credentials and by her tenacity:

> The fact is we didn't have any (women in the bureau). She started quite a campaign from Texas. She started having people call me. I went to the Times and told them she was good, and we should put our money where our mouth is. So we created a new job for her. [18]

Skelton said he has attempted to get more women to move to the Capitol bureau from within the huge staff of the paper in southern California.

> We've tried to get women to come up here, and we couldn't. There is one woman who has a standing invitation to come up here, but her husband is in a business -- the entertainment industry -- which doesn't exist up here. A couple of others are interested, but everytime there is an opportunity, something happens. With our paper, a lot of people are afraid that if they leave the mother ship (in Los Angeles), they'll lose out (on promotional opportunities). I've been with the mother ship and away from it, and I don't think it makes a difference, although if I wanted to be a big editor, I'd have to be in L.A.
>
> And women have a lot of opportunities to advance.[19]

Jennifer Kerr [20]

Jennifer Kerr, 44, has been with the Associated Press since 1974, in Los Angeles, in Charleston, West Virginia, and in the Capitol bureau of AP in Sacramento since 1978. She was one of the first women to work for any news organization at the Capitol, and she has covered all variety of legislative, executive and agency issues. Her longtime beat has been the state Assembly and the grueling, complex annual state budget process -- and, she says, "whatever else

comes up." The mother of an 11-year-old son, she generally works from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Kerr, like many women in this study, began her journalistic career early. While still in high school in Troy, Ohio, she worked for the Troy Daily News, and during the summers between her college years, she worked on the women's pages. She completed her undergraduate degree in journalism at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, in 1968, then worked for two years for the Lima Daily News in Lima, Ohio. Originally planning to become a foreign correspondent, she also holds a Master's degree in Asian Studies from the University of Hawaii. "Unfortunately, by the time I got in the AP, the world was losing interest in Southeast Asia, which was my area of expertise."

As an undergraduate, Kerr remembers news media recruiters visiting Ohio University, and one of them was from the Wall Street Journal. "They were opening or expanding the Chicago bureau. When another woman and I went into the interview, they asked us how as a woman we could deal with (working in Chicago), because of the crime. I remember feeling angry. It kind of floored me."

She wanted to go to New York, and found a job there as a copy editor for McGraw-Hill. But she soon returned to Lima and "went looking for a job."

> There were still laws in Ohio about hours for women. They had never had a woman on the (city) desk, and the only opening was on the desk. The

> women's section was all women, the education reporter was a woman, and everyone else, including all the desk people, were men. I wrote the "Action Line" column for a few months, then they decided to put me on the desk. I was fine on the desk. It had just never occurred to them.

In 1973, she took the AP test for reporters in Washington, D.C., and was sent to New York for an interview. "They called me two weeks later," she recalls. "I was real surprised." About the same time, AP was being sued for institutional sex discrimination, so Kerr's timing may have been fortuitous. "Sometimes I think that was how I was hired, because I was hired really rapidly."

Before coming to Sacramento in 1978, she covered the West Virginia Legislature for AP. "There is a little more patronage in the West Virginia Legislature than in California. They (legislators) would sometimes tell (a woman reporter) more than they otherwise would because they were trying to be charming and they would underestimate you." She said women were starting to show up on the Capitol reporting staffs of major West Virginia media -- a woman was covering the Capitol for United Press International, and the main Capitol reporter for the largest paper in the state was a woman.

The AP bureau at the state Capitol in Sacramento is headed by longtime Bureau Chief Doug Willis, a soft-spoken, veteran political reporter who prefers the less high-

sounding title of "correspondent." Besides Kerr, there is one other woman -- Kathleen Grubb -- in the seven-person bureau.

Kerr and others in the bureau, including Willis and News Editor John Howard, pay special attention to the needs of working parents, male as well as female. The daughter of one male reporter comes to the bureau in the afternoon to do her homework and wait for her father to take her home -- since both parents work, and prefer that their daughter not go home to an empty house. Willis has no problems with the arrangement, and respects Kerr's desire to avoid covering campaigns because of the killer-hours and travel. In return, Kerr annually covers the state budget battles, which -- unlike many reporters, who regard budget coverage as akin to having a root canal -- she <u>likes</u> to cover the budget process.[21]

On child care and family issues, Kerr says, "there is no problem. There are others who have scheduling problems, and they (management) are extremely understanding. Everything is flexible." Although Kerr does not do much campaign traveling, she remembers one year, when her son was four years old. One of the other male reporters was in law school, and another's wife was expecting a baby. "That was a year I did a lot of traveling," Kerr recalls. Her husband, Bob Schmidt, then a Capitol bureau reporter for the <u>Long Beach Press-Telegram</u> (now with a major Sacramento

political public relations firm), "was flexible," and they survived the year.

Even legislators have been understanding of her dual role, Kerr says. She remembers when former Assemblyman Art Agnos, now mayor of San Francisco, was chair of an important budget subcommittee which met at five p.m. "I was kind of kidding when I asked if he could get this out of the way, my kid's at day care. He could, and he did. I thought that was nice."

She has not found the hours of Capitol reporting to be inimical to a reasonably orderly family life:

> Actually, you have better hours than other beats. There are fewer night meetings, you're generally working day shifts. There are times when it's crazy. I send my son out of town in August (when the state budget battles reach crisis proportions). There are certain things you know you're not going to be able to do.

She believes the relationship between reporters and legislators -- male or female -- has changed substantially over the years. "There isn't the cozy relationship between the press and the Legislature that there once was. There is no longer a (press-legislature) golf tournament. The drinking-in-the-bars thing has stopped to a great extent." And, the kind of coziness that might foster sexual harassment of female reporters has largely been eliminated. "Even in the Legislature," she says, "they were beginning to change themselves." The most noticeable change, of course,

is seen in the number of women being elected to the Assembly and even the Senate, and in the increasing numbers of female legislative staff members.

