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Party identification: The covert influence on media's construction and portrayal of women's political identities

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Party identification: The covert influence on media's construction and portrayal of women's political identities

by

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A thesis, submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Political Science

Program of Study Committee:
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Valerie Hennings, Co-Major Professor
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ABSTRACT

Much scholarly attention has been paid to the differences and similarities that exist in media coverage of men and women. However, whether differences exist in media coverage among different groups of women remains largely ambiguous. This study aims to contribute to this understanding by analyzing women officeholders' media coverage along partisan lines. A content analysis of newspaper stories from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *USA Today* is used to examine and test for the possible statistical significance of the relationship among gender, partisanship, and media coverage in the first session of the 112th Congress. The newspaper stories are analyzed in terms of the kinds of issues that are discussed in relation to each officeholder and whether these issues were "masculine" or "feminine" in nature. Additionally, the articles were analyzed in terms of the use of gendered image stereotypes, the theme of the story, and the overall tone used. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that differences do exist in types of issues that are discussed and the themes and tones used in the media coverage that Republican and Democratic women officeholders receive. In terms of the feminine issues analyzed, the Republican women are more often discussed in relation to the specific issues of *Healthcare Reform*, *Prescriptions/Medicine*, and *Immigration*, whereas the Democratic women are more often connected to the issues of *Medicaid/Medicare* and *Crime/Gun Rights*. Additionally, the Democratic women officeholders are more often discussed in relation to masculine issues in general, as well as the broad issue category of *Taxes/Economy* and the specific issue of *Federal Budget/National Debt* and are significantly more often covered using

the *Women's Theme*. In the coverage of the Republican women officeholders, on the other hand, more substantive criticisms and mentions of the officeholders' children appear. Implications of these differences and avenues for further research are discussed.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The partisan gender gap, characterized by gender differences in vote choice and party identification (Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef, & Linn, 2004) has been a consistent and pervasive element of the American political setting. Results from the 2012 election underscored this notion, pushing this partisan gender gap, as it relates to the composition of Congress, even further. Although the election saw the number of women serving in congressional office reach the historic marker of 98, the disparity between the number of these women who were Democrats and those who were Republicans also widened. Of the 90 women serving in the 112th session of Congress in 2011 and 2012, there were 61 Democrats and 29 Republicans. As a result of the 2012 election, however, the discrepancy for the 113th session of Congress moved to 75 Democrats compared to only 23 Republicans (Center for American Women in Politics, 2013). While it's important to recognize and applaud this overall increase of women in Congress, the marked difference in the success Democratic women had in obtaining these seats compared to Republican women should not go unnoticed.

The partisan gender gap, as defined in this study, is characterized by the discrepancy in the number of women belonging to the Democratic Party rather than the Republican Party, specifically as it relates to women officeholders. Juxtaposing the continuation and acceleration of the partisan gender gap among officeholders in Congress with the overall advancements in women's electoral achievements provides an opportunity to bring gender and politics research a step further. In recent years, as the number of

women involved in politics has slowly begun to increase, gender and politics research has progressively become a more significant and prevalent area of scholarly interest.

Subsequently, the unique challenges and differences that women in the political arena face concurrently have become better studied and more fully understood. With the emergence of gender and politics research, scholars have worked to illuminate the nonuniformity between men's and women's political ambition, policy preferences, and perceptions voters have of them.

The media's portrayal of these women in politics, similarly, has become an important area of inquiry because of the media's expanding political influence. Scholarly work has shed light on the media's agenda setting role, as consumers of media learn about issues and attach importance to them from news media (McCombs & Shaw, 2007). It is now broadly understood that citizens focus on and form political evaluations and opinions based on what the news media have conveyed are the most important issues (Davis & Owen, 1998; Zaller, 1992). Gender and politics research focused on the media have found additional differences between men and women officeholders and candidates in terms of the type of coverage they each receive. Therefore, the media's role in exposing these differences and challenges and perpetuating them has been a significant part of understanding the gains and setbacks for women in politics.

Although there have been significant advances in understanding women's distinct paths and behavior in politics, to understand these gender differences many times women have been studied as a single, homogenous group. Gender and politics research is generally characterized by women being studied in relation to or compared to men, to further understand women's behavior in politics in general. Because of this, variation between

subgroups of women who differ based on race, sexual identity, age, ideology, or many other traits, is often understudied. Some, albeit limited, research has looked at how the intersection of gender with various other social dimensions shapes women's political experiences (Crenshaw, 1989; Dhamoon, 2011; Jaramillo, 2010; Jordan-Zachery, 2007; Junn & Brown, 2008; Simien, 2007). However, a clear picture as to how this intersection and how fundamental differences between different groups of women translate into differing political outcomes and media portrayals remains missing. Thus, these variations are only beginning to be understood, despite the implications they carry for electoral and governing processes. In other words, cleavages between these subgroups, such as the partisan gender gap, are widely accepted without being deeply questioned or analyzed, leaving their effects on the political system unknown, both on the individual and aggregate levels.

As evidenced by the expansion of the partisan gender gap in the 2012 election, the differences between Democratic and Republican women is an increasingly important and relevant area of inquiry that needs to be more fully explored. It is clear that partisan differences exist between these two subgroups of women. However, something that remains unclear is the differences that exist in the media's portrayal and construction of them. Previous research has documented the differences in media coverage between men and women in politics (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom, 2010; Bystrom, Robertson, & Banwart, 2001; Carroll & Schreiber, 1997; Dolan, 2010; Falk, 2008; Kahn, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). Additionally, other research has begun to shed light on the differences between Republican and Democratic women in terms of their party's history (Baer, 2011; Baumgardner & Richards, 2000; Box-Steffensmeier, Chaney,

Alvarez, & Nagler, 1998; Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef, & Lin, 2004; Kaufman & Petrocik, 1999; Klein, 1984a; Smeal, 1984; Mueller, 1988), personal policy stances (Shogan, 2001; Swers, 2002), and gender identification (Conover, 1988; Gurin, 1985; Schreiber, 2002). This thesis aims to expand upon existing research by fusing these areas of inquiry to examine differences, and reasons for those differences, in media portrayals between Republican and Democratic women officeholders. The objective is to uncover partisan differences in media coverage of women officeholders to determine if partisanship interacts with gender in a way that leads the media to characterize and portray women officeholders from each party differently.

To assess the relationship between political party identification and media coverage, this study uses a content analysis of articles of female officeholders in both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate from three major national newspapers. The newspaper articles are analyzed along four dimensions. First, the nature and number of the types of issues linked with Republican women officeholders, in contrast to Democratic women officeholders, is examined. Second, differences are assessed between coverage of Republican women and Democratic women in the use of themes that suggest or indicate implications for all women or for feminism. Additionally, the type and number of gendered image stereotypes invoked into stories about Republican women officeholders compared to Democratic women officeholders are assessed. Finally, the differences in the overall tone of the coverage are evaluated. Accordingly, the following research questions are posed:

R1: Are there differences in the types of issues and policies that the media link with Republican women officeholders opposed to Democratic women officeholders? Is one group more likely to be linked with “women’s issues”?

R2: Are the articles that cover Republican women themed differently than those that cover Democratic women? Is a feminist or women’s theme used in either?

R3: When comparing articles covering the officeholders of each party, is there a difference in the use of gendered image stereotypes invoked in the articles, such as mentions of the officeholder’s personal background, personal characteristics, and family?

R4: Does the tone of print media coverage differ based upon a female officeholder’s political party? Do Republican women tend to receive more positive or negative coverage, when compared to Democratic women?

Because each party is distinctly and differently characterized by its own historical evolution, policy stances, and priorities, it should be expected that this distinction will be reflected in media coverage of Republican and Democratic women. The relatively recent alignment of women and women’s issues with the Democratic Party will likely shape the coverage women of this party receive in a different way than the Republican Party’s championing traditional family values will shape Republican women’s coverage. The question is, however, how these distinctions will translate into differences along these four specific aspects of media coverage.

The importance of the answer to these questions and of this research in general is multifold. First, it is essential to understand media coverage of women officeholders because of the pronounced power of the media to influence the political environment by shaping what issues become salient and how citizens think about these issues. This power carries with it immense implications, especially in understanding how women's political experiences differ in each of the two major political parties. Differences in the types of policies the media link with women of each party, or how the media characterizes this discussion, may in turn shape the manner in which citizens view these officeholders, especially in terms of their competency regarding certain issues or in general. Additionally, differences in the way the media portray and discuss these women officeholders, especially in terms of using gendered image stereotypes, may work to unequally benefit or disadvantage women from each party. On one hand, negative stereotypes may further restrain or confine women by discrediting or disregarding their accomplishments. The use of positive stereotypes in the media, alternatively, may augment or profit women's candidacies or work in office. It is important to know if the media are disproportionately invoking negative or positive gendered image stereotypes into the coverage of officeholders of one party over the other because of the profound implications this realization could carry for understanding the nature of contemporary politics in the United States.

This research is important not only because of the implications that media coverage exerts on politics, but also because the media often reflect, to some degree, political trends and occurrences. Therefore, understanding differences in media coverage between Republican and Democratic women officeholders will also allow for a further

understanding of fundamental differences between Republican and Democratic women as political actors. Knowing the intrinsic differences between Republican and Democratic women, and how the media portray or exaggerate these differences, will in turn lead to a greater awareness of the critical elements that contribute to the partisan gender gap.

The first session of the 112th Congress, from its convening on January 5, 2011 to its adjournment on January 3, 2012, presents an interesting and effective context to achieve these purposes. The prevalence of congressional bills and debates that were stratified along party lines, such as the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the debt ceiling crisis, provides a beneficial political setting in which to study how partisan differences intersect with gender and how this is then portrayed by the media.

