A Non-Gendered Lens:
The Absence of Stereotyping in Contemporary Congressional Elections

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Abstract: Much research has argued that female candidates for political office are portrayed by the media and evaluated by voters in ways consistent with gender stereotypes. We suggest, however, that it is time to revisit the conventional wisdom, both because of changes to American politics and methodological shortcomings of previous work. We rely on a detailed content analysis of local newspaper coverage from nearly 350 U.S. House districts and nationally representative survey data from the 2010 midterms to demonstrate that gender stereotyping does not affect journalists' coverage of, or voters' attitudes toward, female candidates. Rather, reporters' portrayals and citizens' evaluations of candidates stem primarily from partisanship, ideology, and incumbency. News coverage can also influence voters' assessments of candidates, but such media effects do not promote gender stereotyping. The results suggest that if we want to understand women's under-representation, then we need to move beyond the media and the voters.

Women's under-representation in U.S. political institutions raises a paradox. When the 112th Congress convened, 83% of its members were men. Men occupy the governor's mansion in 44 of the 50 states, serve as mayor of 92 of the 100 largest cities, and hold roughly three-quarters of statewide and state legislative positions throughout the country. Yet studies consistently reveal that female candidates fare at least as well as their male counterparts, both in vote totals and fundraising receipts (e.g., Cook 1998; Fox 2010; Lawless and Pearson 2008). Given gender disparities in elective office, however, political scientists are reluctant to conclude that sexism and gender bias do not impede women's electoral fortunes. To be sure, researchers recognize that traditional gender socialization, coupled with structural barriers, plays a prominent role in women's slow ascension to public office.[1] But many scholars augment these central explanations with the argument that gender stereotyping by the media and voters continues to contribute, even if only indirectly, to the relatively low percentages of women in public office.

It is hardly surprising that the conventional wisdom has converged on the premise that gender stereotyping presents a barrier to female candidates. After all, dozens of studies uncover evidence of it in media coverage and voter perceptions of candidates' traits, issue expertise, and policy positions. Because the issues and traits associated with women tend to be linked to the private sphere, whereas the policy expertise and characteristics linked to men tend to be visible in the public sphere, gender stereotyping is often characterized as working to women's detriment (see Kittilson and Fridkin 2008 for a review). That is, scholars tend to assume that the electoral playing field is more difficult and complex for women than men (e.g., Dolan 2010; Fox 1997; Lawless 2009).

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[1] For a nuanced discussion of the central explanations for women's under-representation, as well as the relative power of each, see Lawless and Fox 2010.

And although women have learned to succeed in this environment, gender stereotyping in the media and by the electorate presents obstacles for female candidates that men need not surmount.[2]

Despite its intuitive appeal, we suggest that it is time to revisit the conventional wisdom. This is not to imply that candidate sex is irrelevant to journalists and voters. But it is only one of many considerations that might influence the way that reporters and the public assess candidates. Furthermore, there is theoretical reason to believe that it is not a particularly salient one. Throughout the past thirty years, the novelty of female candidates has waned, and public opinion surveys now routinely reveal high levels of support for female candidates for all levels of office. Moreover, journalists and voters alike react to campaigns as they unfold. Especially in an environment of increased party polarization, campaigns tend to focus on ideological differences – not gender differences – between the candidates (Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2006; King and Matland 2003; Rahn 1993). Much of the extant research on gender stereotyping, however, succumbs to methodological limitations that preclude a full assessment of this argument; many studies are not well-suited to test the extent to which the media actually engage in stereotyping or the manner in which media coverage and gender stereotypes matter to voters amid the cacophony of real world campaigns.

In this paper, we rely on a detailed content analysis of local newspaper coverage from nearly 350 U.S. House districts across the country, as well as data from the 2010 Cooperative

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[2] The role gender plays in the candidate emergence process reinforces this perspective. Women are more likely than men to doubt their qualifications, and they are less likely to be recruited to run – both of which are critical predictors of actually seeking an elective position (Lawless and Fox 2010). Thus, "gender-neutral" election outcomes might reflect the higher average quality of women as compared to the men against whom they compete (see also Anzia and Berry 2011).

