session, in comparison to the other eight counties, Rockingham and Hillsborough counties had the lowest percentage of GOP legislators born in New Hampshire (31.9 percent), and the highest percentage (36.9 percent) born in Massachusetts.

Age. Compared to the Democrats, the Republicans showed relatively little change in the age distribution of its delegation. The percentage of legislators under 40, for example, was only 13.6 percent in 1981–82, and mostly stayed above 10 percent during the following twenty years, dropping into high single digits in the last three sessions. Middle-aged legislators (forty to fifty-four-year-olds, and fifty-five to sixty-nine-year-olds) also held steady to their percentages of the delegation.

The percentage of the Republican delegation seventy years of age and older has increased, although not as significantly as for the Democrats. In the 1981–82 session the portion of GOP House members seventy or older stood at about 16 percent. More often than not since then, this segment of the Republican delegation has made up more than 20 percent of the delegation, occasionally exceeding 25 percent.

Gender. Unlike the Democrats, nonnative-born Republican Representatives have had little effect on the gender composition of the GOP delegation. In 1981–82, about seven of ten members of the GOP delegation were male, a proportion quite similar to the Democratic delegation. Over the past twenty years, however, while the

Democrats have moved toward gender parity in its delegation, the Republicans have become even more male-dominated. Since 1991–92, the percentage of males in the delegation has increased each session, reaching a peak of more than 80 percent in the 2001–2002 session.

Education. The Republican delegation, like its opposition, has experienced an increase in legislators possessing a bachelor's or graduate/professional degree. Almost four of ten GOP legislators had that level of education in 1981–82. In four of the last six sessions, that percentage has exceeded 50 percent. Unlike the Democrats, however, the percentage of those with only a high school education or less has not decreased significantly, hovering around the 20 percent mark. As with the Democratic House delegation, the nonnative-born have contributed positively to the proportion of graduate/professional degree-holders among GOP House members.

Occupation. Like Democratic House members, legislators with white-collar occupations and retirees dominate the Republican delegation, making up more than eight of ten legislators in the 2001–02 session. “White-collar” legislators, composing 41 percent of the delegation in 1981–82, mainly stayed above 30 percent throughout the next twenty years, rising to a high of 45 percent in the 2001–02 session. Also like the Democratic delegation, nonnative-born members have increased the overall proportion of white-collar Republican House members. Equally consistent with Democratic House members, blue-collar legislators have largely disappeared from the GOP delegation, decreasing from 12 percent in 1981–82, to fewer than 5 percent in the last two legislative sessions.

Republican retirees, composing 38 percent of the delegation in 1981–82, increased its portion of the delegation to more than 45 percent for six of the following ten sessions, returning to 38.9 in 2001–02. The difference between native-born and nonnative-born retired Republican House members is significant. Close to half of the retired members of GOP delegation are native-born. In contrast, slightly over a third of nonnative-born GOP House members are retired, quite similar to the proportion of nonnative Democratic House members who are retired (See Table 8).

Religious Affiliation. The composition of the Republican delegation, in terms of religious affiliation, has moved in precisely the opposite direction of the Democratic delegation. In the 1981–82 session, there were nearly four Protestant legislators in the GOP delegation (154 in all, 64 percent of the delegation) for every Catholic (forty-two in all, or 17.5 percent). Over the next twenty years, the percentage of Protestant GOP legislators declined significantly, hitting a twenty-year low of 44 percent in the 1999–2000 session. Meanwhile, the number of Catholic legislators has gradually increased, reaching a high in the 2001–02 session of 28 percent. The data reveals no significant differences among native born and nonnative GOP representatives regarding changes in religious affiliation.

Summing up. A side-by-side comparison of the Republican and Democratic delegations in the New Hampshire House shows that, all in all, similarities outweigh differences. Middle-aged and elderly legislators dominate both party delegations. Both party delegations have relatively fewer native-born members. Both party delegations now have better-educated legislators. White-collar professionals and retirees dominate both party delegations.