Additionally, the salience of “women’s issues,” such as reproductive rights and the high number of women running for office in 2012, in addition to the widening of the partisan gender gap as a result of this election, warrants attention to this time frame in particular. The occurrence of these events immediately following the 112th Congress suggests that examining this session, specifically, may reveal insight into some of the underlying reasons for this widening. This study may depart from previous research that explains the partisan gender gap in historical terms, by shedding light on the contemporary nature and reasons for this gap. Specifically, it considers the relationship between news media and the nature of this partisan gender gap as one of these contemporary patterns.

A theoretical framework will be provided in Chapter 2, to give insight into the relevance and implications previous gender and politics research has on this study’s research questions. This theoretical framework is used to inform and provide justification for the research hypotheses and research design that are laid out in Chapter 3. Next, in

Chapter 4, results from the content analysis are analyzed and discussed. Finally, Chapter 5 provides conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research based on these results.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE EVOLUTION OF GENDER AND PARTISANSHIP AS POLITICAL FACTORS

Introduction

Previous gender and politics research serves as a starting point to uncover and build upon knowledge about the relationship between women's political party and the media coverage they receive. The results reveal that differences in media coverage between men and women exist. Furthermore, scholarship on political and social trends and the partisan gender gap suggest that further differences in media coverage may exist between women of different political parties. This claim is strengthened by research that has begun to tease out differences in the media coverage between different types of women and women's groups. However, the question as to how Republican and Democratic women officeholders are portrayed differently in the media is still largely unanswered.

Gendered Differences in Media Coverage

Recent research has made it clear that some differences do exist in the amount and the substance of media coverage between men and women officeholders and candidates. However, the extent and nature of these differences is not widely agreed upon. Some work has shown that the amount of media coverage men receive differs from the amount women receive. For example, Kahn and Goldenberg find that women tend to receive less coverage in U.S. Senate races (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). In a study of women running for U.S. president, Erika Falk provides support for this notion as well, finding that women running

for president receive less coverage than men (Falk, 2008). However, other studies show that these disparities in media coverage among men and women politicians may be equalizing, showing similar amounts of coverage between men and women in more contemporary races (Jalalzai, 2006). Other studies have shown that in some races, women may actually receive more coverage than men (Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom, Robertson, & Banwart, 2001). This evidence suggests there may not be a distinctive pattern in the quantity of coverage between men and women and that this coverage depends more on the political and electoral context (Bystrom, 2010).

Differences scholars find in terms of the substance of media coverage that men and women receive have a similarly complex pattern. The coverage that women political leaders receive tends to focus less on their policy and issue stances, and more on personal traits and viability (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). In addition to the finding that women receive less issue coverage than men, scholars find that the issue coverage women do receive tends to be related to the more stereotypically characterized “female issues” of health and education policy (Dolan, 2010; Kahn, 1994). Gender stereotypes, therefore, are invoked in terms of the way the media discuss policy and issue stances of officeholders. Media create the perception that female politicians are narrowly concerned with “women’s issues,” usually referring to child care, healthcare, reproduction, and education (Whitaker, 2011). Subsequently, women are more often linked to issues dealing with education, healthcare, and poverty, while coverage of male politicians tends to be linked with the more “masculine issues” of the economy, foreign affairs, and national defense (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997).

This kind of coverage may be a result of popular gender stereotypes held by voters. Several studies have demonstrated that gender stereotypes do exist in the minds of voters. These stereotypes tend to ascribe greater leadership skills, competency, and adeptness with military and national security to men, while deeming women as more qualified on compassion-based issues (Alexander & Andersen, 1993; Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993; Lawless, 2004). However, more recent studies seem to suggest that the manner and extent to which voters rely on and utilize these stereotypes to make voting decisions is not consistent and depends heavily on the type of race, candidate information available, and voters' preexisting gender role beliefs (Atkeson & Krebs, 2008; Falk & Kenski, 2006). Nichole Bauer, for example, suggests that utilizing a social psychological approach, which assumes that stereotypes are only used by individuals when contextual factors activate them, may better elucidate the role of stereotypes in voters' evaluations of political actors (Bauer, 2013).

Gendered image stereotypes are also consistently and continually infused into media coverage of female politicians in a number of ways. The coverage of women more often refers to and focuses on their appearance and family and contains more mentions to emotions and their personal backgrounds (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Bystrom, 2010; Heldman & Oliver, 2009). Analyses of media coverage of particular races have found that traditional gender stereotypes relating to marital status and child care, as well as a greater emphasis on feminine traits relating to clothing and appearance, are often found in coverage of women politicians (Braden, 1996; Heith, 2003).

Some scholars have attempted to sort out whether differences in media coverage between men and women candidates result from differences in the candidates themselves

by looking at candidate-controlled media such as television ads and websites. There has been some support for this notion in terms of television advertising, with women emphasizing education, health care, and violence more often, while emphasizing both masculine and feminine traits (Bystrom, 2010). Other scholars, however, have found that the types of issues discussed are relatively similar (Bystrom, 2010; Dolan, 2005), and that the small number of differences that do exist relate more to electoral context (Sapiro et al., 2009). Other scholars have additionally shown that women may actually gain an advantage when they embrace or when voters use traditional gender stereotypes. For example, female candidates who emphasize issues that voters may ascribe as women's issues gain distinct electoral advantages (Herrnson, Lay, & Stokes, 2003). In addition, females are more often characterized as being honest, caring, and ethical, which leads them to be viewed more favorably by voters or constituents who value these characteristics (Dolan, 2004; Fridkin & Kenney, 2009).

Historical Culmination of the Partisan Gender Gap

Evidence of the disparity in media coverage between men and women invites the questions of how these differences relate to, or can be used to understand, any dissimilarity in media coverage between women of different political parties. The partisan gender gap provides support for the notion that differences between Democratic and Republican women do, in fact, exist. For example, research has shown that gender differences in voting preferences, with women favoring Democrats, historically have been a persistent and influential part of America's political setting (Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef, & Lin, 2004). The preference for Democratic candidates by women has culminated in the partisan gender gap

that is present in American politics today, specifically the partisan composition of women officeholders in Congress.

To understand the evolution of this partisan gender gap, a historical context and framework is necessary. Much scholarly literature lends support to the idea that the partisan gender gap found in today's political landscape originated because of a variety of events taking place in the 1970's and 1980's. One predominant event is the manner in which each party crafted and articulated their response to the second wave of feminism and its emphasis on women's equality, sexuality, and health (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000). Prior to this time, women had historically found favorability within the Republican Party, with this party even taking the lead in adding the Equal Rights Amendment to its party platform. However, political chasms that evolved alongside the women's rights movement reversed this trend (Baer, 2011).

In 1972, in response to the demand for gender parity at the nominating conventions, the Democratic Party reformed to allow for proportional representation, which significantly enhanced the inclusion of women by the 1980's (Baer, 2011). The resulting polarization of the parties around women-relevant issues was brought to clear and full fruition at the 1992 conventions, during which each party clearly crafted and articulated their position in response to the issues of the movement (Freeman, 1993). The Republicans framed their stance in terms of maintaining the traditional American family, while the Democrats adopted the feminist assertion that "the personal is political," incorporating feminist issues such as worker's rights and women's health issues into their platform (Freeman, 1993).

The eclipse of the women's movement during the 1980 presidential election between Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter is also identified as an event from which the contemporary partisan gender gap derived (Mueller, 1988). Some scholars attribute women's alignment with the Democratic Party to Reagan's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, (Klein, 1984a; Smeal, 1984). Other work, however, has cast doubt on the notion that specific issues or policies from the women's movement instigated the emergence of the contemporary partisan gender gap, as they have found that men and women hold similar opinions and positions on issues such as the ERA and other traditionally feminist issues (Cook & Wilcox, 1991; Klein, 1984b).

Although the women's movement may not have prompted the development of the partisan gender gap based on certain policies and issues alone, the movement may nonetheless have contributed to this development by allowing women to recognize and change their social roles and dependence. Some studies have shown that changing social structures following the movement afforded women the independence to develop their political attitudes independent from men (Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef & Lin, 2004). Concurrently, women's greater dependence on social welfare and the Republican Party's staunch support for budget-cutting that limited spending on social welfare, pushed women to align with the Democratic Party (Chaney, Alvarez, & Nagler, 1998; Kaufman & Petrocik, 1999; Piven, 1985). On top of this, Reagan's movement away from major objectives of the women's movement, with his opposition to abortion and hesitancy to accept the changing roles of women away from their traditional roles as homemakers, pushed women who supported the movement towards the Democratic Party (Mansbridge, 1985).

These conceptions of the origin of the partisan gender gap are in line with additional work finding that men and women differ in fundamental political values, and that women may be naturally disposed to favor Democratic Party principles. Pamela Conover, for example, finds that women's values differ in a way that causes them to feel more positively towards the disadvantaged, and identifying with feminism may help a woman recognize these intrinsic liberal values (Conover, 1988).

Additional historical work has shed light on various other components that may have contributed to the increasing divide between men's and women's partisan preferences. For example, men's growing political conservatism and women's greater support for government programs (Norrander, 1999), in addition to women's negative assessments of the economy, resulting in women voting against Republican candidates in the 1984, 1988, and 1992 elections have all been tied to the culmination of the partisan gender gap (Chaney, Alvarez, & Nagler, 1998; Norrander, 1999). A combination of these developments likely led to the unequal rates of men and women moving away from or toward the parties (Cook & Wilcox, 1991; Wirls, 1986), thus resulting in the partisan gender gap.

Contemporary Gendered Partisan Differences

Although the roots of the partisan gender gap may be tied to paths taken by the two political parties in response to the women's movement and other political and social trends, reasons for its existence today can be found in the current political landscape as well. This can be seen in studies of women's gender-consciousness, or the degree to which women identify with and perceive themselves as being part of the shared experiences of

women as a group. It is usually found to apply only to women who support the more politically liberal policy and issue positions on women relevant issues (Conover, 1988; Gurin, 1985). Limited research has focused on the role of gender-consciousness for conservative or Republican women. However, Ronnee Schreiber suggests that conservative women's organizations also articulate a women's perspective on policy issues, framing their opposition to certain issues, such as abortion and Title IX, in terms of women's interests (Schreiber, 2002).

