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*Review of Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage Through the Rise of the New Right.* Catherine E. Rymph.  
**Reviewed by Leon Ginsberg.**

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## Book Reviews

Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage through the Rise of the New Right*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. \$24.05 papercover.

Among the remarkable phenomena of the Twentieth Century were the changing roles of women in politics and the transformation of the Republican Party. This book provides an unusual history of women's involvement in the Party from the time of women's suffrage, guaranteed by the 19th Amendment, through the dominance of the Party by the New Right. That dominance was partly the result of the efforts of some Republican women.

Because the book is in large measure an explanation of how the New Right came to power in the Party with the support of conservative women, some of the most prominent Republican women are either not mentioned at all or are given minimal attention. For example, one of the Republican women best regarded by social workers is Jeanette Rankin, a social worker herself, and the first woman to be elected to Congress in 1916. She is not mentioned. She was a leading supporter of women's suffrage and a pacifist. Margaret Chase Smith, one of the most important Republican Senators in the Twentieth Century and one of the few women ever elected to that body, is only referred to in passing. Current Senator Elizabeth Dole is not included.

The author suggests that there were and continue to be various dichotomies among the women in the Party. She describes the National Federation of Republican Women, and women Republican Party officials, whom she calls Party women. Party women, she notes, were "often unmarried, used politics as a career, and were in some cases paid for their work" (p. 3). Clubwomen, active in the Federation, were volunteers.

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However, there were great conflicts beginning in the 1960s about the principles that women's efforts should support. So the other dichotomy was between Republican women feminists and liberals and Republican women who were antifeminists and conservatives. Perhaps the turning point, the author notes, came in 1967 when, for the first time, the presidency of the National Federation of Republican Women was contested. Usually, a nominating committee's recommendations were ratified at the conventions of the Federation. However, in 1967, after the 1964 lopsided defeat of the Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater by Lyndon B. Johnson, "the Party regular" Republican women and a group of insurgents battled for the presidency of the Federation.

The leader of the insurgents was Phyllis Schlafly, then and now a strong supporter of conservative positions, who opposed the nominating committee candidate, Gladys O'Donnell. O'Donnell was elected with 56 percent of the convention delegates but Schlafly and her point of view largely prevailed over the future of the Party. Schlafly was the author, in 1964, of *A Choice Not an Echo*, a strongly conservative political book that voiced opposition to Democrats and their policies. Republicans, Schlafly argued, should not echo the more liberal positions that were espoused by Democrats and were the prevailing philosophy of the more liberal wing of the Republicans. Instead, the Party should pursue conservative policies. In some ways, the Goldwater candidacy and Schlafly's book set the agenda for the New Right. Schlafly and her supporters were opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment, which had initially been supported by many Republicans as well as Democrats but which ultimately failed to be ratified.

The nomination of Ronald Reagan in 1980 was a victory for the Republican Right, including the conservative Republicans. For the future of the party, up to and including the present, the dominant position of the Republican Party, including its women leaders, has tended towards the conservative. Although not all Republican presidents and presidential candidates are as conservative as Goldwater and Schlafly, the liberal wing of the Party, which had once been dominant, now represents only a minority of Republicans.

The author notes that the battle continues. Although the

Democratic Party is more identified with feminism, feminist women continue to work within the Republican Party for their point of view. Schlafly continues to pursue her philosophy through her Eagle Forum, an independent organization. A new breed of active and high-ranking Republican women, such as Mary Matalin, an aide to Vice President Cheney, do not especially identify with feminist causes or movements or suggest that they speak for women. They identify themselves as individuals, the author notes.

In several ways, the book is a useful and objective analysis of some of the forces of recent American politics and the conflicts over feminism as well as liberal versus conservative political philosophies within the Republican Party. It will be a useful resource for anyone interested in these developments.

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Peter W. Greenwood, *Changing Lives: Delinquency Prevention as Crime Control Policy*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006, \$37.00 hardcover.

The conversion of scientific knowledge about juvenile delinquency to actual policy and practice has been dreadfully slow and even stalled at times. Criminological research consistently links such factors as delinquent peer affiliations, neglectful parental supervision, low school achievement, and adolescent substance abuse to juvenile delinquency, and juvenile delinquency itself is a risk factor for adult criminality. Despite this robust knowledge base, however, recent developments in crime-control policy often look strikingly like old developments. Tougher sentencing laws, expanding police departments, and construction of more prisons are promoted, supported and funded over proven evidence-based interventions.

The frequent evolution of chronic juvenile delinquents into serious adult offenders would seem enough to justify the need for sound, early preventive programming. Yet, as Peter Greenwood notes in his new book, *Changing Lives: Delinquency Prevention as Crime-Control Policy*, delinquency prevention is