She believes women reporters bring a different perspective than many men to the legislative process: "Anytime you write something, you're a product of what has happened to you in your life. Women look at things differently. They may look at something somewhat differently or ask a different question. Having both male and female reporters, you tend to get a broader picture."

Like many women reporters at the Capitol, she says women often have a more subtle approach than male reporters to coverage of issues such as child care, welfare and abortion: "Even if you're talking about something like welfare or workfare or even abortion, sometimes men get caught up in the politics of something without stopping to think about the people affected -- often women and children -- and how it is going to affect them individually."

As wire service reporters, Kerr adds, "We don't have the same relationship (with legislators) as newspaper reporters. We cover them as a whole and on a broader basis. Sometimes I don't think they even know we exist. We're a lot more anonymous, male or female."

Like other women reporters -- particularly those who have observed the Capitol news scene for many years, as Kerr

has -- she is concerned that the gains made by women reporters in the 70s and 80s are, if not actually losing ground, at least in a state of inertia.

While the number of women reporters covering the Capitol since the early 1970s has risen, there have been no substantive increases in recent years. Since many Capitol bureaus are one- and two-person operations, turnover can be glacial and opportunities slim for new blood, including women and minorities (minority representation in the Capitol press corps is dismal, much lower than the number of women).

"It may just be chance and coincidence," says Kerr, "but at the larger bureaus, there appears to be this conscious decision to just have <u>one</u> woman reporter."

<u>Rebecca LaVally</u> [22]

Rebecca LaVally, 40, was raised in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County and graduated from Grover Cleveland High School in Reseda. Her interest in journalism began in junior high school, when she worked on her school paper. She was also editor of her high school paper, as well as news editor and city editor of her college paper. She graduated from California State University in Northridge in 1971 with a Bachelor's degree in journalism and a minor in biology.

"My father and grandfather had been newspapermen. My

grandfather was a small newspaper publisher in New York, and my father grew up in his print shop. My dad went into public relations and always regretted that he hadn't remained in news."

Her father, her strongest mentor, was killed in a bicycle accident when LaVally was 18. "I was committed very deeply to being a newspaper reporter. It was something I wanted to do for myself and for my father."

During college, she was an intern for the Daily News of Los Angeles and for one year was editor of the Santa Clarita Clarion, a weekly in the Newhall area. She also edited the college alumni newsletter while at Northridge, which she attended on a four-year scholarship. "It was all great experience, and looked good on my resume. I had a long resume when I graduated."

The year she graduated, Copley Newspapers sent a representative to interview promising students. LaVally tried to apply, but was told by the department chair that "Copley didn't want to talk to women." She insisted on the interview, and was told by the recruiter that "for every ten women they hired five quit, and he would not hire a woman for that reason."

Her reaction? "People react differently, and that just strengthened my resolve."

She was even more offended by the fact that the

journalism department -- the same department that had awarded her a four-year-scholarship -- did not complain or intervene in any way.

She recalled advice she had received from a prominent television newswoman, who told her while LaVally was still in college, that to be successful in the news business she had to be prepared to "work three times as hard as a man. I'd heard twice as hard, but she said three times as hard."

After graduation, she spent eight months on the Fremont News-Register, a now defunct daily in Alameda County, then accompanied her fiance to Ohio, where he had been accepted in medical school. She found a job on the Lorain journal in Lorain, Ohio, and worked there for five months, when, in early 1972, United Press International in Cleveland "called up and said the bureau manager was looking for women, and I was the only one who had applied. Boy, I'd never heard that before, I'd never heard they wanted to hire a woman."

So she went to work for the wire service in a rundown part of town where employees had to walk several blocks to their cars at two a.m.

> It was very dangerous work. I had to park several blocks from the office, and I never got out of the bureau until two in the morning. I would put my hair up and wear pants and a coat and hope people thought I was a man. I had to walk over a bridge, past a hobo camp under it. I parked in a very remote lot by Lake Erie, and we had to pay for our parking. I was 22 years old. My mother, who was widowed, was terrified that I was working in Cleveland at all. It was a very crime-ridden

> town. We all had experiences with crime. I was accosted in broad daylight and had my purse stolen. It was just a matter of time before I got badly hurt. I was terrified.

At one point, she went to the managing editor of the Cleveland Press, in whose building UPI was located, and asked him for a parking space. He refused. "I didn't want to use my gender. There were no precedents. Do you ask for special favors? I was really in a quandry. A sports reporter felt sorry for me and gave me a pass for a month. Then his pass expired because they said he wasn't using it."

Her Cleveland parking quandry was rendered moot when she left UPI to go to work for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, which offered its employees parking next to the building. She spent two years with the paper, then went with her husband when he was accepted for an internship at Stanford University in 1975.

LaVally considered herself "very, very lucky" when she was hired by the San Jose Mercury-News. "They hadn't hired anybody in two years. It was just an incredible break." She worked out of the Mercury's north county bureau in Mountain View, covering all variety of local news. She worked there two years, then her husband was accepted for a residency at the University of California in Davis.

She asked her Mercury-News editor about working in the paper's Sacramento bureau, "but he was pretty skeptical. .

.He told me he didn't think I was qualified." LaVally said the editor also asked questions "which I deeply resented." He asked her "if I was a bitch to work with and whether I was applying for this job because I needed the money -- questions that had nothing to do with my reporting skills. I was well aware no man would have been asked questions like that."