In addition to the extent that women identify with each party for gender-conscious reasons, the manner in which Republican and Democratic officeholders appeal to women also varies. Kathryn Pearson and Logan Dancey find that both Republican and Democratic officeholders are significantly more likely than men to deliver floor speeches, and will more often discuss women in these speeches. However, they note that as the divide between the number of Democratic and Republican women officeholders continues to increase, these similarities may begin to fade (Pearson & Dancey, 2011a, 2011b).

Other scholarly work has yielded results that speak to differences that may be nested within the similarities Pearson and Dancey show in Democratic and Republican women officeholders' speeches. These findings again show that female House members from both parties appeal to women in their public statements. However, the language and manner in which each attempts to do so is different. Republicans discuss how tax and business laws affect women, while Democrats more often express praise towards women and discuss women in relation to welfare funding (Shogan, 2001). In terms of actual policy support, research suggests that Republican congresswomen are less likely to sponsor bills

about women's issues than are their more moderate and liberal counterparts (Swers, 2002).

It seems as though voters' awareness of these differences between Republican and Democratic politicians contributes in large part to the gender gap in voting behavior. When compared to men, women are found to feel more positively toward female candidates, but only when those female candidates are Democrats (Dolan, 2008). Additionally, women are more likely to provide electoral support to women candidates; however, Republican women voters are much more likely to cross party lines to provide this support (Brians, 2005).

The interplay of party and gender, therefore, presents a number of interesting questions as to its effects on political behavior. Some recent work has begun to dig into these questions. Findings show that, for a female Republican politician, party and gender may interact in a way that garners more crossover votes but may generate negative reactions among same-party voters who view the female Republican as less conservative (King & Matland, 2003). Other work has illuminated the different political cultures that exist between the two parties (Freeman, 1986) and the gendered differences these distinct cultures provide members of the party (Baer, 2011). According to this work, the Republican Party tends to attract more married women and women who are more religious, and a lower proportion of employed women. Additionally, Republican women candidates have fewer resources, tend to be defined in terms of traditional stereotypes, and find more support among pro-life and evangelical groups. Democratic women, conversely, find support among feminist and pro-choice groups (Baer, 2011).

Media Coverage among Different Groups of Women

The question that arises out of this information is whether the historical evolution of the Democratic Party's attractiveness to women voters and the culmination of this attraction in the current gendered partisan differences and divisions will be related to or reflected in the media's coverage of women from the two parties. Do the media portray or construct the images of Republican women differently than Democratic women, given the historic and current party-based differences?

Previous research fails to answer these questions specifically; however, it does indicate that differences do exist in media coverage among different types of women. Some evidence indicates that the type of media coverage received by conservative and feminist women's activist groups differs. The coverage of the conservative women's groups more often relates to their conservatism, whereas coverage of feminist groups pertains to their role in representing women's interests (Schreiber, 2010). This finding, in addition to the media bias that both conservatives (Goldberg, 2003) and feminists (Ashley & Olson, 1998) argue works against them, has interesting applications to this study's research questions. Will these proposed biases be evident in media coverage of Democratic or Republican officeholders? What are the media implications of being associated with feminist issues for Democratic female officeholders, or being opposed to those issues for Republican female officeholders?

The limited work that has tried to address questions similar to those posed above tends to relate to how the partisan leaning of the media source may influence its reporting. For example, a study of Democratic-leaning and Republican-leaning newspapers shows that the newspapers do tend to cover more political scandals of members of the opposing

party (Puglisi & Snyder, 2011). Additional studies have shown similarly that news coverage of Senate campaigns is often slanted in favor of the candidate the newspaper endorsed (Kahn & Kenney, 2002) and that a journalist's political leanings may affect the stories he or she deems newsworthy (Patterson & Donsbach, 1996). Moreover, a number of works have attempted to determine whether a partisan media bias exists within the media as a whole (Graber, 1980; Hofstetter, 1976; Niven, 1999).

Although these studies contribute to a greater overall understanding of partisan influences and intersections with news media, the larger question that remains unanswered is how the media, partisan biases aside, portrays and characterizes fundamental differences between the parties, especially when these differences are interrelated with gender. The literature that has been examined provides a framework and a starting point for this question to be addressed.

CHAPTER 3

PARTISANSHIP, GENDER, AND MEDIA COVERAGE: UNDERSTANDING

THE RELATIONSHIP THROUGH CONTENT ANALYSIS

Introduction

Given that little scholarly attention has been paid to the differences that exist between Republican and Democratic women officeholders, and the role the media play in shaping or portraying these differences, this inquiry will strive to explore this topic through a content analysis of media coverage of women officeholders. To achieve this aim, the overarching research hypothesis put forth by the study is meant to be rather straightforward, as it simply speculates that a female officeholder's political party will shape the media coverage she receives. The nuances and complexities will come into play as the kinds of differences in media coverage that exists between Republican and Democratic female politicians and the reasons for these differences are postulated.

Variables

Political Party

The "party" variable for this study was measured simply by taking into account whether the congresswoman has classified herself as Republican or Democrat. It is important to note and to understand why this study focuses on exploring and exposing differences in media coverage between women officeholders of America's two major political parties, rather than officeholders of differing political ideologies. The decision to analyze differences between Republican and Democratic politicians rather than

conservative and liberal politicians was made because doing so provided ease of measurement, understanding, and interpretation.

By definition, a political ideology is the collection of personal orientations, beliefs, and ideas in which politics is understood (Ginsberg et al., 2013). A political party, on the other hand, consists of individuals with shared or common views and ideas about how government should run or behave (Ginsberg et al., 2013). A political ideology, therefore, is much more variable from person to person, and thus by nature is less appropriate to be treated as a uniform entity to be used in a comparison. It is critical to this study's purpose to be able to generalize, draw conclusions, and make comparisons about entire subgroups of women to uncover distinctions and variations among these subgroups and add to the gender and politics research as a whole. Using political party as a way to divide women into these subgroups to analyze provides for a much better means to accomplish this purpose because of the definitional nature that political party platforms provide.

Additionally, because political party identification is something that is decided, and typically declared publicly by officeholders, it is more easily measured, in contrast to political ideology. Because of the advantages that using political party provides, it is commonly used by scholars as a framework to compare, study, and understand women in politics. For example, political party has been used to shed light on gender stereotypes and the partisan gender gap (Sanbonmatsu & Dolan, 2009), voters' attitudes towards female politicians (Dolan, 2008), and bill sponsorship of congresswomen (Swers, 2002), among other things. Certainly one's personal political ideology strongly influences and relates to the party in which they choose to belong. Therefore, any party-based differences in media

coverage that are found will give insight into the ideological differences and cleavages that exist and that the media portray between women officeholders of each party.

Media Coverage

The alternate variable, the media coverage that the officeholders receive, was measured in terms of the substance and tone of newspaper articles covering U.S. women in Congress. Differences in substance were analyzed in three different ways. First, this study looked to see if there were differences in the types of issues that the media linked to female Republican and Democratic members of Congress. Because this study examines differences in issue linkage based upon the issue's gendered nature, or stereotypically supposed gendered nature, issues fell into two different categories: masculine and feminine. Scholars have found that women politicians are thought to be more adept at handling issues related to education, healthcare, civil rights, and the disabled and elderly, all of which are deemed as "feminine issues" in this thesis. Men are perceived to be better in dealing with issues of foreign affairs, the military, and the economy (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997; Walsh, 2002). Accordingly, the issues mentioned in the articles were coded as falling into one of the following subcategories: *Health/Healthcare*, *Education*, *Social Issues/Equality*, *Taxes/Economy*, and *Defense/Foreign Affairs*. Of these issues, each was coded and assigned to a masculine or feminine issue category, with *Taxes/Economy* and *Defense/Foreign Affairs* falling into the former, and the remaining issues into the latter.

The substance was also assessed and measured in terms of the article's theme and use of gendered image stereotypes. The theme of the story was coded along two dimensions: whether the story used a *Women's Theme* or not and whether the story used a

Feminist Theme or not. The story was considered to have a *Women's Theme* if the officeholder or her actions were discussed in terms of how they relate to or have significance for women in general. A *Feminist Theme* was assessed using more specific criteria. For the story to be coded as using a *Feminist Theme* it should have specifically mentioned or discussed feminism, the feminist movement, or feminist organizations in relation to the discussion of the officeholder. Feminist organizations included organizations that described or labeled their organization as feminist, either in the title of the organization itself or in the organization's description of its mission or purpose.

Finally, tone was coded as positive, negative, or neutral. It was assessed in terms of whether the officeholder was criticized substantively or personally and whether she was praised substantively or personally. Substantive criticism and praise included statements that referred to policy positions and official actions of the officeholder, whereas personal criticism and praise included statements made about the officeholder's personal life or attributes or elements such as appearance, family, or personality.

Research Hypotheses

Prior research and literature provides a framework in which to craft research hypotheses to answer this study's research questions regarding differences in media coverage between Republican and Democratic female officeholders. Regarding the first research question as to whether or not there are differences in issue linkage among Republican and Democratic officeholders, the Democratic Party's tendency, in general, to emphasize or support policies that align with "women's issues" such as education, welfare, and women's health (Schreiber & Carroll, 1997; Walsh, 2002), suggests that the Democratic

officeholders will be linked more often to issues that fall along that spectrum. The Republican Party's make-up of fewer women officeholders, in combination with its opposition to the women's issues listed above, suggests the party and its issue stances may be more masculine in nature. The media coverage that the Republican Party's female officeholders receive in regards to issues should be expected to reflect that circumstance.

H1: The Democratic officeholders will be more likely to be linked to issues falling into the feminine policy category.

H2: The Republican officeholders will be more likely to be linked to issues falling into the masculine policy category.

The logic that is used to propose H1 and H2 can also be further applied to expect similar differences in media themes used between Republican and Democratic officeholders. Additionally, the historical evolution of the contemporary partisan gender gap, including the Democratic Party's embrace and the Republican Party's rejection of certain tenants of the women's movement, suggests that the use of a *Feminist Theme* or *Women's Theme* will be more likely to be used in coverage of Democratic women officeholders.