Differences in delegations occur in gender distribution and religious affiliation. Among Democrats, the delegation is split equally between men and women. On the other side, males dominate the GOP delegation. Catholics, once dominant among Democratic House members, now are roughly equal in number to Protestants. Among Republican House members, Protestants, once a majority, are now less than

half of the delegation, with Catholics on the increase. Where changes have taken place, nonnative-born members in both delegations have been causes of those changes.

One might expect that two party delegations so similar in socioeconomic background might find much common ground when they grappled with the details of legislative action. This assumption, however, has been proven false by the increased partisanship of the House in the last two decades.

Loosely Managed Chaos: The Conventional Picture of State Party Organization

New Hampshire politics often are noted for their surplus of enthusiasm and their lack of formal organization. David Mayhew put it succinctly in his 1986 survey of party organizations in the fifty states. Given the deluge of media attention the Granite State receives due to its first-in-the-nation presidential primary, "If any important traditional organizations operated in New Hampshire, no doubt somebody would have written about them by now."¹³ In coming to this conclusion, Mayhew cited (among others) a 1975 study of New Hampshire politics by Eric P. Veblen,¹⁴ who stated:

Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans have powerful, cohesive party organizations. There is no strong party "machine" able to discipline dissident members. Fragmentation among party leaders, not unity, is the common state of affairs. From time to time certain individuals are able to build strong personal organizations within a party. . . In both the Democratic and Republican parties, the institution of the primary election has worked against party unity. Candidates are able to succeed by appealing directly to the voters rather than by placing top priority on cooperation with party leaders.¹⁵

A more recent study of New Hampshire politics by Michelle Anne Fistek adheres to the conventional wisdom regarding the lack of state party organization.¹⁶ Citing as evidence the parties' consistent failure to nominate candidates for minor offices, as well as their inability to contest a significant percentage of higher-profile races, Fistek contends, "In action, the parties in New Hampshire can be best described as incomplete, occasional, and highly decentralized."¹⁷ According to Fistek, Democratic party organization mainly exists in major cities, while the Republicans are merely a "loose coalition of all types and variations of Republican ideology, including 'closet Democrats' who identify themselves as Republican to win office."¹⁸ The reasons for the lack of state party organization are several, Fistek claims:

- Lack of significant managerial and organizational resources, such as staffing and campaign funding (except for major offices).
- Large size of legislature (424 members in all) makes party recruitment of candidates difficult, as well as unification of party.
- Erratic monitoring of individual legislators means many individual votes "based on friendship, personal favors," or the caprice of the legislator.
- Lack of a distinctive political philosophy in either party. Both parties contain liberals, moderates, and conservatives.
- Republicans in particular, who enjoy an advantage in voter registration over Democrats, do not find it in their interest to enforce

orthodoxy on ideology. Indeed, their experience is that strong ideological agendas often backfire, causing schisms and leading to Democratic electoral victories.

- Although Democrats have achieved some successes when they are well-organized, they also have suffered from internal struggle and turmoil.¹⁹

The Emergence of Party-Line Voting in the New Hampshire House

While we do not contest the overall conclusion of the above scholars that New Hampshire parties should not be mistaken for “political machines,” our analysis of selected roll-call votes in the New Hampshire House of Representatives over the past two decades indicates a degree of party unity (and perhaps even discipline) that cannot be easily dismissed.

Tracking selected roll-call votes²⁰ over the past eleven sessions of the House, from 1979 to 2000, we found that bipartisanship, once the norm, is now the exception. At the beginning of this period, it was difficult to distinguish Democrats from Republicans, based on how they voted on a given piece of legislation. By the end of this period, distinguishing one party’s members from another by roll-call votes became increasingly easier. In one issue-area after another — taxes and fiscal issues, crime and punishment, guns, social issues such as homosexual rights and abortion regulations — the Democratic and Republican delegations now sharply diverge from one another. Strict segregation by party is now a fact of political life in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, as the following data indicate.