Congressional Election Study (CCES), to demonstrate that gender stereotyping does not affect journalists' coverage of, or voters' attitudes toward, female candidates. The content analysis – the first to examine systematically the prevalence of gender stereotyping in hundreds of House races – provides compelling evidence that male and female congressional candidates receive virtually identical media coverage. We uncover no significant gender differences in the volume of coverage candidates receive, references to their sex, or the traits and issues with which they are associated. The results from our analysis of the CCES data are similar: candidate sex does not affect voters' assessments of candidates on a wide variety of trait dimensions. In linking media coverage in each district to voters' evaluations of candidates in that district, we do find that media coverage often affects voters' assessments. But because journalists do not systematically amplify traditional gender stereotypes, media effects do not disadvantage female candidates. Rather, reporters' portrayals and citizens' evaluations of candidates stem primarily from partisanship, ideology, and incumbency. Ultimately, our results suggest that women do not experience – at least as far as news coverage and voter evaluations are concerned – a more hostile campaign environment than do men. If we want to understand women's under-representation, then we need to move beyond the media and the voters. They may be the easiest to blame, but they are not guilty.

Rethinking Gender Stereotyping by the Media and the Electorate

Political scientists have, for the last twenty years, generally argued that female candidates are treated differently – and often worse – than male candidates in the press and by the electorate. Many studies, nearly all of which focus on presidential, senatorial, and gubernatorial candidates, find not only that women receive less overall and less prominent coverage than men, but also that gender differences emerge in the content of the coverage they do receive (Heldman, Carroll, and Olson 2005; Kahn 1994; 1992; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). Press coverage of female candidates is more

likely to focus on the horse race and a lack of viability (Smith 1997). Further, the news tends to emphasize women's appearance, personality, family roles, "feminine traits" – such as compassion and honesty – and advocacy for "women's issues." Men, on the other hand, are more likely than women to garner attention that focuses on their professional backgrounds, credentials, office-holding experience, "masculine" attributes – such as leadership and experience – and strengths in the areas of foreign policy, defense, and the economy (Braden 1996; Bystrom et al 2004; Carroll and Schreiber 1997; Devitt 1999; Kahn 1996; Norris 1997a; 1997b; Weir 1996; but see Fowler and Lawless 2009; Hayes 2011).

These portrayals in the media are consistent with – and are assumed to reinforce – voters' perceptions of gender differences among politicians. Empirical analyses reveal that women and men who enter politics are perceived by citizens differently in terms of their ideologies, characteristics, and policy expertise. Female candidates and office-holders, for example, are generally viewed as more liberal than male candidates of the same party (Alexander and Andersen 1993; King and Matland 2003; Koch 2000; McDermott 1998; 1997). Voters tend to assess men as assertive, active, and self-confident, whereas they identify women as compassionate, willing to compromise, and people-oriented (Burrell 1994; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Lawless 2004; Leeper 1991; Rosenwasser and Dean 1989). And male candidates are perceived as more competent than women in the areas of military crises, crime, and the economy; women are viewed as more competent when the issues at hand are gender equity, education, health care, and poverty (Alexander and Anderson 1993; Burrell 1994; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Lawless 2004; Leeper 1991; Rosenwasser and Dean 1989; Sapiro 1981-82).