H3: The *Feminist Theme* will be used more often in articles about Democratic officeholders than in articles about Republican officeholders.

H4: The *Women's Theme* will be used more often in articles about Democratic officeholders than in articles about Republican officeholders.

The historical tendencies that are tied to the Republican Party, on the other hand, might influence the media coverage that Republican officeholders receive in a dissimilar way. As described above, in response to the feminist movement, the Republican Party articulated their stance, in relation to the relevant issues, in terms of family values (Freeman, 1993). This position, therefore, may influence the use of some gendered image stereotyping, in the form of more mentions of family, in articles about Republican officeholders. Additionally, the partisan gender gap favoring the Democratic Party and the association of Democratic policy stances with feminism and gender equality, works to paint them as in opposition to traditional gender stereotyping, while the Republican Party's championing of "traditional family values" may do the opposite.

H5: The use of gendered image stereotypes, in the form of mentioning the officeholder's personal background, personal characteristics, emotions, and family, will be more evident in the articles covering Republican officeholders.

Addressing the final research question pertaining to differences in the tone of the coverage is difficult because, as mentioned earlier, there is not a clear consensus on whether or not a media bias exists and who it advantages or disadvantages, with both feminists and conservatives arguing it works against them (Ashley & Olson, 1998; Goldberg, 2003). The perceived congruence between the Democratic Party's liberal policy

positions and feminist ideals, however, may work in favor of Democratic women officeholders. This congruence may work to characterize female officeholders of the Democratic Party as pro-women and pro-equality, without attaching feminist extremist connotations that may be characterized negatively. The tone of the coverage of the Democratic officeholders, then, might be expected to be more positive. The Republican women who oppose Democratic officeholders, on the other hand, may be characterized as in opposition to those positive attributes, and thus receive more negative coverage.

Research pertaining to media bias may support this argument as well. This research suggests that instead of characterizing the media as having a partisan bias one way or the other, a more accurate depiction would show that the media have a strong inclination to respond to consumer preferences. Consumers, likewise, have a strong preference for news that reinforces or coincides with their views and opinions (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2010). One possible explanation for the existence of the liberal bias that certain studies have shown (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005) could be that the media slant news in a way that appeals to females, who often make purchasing decisions for the family and who also tend to hold more liberal political views (Gloseclose & Milyo, 2005). As it relates to newspaper articles of female officeholders, it is likely that journalists would view females as a target audience of these stories. Therefore, the tone of the stories about Democratic officeholders may be more positive to appeal to this audience.

H6: Differences in media coverage between Democratic and Republican officeholders will emerge in the tone of the coverage, with the articles on the Democratic officeholders receiving a more positive tone.

Data and Method

Data

The data for this research study came from a content analysis of newspaper media coverage. The articles came from three of the largest and most popular newspapers, the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and the *New York Times*. The coverage was amassed through the LexisNexis database, which provides access to 45,000 documents and records from legal, news, and business sources (LexisNexis, 2012). Articles that fall in the time frame between January 5, 2011 and January 3, 2012, which is consistent with the time frame of the first session of the 112th Congress, were examined. Using LexisNexis, a search was performed for all articles that mentioned the name of each female member of Congress, across each of the three newspapers. As a function of the LexisNexis search, the researcher has the ability to specify the type of articles to include in the search. Accordingly, this study's search included newspaper blogs, editorials, and news stories in order to ensure the most representative sample of content put out by the newspapers.

Using this search method, the universe of coverage was equivalent to over 4,000 newspaper stories; accordingly, a stratified sample was taken from this universe. The sample size was calculated for each newspaper based on the population of newspaper stories of congresswomen during the given time period.¹ Once the sample size for each newspaper was determined, the number of stories for each congresswoman was then determined based on the proportion of stories that were about them in the population of

¹ Sample size was calculated using a 95% confidence interval and margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

stories for each newspaper. The stories were then randomly selected to be included into the entire sample. This method ensured a complete and representative sample of the entire population of newspaper stories about the women officeholders. The resulting sample consisted of a total of 1,741 stories. This included 737 stories from the *New York Times*, 682 stories from the *Washington Post*, and 322 stories from *USA Today*. The number of stories per congresswoman for a particular newspaper ranged from a low of 0 stories to a high of 1,000 stories. The number of stories per congresswomen for a particular newspaper in the sample, on the other hand, ranged from 0 to 320 stories (see Tables A1 and A2 in Appendix A).

Content Analysis

To analyze the relationship between women officeholders' political party identification and media coverage and examine this study's research hypotheses, a content analysis was performed on the articles using NVivo research software. This program allows users to more easily manage, code, analyze, and report qualitative or mixed-methods data (QSR International, 2012). Therefore, researchers are required to work closely with the data and code it themselves. In the case of this study, the author, who served as the only coder for this study, first uploaded the news stories into the program. These stories were then read, analyzed, and coded along the dimensions established on the code sheet.

To conduct the content analysis, a code sheet was developed to serve as a vehicle to arrive at answers to the research questions by turning the raw data into coded dichotomous variables (see Appendix A). Because this study seeks to analyze the media coverage along four dimensions)—issue linkage, theme, gendered image stereotypes, and

tone—the dichotomous variables that were included fall into these dimensions as well. For example, in terms of the issue linkage dimension, each news story was coded as mentioning the officeholder in relation to each of the issue areas included (coded as 1), or not (coded as 0). To address the theme of the story, stories were coded as using a *Women’s Theme* or not (1=yes, 0=no) and as using a *Feminist Theme* or not (1=yes, 0=no). A number of gendered image stereotypes, which are generally and widely accepted by scholars, were also included on the code sheet and coded as either being present (1) or not (0). Finally, to analyze the tone of the coverage the stories were coded on whether they contained substantive criticism, personal criticism, substantive praise, and personal praise (1=yes, 0=no).

Although the entire dataset was coded solely by the author of this study, inter-coder reliability was still determined prior to performing the analysis to ensure unbiased and reliable coding. The author and an undergraduate research assistant, who served as the second coder, coded a subsample of stories, which consisted of 10% of the entire sample, or 170 newspaper stories. Inter-coder reliability was calculated using Cohen’s *kappa*² and attained at a minimum reliability coefficient of .60 for each necessary variable (see Table A3 in Appendix B).³

Once inter-coder reliability was attained, the author coded the remaining stories in the entire sample. After coding each newspaper article, the coverage of the Republican members of Congress and Democratic members was then compared. The categorical

² Cohen’s $kappa = \frac{\% \text{ observed agreement} - \% \text{ expected agreement}}{(\# \text{ of objects coded}) \times (\# \text{ of coders}) - \% \text{ expected agreement}}$

³ The minimum reliability coefficient of .60 only applied to the variables that were coded by a “yes” by at least one of the coders. Thus, the calculated value for Cohen’s *kappa* for variables that did not appear in any of the 170 stories in the sample did not need to meet this standard.

nature of the variables determined the types of statistical methods and inferences that could be used appropriately. Thus, based on the coding of the articles, differences in frequency of each concept of interest used in the sample of articles were reported in a cross-tabulation table. Next, the chi-square statistic for each variable is reported, which gives insight into whether statistically significant differences exist in media coverage of Republican women and Democratic women officeholders.

CHAPTER 4

MEDIA COVERAGE OF WOMEN OFFICEHOLDERS: DOES PARTISANSHIP MATTER?

Introduction

To ascertain whether differences exist in media coverage of Republican and Democratic women officeholders, contingency table analysis was used. This analysis is meant to illuminate if and how the sample of newspaper coverage differs between Republican and Democratic women officeholders in regards to the proposed research questions and research hypotheses. However, descriptive analysis must first be employed to provide a complete and clear picture of the data.

Descriptive Analysis

Of the 1,741 articles that made up the sample of stories from the three newspapers, 919 covered Republican women officeholders and 822 covered Democratic women officeholders. Among the 919 stories about Republican women, 765 were regarding members of the U.S. House of Representatives, while 154 covered U.S. senators. The 822 stories about the Democratic women included 521 stories about representatives and 301 stories about senators. Additionally, the stories in the sample were categorized by the type of article, which included 1,312 news stories, 312 newspaper blogs, and 117 editorials.

In the following table, the number of stories that were coded as a “yes” for each category for the Republican women and Democratic women are displayed. These numbers provide an initial insight into themes and patterns that emerged in the sample of newspaper stories. For example, Table 1 demonstrates the substance of these articles in

terms of the policies and issues most often discussed. As shown, despite conventional wisdom and stereotypical convictions regarding the types of issues that are defined as feminine and the types of issues that are defined as masculine, in this sample of coverage, many more articles linked the female officeholders with masculine issues rather than feminine issues. However, looking at the specific masculine issue that was mentioned most often, *Federal Budget/National Debt* suggests that the political context during this time frame, which placed this issue at the forefront of national debate and conversation, may go a long way in explaining the high number of masculine issues in this sample. This political context, which additionally focused media and public attention on healthcare reform with the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, also likely explains why *Healthcare reform* was one of the most frequently mentioned issues in the feminine issue category. Though, what this context does not explain, and what remains surprising, is the relatively low number of feminine issues mentioned in relation to the officeholders overall.