At that time, Knight-Ridder Newspapers, which owns the Mercury-News and the Long Beach Press-Telegram in California, maintained a one-person bureau -- Bob Schmidt -- but was contemplating adding a second reporter. LaVally felt her chances of getting the slot were nil, so she went to work for the Sacramento Bee parttime for ten weeks, then, in 1977, was hired by United Press International in its Capitol bureau. Eight years later, she was named bureau chief.

In 1989, LaVally left the financially ailing wire service to become bureau manager for Gannett Newspapers, a corporate giant in the news business. Because Gannett would not agree to a more flexible work schedule so she could spend more time with her young daughter, LaVally left Gannett in 1990 to work parttime as an editor for the California Senate Office of Research, and to write freelance articles for various publications.

One recent article, for the California Journal, a

magazine about California government and politics, explored the history -- and future -- of women reporters in the Capitol Press Corps. In part a sequel to a controversial 1985 article [23] -- in which LaVally described blatant acts of sexual harassment against female reporters by certain state legislators -- LaVally's 1991 article does not present an optimistic picture of progress for women reporters at the Capitol. The article's headline -- "Was 1990 the 'Year of the woman?' Not in the Capitol Press Corps" -- aptly described LaVally's conclusions:

> At the Capitol, where California's political pulse beats strongest and statewide social policy is made, women and the perspective they bring rarely decide what's newsworthy or how stories will be shaped.
>
> Until the mid 1970s female Capitol reporters could be counted on one hand. Today, it takes two hands. But the number has been dropping steadily. . .In bureau after bureau, men have replaced the women who moved on, while in many bureaus women never got a toehold.[24]

One reason for the decline -- in addition to low turnover rates and (sometimes subtle) discrimination -- is the concern among many women reporters that their families , especially their children, suffer as a result of the pressures of the job. "Once you get in," LaVally says, "it's such a demanding job." She recalls that when she was seven months pregnant, working at UPI, her days sometimes lasted 15 or 16 hours. On one occasion, she said she had worked six long days in a row, and told her boss "I couldn't

continue."

> I was sleeping in the women's room, and the guys would come and knock on the door and get me back out. I remember calling (her boss) and begging not to be made to work another day. It would have been a Sunday, and he got very upset. He did have someone come in eventually. I didn't feel I should ask for special consideration, and I only asked once.

Unable to persuade her boss to allow her to job-share with another reporter after her daughter was born, LaVally would later encourage just such an arrangement -- and for the same reason -- when she was bureau chief and Capitol reporter Ann Bancroft was looking for a parttime job so she could spend more time with her young son.[25]

Because the bureau was a seven-day operation, when LaVally was bureau chief she worked Sunday through Thursday, so that on Friday she could volunteer in her daughter's school in Auburn (divorced from her physician husband, whose practice is in Auburn, LaVally shares custody of their daughter, who lives part of the week with each parent). "I have my daughter on the days I'm not working. It's a tremendous relief now not to have to juggle a demanding job with child care." The pressures are heavy in two-parent households, but particularly deadly for single parents.

> The ideal situation in those jobs, if you have children, is to have a spouse who takes primary care, so you don't have to be sitting in a hearing and wondering how you're going to get to the day

> care center. You are always in a terrible state of stress. For a single working mom, it is probably the worst imaginable situation.
>
> And there is a lot of travel. You don't say in the news business that you don't want to cover out of town stories. You are supposed to be available at the drop of a hat.

Despite its superior record of hiring and promoting women, LaVally says Gannett "isn't any more willing than other companies to give women the flexibility to do well in both roles." Assuming that Gannett -- with a woman president (Nancy Woodhull) and a stellar reputation in the industry on women's rights issues [26] -- would be amenable to a flexible job schedule so she could continue to spend time in her daughter's classroom, LaVally said she was "floored" when the company refused to allow her a more flexible work schedule.

> When I went to Gannett, my daughter asked me, "Mommy, aren't you going to work in my class anymore?" I told (Madeline) Jennings, vice-president for personnel at Gannett, that I was going to cut back my hours or look for a parttime job. Her response was that it would have to fit in with their bottom line. She seemed very surprised. She did talk to the president of the company, but nothing ever happened. I was floored that a company that had a reputation for hiring and promoting women wouldn't have an open mind about helping people with the responsibilities that go with being a mother easier to bear.
>
> My editor asked me to come back to Washington, but I was there for two days and the subject never came up. It was as if it were something too painful to think about, and the company would rather not discuss it at all.

When she did quit, LaVally said, her immediate supervisor in the Bay Area urged her to reconsider and

suggested an amenable schedule could be worked out -- perhaps a few hours off on Friday afternoons. "I had already quit and made up my mind to work halftime for half the salary," LaVally said. Her position remained unfilled for four months.

"Do you know how many Fridays that is?"

Like many other women in the news business who have encountered entrenched resistance to the needs of working parents, LaVally doesn't conceal her bitterness:

> Why go to college and prepare yourself for a career and not pursue it full-tilt? You have to be as successful as you can be, but it shouldn't have to be so <u>hard.</u>
>
> It would have been very difficult for me to drop out and do something else if I hadn't proven to myself that I could do it.

Although she favors more flexibility in scheduling to benefit reporters who are also parents, LaVally says parttime arrangements can be difficult in the deadline-pressed world of reporting. When she approved the job-sharing arrangement at UPI for Ann Bancroft and Jan Haag, she said, "the up side was that each one had her own area of expertise, her own sources, and in that respect we really got our money's worth, because we instantly had double those resources."

The "down side" was the difficulty presented when half of the partnership must adequately brief the other half during coverage of a breaking or evolving story. "If one

covered a committee hearing, and the other one came in at the end of the week, it was impossible for her to pick up where her partner left off."