This kind of gender stereotyping is relevant not only because it demonstrates the degree to which traditional gender roles and expectations permeate contemporary society, but also because it can affect voters' assessments of candidates. Citizens tend to pay relatively little attention to the

details of politics and policy (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). So, when making judgments about

candidates, individuals invoke myriad heuristics, of which gender serves as one of the most

straightforward (McDermott 1997; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009). "Women's issues" and women's

"outsider" status can undoubtedly advantage female candidates in some election years (Dolan 1998;

Fridkin and Kenney 2009; Paolino 1995). But for the most part, the traits and issue expertise

accorded to male politicians are viewed as more important for politics (Falk and Kenski 2006; Fox

and Oxley 2003; Kahn 1996; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Lawless 2004). Thus, in its entirety, the

women and politics literature suggests that female candidates must overcome a series of pervasive

obstacles to succeed.

We argue, however, that this characterization is questionable, both theoretically and in light

of the empirical evidence on which it is based. This is to not say that gender stereotyping has not

existed in the past, that sex is irrelevant when considering the electoral playing field candidates

traverse, or that high-profile examples of sexism never rear their heads. But we develop a three-

pronged argument for why – given the current political context and the academic literature – we

would not expect to uncover systematic gender stereotyping by the media or the voters in

contemporary congressional elections.

Changing Times: Early research in the women and elections subfield attributed gender

disparities in office holding to overt discrimination (Githens and Prestage 1977; Kirkpatrick 1974).

Electoral gatekeepers all but prohibited women from running for office through the 1970s. And

those women who did emerge as candidates often faced sexism and a hostile environment (see Witt,

Paget and Matthews 1994). Individual accounts of women who face blatant gender discrimination

once they enter the public arena, however, are increasingly uncommon (Woods 2000).

The public's attitudes toward women in politics have also evolved. Seventy-five percent of

Americans no longer believe that men are better suited emotionally for politics than are women

(General Social Survey 2010). When asked about the "major reasons" for women's under-representation, only 14% of citizens agree that "women aren't tough enough for politics" and only 16% contend that "women don't make as good leaders as men." Moreover, 95% of survey respondents express a willingness to support a qualified, female party nominee for president (Gallup 2012). Many of the studies that uncover gender disparities in news coverage also acknowledge that the magnitude of these differences has become far more subtle over the years (e.g., Banwart, Bystrom, and Robertson 2003; Fowler and Lawless 2009; Jalalzai 2006; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Smith 1997). Yet most of this research still focuses on contests from the 1990s and early 2000s. Given the public's increasing receptivity of women in politics, we would expect to uncover even less gender stereotyping in more recent elections.

Increased Party Polarization: Sex is only one piece of information voters have about candidates. In addition, they know the candidate's party affiliation, which serves as a particularly powerful information shortcut (Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Rahn 1993), especially in the current electoral environment. Certainly, citizens have long been inclined to view U.S. politics through a partisan lens (see King and Matland 2003). But with the growth of party polarization at the elite level (Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2006; Hetherington 2001; Theriault 2008), the party heuristic has become more useful and party-line voting has increased (Bartels 2000).

This carries implications for the use of gender stereotyping because people tend to make political judgments by accessing easily retrievable information; stereotypes that are frequently activated will be more influential than those that are not (Huckfeldt et al 2005). When voters navigate the current political environment – one in which both gender and partisanship may be relevant considerations – we would expect candidate party, in most cases, to trump candidate sex as an evaluative criterion (Hayes 2011). Not only do candidates themselves focus on party differences, but the news media also cover partisan conflict as a central aspect of campaigns (Bruni 2002).

Moreover, the legislative behavior of members of Congress points to the manner in which partisanship is a more useful information shortcut than gender. Through the 1990s, Democratic and moderate Republican women in Congress were more likely than men to use their bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship activity to focus on "women's issues" (Dodson 1998; Gerrity, Osborn, and Mendez 2007; Swers 2002; 1998). But as the parties have polarized, gender differences in members' priorities and preferences have faded (Frederick 2009). Relative to gender, then, we suggest that partisanship is more likely to be cued and to confer relevant information to the media and the voters.

Methodological Limitations: For a series of research design and methodological reasons, most studies of gender stereotyping are limited in the light they can shed not only on its prevalence, but also its electoral effects. A central problem is that scholars tend not to merge media content analyses with measures of public opinion. Rather, most studies focus either on the media or the voters and then assume transmission of information from the former to the latter.