Table 1: Number of Mentions for Policies and Issues

Variable	Number of Stories that Mention		
	Republican	Democrat	Total
<i>Feminine Issues</i>	141	137	278
<i>Education</i>	5	9	14
<i>Health/Healthcare</i>	67	57	124
Healthcare reform	29	12	41
Medicaid/Medicare	12	40	52
Prescriptions/Medicine	25	3	28

Table 1: Number of Mentions for Policies and Issues (continued)

Other	1	2	3
<i>Social Issues/Equality</i>	69	70	139
Abortion/Reproductive	21	12	33
Rights			
Crime/Gun Rights	6	12	18
Gay Rights/Marriage	14	10	24
Immigration	20	6	26
Other	8	30	38
<i>Masculine Issues</i>	281	306	587
<i>Defense/Foreign Relations</i>	90	81	171
Foreign Aid	12	4	16
Military	24	33	56
War/Terrorism	15	23	38
Other	39	21	60
<i>Economy/ Taxes</i>	191	225	416
Federal Budget/National	83	107	190
Debt			
Economy	30	24	54
Gas Prices	9	4	13
Jobs	25	32	57
Taxes	28	35	63

Table 1: Number of Mentions for Policies and Issues (continued)

Other	16	23	39
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In addition to the low number of feminine issues mentioned in these articles, Table 2 shows that gender-invoked themes are rarely used as well. The absence of feminist terminology being connected with these officeholders may seem reasonable, as feminism is a term that may carry many different connotations and controversies, and this may be something journalists wish to shy away from. The *Women's Theme*, being broader and less controversial, was used more; however, 44 stories using this theme out of a possible 1,741 stories is still not enough to classify this as a prevalent theme.

Table 2: Number of Mentions for Theme

Variable	Number of Stories that Mention		
	Republican	Democrat	Total
Feminist Theme	1	1	2
Women's Theme	14	30	44

An additional theme that emerged during the content analysis of the newspaper stories regarded the dominant focuses of the stories. As Table 3 shows, 546 of the 1,741 stories in the sample focused primarily on an officeholder's campaign coverage. Coverage of Michele Bachmann's 2012 bid for the Republican presidential nomination made up 500 of these 544 stories. In addition, only 102 stories made the officeholder the dominant focus of the story by focusing primarily or exclusively on the officeholder or her actions.

Therefore, most of the articles contained in the sample of coverage are stories that only mention or refer to the officeholder, while primarily focusing on a different or broader topic.

Table 3: Number of Mentions for Focus

Variable	Number of Stories that Mention		
	Republican	Democrat	Total
Dominant Focus is Campaign Coverage	506	40	546
Officeholder is Dominant Focus	73	31	104

The newspaper stories additionally invoked gender in their coverage of the officeholders through the use of image stereotypes. As Table 4 demonstrates, six primary stereotypes emerged in the sample of articles. It's interesting that, counter to previous research, the remaining stereotypes that were coded, regarding character traits, emotions, and marital status of the officeholders, appeared rarely or not at all. Perhaps this can be explained by the nature of the media coverage. For example, campaign and candidate coverage may lend to more character and personal trait references than coverage that is primarily focused on the officeholders' work and actions in office, as this sample of newspaper coverage was.

Table 4: Number of Mentions for Gendered Stereotypes |

Variable	Number of Stories that Mention		
	Republican	Democrat	Total
<i>Gendered Image Stereotypes</i>	109	90	199
Appearance	14	14	28
Children	14	3	17
Family	11	9	20
Spouse	18	16	34
Gender	33	29	62
Personal life	18	15	33
Marital status	0	1	1
Is a Leader	1	1	2
Is Not a Leader	0	0	0
Is Caring	0	0	0
Is Not Caring	0	0	0
Is Compassionate	0	0	0
Is Not Compassionate	0	0	0
Is Honest	0	1	1
Is Dishonest	0	0	0
Is Truthful	0	0	0
Is Not Truthful	0	0	0

Table 4: Number of Mentions for Gendered Stereotypes (continued)

Is Intelligent	0	0	0
Is Not Intelligent	0	0	0
Is Smart	0	1	1
Is Not Smart	0	0	0

Finally, an initial look at the data shows that the tone of the majority of the newspaper stories seemed to be neutral, neither criticizing nor praising the officeholder. However, as Table 5 shows, substantive criticisms, statements critical of the officeholders' official actions as officeholders, were the most common in this sample of coverage. Personal criticism or praise, on the other hand, rarely appeared.

Table 5: Number of Mentions for Tone

Variable	Number of Stories that Mention		
	Republican	Democrat	Total
Criticized Personally	0	1	1
Criticized Substantively	62	24	86
Praised Personally	2	1	3
Praised Substantively	13	8	21

Contingency Table Analysis⁴

The foregoing descriptive analysis provides the natural groundwork for a contingency analysis regarding differences in media coverage of the Republican and Democratic women officeholders. Each of the preceding categories, in addition to the subcategories that each contains, is analyzed in an attempt to answer this question. Chi square analysis is used to determine if the differences that appear are statistically significant. Chi square involves a comparison of the expected and observed frequencies of dichotomous variables to determine the likelihood that any differences that appear occur only by chance.

First, the difference in the kinds of policies and issues linked with each group of women is examined to investigate the research hypotheses that Democratic women will more likely be connected to feminine issues, while Republican women will more often be connected to masculine issues. Table 6 shows the results of the contingency analysis of differences in the types of issues discussed in relation to Democratic and Republican women officeholders. Here, it can be seen that neither Democrats nor Republicans were significantly more likely to be discussed in relation to the feminine issues. Certain issue areas, however, do yield significant differences. The Democrats were, indeed, more likely to be mentioned in relation to the feminine issues of *Medicaid/Medicare* and *Crime/Gun*

⁴ Because such a large portion of the newspaper stories in the sample focused on a different or broader topic rather than exclusively discussing the officeholder or her actions (see Table 3), the contingency table analysis was additionally performed only on the stories in which the officeholder was the dominant focus. The results of this analysis showed only two items to have significant differences in the amount they were discussed in relation to officeholders of each party. The issue of *Federal Budget/National Debt* and mentions of the officeholder's spouse were both significantly more often present in the Democratic coverage. However, it should be noted that because there were few stories that made the officeholder the dominant focus in total, subsequently there were also few mentions of each of the items included in the content analysis when looking only at this coverage. Therefore, the low expected frequencies in the contingency tables for each of these items makes it difficult to draw conclusions regarding if and how the coverage that focused exclusively on the officeholder differed or coincided with the overall findings from the entire sample of media coverage. It is suggested that further research look into this question using a larger sample or a broader coding scheme.

Rights. Conversely, however, the Republicans were more likely to be linked to other feminine issues, namely *Healthcare Reform*, *Prescriptions/Medicine*, and *Immigration*. Additionally, the odds ratio statistics for these variables indicates that these differences are not only significant, but substantial in magnitude as well. Table 6 shows that the issue of *Medicaid/Medicare* was almost four (3.866)⁵ times as likely and *Crime/Gun Right* was almost three (2.924)⁶ times more likely to be mentioned in relation to Democratic officeholders than Republican. *Healthcare Reform* and *Immigration*, on the other hand, were respectively two and a half (2.42) and three (3.04) times more likely to be discussed in regards to the Republican congresswomen. Finally, *Prescriptions/Medicine* was nearly eight (7.634) times more likely to be linked to the Republican women.

In terms of the masculine issues, an interesting finding that emerges is that, in contrast with the research hypothesis, the Democratic women were actually significantly more likely to be linked to the masculine issues. In addition, of the issues that showed significant differences between Republicans and Democrats, all were more likely to be mentioned in relation to the Democratic women. Democratic women officeholders were more likely than their Republican counterparts to receive media coverage in relation to the general issue category of *Economy/Taxes*. In addition, Democrats were significantly more likely to be connected to the specific issue of the *Federal Budget/National Debt*. These differences, again, appear to be rather substantial. For example, Table 6 shows that masculine issues were roughly one and one-third (1.346)⁷ times more likely to be linked to the Democratic officeholders than the Republican officeholders.

⁵ $1/.258655 = 3.866$

⁶ $1/.342021 = 2.924$

⁷ $1/.742701 = 1.346$

Additionally, the issues of *Economy/Taxes*, and *Federal Budget/National Debt* were also both about one and a half (1.437⁸, 1.507⁹) times as likely to be discussed in the stories of the Democratic officeholders. Therefore, clearly the research hypotheses that Republicans would be more often discussed in relation to masculine issues and the Democrats would be more often discussed in regards to feminine issues are not supported. However, completely rejecting the notion that differences between Republican and Democratic women in the types of issues each is linked to would be misguided, as the results make it apparent that this is not the case.

Table 6: Contingency Table Analysis of Issues by Political Party (

Variable	Republican (Col %)	Democrat (Col %)	χ^2	Odds Ratio
<i>Feminine Issues</i>	12.84%	14.11%	.603	.897
<i>Education</i>	54%	1.09%	1.662	.494
<i>Health/Healthcare</i>	7.29%	6.93%	0.083	1.06
Medicaid/Medicare	1.31%%	4.87%	19.758**	.259
Healthcare Reform	3.16%	1.46%	5.625*	2.42
Prescriptions/ Medicine	2.72%	.36%	17.626**	7.634

*p<.05; **p<.01 (two tailed), degrees of freedom= 1

⁸ 1/.696136= 1.437

⁹ 1/.663428= 1.507

Table 6: Contingency Table Analysis of Issues by Political Party (continued)

Other	.11%	.06%	.461	.447
<i>Social Issues</i>	5.89%	5.22%	.372	1.136
Abortion/ Reproductive Rights	2.29%	1.46%	1.649	1.586
Gay Rights/Marriage	1.53%	1.21%	.315	1.262
Immigration	2.18%	.73%	6.623*	3.04
Crime/Gun Rights	.55%	1.58%	4.637*	.342
Other	.22%	.73%	2.555	.298
<i>Masculine Issues</i>	47.87%	55.29%	8.580**	.743
<i>Defense/Foreign Relations</i>	9.85%	9.79%	.002	.993
War/Terrorism	1.63%	2.80%	2.768	.576
Military	1.38%	1.90%	2.696	.641
Foreign Aid	1.31%	.49%	3.373	2.706
Other	4.24%	2.55%	3.791	1.690
<i>Economy/Taxes</i>	20.78%	27.37%	10.348**	.696
Economy	3.26%	2.92%	.172	1.122
Jobs	2.72%	3.89%	1.882	.690
Federal Budget/ National Debt	9.03%	13.02%	7.082**	.663
Taxes	3.05%	4.26%	1.822	.707

Table 6: Contingency Table Analysis of Issues by Political Party (continued)

Gas Prices	.98%	.49%	1.467	2.023
Other	.65%	.61%	.016	1.079

To address the third and fourth research hypotheses that the *Feminist Theme* and the *Women's Theme* would more often be used in the newspaper stories of Democratic women officeholders, the results of the contingency analysis displayed in Table 7 can be examined. As evidenced by the table, the research hypothesis that the *Feminist Theme* would be used more often in the stories about the Democratic women was not supported. There was not a significant difference between the two groups of officeholders in the use of this theme. In fact, as discussed above, this theme was rarely used at all. The *Women's Theme*, however, was significantly more likely to be used in the stories of the Democratic officeholders than the Republican officeholders. In fact, Table 7 shows that it was roughly two and a half (2.449)¹⁰ times more likely to be used in coverage of the Democratic women. Thus, the postulation that the Democratic Party's historical and contemporary embrace of issues and ideas that align with tenets of the women's movement would prompt the media to use the *Women's Theme* in its coverage of Democratic women officeholders more often seems to be supported.