LaVally believes strongly that women reporters -- and the few female editors and/or bureau chiefs in the Capitol -- bring a much-needed perspective to Capitol reporting. She remembers an incident in 1982, when she was covering George Deukmejian's first run for governor and he was asked at a large gathering in San Francisco to state his position on abortion. She said Deukmejian, who was then state Attorney General, had a less than precise legal understanding of abortion law in California and the U.S. "I explained Roe v. Wade (the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding a woman's right to choose) to the attorney general of California," LaVally recalls.

"He got very huffy and went off to the car. I was the only reporter and the only woman who (raised) that question." She recalls that a veteran (male) political reporter turned to her and said, "Becky, can women get an abortion in California? The question just didn't occur to them. The whole situation was just ludicrous."

In 1989, LaVally said, when money for family planning was eliminated by Deukmejian from the state budget, "women reporters like myself were writing columns about it, but it was not an issue in news conferences. It just never came up

as an important issue, although it was incredibly important to the women and girls affected by that veto."

Although LaVally believes so-called "women's issues" still receive inadequate coverage by the Capitol press corps, she said the sexual harassment which she chronicled in her 1985 California Journal article has "tapered off."

> When I first came to the Capitol in 1977, I think there had been only about 12 women ever assigned to the Capitol. Carl Ingram (then UPI's assistant bureau chief) told me it was so incredibly rare that a woman covered the Capitol that I would receive a lot of attention and get stories nobody would get.
>
> Some legislators were sexist, some were egalitarian, some were flirtatious. Jim Mills (Senate President Pro Tempore) called me the poor man's Brenda Starr. On the other hand, today Roberti (current Pro Tem David Roberti) would never do that. I think today there are more Roberti's than Jim Mills' A lot more women lobbyists and legislators have showed up and changed the chemistry. And I've gotten older. The interaction is different. I'm more respected for what I do.

Problems with male reporters in the Capitol press corps have also diminished over time, she said. As a young reporter, LaVally said, "I had trouble with other (male) reporters drowning me out." She recalls having to "yell over" a well-known male political columnist of substantial girth and vocal power, or "getting stuck behind" a tall male reporter. She said the male state officials she covered could help or hinder her efforts.

"Jerry Brown was very egalitarian, very accessible, but he often left me out there to fend for myself. Deukmejian

made it easier -- he was a gentleman. If he saw you struggling to ask a question, he'd call on you, men as well as women."

She said it took "a long time" to earn the respect of male Capitol reporters, "but I feel I eventually won it. I earned it." And, she believes the days when a notably misogynist male assemblyman could get away with saying that a female reporter "looked like she'd been visited by a gynecologist with cold fingers" -- and male reporters would laugh -- are over.

She also believes her controversial 1985 article, which was factually detailed and named names, hampered her search for a job when UPI encountered rough financial waters. "Any editor has to be careful not to hire people with chips on their shoulders," LaVally says philosophically. "You don't want highly opinionated people in your newsroom. I took a risk (writing the article), but I believed in it. I thought it would bring more women to the Capitol, but it didn't."

Kathleen Zimmerman McKenna [27]

One of many one-person "bureaus" at the state Capitol, 30-year-old Kathleen Zimmerman McKenna of the Oakland Tribune is also one of the few women in charge of a bureau. She majored in English and history, with a concentration in journalism, at the state University of New York in Fredonia,

where she received her B.A., and received a Master's in journalism from the prestigious Northwestern University School of Journalism.

After graduate school, she found a job at a weekly in Oakland, California, the Montclarion, where she covered local government, regularly beating the competing daily newspaper, the Tribune. Five years ago, she was hired by the Tribune, which sent her to the Capitol bureau nearly three years ago to succeed longtime Tribune Capitol bureau chief Virgil Meibert, who left for the Contra Costa Times.

McKenna is troubled by the sparsity of women reporters at the Capitol, but more troubled by the near-nonexistence of minority reporters. She notes that there is only one black reporter covering the Capitol, Herbert Sample of the Sacramento Bee, and only two Hispanic reporters, Deputy Capitol Bureau Chief Rick Rodriguez, also of the Bee, and former Bee reporter Ray Sotero, now with Gannett.

"To me, that's pretty appalling," says McKenna. "I've had this conversation with white male reporters, and they agree. I don't know who is to blame -- is it because there are no minority reporters in the pool (of potential hires), or do they go to more attractive pastures?"

She says there is "definitely some sexism" remaining among Capitol habitues:

> I don't think it's always overt, but there is an undercurrent that is always there. Is it a

> problem, or do you work around it? No, it's not usually a problem. Yes, I work around it. One senator always calls me honey. Another tells me how great I look. Mostly, they're the jerks. I don't know what they're trying to prove.

She said that "generally the (male) press corps is good," and not demeaning to women reporters. "They're younger, their wives work. There are men in the press corps who have four-day weeks, who have child care responsibilities."

The mother of a one-year-old son, she works many long days as a one-person bureau.

> Some days are real long, others are shorter, pretty much depending on when the legislature is in session. . .My son turned one year old on the last day of the session. I worked from nine a.m. to three in the morning. That was hard. There are other times. During the (gubernatorial) primary coverage, I flew to L.A. twice to interview Wilson and Feinstein. The first time I was still nursing, and I had to stay overnight, then come back and follow Feinstein around. It was very hard.

She recently began working at home two days a week, spending the remaining three in the bureau. At home, she writes on a computer, sending her stories by modem to Oakland. "Because I'm only in the office three days a week, and since I had the baby, I have no time to dawdle," she says. "A bunch of guys in another office went to a baseball game in the middle of the day. I can't do that. It's not an option."