Consider, on the one hand, some recent relatively large-scale analyses of gender stereotyping in media coverage. Fowler and Lawless (2009) offer a detailed content analysis of 1,365 newspaper articles for 27 gubernatorial contests in which a woman held a major party nomination. They then use the media content variables to predict election outcomes. With no public opinion or individual-level data from the voters, though, they are left to assume that media content shapes voters' propensities to stereotype and that those stereotypes then affect candidate choice. Kittilson and Fridkin's (2008) cross-national study of federal candidates analyzes 354 articles that appeared in national newspapers, but they have no public opinion data to which they can link their findings. Thus, they can do nothing beyond speculate that gender differences may "shape the ways in which men and women in the electorate look at political life" (Kittilson and Fridkin 2008, 386). Studies that focus exclusively on the media are valuable (Devitt 2002; Gidengil and Everitt 2003; Heldman,

Carroll, and Olson 2005; Kahn 1994; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Miller 2001; Smith 1997), but they cannot discern the effect of the information environment on voters' assessments of candidates.

On the other hand, studies of gender stereotyping among voters tend to control for political interest, but not the media content to which they are exposed. Dolan and Sanbonmatsu (2009), for example, rely on National Election Studies data to demonstrate that gender stereotypes held by voters affect their attitudes toward gender parity and electing more women to U.S. political institutions. Although they control for political knowledge and the presence of women serving in statewide office, they do not gauge the information environment that transmits cues to voters about these elected officials, something the authors themselves acknowledge. The same is true of most trait stereotyping studies; they either lack measures of media coverage, occur in an experimental setting, or focus on hypothetical candidates so that there is no "real" information environment for which to control (see Alexander and Anderson 2003; Brooks 2011; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Kahn 1996; Lawless 2004; Leeper 1991; Rosenwasser and Dean 1989; Sanbonmatsu 2003). Because news coverage can shape voters' attitudes, the manner in which candidates are covered could exacerbate or mitigate the propensity to stereotype (Kunda and Spencer 2003; Kunda and Thagard 1996). Only by directly measuring the information environment and incorporating it into their analyses can researchers explore the plausible sources – gender-related or otherwise – of voters' attitudes about candidates.

This leads to another methodological problem: the inability to disentangle gender and party effects. Because experimental designs have provided significant leverage to scholars attempting to measure citizens' use of gender stereotypes, much of the evidence for gender stereotyping cannot account for the extent to which partisanship is a competing heuristic in a real campaign environment. Sanbonmatsu and Dolan (2009), for instance, ask respondents to consider the capability of "a Democrat who is a man" or "a Democrat who is a woman" to handle various issues.

They find that voters of both parties give an advantage to women when the issue at hand is education, a domain in which women are ostensibly perceived as capable. Huddy and Capelos's (2002) experimental results are consistent; candidate sex influences voters' perceptions of how well candidates would address "women's issues." In both cases, however, respondents are primed to use gender to assess the candidates; partisanship is held constant in one case and, in the other, "women's issues" are the focus. In fact, on most issues, Huddy and Capelos (2002) find that a candidate's party trumps sex as a predictor of vote choice, thereby suggesting that when gender is not cued, party dominates.

Only one study merges media and public opinion data during an actual election season, thereby warding off the criticisms common to most analyses of gender stereotyping. Hayes (2011) offers a detailed content analysis of the 2006 U.S. Senate elections and then uses those results to predict voters' attitudes toward the candidates. His results suggest that assessments of candidate attributes can be affected by news coverage, but that gender stereotyping is limited by the relevance of party stereotypes. Despite the advantages of this research design, the results may be driven, at least in part, by a small-N problem; only 12 women ran for Senate that year. Indeed, this is a common problem for studies of female candidates more generally. Because the vast majority of research in this area has focused on statewide races, scholars have been forced to draw inferences from studies of relatively few female politicians. Even Kahn's (1996) pioneering work on media coverage of U.S. Senate and gubernatorial campaigns – among the most comprehensive in the field – is based on just 22 female candidates. Improving our understanding of the way journalists treat and voters evaluate women running for office requires a research design that goes beyond the scope of the existing literature.