Taxes

New Hampshire historically has placed one of the lightest tax burdens in the country on its citizens. In 1950, the state had the third lowest tax burden in the country, and was the lowest of all fifty states in 1970, 1990, and 1997.²¹ Currently, the state has no sales or income tax. Advocates of holding the line against new taxes, such as the prominent newspaper *The Manchester Union-Leader*, claim that the absence of broad-based taxes is a key facet of “the New Hampshire advantage,” drawing business, industry, and citizens from neighboring states to reside in a tax-free haven.

A look at selected roll-call votes in the early 1980s indicates that Democrat and Republican members of the House stood shoulder to shoulder against new taxes. In the 1979–80 and 1981–82 sessions, the House considered two income tax bills: a 5 percent income tax in 1979–80, and a 3 percent income tax in 1981–82. Neither bill came even close to winning the support of a majority of Democrats or Republicans. In fact, as Table 9 shows, the two party delegations voted in quite similar patterns on both bills.

Some fifteen years later, a bill that would increase taxes on cigarettes showed some evidence of divergence between the two party delegations. While Republicans voted narrowly against the tax, Democrats voted in favor.

The 1999–2000 session vote on a 4 percent income tax was the most glaring sign of divergence between the two party delegations. The percentage of the Republican and Democratic party delegations voting for and against the bill were virtual reverses of each other: Republicans who cast votes were against the income tax by about 4-to-1, while Democrats who cast votes were for the bill by more than 4-to-1.

Table 9

Tax Legislation	Reps. (%)	Dems. (%)	Phi Coefficient & Significance Level
5 % Income Tax, 1979-80 Session			
For	16.8	26.8	F = -.118 p > .05
Against	83.2	73.2	
3 % Income Tax, 1981-1982 Session			
For	27.9	39.3	F = -.119 p > .05
Against	72.1	60.7	
Cigarette Tax Increase, 1995-96 Session			
For	47.2	61.5	F = -.129 p < .05
Against	52.8	38.5	
4 % Income Tax, 1999-2000 Session			
For	24.5	77.7	F = .520 p < .01
Against	75.5	22.3	

Source: *The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982*, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; *The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002*, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

Crime Legislation

During the past twenty years, the New Hampshire House has considered several bills concerning crime and punishment, including minimum sentencing laws, creating a needle exchange program for drug users, and abolishment of the death penalty.

Unlike the voting pattern on taxes, there was already evidence of disparity in Democratic and Republican voting patterns as far back as the 1981–82 session. As with tax votes, however, this disparity increased significantly from the 1980s to the 1990s (Table 10).

In the 1981–82 session vote on minimum sentencing laws, Republican and Democratic majorities (of those casting votes) supported the measure. Such bipartisan agreement did not materialize again on any of the three subsequent bills considered by the House. On the 1993–94 session bill creating a needle exchange program for drug users, 85.7 percent of all Democrats supported the measure, compared to 42.9 percent of Republicans. Similar trends emerged on the two votes on the state’s death penalty law in the 1997–98 and 1999–2000 sessions. On both occasions, Democratic House members voting on the bill were overwhelmingly in favor of abolishing the death penalty, while the Republican delegation was nearly as steadfast in their support for keeping the penalty.

Abortion and Homosexual Rights Issues

From the late 1980s to the present day, New Hampshire House legislators have considered a host of legislation concerning social and moral issues such as abortion and

Table 10

Roll-call Votes on Crime Legislation, New Hampshire House

Crime Legislation	Reps. (%)	Dems. (%)	Phi Coefficient & Significance Level
Minimum Sentencing Law, 1981-82 Session			
For	92.9	59.5	
Against	7.1	40.5	F = .405 p < .01
Needle Exchange Program, 1993-94 Session			
For	42.9	85.7	
Against	57.1	14.3	F = -.403 p < .01
Abolish Death Penalty, 1997-98 Session			
For	24.7	77.2	
Against	75.3	22.8	F = -.507 p < .01
Abolish Death Penalty, 1999-2000 Session			
For	36.2	82.8	
Against	63.8	17.2	F = -.454 p < .01

