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## Summaries in English

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## Summaries

### Bets Beat Polls

by W. K. B. Hofstee and H. Schaapman

At the invitation of a regional advertisement paper, 361 readers predicted the outcome of the election of the Second Chamber of the Netherlands Parliament on September 5 1989. The averaged prediction showed a discrepancy with the election outcome of 8 seats, whereas the discrepancy was 14 seats for a synchronous poll. Through additional prediction rounds and more detailed analyses, we investigated (1) how robust the averaged prediction was, (2) to what extent participants were influenced by polls, and (3) whether wishful thinking or strategic manoeuvring could be traced. We argue that averaged predictions will be more generally superior to polls on the basis of methodological grounds, especially, the extreme robustness of averaged predictions. We conclude with more general considerations on the methodological status of the present betting approach.

### Political representation of women

by M. Leijenaar

The article looks at the political representation of women. The quantitative representation by women in local, provincial and national political bodies is reviewed, and attention is paid to the accessibility of representative bodies for women. It is obvious from the data, presented in the first paragraph, that neither the Dutch Parliament, nor the government, nor the local and provincial councils, reflect the gender balance of the electorate. In this sense, the introduction of women's suffrage has not led to proportional representation. In the inter-war period only few women took up seats in Parliament and lower councils. After the second world war the percentage gradually increased until the late 1980s, with women accounting for 25% of seats in the Second Chamber of Parliament, 26% of seats in the First Chamber (Senate), 25% of seats in provincial councils and 19% of seats in local councils.

The second part of this article reviews the literature explaining this underrepresentation. Explanations can be categorized in terms of both individual and institutional characteristics, each of which is discussed in the next paragraph. The first

question to be addressed is the extent to which individual characteristics favoured the attainment of a representative position. Individual barriers in the process of recruitment can be categorized as structural, situational and psychological. With regard to the Dutch politicians especially the situational variables, such as being married and having children did indeed make a great deal of difference. Factors more related to the process of selection and election are for example degree of organisation and electoral attractiveness.

With regard to the second category one can refer to the organization of most Western European societies, which allegedly leave little scope for women to emerge from their private domains. The virtual nonexistence of nurseries for babies, the impediments placed by the labour-market, the vagaries of the shop opening Act, and so on, also explain the inaccessibility of the political system for women.

In this respect explanations are also sought in the political system itself, in that the selection procedures of political parties hamper the chances of women. What is important here is the fact that fewer women belong to political parties, and perform fewer activities within these parties. Yet it is from the active members that candidates are recruited. Secondly, in an analysis of the impact of selection procedures on the electoral prospects of women, four factors should be taken into account: who is making the selection; what are the selection criteria; whether there are any special policies to strengthen the position of women candidates, and how well women are organized within the party. As regards the selectors, one can say in general that a decentralized (constituency-based) process is more disadvantageous for the selection of women than a somewhat centralized process, in that it is shown that party leaderships are more concerned about the male-female balance than are the local or regional branches. It is clear that decentralized procedures induce tougher competition, resulting in fewer chances for women to obtain a safe place. Local party leaders often have their own regional candidates (who are mostly males). Secondly, one can conclude that both quota setting and a strong women's organization have a positive impact on the chances of women in the selection process. Quota setting has an eye opening effect, making selectors more aware than before of the availability of women as possible representatives. Women's organizations within the parties, which are organized nationally as well as regionally and locally, use their own networks to lobby for women candidates.

Finally, in the last paragraph some recommendations are made for future research on political behavior of women and men.