Ultimately, we argue that the last few decades have been characterized by evolving attitudes toward women in politics and heightened levels of party polarization that decrease the salience of

candidate sex as an information shortcut. By relying on a research design that allows us to measure both media content and public opinion during an election cycle, we offer the first nuanced assessment of the long-held assumption that gender stereotyping affects attitudes toward female candidates, thereby contributing to women's numeric under-representation.

Investigating Gender Stereotyping in Media Coverage of U.S. House Campaigns

We begin our assessment of gender stereotyping with an analysis of media coverage of the 2010 U.S. House campaigns. In each of 380 congressional districts for which we have survey data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (discussed below), we identified the largest circulation local newspaper that we could access through one of several electronic databases or the newspaper's online archives. We then collected every newspaper article that mentioned at least one of the two major-party candidates for the House seat and analyzed the content of the coverage they received in the month leading up to Election Day (October 2 – November 2, 2010). We recorded the number of instances a candidate's sex was mentioned, references to more than 100 character traits, and mentions of more than 150 issues associated with a candidate. In all, we coded 4,748 news stories, editorials, and op-ed columns. In the 342 districts for which we located at least one story about the congressional race, 108 candidates were women, and 555 were men. The average number of stories about each contest was fourteen.[3]

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[3] We compared the 342 districts with at least one story to the 38 for which we did not find coverage. Districts with coverage were more likely to feature open seat contests and more competitive races. But they were no more or less likely to include a female candidate. We also compared these districts to the remaining congressional districts across the country. Here, too, competitiveness is the main difference between the districts we analyze and the ones we don't. And

In contrast to most studies of gender stereotyping by the media, which tend to conduct the analysis at the story or paragraph level, we carried out our coding at the level of the individual reference. In other words, we account for *every* time a particular attribute or issue was mentioned. The nuance and scope of our data set allow us also to analyze a large number of male and female candidates, adding to our findings a measure of generalizability that is lacking in previous work. The Appendix provides a detailed description of the content analysis project and coding procedures, including data on the newspapers, the volume of coverage in these races, and the traits and issues we measured (see Tables A1 – A3).

We employ the data set first to test four central propositions from the existing literature: that news coverage of female candidates, relative to coverage of men, is (1) less plentiful, (2) more likely to include references to their sex, (3) more focused on personal traits, and (4) less focused on issues.[4] The second column of Table 1 displays the results of a regression analysis predicting the number of news stories about a race. In addition to candidate sex, we include measures of several other factors that could plausibly influence media coverage: whether the candidate is an incumbent, the candidate's party affiliation, and the competitiveness of the race (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 1999), which we base on the *Cook Political Report's* classification as of October 5, 2010. We also include a

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since the role of the news media and the importance of candidate evaluations are dramatically reduced in non-competitive races, our sample affords us the opportunity to focus on the districts where the relationships among candidate sex, media coverage, and voter attitudes are electorally meaningful.

[4] Our analysis is agnostic as to whether differences in news coverage stem from candidates' campaign strategies, journalistic "bias," or a combination of both.

variable indicating whether the candidate's opponent is a woman, a test of whether even the presence of a female candidate in the race may affect coverage.

The results indicate that neither a candidate's sex, nor the sex of his/her opponent, has anything to do with how much attention journalists devote to a contest. The same story emerges when we examine the number of references to a candidate's sex, as well as the number of references to his/her personal traits and policy issues (see Table 1, columns 3 – 5).[5] In short, we find no evidence that candidate sex is related to the volume or content of media coverage candidates receive. Instead, media coverage is most strongly affected by competitiveness – the more hotly contested the race, the more likely the media are to cover the candidates across all dimensions.