Source: The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

homosexual rights. It is worthy of note that while New Hampshire has a reputation as a conservative state, its brand of conservatism has often been libertarian on such issues (e.g., the legislature's continual resistance to imposing mandatory motorcycle helmet or adult seatbelt requirement laws). In this particular issue-area, as in the others we have reviewed, the same pattern emerges over the 1980s and 1990s: initial correspondence between Democrats and Republicans on roll-call voting gives way to significant division along party lines.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the House faced several votes on issues of abortion and homosexual rights, including a proposed ban on homosexual foster parents; a bill requiring parental notification for minors seeking an abortion; and two votes on a repeal of a penalty for abortion. In these four votes, there was no significant divergence between Republican and Democratic support, as Table 11 shows.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, however, the gap between Republicans and Democrats widened and hardened on roll-call votes regarding moral and social issues. On a 1993-94 session bill regarding homosexual rights, Democrats voted in favor at a rate of 11 to 1, while a majority of voting Republicans opposed it. Significant divergence between the party delegations also emerged on the abortion issue, on two

Table 11

**Roll-call Votes on Abortion and Homosexual Rights,
New Hampshire House**

Abortion and Homosexual Rights Legislation	Reps. (%)	Dems. (%)	Phi Coefficient & Significance Level
Ban On Homosexual Foster Parents, 1987-88 Session			
For	64.2	43.1	F = .198 p < .05
Against	35.8	56.9	
Parental Notification Bill , 1987-88 Session			
For	23.1	30.0	F = -.073 p > .05
Against	76.9	70.0	
Repeal Abortion Penalty, 1989-90 Session			
For	58.6	64.1	F = -.049 p > .05
Against	41.4	35.9	
Criminal Penalty for Abortion, 1991-92 Session			
For	65.5	75.7	F = -.104 p > .05
Against	34.5	24.3	
Homosexual Rights Bill, 1993-94 Session			
For	42.9	91.5	F = .468 p < .01
Against	57.1	8.5	
Parental Notification Bill, 1995-96 Session			
For	40.0	17.6	F = .217 p < .01
Against	60.0	82.4	
Parental Notification Bill, 1997-98 Session			
For	38.1	13.6	F = .257 p < .01
Against	61.9	86.4	
Prohibition of Partial-birth Abortion, 1999-2000 Session			
For	66.2	18.8	F = .463 p < .01
Against	33.8	81.3	

Source: The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, NH: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

parental-notification bills in the 1995–96 and 1997–98 sessions, and a prohibition of “partial-birth” abortions in the 1999–2000 session. Again, Republicans voted in favor of these bills at much higher rates than Democrats did.

Environmental Issues

Roll-call votes on environmental issues in the New Hampshire House again show a similar pattern of divergence, albeit not as pronounced as in earlier issue-areas.

Table 12

Roll-call Votes on Environmental Legislation, New Hampshire House

Environmental Legislation	Reps.(%)	Dems.(%)	Phi Coefficient & Significance Level
Creating a State Environmental Protection Agency, 1979-80 Session			
For	28.0	35.8	
Against	72.0	64.2	F = -.080 p > .05
Bottle Deposit Bill, 1983-84 Session			
For	46.8	52.6	
Against	53.2	47.4	F = -.051 p > .05
Allowing Moose Hunting, 1987-88 Session			
For	76.1	64.1	
Against	23.9	35.9	F = -.123 p > .05
Shoreline Protection, 1991-92 Session			
For	72.6	92.6	
Against	27.4	7.4	F = -.729 p < .01
Banning Steel Leg Traps, 1991-92 Session			
For	23.1	60.9	
Against	76.9	39.1	F = -.368 p < .01
River / Shoreline Protection 1997-98 Session			
For	55.8	94.8	
Against	44.2	5.2	F = -.401 p < .01

Source: The New Hampshire Political Almanac: 1981-1982, eds. Stephen G. Lakis and Philip E. Ginsburg (Concord, N.H.: Almanac Research Services, 1981; The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials, 2001-2002, ed. Donald Grissom (Concord, N.H.: Northeast Information Services, 2001).