¹⁰ $1/.408398 = 2.449$

Table 7: Contingency Table Analysis of Theme by Political Party

Variable	Republican	Democrat	χ^2	Odds Ratio
	(Col %)	(Col %)		
Feminist Theme	.11%	.12%	.006	.894
Women's Theme	1.52%	3.65%	8.077**	.408

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed), degrees of freedom=1

The fifth research hypothesis, that more gendered image stereotypes would be present in the newspaper stories of the Republican women officeholders, can be assessed using the contingency analysis results displayed in Table 8. This table shows only the results of the six dominant stereotypes that emerged in the analysis, as the remaining stereotypes did not appear in great enough frequency to analyze statistically. These results indicate that substantial differences between the two groups of officeholders generally do not exist in the use of gendered image stereotypes. The one exception to this is that the children of the officeholders were about four (4.223) times as likely to be mentioned in the stories about the Republican women. Overall, however, these findings indicate that, not only are a large number of gendered image stereotypes not heavily present in newspaper coverage of women officeholders, but also that differences do not exist in the amount of stereotypes used in coverage of Republican and Democratic women.

Table 8: Contingency Table Analysis of Gendered Stereotypes by Political**Party**

Variable	Republican (Col %)	Democrat (Col %)	χ^2	Odds Ratio
Gendered Image	9.25%	8.52%	.288	1.095
Stereotypes				
Appearance	1.52%	1.70%	.088	.893
Children	1.52%	.36%	6.608**	4.223
Family	1.20%	1.09%	0.04	1.094
Spouse	1.96%	1.95%	.000	1.006
Gender	3.59%	3.53%	.005	1.018
Personal Life	1.96%	1.82%	.042	1.075

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed), degrees of freedom=1

The final research hypothesis proposed that the newspaper stories about Democratic women would have a more positive tone, as these women may receive the benefit of journalists trying to appeal to a female and ideologically liberal audience, in addition to the fact that these women may be attached to the honorable attributes of being pro-women or pro-equality. As Table 9 demonstrates, it does not necessarily seem to be the case that Democratic women receive more positive coverage than Republican women, but rather that they receive less negative coverage. As discussed above, these newspaper stories seldom let the tone of the story stray from neutral by allotting substantive praise, personal praise, or personal criticism to the officeholders. However, when this neutral tone was compromised through the use of substantive criticism, it significantly more often

condemned the Republican women. As Table 9 demonstrates, substantive criticism was about two and a half (2.405) as likely to be used in reference to the Republican officeholders. It's difficult to understand why this was the case without knowing the journalists' motivations or intentions behind these criticisms. However, because substantive criticism focuses exclusively on the officeholders' official actions as officeholders, it's possible that the explanation used to propose this sixth research hypothesis can be used as one possible reason.

Table 9: Contingency Table Analysis of Tone by Political Party

Variable	Republican (Col %)	Democrat (Col %)	χ^2	Odds Ratio
Criticized Personally	0%	.12%	1.502	0
Criticized Substantively	6.75%	2.92%	14.081**	2.405
Praised Personally	.22%	.12%	.238	1.791
Praised Substantively	1.41%	.97%	.728	1.464

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed), degrees of freedom=1

Discussion

This study set out to determine if differences exist in the media coverage received by Republican and Democratic women officeholders. A question this complex, however, naturally results in a complex answer. Although the findings presented above do, in fact, indicate that such differences exist, the nature and cause of these differences is not completely in line with the hypothesized differences. Neither can it be completely

explained by contemporary literature on gendered partisan differences or gendered differences in media coverage. Rather, interpreting the differences that were brought to fruition require a unique understanding of the nature of gendered media coverage of Republican and Democratic women.

The first research question posed by this study sought to determine whether there are differences in the kinds of issues linked with women officeholders of each party. Specifically, this study was interested in exploring if either party is more likely to be linked with “women’s issues.” As the findings demonstrated, officeholders from neither party were more likely to be linked with the feminine issues. Democratic women, though, were more likely to be connected to masculine issues. In addition, differences also appeared in regards to certain issue areas in both the feminine and masculine issue categories. Because these specific differences emerged but did not result in either party receiving more masculine or feminine issue coverage as hypothesized, it seems that perhaps using gendered categories to understand differences in the way the media covers women officeholders of the two political parties is not optimal. Rather, findings from this study indicate that an alternative conceptualization may be necessary. Looking at the specific issues that were found to be connected to one group of officeholders more often than the other gives insight into what this conceptualization might entail.

Differences that emerged in the kinds of feminine issues that were significantly more likely to be connected to one group of officeholders over the other seem to make sense given the political context and background. For example, it makes sense that more Republican officeholders were discussed in relation to healthcare reform, given the party’s vigorous effort to voice its opposition to the Affordable Care Act. Additionally, the fact that

immigration was more often discussed in the stories of Republican women seems to be due, in large part, to coverage of Michele Bachmann's presidential campaign, as immigration tends to be a more salient issue during the election season. Similarly, stories regarding comments Michele Bachmann made during a presidential debate about the human papillomavirus vaccine made up a large portion of the stories in the *Prescriptions/Medicine* category. On the other side, the finding that Democratic women officeholders were more often discussed in relation to Medicaid and Medicare, as well as issues relating to crime and gun rights, is likely a product of the Democratic Party's longstanding advocacy and voice on these social issues. Therefore, an understanding of how the media covers women of each party differently must first, and foremost, take the political context into account.

In terms of the significant differences in the issue linkage of masculine issues with Democratic women officeholders, the findings give pause for thought. Democrats were more likely to be discussed in relation to masculine issues in general, as well as the broad issue category *Economy/Taxes*, and the specific issue of the *Federal Budget/National Debt*. Both of these issue areas were important points of contention and conversation in both parties during this political context. Therefore, the fact that the media chose to report on these issues in regards to Democratic women with greater frequency than Republican women is important. One possible explanation for Democratic women's greater likelihood of receiving media coverage in relation to masculine, hard-hitting issues is simply that there are more Democratic women officeholders. As such, these women may be seen as less of a novelty, both by the media and by other members of the party. Accordingly, they may

have more opportunities or ability to be able to voice their thoughts on more important matters.

Differences in the use of themes in the stories of Republicans and Democrats were more clear-cut. It became apparent that feminist themes are not readily used by the media to discuss women officeholders. However, these newspaper stories did utilize a *Women's Theme* when they deemed it applicable, which, accordingly, prompted its use more often in the stories of Democratic women. It is not difficult to conceptualize why this might be the case. The greater proportion of congresswomen in the Democratic Party compared to the Republican Party gives the Democratic women more opportunities and puts them in a position to act as, or simply be seen as, champions, pioneers, or advocates for women. Therefore, the media's use of the *Women's Theme* more often in stories of Democratic women is likely a reflection or projection of this fact. As women's role in both political parties continues to change and expand it will be interesting to see how the use of this theme changes as well.

The absence or minimal use of most gendered image stereotypes in the newspaper stories overall was surprising in that it seemed to run counter to much previous research that has demonstrated the continual pervasiveness of these stereotypes in media coverage of women politicians (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Braden, 1996; Bystrom, 2010; Heith, 2003; Heldman & Oliver, 2009). The distinction between this study's findings and previous literature, though, may be that this study focused exclusively on newspaper coverage of women already holding office. First, it's possible that other types of live or unfiltered media coverage may see higher numbers of stereotypes being used in the discussion of women politicians than is true for newspaper coverage, which can be proofread and monitored by

editors. Furthermore, it is not safe to assume that patterns in media coverage of female candidates will be the same as the coverage of women officeholders. In presenting information about political candidates, the media often give more in-depth, personal, and scrutinizing coverage. Officeholders who have already been elected may no longer have to endure as much of this in-depth scrutiny, and the gender stereotypes that may be attached. Upon a closer look at the data, this notion seems to be supported if a distinction is made regarding the nature of the stereotypes. One set of stereotypes, which rarely or never appeared in the coverage, blatantly attach or allot personal characteristics and attributes to the officeholder. The six dominant stereotypes that did emerge, on the other hand, rather manifested in a more subtle manner, by simply mentioning the appearance, family, spouse, children, gender, or personal life of the officeholder. Moreover, because only a very small subset of the sample included articles in which the officeholder was the dominant focus of the story, the use of gendered image stereotypes may have been curbed by a lack of comprehensive coverage in general. Accordingly, because of the minimal use of stereotypes in general, it is difficult for significant differences between Republican and Democratic women in regards to the presence of stereotypes to emerge.

The findings of this study seem to provide support for this notion. Not only were few gendered image stereotypes used at all, but only one stereotype yielded significant differences in the extent to which it was used in comparing stories between the two groups of women officeholders. Mentions of the officeholders' children appeared in 14 of the 919 stories of Republican women, and only 3 of the 822 stories about Democratic women. These numbers are still rather low, and do not seem to suggest that the use of this stereotype was prevalent overall. Additionally, upon closer examination, it appears that all

14 mentions of children that appeared in the Republican women's stories were in articles about Michele Bachmann. Although not all of these articles focused on her 2012 presidential campaign, it seems likely that the fact that her children and foster children were propelled into the spotlight during this campaign had a part in making this topic relevant in coverage of her actions as an officeholder as well.