Deborah Pacyna [28]

Raised in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, Deborah Pacyna, 36, was editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper and "decided rather early what I wanted to do." A 1976 graduate of Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where she majored in broadcast communications with an emphasis in political science, she did newscasts and radio broadcasts at the university, which had both television and radio stations on campus. "I had my own radio show," she recalls, "and I used to get up at the crack of dawn and do two hours of radio news before I went to class."

Her first job out of college was at the Ohio state Capitol in Columbus, where she worked as a cameraperson -- one of the first women ever to hold such a position -- for a freelance newsman who covered the Capitol for about a dozen television and radio stations around the state.

> My job was to shoot film, and to put a couple of radio stories together for the radio feed every day. I did that for a year. They nicknamed me Billy's Burro. It was kind of a switchover time (between film and video), and I was carrying video and (film) cameras. I worked my butt off. All the stations wanted their own angle -- if it was a budget story, all of the stations wanted their own angle, their representative (interviewed). It was hard.

She held that job for a year, then worked for WTVN-Radio in Columbus for three years, then moved on to become bureau chief for WHIO-TV in Dayton, Ohio, for two years. "I was basically my own boss, covering stories of interest to

Dayton in the Capitol and shipping them back every day." During that time, she covered the 1980 Republican Party convention in Detroit for WHIO, which also owned a radio station in Dayton. Her transition from radio to television was made with some reluctance:

> I really didn't want to go into TV, and I remember when the news director called me and asked me if I wanted to. I was really afraid of it. But they offered to double my salary. . .and I decided, wellll, o.k. It was an offer I couldn't refuse.
>
> I felt radio was a more realistic medium, and the people were more down-to-earth. I had this impression that everyone in TV was shallow. But I got to thinking, maybe it doesn't have to be that way, especially when you're covering politics. And, there are good and bad things about every profession.

She came to Sacramento in 1984, as Capitol reporter for the local CBS affiliate, KXTV-TV. She felt some trepidation, "coming from a different state, up against the L.A. Times and the Bee. And they (station management) wanted me to do it all." She bought back issues of the Times and California Journal and "just started reading to get myself up to speed, for several months. Fortunately, the news director at that time allowed me that opportunity."

Ironically, she says, "one of the reasons I was hired was because I think they wanted a woman, because in this market, everyone who had covered the Capitol for TV had been a guy," including for many years the same two "guys" for the other network affiliates, KOVR and KCRA.

Her job is, she says, "as exclusive as you can get in

television," although occasionally she is "pulled off" the Capitol beat to help with major news stories, or if there is a lull in legislative activity. "We don't go around with the candidates anymore, so political coverage is to get KCBS to get us a feed from L.A. So it's not as time-consuming as a print reporter." San Francisco and Los Angeles stations once maintained Capitol bureaus, but now rely on feeds from their Sacramento affiliates -- if they cover the Capitol at all. Pacyna has a mail drop and a desk at UPI's Capitol bureau, but no regular office there.

> Doing political reporting in TV is not the cat's meow, it's not the thing to do. TV directors want to see you covering fires and crimes. You're not going to get that at the Capitol. People literally groan when I go on vacation, because they know they're going to have to cover the Capitol. It's an issues beat, and you have to wade through all the crap that comes through. You have to be aware of what is happening behind the scenes. It's a very difficult, demanding job. You basically have to take the story out of the Capitol to make it palatable back to the people at home.

Despite the glamor associated with television reporting, Pacyna says the reality is often far from glamorous. "Working on a TV station is physically exhausting. You're on your feet all the time. You go to Burger King for lunch and you go. I definitely don't see myself doing this when I'm 45, but I just don't know."

Although women on the air in television news are a relatively new phenomenon, many women who broke the sex

barrier in TV news are aging, and a youthful appearance -- for years a requirement for women, though not for the Walter Cronkites and Mike Wallaces of TV news -- may now be obsolete. Pacyna sees a trend toward the acceptability of older women on television news. "The Leslie Stahl's, the Connie Chung's, they're getting older. The population is getting older. You want somebody who looks mature to cover politics. It is becoming more acceptable to see an older woman on the air, whereas before it was unthinkable."

And, she says women are "just now getting into management" in television news. "Some of them think they have to be as tough, as hardass as the guys," says Pacyna, echoing a sentiment expressed, if cautiously, by other women reporters. "They don't want to appear to be sensitive to women."

Pacyna says she has experienced sexual harassment on the job only once, when she was fired from a radio job in 1976 when she refused the advances of her boss. At the California Capitol, she says, "it's a good old boys' network, but what isn't? I look at it as just another clique." And she recalls the "countless times when (a male legislator) would pull (a male reporter) aside and tell him a dirty joke. That would never happen to me."

She says lawmakers are more likely to "come up and tell you things about their family." With more female

legislators in the Capitol, she says, "I see it as an equal playing field, more so than it was."

Still, she says, the atmosphere is "definitely male. I go into these press conferences, and there is a sea of male faces. Still. There is something about politics. It's like sports. There's kind of a club thing." In some ways, she says being a woman is an advantage in covering politics, because "you stick out."

In the KXTV newsroom, the atmosphere is more balanced. The news director is a woman, and a female perspective is regularly represented in daily story conferences.

> Women do bring a special perspective. We have a morning meeting, where all the reporters and producers get together, and we brainstorm on the stories of the day. It's an exchange of ideas, but I think it's the women who come up with the ideas that say, hey, wait a minute, people are raising families, whereas before it was just go get the story.
>
> Women will ask questions about aging, how the population is aging, having to care for sick parents. I'm seeing more of those kinds of issues raised, largely by women reporters. Those are the things that affect women more. It's not that the guys don't think about it, but they're conditioned differently. They're conditioned to go after certain kinds of stories. It's kind of an evolution, it hasn't been an overnight thing.