Of course, the volume and emphasis of coverage does not eliminate the possibility that news organizations cover candidates in a stereotypical fashion. A common assertion is that the media give more attention to female candidates' "feminine" traits, such as empathy and integrity, than they do to men's. Likewise, male candidates' "masculine traits," such as competence and leadership, receive disproportionate coverage. Since voters value competence and leadership, disparate levels of coverage of these traits could encourage voters to question female candidates' ability to get the job done.

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[5] To adjust for differences in the volume of coverage across races, we divided the references to candidate sex, traits, and issues by the number of stories in each race. This creates directly comparable measures. In a supplementary analysis, rather than scale the dependent variable by the number of stories in the race, we employed count models to predict the number of references to candidate sex, traits, and issues, and added to these regression equations a control for the number of stories about the race. In both Poisson and negative binomial specifications, the results were unchanged.

Table 1: Candidate Sex and Newspaper Coverage in the 2010 U.S. House Elections

	Number of Stories	References to Candidate Sex	Amount of Trait Coverage	Amount of Issue Coverage
Female Candidate	-0.304 (1.148)	0.032 (0.023)	0.005 (0.032)	0.252 (0.171)
Female Opponent	-0.429 (1.177)	-0.017 (0.017)	-0.013 (0.029)	-0.069 (0.114)
Incumbent	-0.078 (0.552)	-0.004 (0.010)	0.083 (0.020) *	0.791 (0.091) *
Democrat	-0.052 (0.204)	0.007 (0.010)	-0.017 (0.021)	-0.277 (0.082) *
Competitiveness	5.781 (0.708) *	0.019 (0.006) *	0.080 (0.027) *	0.395 (0.064) *
Constant	10.324 (0.771) *	0.041 (0.007) *	0.077 (0.016) *	0.980 (0.096) *
Adjusted R^2	0.223	0.012	0.067	0.141
N	663	663	663	663

Notes: The dependent variables in the final three columns – References to Candidate Sex, Amount of Trait Coverage, and Amount of Issue Coverage – are scaled by the number of stories in a district. Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * $p < .05$.

Our coding scheme identified every news reference to a candidate's traits, allowing us to quantify with unusual precision the attributes most frequently used to describe female and male candidates. We then classified each trait as belonging to one of the four dimensions that previous research has identified as salient for voters: competence, leadership, integrity, and empathy (see, e.g., Kinder 1986). We also coded whether, based on the context in which it appeared in the article, the trait reference was positive (e.g., competent) or negative (e.g., incompetent). The results reveal a fair amount of both positive and negative trait coverage. Overall, 51% of the candidates received at least one mention of their competence, leadership, integrity, or empathy. Positive mentions were somewhat more common than negative references; 38% of candidates were associated with at least one positive trait, and 32% were associated with at least one negative attribute.

The data, however, are not kind to the conventional wisdom. In Figure 1, we present the proportion of candidates, by sex, for whom we found at least one story that made reference to the candidate's competence, leadership, integrity, and empathy. As indicated by the overlapping confidence intervals in each of the eight comparisons, male and female candidates were equally likely to be described as possessing these traits; none of the comparisons between men and women is statistically significant (p < .05).