The final findings drawn from this study answer the last research question in regards to whether differences exist in the tone of the newspaper stories of the Republican and Democratic women. Based on the significant difference in the use of substantive criticism, it appears that the answer is a conditional yes. However, it seems that a part of this difference may also be a product of media coverage of Michele Bachmann's 2012 presidential campaign. It seems likely that, just as more stereotypes might be used in coverage of political candidates rather than of officeholders, more criticism, too, might be found in the candidate's coverage. Although this may be the case, media coverage of officeholders, whether in regards to upcoming elections or not, is still classified as media coverage. Therefore, in regards to the question of whether differences in tone exist in newspaper coverage of Republican and Democratic women officeholders, the conditional answer of "yes" that is provided by these findings may be best taken with a grain of salt.

CHAPTER 5

PARTY IDENTIFICATION: THE COVERT INFLUENCE ON MEDIA'S CONSTRUCTION AND PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL IDENTITIES

Introduction

This study set out with the purpose of illuminating the relationship between the partisanship of women officeholders and the media coverage they receive. Through the use of content analysis, it examined if the newspaper coverage received by Republican and Democratic congresswomen differed in terms of the kinds of issues that are linked with each group of officeholders, the use of gendered image stereotypes, the theme of the stories, and the overall tone used.

Summary of Results

The findings of this study indicate that differences in media coverage of Republican and Democratic women officeholders do exist. However, these differences are not completely in line with the hypothesized differences. This study found that there are, in fact, differences in the kinds of policies and issues linked with each group of officeholders. The Democratic women were more likely to be discussed in relation to masculine issues overall, as well as the broad issue category of *Economy/Taxes* and the specific issue area of *Federal Budget/National Debt*. Differences between the two groups of officeholders as it relates to the feminine issues were a bit more nuanced. Neither group of women was significantly more likely to be connected to feminine issues overall. However, the issues of *Medicaid/Medicare* and *Crime/Gun Rights* were connected to the Democratic officeholders

more often, while *Healthcare Reform*, *Prescriptions/Medicine*, and *Immigration* were more often linked to the Republican officeholders.

Additionally, a few differences appeared in the use of story themes, stereotypes, and tone. The *Women's Theme* was used more often in the stories of Democratic women, although this theme was not prevalent overall. In addition, the gendered image stereotypes found to be commonplace in other studies of media coverage of women politicians were not widely used in this sample of coverage. The finding that the children of the officeholders were more often mentioned in the Republican officeholders' coverage was the only difference that emerged between the two groups of officeholders in the use of gendered image stereotypes. Finally, the sole difference that appeared in terms of the tone of the newspapers was that the Republican officeholders were more likely to be criticized about substantive matters.

Implications

As the dominant source of information, news, and political happenings, the media outlets are powerful and influential institutions. The media have the power to set the public agenda and influence how the public interprets and views events and people. In the American political setting, where public opinions and perceptions are so entangled with and influential on politics and policies, understanding the political content communicated by these media outlets is essential. Because it can both reflect and shape political reality, it is critical to take this media content into account to truly understand any political phenomenon.

As the dominant source of political information, the media play a large role in constructing and conveying the political identities and personas of candidates and officeholders to the public. In choosing to cover an officeholder or a group of officeholders in relation to certain issues, or using certain themes, stereotypes, and tones, the media influence how the public views them. Thus, the differences in media coverage between Republican and Democratic officeholders among the four areas that were explored in this study are working to differently construct the identities of each group of officeholders. Although more research is needed to explore more fully how the media are constructing these identities, a few patterns did emerge from this study. By discussing certain policies and issues in relation to one group of officeholders over the other, the media convey that this group of officeholders is more competent and better advocates for these issues. Additionally, the more prevalent use of the *Women's Theme* in the stories of the Democratic officeholders may convey that these officeholders are pioneers for women and for equality more so than are the Republican officeholders. The greater use of substantive criticism on the Republican officeholders additionally may work to construct negative political identities of women officeholders in this party.

The differently constructed political identities of congresswomen of each party may contribute and relate to the development and the widening of the partisan gender gap. It's possible that the higher number of Democratic women officeholders that results from this partisan gender gap leads to more favorable media coverage. As influential women in this party become more commonplace, these women may have more opportunities to take the lead on prominent issues and to embrace their role as an advocate for women. Conversely, the fewer number of Republican women may cause other members of the party and the

media to downplay their significance and competence, resulting in less prominent issues coverage and more criticism about their work as officeholders. Therefore, it's possible that these differences in media coverage are a result of the partisan gender gap. However, it's also possible that the media's differing construction of the political identities of women of each party has been and may continue to be a significant contributing factor to this gap as well.

Because there is a dearth of research regarding differences in media coverage among Republican and Democratic women officeholders, the findings of this study contribute to a baseline of understanding of these gendered partisan differences. Therefore, findings from this study present a starting point in which future research can begin to delve more deeply into this question. Additionally, this study contributes to the broader gender and politics research as the findings illuminate how the media cover women officeholders as a whole. Results showed that women officeholders from both parties are most often discussed in relation to issues that have generally been considered "masculine." Moreover, the results showed that this media coverage rarely discusses the officeholder in connection to women or feminism, and seldom uses gendered image stereotypes. These findings do not indicate that conclusions drawn from previous research that run counter to these results should be rejected, nor do they provide evidence that media coverage of women in politics is completely changing or equalizing. Rather, these findings highlight how this previous research might be nuanced by the focus or the format of the media coverage. In other words, this study not only contributed to a greater understanding of variations between subgroups of women, but also spoke to variations

that may exist in women's coverage among different types of media, as well as variations between campaign-focused media and officeholder-focused media.

The findings of this study additionally contributed to research regarding the intersection of media and politics. This thesis did not set out to determine whether or not a bias exists within the media. Therefore, the differences in media coverage that were found among officeholders of each party cannot be used to substantiate a media bias without being overtly speculative. However, these findings do show that, regardless of the reason, the media do differently cover Republican and Democratic women officeholders. In this way, these findings provide insight into media coverage regarding women officeholders. This insight may be used in the future to inform or motivate a more thorough examination of the reasons behind this differential coverage.

Limitations

Because the focus of this study was purely on newspaper coverage, caution should be exercised when generalizing these findings to other forms of media. Although topics and issues discussed in newspapers may often reflect those found in other types of media, it is also true that the distinctive characteristics of newspaper media may produce findings in a content analysis that are unique from other media sources. For example, in comparison with other types of visual media, the written format of newspapers often provides more in-depth, more descriptive, and less sensational media coverage. Additionally, the fact that newspaper readership continues to decline, especially among younger audiences, may cause newspapers to produce content that differs from other types of media, to appeal to their stable audience or in an attempt to appeal to new audiences. To gain a clearer picture

of the differences that exist between Republican and Democratic women officeholders, it would be beneficial to consider alternative types of media as well.

Additionally, further limitations may be posed by the political context and timing that the sample of media coverage was drawn from, in which there was much media and public focus on Michele Bachmann's presidential campaign. A large portion of the Republican officeholders' media coverage was made up of stories regarding this campaign. Because it was beyond the scope of this study to determine how media coverage that women candidates receive differs from the media coverage that women officeholders receive, it is difficult to determine if and to what extent Bachmann's campaign coverage influenced the findings drawn about Republican officeholders' media coverage overall.

Suggestions for Future Research

The limitations and problems faced by this study, outlined above, provide a natural gateway for further research. Primarily, it would be beneficial to examine whether the differences in media coverage between Republican and Democratic women officeholders found by this study can be used to explore further nuances in these differences. As mentioned above, there is a need to demarcate how media coverage differs among candidates as compared to officeholders. Evidence from this study suggests that there may be substantial differences in these types of media coverage. Further analyzing how these types of media coverage interact with partisanship, as well, would be a natural and beneficial extension from the work done by this study.

Moreover, because this study exclusively looked at media coverage of congresswomen, further research is also needed to determine if the differences found by

this study also exist in media coverage of Republican and Democratic officeholders in other positions, levels of office, and in other countries. Additional work is also needed to determine if and how the findings of this study can be generalized and used to understand media coverage of women candidates and officeholders who do not belong to either of the two major parties.

Finally, because previous literature largely does not address how media coverage of Republican and Democratic women differs, this study was forced to use the broader literature as a theoretical framework. Although this research serves as a good starting point, future research regarding media differences between Republican and Democratic women should use a more refined framework. The findings of this study suggest that traditional differences in media coverage among men and women politicians cannot be used as the sole basis to understand differences between Republican and Democratic women officeholders. Future research should take a more in-depth approach to draw out more subtle differences and aid in developing a new and alternative framework to understand media differences between women of these two parties.