Pacyna cites, for example, the fact that the female news director was "intensely interested" in a story about a woman in Stockton who was killed by her husband, even though she had a restraining order against him and had called 911. "I don't think other male news directors would have been as

aggressive on a story like that."

Pacyna was interviewed for this study while on maternity leave after the birth of her second child. The baby was three weeks early and had some respiratory problems at birth, and Pacyna missed the election. "Someone reminded me it might be less painful to have a baby than to cover the gubernatorial campaign." She received six weeks' paid maternity leave, added two weeks to that, and is now back at work, fulltime.

She and her husband, a Sacramento Police detective who left his law enforcement position in Ohio so his wife could take the Sacramento TV job, juggle their work schedules to spend time with their two children:

> He works a four-day week, and he works the swing shift, so he's off at 2:30. For a while, we had no days off together. It was ridiculous in terms of our relationship, but it was great for child care. I think that's why I've been able to do this.

Although Pacyna's husband clearly shares the parental load, she says working women generally carry a heavier load than their male counterparts. "Women still carry the load. They still come home and clean the toilet bowl and do the cooking and most of the laundry, if not all of it, and the grocery shopping. I look at these other women, and I wonder how they do it."

She realizes that having children limits her options as

a television reporter.

> I know I'll never be a network reporter. Every reporter aspires to be a network reporter, but I think what will I have to hold and look at it and feel good about? I realized long ago that I wanted to go somewhere with my career, but I had to put the reins on it if I wanted to have children.
>
> But I envied (KCRA-TV's) Margaret Pelley. She went to the network, and she's going to be a foreign correpondent. She doesn't have any children.

Ginger Rutland [29]

Ginger Rutland, 41, a longtime Sacramento television reporter who now writes editorials for the Sacramento Bee, says she "always wanted to be a journalist." Her father, William Rutland, was a member of the Board of Education of the Sacramento City Unified School District in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and, she recalls, was always a "real newspaper reader -- we had both the Bee and the Union and Life and Look and Newsweek and Time," and the family regularly discussed current events. Her mother is a writer -- "she writes cheap romance novels, and she's written lots of magazine articles."

Her father was a civilian Air Force employee, and Rutland completed her last year of high school in Weisbaden, West Germany. She and her two sisters (one is her twin) and brother were raised in Sacramento, and she attended McClatchy High School, where she worked on the school

newspaper. After graduation from high school in Germany, she spent a year in France before going to Howard University, where she received a B.A. in history and French.

She remembers always reading avidly, and in high school she became deeply interested in the civil rights movement, school integration and "the whole debate over busing which took place in Sacramento." Like many politically astute young people of the era, she was strongly affected by the social and political upheavals of the 1960s. "I couldn't think of a better way to (have an) influence than by writing," she said.

She did not work on her college paper, although she does recall writing one letter to the editor: "I didn't have a lot of spare time in college. It was a very politicized time. The black power movement was very strong, and politically I was not a black separatist, so I was more conservative than the newspaper staff." She wrote a letter after a speech by black activist Eldridge Cleaver: "I've forgotten the specifics of my complaint, but his schtick was to insult his audience, and I remember being really bothered by his rap." She recalls that the letter was published.

After graduation from college, she returned to Sacramento, interviewed with the Bee and the Union, and was offered a summer internship at Newsweek. "As a lark, I went to a TV station, channel 3." And she asked a Bee reporter

friend for advice:

> I didn't have any clips or anything that would indicate I could put a noun and a verb together, and he suggested I write an autobiography, which could indicate my ability to write, my ability to think and give some background.
>
> I made a big deal of the fact that I had gone to a black university where I was exposed to the black power movement. I had also worked in college -- as a checker in a grocery store, in a government printing office. I talked about experiences in Europe, where they have different attitudes about hygiene -- they don't put saran wrap around everything. I can remember discussing all of those things.
>
> I remember writing something clever and funny. It got some people interested in me, and it got me a job in television.

She was "flattered and intrigued by the prospect of television." She started working for KCRA-TV in 1972, beginning in the administrative office and helping the noon news producer. She volunteered to work on Saturdays "to get some reporting experience."

Rutland was working the Saturday when a plane crashed into a popular ice cream parlor crowded with children celebrating birthdays. She covered that sad and grisly story, and rapidly learned the technical intricacies of television news. "I remember on that day the audio cartridge was not cued up, so the pictures didn't match the sound. I can remember that."

She did some coverage of politics and government, and covered several complicated statewide and national stories, including the controversial Bakke decision (which held that

a white student at the University of California in Davis was the victim of so-called "reverse discrimination"). She covered various local and state political campaigns, and she recalls her first experience covering a California governor. "I remember interviewing Ronald Reagan in my first year with KCRA and his last year as governor. I was so nervous that I blurted out my question before my cameraman was ready. Reagan was very smooth, and he waited until my cameraman could catch up."

In 1978, she left KCRA to become the Capitol Bureau correspondent for San Francisco's KRON-TV. Her producer was Don Fields, a former legislative staffer who became Rutland's husband. Together, they covered virtually every aspect of state government and politics, including daily stories as well as long-term investigative series. They became known as a formidable team, unearthing stories other journalists -- print as well as broadcast -- often missed, or dismissed as unimportant or too difficult. The station management was supportive of investigative television journalism and encouraged her to tackle the difficult stories that television journalists often have neither the time, nor the management support, to do.

> KRON became interested in the Capitol because of Proposition 13 (the controversial 1978 property-tax-cutting initative). They had taken an editorial position against it and were interested in this issue. They were convinced there was waste in state government, and they opened a

> Washington bureau at the same time.
>
> They wanted me to get a producer, to produce stories for me, so I wouldn't be doing the usual numb-numb stories, so I'd have somebody to do research, somebody with inside knowledge of the Capitol. The first assignment was to do a five-part series on government waste. I was determined not to do a story about the welfare mother wasting 50 cents. The series we did was about the remodeling of the Capitol, which cost a zillion dollars a square foot, and about Medi-Cal billing, and the selling of land at Cal Expo. I was trying to avoid the usual kind of nitpicky government-waste stories, and the only way I could do that was with Don's encyclopedic memory.