Indeed, on four of the six roll-call votes, taken from the 1979–80 to the 1991–92 sessions — on establishment of a state environmental protection agency; a bottle deposit bill; moose hunting; and shoreline protection — roughly equal percentages of Republicans and Democrats voted the same on these measures.

Another vote in the 1991–92 session, however, and one in the 1997–98 session, indicated some divergence along party lines. The 1991–92 session bill, which would have banned the use of steel leg traps, received majority support from voting Democrats, while Republicans voted in opposition to the bill by more than three to one. Most recently, a river and shoreline protection bill gained nearly unanimous support from Democratic House members (94.8 percent), while Republicans were much more closely split (55.8 percent in favor, 44.2 percent opposing).

Native-born vs. Nonnative Born Legislators

Some measure of increased partisanship by Democrats and Republicans is a reflection of voting dissimilarities between native-born and nonnative-born New Hampshire House members within the Democratic delegation. While no significant voting differences were discovered between native-born and nonnative born GOP Representatives, voting differences were evident between native born and nonnative-born members of the Democratic House delegation on seven of the twenty-two roll call votes discussed in this paper. Voting dissimilarities between native-born and nonnative-born Democrats were found regarding a minimum sentencing law, a bill requiring deposits on soft drink bottles, legislation introducing a 3 percent state income tax, a bill banning homosexual foster parents, and three bills concerned with abortion issues.

The 1981–82 minimum sentencing bill passed the New Hampshire House with a comfortable 80 percent vote. Native born Democratic House members voted with the majority on the issue, with thirty-six of fifty (72 percent) lending support to the measure. On the other hand, nineteen of thirty-two nonnative Democratic House members (59 percent) voted in opposition to the bill. Native-born Democrats followed the House majority vote in a similar fashion with the 1981-82 session attempt to introduce a 3 percent state income tax. While the bill failed with over a two-thirds majority in opposition, three of four native-born Democrats voted against the measure, while two out of three of their nonnative Democratic counterparts voiced approval for the tax. The bottle deposit bill was narrowly defeated in the New Hampshire House during the 1983-84 session, with 52 percent voting against it. Twelve of the thirty (40 percent) native born Democratic Representatives voted with the majority to defeat the legislation. Once again, nonnative born Democratic House members voted in a different way, with two-thirds expressing support for the bill.

The 1987-88 session bill banning homosexuals from becoming foster parents passed the House with 57 percent of the membership in favor. Again, native-born Democratic House members voted with the majority on the bill (twenty of thirty-five or 57 percent), while twenty-six out of thirty-seven (70 percent) of their nonnative-born counterparts voted strongly against the measure. Two bills requiring parental notification for abortion by minors were strongly defeated in the 1987-88 and 1995-96 sessions (75 percent against in 1987-88, and 67 percent against in 1995-96). Of interest in both instances was the level of favorable voting for the measures among native-born Democratic House members as compared to nonnative born Democratic House members. In 1987-88, sixteen of thirty-five (46 percent) of native born Democrats voted in favor of the bill, in contrast to five of thirty-five (14



percent) of nonnative Democrats favoring the measure. The 1995-96 parental notification bill involved nine of thirty-one (29 percent) of native-born Democratic Representatives supporting the measure, in contrast to only three of forty-two (7 percent) of nonnative-born Democrats in favor. Finally, the 1999-2000 session bill banning partial-birth abortions was narrowly defeated in the House (52 percent against). Two-thirds of the GOP delegation voted in favor of the prohibition. Defeat of the legislation was a product of the strong opposition from nonnative born Democrats, with nine out of ten expressing opposition. Native-born Democratic House members, while opposed to the measure, were not nearly as united, with twelve of thirty-five (34 percent) voting in favor of banning partial-birth abortions.