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APPENDIX A

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative

Name	New York Times		Washington Post		USA Today	
	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample
Martha Roby (AL-R)	5	2	3	1	2	1
Terri Sewell (AL-D)	3	1	2	1	1	1
Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ-D)	0	0	0	0	2	1
Doris Matsui (CA-D)	0	0	3	1	0	0
Nancy Pelosi (CA-D)	273	87	243	88	68	45
Barbara Lee (CA-D)	11	3	10	4	3	2
Jackie Speier (CA-D)	3	1	6	2	1	1
Anna Eshoo	1	1	0	0	2	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

(CA-D)						
Zoe Lofgren	9	3	13	5	0	0
(CA-D)						
Lois Capps	3	1	3	1	0	0
(CA-D)						
Judy Chu	1	1	7	3	1	1
(CA-D)						
Grace Napolitano	1	1	6	2	0	0
(CA-D)						
Gloria Negrete-McLeod		0		0		0
(CA-D)						
Karen Bass	3	1	5	2	2	1
(CA-D)						
Linda Sanchez	0	0	1	1	0	0
(CA-D)						
Lucille Roybal-Allard	0	0	2	1	0	0
(CA-D)						
Lynn Woolsey	5	2	6	2	2	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

(CA-D)						
Maxine Waters	26	8	27	10	2	1
(CA-D)						
Janice Hahn	9	3	4	1	1	1
(CA-D)						
Loretta Sanchez	4	1	18	7	0	0
(CA-D)						
Susan Davis	0	0	4	1	1	1
(CA-D)						
Laura Richardson	4	1	0	0	0	0
(CA-D)						
Mary Bono Mack	11	3	6	2	3	2
(CA-R)						
Diana DeGette	11	3	7	3	1	1
(CO-D)						
Rosa DeLauro	13	4	10	4	6	4
(CT-D)						
Corrine Brown	2	1	2	1	0	0
(FL-D)						

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

Kathy Castor (FL-D)	1	1	3	1	1	1
Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-D)	69	22	60	22	16	11
Frederica Wilson (FL-D)	5	2	4	1	1	1
Ileana Ros- Lehtinen (FL-R)	21	7	36	13	7	5
Sandy Adams (FL-R)	2	1	3	1	3	2
Colleen Hanabusa (HI-D)	1	1	2	1	1	1
Jan Schakowsky (IL-D)	8	3	4	1	1	1
Judy Biggert (IL-R)	4	1	8	3	1	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

Lynn Jenkins (KS-R)	1	1	0	0	0	0
Chellie Pingree (ME-D)	6	2	2	1	0	0
Donna Edwards (MD-D)	6	2	12	4	0	0
Niki Tsongas (MA-D)	5	2	2	1	1	1
Candice Miller (MI-R)	4	1	0	0	2	1
Betty McCollum (MN-D)	6	2	5	2	3	2
Michele Bachmann (MN-R)	1000	320	595	216	169	106
Vicky Hartzler (MO-R)	5	2	3	1	0	0
Jo Ann Emerson (MO-R)	2	1	10	4	2	1
Carolyn McCarthy	13	4	17	6	2	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

(NY-D)						
Sue Myrick	2	1	2	1	0	0
(NC-R)						
Shelley Berkley	9	3	4	1	1	1
(NV-D)						
Nydia Velazquez	6	2	2	1	1	1
(NY-D)						
Yvette Clarke	4	1	0	0	1	1
(NY-D)						
Carolyn Maloney	20	6	9	3	1	1
(NY-D)						
Nita Lowey	1	1	7	3	0	0
(NY-D)						
Louise Slaughter	9	3	2	1	6	4
(NY-D)						
Nan Hayworth	11	4	2	1	0	0
(NY-R)						
Ann Marie	7	2	7	3	1	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

Buerkle (NY-R)						
Kathy Hochul (NY-D)	42	13	18	7	7	5
Renee Ellmers (NC-R)	9	3	1	1	0	0
Virginia Foxx (NC-R)	3	1	5	2	0	0
Marcy Kaptur (OH-D)	8	3	5	2	3	2
Marcia Fudge (OH-D)	1	1	1	1	0	0
Jean Schmidt (OH-R)	6	2	4	1	1	1
Betty Sutton (OH-D)	3	1	2	1	1	1
Suzanne Bonamici (OR-D)	0	0	1	1	7	5
Allyson Schwartz	2	1	1	1	2	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

(PA-D)						
Kristi Noem	6	2	10	4	3	2
(SD-R)						
Diane Black	4	1	8	3	3	2
(TN-R)						
Marsha Blackburn	8	3	8	3	2	1
(TN-R)						
Kay Granger	5	2	9	3	0	0
(TX-R)						
Sheila Jackson Lee	4	1	15	5	3	2
(TX-D)						
Eddie Bernice Johnson	2	1	1	1	0	0
(TX-D)						
Jaime Herrera Beutler	1	1	3	1	0	0
(WA-R)						
Cathy McMorris Rodgers	5	2	3	1	2	1

Table A1: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Representative (continued)

(WA-R)						
Shelley Moore	7	2	7	3	5	3
Capito						
(WV-R)						
Gwen Moore	3	1	1	1	0	0
(WI-D)						
Tammy Baldwin	8	3	4	1	2	1
(WI-D)						
Cynthia Lummis	1	1	4	1	0	0
(WY-R)						
TOTAL	1754	571	1300	479	360	236

Table A2: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Senator (

Name	New York Times		Washington Post		USA Today	
	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample	Total # Stories	# Stories in Sample
Lisa Murkowski	29	9	22	8	2	1
(AL-R)						

Table A2: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Senator (continued)

Barbara Boxer (CA-D)	43	14	58	21	12	8
Senator Dianne Feinstein (CA-D)	52	17	49	18	9	6
Mary Landrieu (LA-D)	29	9	33	12	6	4
Susan Collins (ME-R)	49	16	66	24	13	9
Olympia Snowe (ME-R)	24	8	21	8	4	3
Barbara Mikulski (MD-D)	8	3	43	16	6	4
Debbie Stabenow (MI-D)	21	7	10	4	4	3
Amy Klobuchar	13	4	24	9	8	5

Table A2: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Senator (continued)

(MN-D)						
Claire	35	11	58	21	7	5
McCaskill						
(MO-D)						
Kay Hagan	7	2	8	3	3	2
(NC-D)						
Kelly Ayotte	22	7	24	9	1	1
(NH-R)						
Jeanne	10	3	11	4	2	1
Shaheen						
(NH-D)						
Kirsten	42	13	21	8	8	5
Gillibrand						
(NY-D)						
Kay Bailey	63	20	52	19	17	11
Hutchison						
(TX-R)						
Patty Murray	58	19	61	22	17	11
(WA-D)						
Maria	11	4	8	3	2	1
Cantwell						

Table A2: Number of Newspaper Stories by U.S. Senator (continued)

(WA-D)						
Total	516	166	569	209	121	80

APPENDIX B

Code Sheet

Code sheet adapted from:

Bystrom, D., Robertson, T., Banwart, M.C., & Kaid, L.L. (2004). *Gender and candidate communication: Videostyle, webstyle, newsstyle*. New York: Routledge.

Source: ____ (1) New York Times (2) Washington Post (3) USA Today

Type: ____ (1) News (2) Editorial (3) Blog

Date: ____

Number of Words: ____

Name of Officeholder: _____

Position Held by Officeholder: ____ (1) Representative (2) Senator

Party of Officeholder: ____ (1) Republican (2) Democrat

State the Officeholder Represents: _____

FEMININE POLICIES/ ISSUES: (0 if not mentioned, 1 if mentioned in relation to the officeholder)

Education:

____ education

Health/Healthcare:

____ Medicaid/ Medicare ____ Affordable Care Act/ healthcare reform

____ prescriptions/medicine ____ other

Social Issues/ Equality:

___ abortion/ reproductive rights ___ gay rights/ marriage
 ___ immigration ___ crime/ gun control ___ other

MASCULINE POLICIES/ /ISSUES: (0 if not mentioned, 1 if mentioned in relation to the officeholder)

Defense/ Foreign Relations:

___ war/terrorism ___ military ___ foreign aid ___ other

Economy/ Taxes:

___ economy ___ jobs ___ budget / national debt ___ taxes
 ___ gas prices ___ other

STORY THEME: (0 if not present, 1 if present)

Feminist theme used ___

Women's theme used ___

Dominant focus of coverage of the officeholder is about current or future campaign/ election ___ (0- no, 1- yes)

Officeholder is the dominant focus of the story ___ (0 -no, 1 -yes)

IMAGE GENDER STEREOTYPES: (0 if not mentioned, 1 if mentioned in relation to the officeholder)

___ appearance ___ children ___ family ___ spouse ___ gender

___ personal life/ background ___ marital status ___ is a leader

___ is not a leader ___ is caring ___ is not caring

___ is compassionate ___ is not compassionate ___ is honest

___ is dishonest ___ is truthful ___ is not truthful

___ is intelligent ___ is not intelligent ___ is smart ___ is not smart

TONE: (0 if not present, 1 if present)

Criticized personally ___

Criticized substantively ___

Praised personally ___

Praised substantively ___

APPENDIX C

Table A3: Inter-coder Reliability Results ¹¹

Variable	<i>Kappa=</i>
Education	0.664
Medicaid/Medicare	0.827
Healthcare reform	0.601
Prescriptions/Medicine	0.664
Other Healthcare	1
Abortion	1
Gay Rights/Marriage	1
Immigration	1
Crime/Gun Rights	0.656
Other Social Issues	0.607
War/Terrorism	0.702
Military	0.613
Foreign Aid	0.661
Other Defense/Foreign Relations	0.699
Economy	0.738

¹¹ All variables with *kappa*= 0 listed in the table were not coded as a “yes” by either coder in any of the 170 stories in the subsample. Therefore, there was 100% agreement in the coding of these variables between the two coders. However, because there was no variation in the coding, Cohen’s *kappa* is calculated to be 0.

Table A3: Inter-coder Reliability Results ¹¹ (continued)

Jobs	0.765
Budget/National Debt	0.758
Taxes	0.659
Gas Prices	0.791
Other Taxes/Economy	0.791
Feminist Frame	0
Women's Frame	0.611
Dominant Focus is Campaign Coverage	0.9
Officeholder is Dominant Focus	0.703
Appearance	0
Children	0.664
Family	0.744
Spouse	1
Gender	0.92
Personal Life	0.814
Marital Status	1
Is a Leader	0.661
Is Not a Leader	0
Is Caring	0

Table A3: Inter-coder Reliability Results ¹¹ (continued)

Is Not Caring	0
Is Compassionate	0
Is Not Compassionate	0
Is Honest	0
Is Dishonest	0
Is Truthful	0
Is Not Truthful	0
Is Intelligent	0
Is Not Intelligent	0
Is Smart	0
Is Not Smart	0
Criticized Substantively	0.6
Criticized Personally	0
Praised Substantively	0.718
Praised Personally	1