The pair researched consumer fraud issues, and did stories on medical issues, midwifery, and the dental profession. They did a landmark series on pesticide poisoning of California farmworkers, including dramatic film footage of a baby born without limbs to a farmworker mother who had been exposed to pesticides in the fields where she worked when she was pregnant. They received awards, including one for a series on the controversial Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.

"Anything east of the coastal range was ours," she recalls, "and we became something of an expert."

Disturbed by the power of medical special-interest groups (and their lobbying clout in the Legislature), Rutland and Fields did many stories about abuse of power in the health care industry. They did stories about industry efforts to limit female-dominated medical professions -- nurse-practitioners, midwives, dental hygienists -- regarded as a threat to the economic power of male-dominated

associations of doctors and dentists. Says Rutland:

"When you had a special interest that was very powerful, that was costing millions of dollars in health care and preventing another group, often mostly women, from earning a living. . .that bothered me."

KRON was the last out-of-town station to maintain a bureau in the Capitol -- a fact bemoaned by journalists who believe the dearth of major statewide television coverage of state government leaves most viewers sadly uninformed on the workings of their representatives in Sacramento. In 1988, KRON closed its bureau. Rutland and Fields, not wanting to uproot their daughter and leave their Sacramento home, looked for jobs. Rutland turned to print journalism and became an editorial writer for the Bee, and Fields started his own media consulting and production business.

When she started covering the Capitol for KRON in 1978, Rutland was the only minority reporter in the Capitol press corps, and the numbers have hardly improved since then. She said the dearth of minorities covering the Capitol is often in stark contrast to the agencies or legislative staff they cover.

> When Deukmejian was first elected, the press corps was asking a lot of questions about his Cabinet. There were a lot of Armenians, and it was all white male. It was a big difference from Jerry Brown, because they were all conservative white males.
>
> He (Deukmejian) looked around the governor's press conference room and said all you people

> asking me questions are pretty male and pretty white. There were titters around the room. All of these people who were asking sanctimonious questions about lack of color and lack of diversity in his administration were left with this reality that there was a lack of diversity in their own ranks.

Rutland said legislative staff is more ethnically and racially balanced in part because of leadership in the Capitol: "A lot of the major leaders in the Capitol are minorities. Willie Brown is speaker of the Assembly." And, another reason for the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the press corps, she adds, is "just Sacramento."

> Sacramento doesn't have a large minority population. People of color don't want to move to Sacramento -- they want to stay in the Bay Area or L.A.
>
> I'm here because my family is here, and I'm comfortable here, but I don't think you have a large pool of minority reporters in Sacramento. A lot of single women don't like it either, because (they feel) the social life is limited.

She does not believe those minorities and women who have "made it" into the Capitol press corps are barred from the choice assignments. She does believe many reporters covering the Capitol are simply not doing aggressive, substantive coverage.

> Plum assignments are a function of reporters getting their own stories -- people who get motivated and go out and find stories, which is sort of self-assigning. The ritual assignment that people might consider a plum -- like covering a governor's press conference -- really isn't a plum.
>
> I don't think there is a lot of good coverage of the Capitol by anybody. There is a lack of real work. The agencies are largely ignored by the Capitol press corps, which thinks it has to

> wait and watch those people (legislators) go through their file on the floor when really little or nothing of substance is going on.
>
> They do their ritual coverage -- a lot of inside baseball stuff. Who's on top. Not a lot of interest in policy issues -- nobody looking at the Department of Education or other departments of state government in a systematic and consistent way. They only thing they look at is party fights. And I think that in some ways has a lot to do with how badly politicians are regarded and this whole backlash against the Legislature. Reporters bear some responsibility for this.

Susan Sward [30]

Susan Sward, a longtime Capitol Bureau reporter for Associated Press who has been a staff writer for the San Francisco Chronicle in San Francisco for more than a decade, was one of the first women to cover the state Capitol for a major news organization in the early 1970s.

The 43-year-old Sward has been interested in writing since she was a child, starting by writing short stories, plays and poems. She became involved in journalism by writing for her college papers. She received a B.A. in psychology from Stanford University and a Master's degree in journalism from the University of California in Los Angeles. She was an intern for the Los Angeles Times in 1970-71, when she was completing her Master's degree, and in 1971 was sent by AP to its Capitol bureau, where she remained for nine years, including one year as news editor.

Sward is married to J. Anthony Kline, who was Governor Jerry Brown's legal affairs secretary and is now a state

appellate court justice in San Francisco.

> When AP sent me to the Sacramento bureau, I understood from other long-timers that I was the third woman to ever cover Sacramento fulltime for a print publication since Mary Ellen Leary worked for the San Francisco News in the 40s. Tracy wood covered for UPI in the late 60s. Edith Lederer, still with AP in London, had covered the Capitol for AP during the part-time sessions for a while before the Legislature became a year-round institution.

Sward had never covered politics before, but she recalls that Tom Pendergast, the AP bureau chief in Los Angeles, where she worked briefly before coming to Sacramento, "emphasized that this was a real career opportunity for me." She said Pendergast also emphasized "the woman angle."

In retrospect, Sward believes being a woman helped her career. "At AP, working first for Bill Stall and then Doug Willis, I think they admired my energy and push and sex was not a factor as their employee. I was neuter in that regard in their eyes." In the highly competitive atmosphere of the Capitol, she said, "being a woman made me stand out and in some ways helped me get competitive stories."