Perhaps some explanation for native-born, more traditional, Democratic House members taking a more conservative position on these issues, particularly when it comes to abortion legislation, may reflect tendencies of “working-class authoritarianism” described by Seymour Martin Lipset.²² The more liberal voting positions taken by nonnative Democrats may reflect Thompson and Moncrief’s contention that migrants are less bound to tradition and “serve as agents of change within the institution and offer the minority party a pool of potential recruits as they seek to attain more competitive status.”²³

Conclusions and Thoughts on Further Research

Our research tends to support Thompson and Moncrief’s argument: “Nonnatives in the legislatures are not necessarily ‘outsiders’ but instead reflect the makeup of the states’ changing populations. In these states, nonnatives function to make the legislatures more, not less, representative of the citizens of the states.”²⁴ Major population growth in New Hampshire has not resulted in significant change in voters’ party affiliation over the past two decades, but the “suburbanization” of the state’s population is reflected in the changing composition of the political institution most directly representative of the state’s citizens, the New Hampshire House of Representatives. And contrary to the conventional scholarly wisdom on the lack of party organization and discipline among New Hampshire state legislators, party line voting has increased significantly over the past two decades, over numerous issue-areas.

Several explanations are offered on why the New Hampshire House has become more partisan, while its members have simultaneously increased across the board in measures of socioeconomic status such as education and occupation.

- *Political party as collective identity.* Given the decreased presence of native-born legislators in the House, political party and partisanship have become the new mode of organization and collective identity in a legislature where individual members do not necessarily share common social experiences and upbringing.
- *Gender.* The emergence of gender parity in the Democratic House delegation, and the increase in party line voting during the same period of time, raises a host of questions about possible connections between these two developments. Is there now a “gender gap” in the New Hampshire House, and will that gap increase over time and have discernible political effects? Another set of questions centers on how the increased presence of female legislators in the Democratic delegation is affecting the party internally. According to one

authoritative study, female state legislators have often found power in numbers, that is, increasing confidence and freedom in pursuing issues most important to them, such as legislation dealing with women, children, and families.²⁵

- *New set of more divisive issues.* The rise of “culture wars” issues, such as abortion and homosexual rights, as well as the perennial dilemma of education funding and property taxation brought on by the state Supreme Court’s recent decisions regarding the funding of public education, has created a more divisive environment in the House.
- *Increased party organization.* Behind-the-scenes organization by party leadership, heretofore unnoticed by scholars, has led to more disciplined party legislative delegations. Increased discipline, as far as we can tell, is not the result of increased party funding of campaigns, or other such traditional party favors to legislators. One possibility is that the legislators in each of the party delegations now share more ideological affinity with each other (and ideological opposition to the rival delegation) than in previous decades. Another possibility may lie in the particular assemblage of legislative leadership, which emerges in each session, such as the oligarchy of committee chairs. A third possibility is how the major political parties recruit candidates for legislative office. In many House races, winning the Republican party primary is equivalent to winning the legislative seat, because of lack of effective two-party competition. Also, Democrats historically try to discourage primary contests, at least in major races.✿

NOTES

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 17. Fistek, "New Hampshire: Is the Granite Grip of the Republican Party Cracking?," 51. For example, of the 49 seats up for election in the Executive Council, State Senate, Register of Probate, and County Attorney races in 1994, the Democrats did not contest 12, or 24 percent; the Republicans did not contest 4, or 8 percent.
 18. "New Hampshire: Is the Granite Grip of the Republican Party Cracking?," 52.
 19. "New Hampshire: Is the Granite Grip of the Republican Party Cracking?," 52-53.
 20. All roll-call votes compiled from records in *The Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials*, various editions.
 21. Richard F. Winters, "The Politics of Taxing and Spending," in *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*, 7th ed., ed. Virginia Gray, Russell L. Hanson, Herbert Jacob (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1999), 309.
 22. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*, Expanded Edition (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 87-126.
 23. Thompson and Moncrief, "Nativity, Mobility, and State Legislators," 32.
 24. Thompson and Moncrief, "Nativity, Mobility, and State Legislators," 33.
 25. Sue Thomas, *How Women Legislate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 104.