> Let me paint 1971 Sacramento for you:
> I was the only woman in the print press corps. Karen Stanley was there for KCBS (Radio), and a woman was there for another radio station that I think she or her husband maybe owned, and that was it. There were maybe 60 in the press corps at that time. I am sure there was no female TV reporter covering the Capitol then.
> There were three women in the Legislature: Pauline Davis, March Fong and Yvonne Brathwaite, no woman in the Senate. There were very few

> female staff aides on committees or in legislators' offices. The basic female presence was secretaries.

Sward's sartorial trademark in those paradoxical days of miniskirts and women's liberation was a wardrobe of hats, which she wore on the floor of the Legislature.

> I wore miniskirts and big floppy hats at the time, and Pauline Davis reportedly complained that I kept on my hats during the pledge to the flag. The sergeants passed the complaint on to me, and Stall (Bill Stall, AP bureau chief) went and smoothed it over for me. As I recall, I was allowed to continue to wear my hats through the pledge.

Her first Capitol beat assignment was the state Assembly. She recalls her first day on the Assembly floor:

> My first day on the floor, (Assemblyman) Bill Bagley came and kissed my hand and arm, on bended knee in front of my AP seat on the edge of the floor. Willie Brown came over and asked if I would co-author his consenting adults bill. I was not bothered by any of this and found it funny. I guess that is much of how I survived the intense maleness of the place back then. I did have a sense of humor, and I tried to cover stories in a tough, competitive way without trying to be an honorary member of the Boys' Club -- a trap I think many women in the journalism generation before me fall into frequently, and understandably so. (They try to show that) "I am as tough as any of you, and then some."

While not feeling particularly harassed by the "intense maleness" of the Capitol Boys' Club, neither did Sward feel particularly accepted. She does not believe some of the "old-time legislators" regarded her as a "serious player," or tipped her to stories.

> I don't remember anything specific, but I just have that sense of those days. It was the

> Fraternity House atmosphere, as you phrased it in your question, that really bothered me the most, especially in the early years when there were no other print women to befriend.
>
> I recall walking into the bureau, and there would be several guys from other newspapers talking football or baseball or something, and I would feel totally excluded. Within a year or so, I recall, I was more confident, had more friends and was less lonely and got into the back-and-forth chatter more with colleagues and legislators, but initially I felt very, very alone.
>
> That was partly a function of being 23 and unsure of myself generally when I arrived in Sacramento. But it was also a function of the intense maleness of the place. I think in those years of the early 70s I didn't like the maleness, but that was the way it was.

Today, when she watches a television panel discussion or interview show, "with many men and only one woman," she gets mad. Recently, she even wrote a letter to the moderator of one such show, "but I never got an answer."

Although improvements were soon to come in the image and mere <u>presence</u> of women in the Legislature and state government generally, the early 1970s atmosphere in the Capitol was characterized by a sense that women were ornamental, not to be taken seriously.

> While I didn't mind Brown's consenting adults joke, for example, I did get sick of the day-in-day-out male bonding aspect of the place -- the locker room flavor of jokes and friendships and the way it flavored how the politics got done too. The women around seemed like ornaments, not real players. Bit by bit, that changed, as more women came into the Legislature, the press corps and on staff as experts.

It was during the 1970s when women reporters organized a group called Sacramento Women in Media (with the quite

accidental acronym of SWIM), a successor to the Women's Caucus of the Sacramento Newspaper Guild. Sward recalls that SWIM held parties to raise money for scholarships for young women wanting to pursue journalism careers -- and sold tickets to the fundraisers to the people they covered. "The ethics of selling tickets to the guys you cover might have been a problem, of course, but we did it anyway." In any case, the fundraisers, held in a restaurant across the street from the Capitol, were always well-attended by journalists and politicians alike.

She believes women bring a definite perspective to political coverage -- or, for that matter, any coverage of political/social trends and issues.

> Women are interested in different types of stories than their male counterparts and see angles like child care much more readily than men. When I was assigned to the city hall beat for the Chronicle in the mid-1980s, there was a handout lying on my desk that no one had touched about a measure being pushed in the city to charge new construction projects a fee for child care funding. I wrote a front page story that was picked up nationwide; no other city had ever tried such an approach.
>
> That story had been waiting for an eye to see it.

Now the mother of two young children, Sward is not sure she could have handled the demands of Capitol coverage, certainly not campaign coverage, as a mother.

> I became a mother only four years ago and now understand its burdens as I didn't then. I don't feel I could have handled the Sacramento job as a mother, or at least it would have been very, very hard. I admire (other women) for doing it so well.

> The hours -- especially when the Legislature had deadlines and campaigns are in high gear -- are killing to family life and children's need for their mother. . .
>
> I think it is very hard for a woman with a family to cover campaigns. I think covering the Legislature itself, if a beat can be constructed to limit a woman's time on the campaign trail, is possible -- hard but possible. I also come from the bias that most real news happens away from the campaign trail, so it's not the desirable beat that a lot of reporters seem to think it is.
>
> I don't know whether other women left the job because of family demands. I just know from watching Nancy Skelton, for example, that the demands of trying to be a mother and campaign trail reporter place superhuman pressures on women.

Like many veteran women reporters, Sward views women's dual role as a serious barrier to professional advancement in high-pressure jobs -- like political reporting -- which are characterized by long, irregular hours and extensive travel.

> My job now can be worked around family life much more readily. I see women's role in the home as a real roadblock to dramatically increasing the number of women in the Sacramento press corps. Partly, I feel men in an ideal society would carry more of the burden of staying home for an ill child, etc., but I also feel -- dedicated feminist that I am -- that small children need their mother the most.