Figure 1: Trait Mentions in 2010 U.S. House Campaign News Coverage, by Sex of the Candidate
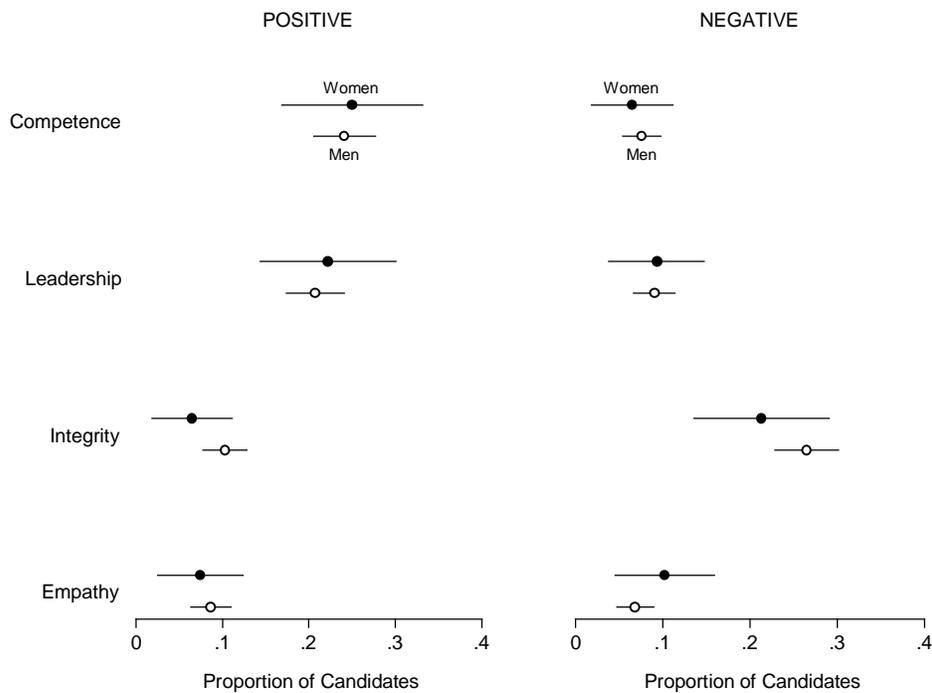
Notes: Dots indicate the proportion of candidates (with 95% confidence intervals) who received at least one mention of each trait in the overall amount of news coverage analyzed. For women, N = 108; for men, N = 555.

We can provide a more refined test of the stereotyping argument by taking advantage of the exhaustive nature of our coding scheme. While newspapers may have published similar numbers of stories that mentioned male and female candidates' traits, perhaps the frequency with which these attributes appeared in the news differed. The proportions in Figure 1 could mask the fact that

women and men might receive heavy amounts of attention to different traits within a given story. Moreover, the descriptive analysis does not control for incumbency, party, the competitiveness of the race, or the presence of a female opponent.

Thus, we conducted a series of regression equations that include these controls. The dependent variable in each model is the number of news references to a candidate's attributes on the eight trait dimensions.[6] Once again, we find no evidence that candidate sex affects media coverage. The top portion of Figure 2 presents the regression coefficients (and 95% confidence intervals) for female candidate in each equation. In no case is the effect of sex statistically distinguishable from zero. Whereas heightened levels of competitiveness and the presence of a sitting representative in the race affect how journalists cover a campaign, the sex of the candidates does not. (See Table A4 for the full regression equations.)

The same finding emerges when we turn to references to the issues mentioned in connection with a candidate. We identified every issue mentioned in each newspaper article and then classified each as a "women's issue," "men's issue," or neither. We attributed "women's issue" and "men's issue" status only to cases for which the literature has reached a consensus and the classification is intuitive. Even with this conservative coding scheme, issue coverage was prevalent; nearly 43% of the candidates were connected to at least one "men's issue," such as crime, national security, or war, and roughly 16% received coverage of at least one "women's issue," including abortion, domestic violence, or pay equity. As the coefficients presented in the bottom portion of Figure 2 make clear, though, male and female candidates were equally likely to be associated with "men's issues" and

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[6] We scaled the dependent variables by the number of stories in each race.

"women's issues" (see Table A5 for the complete regression results).[7] Even if "women's issues" are typically not salient to voters, female candidates are not disadvantaged because they are not systematically more likely than men to be connected to them.

Figure 2: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Trait and Issue Mentions in 2010 U.S. House Campaign News Coverage
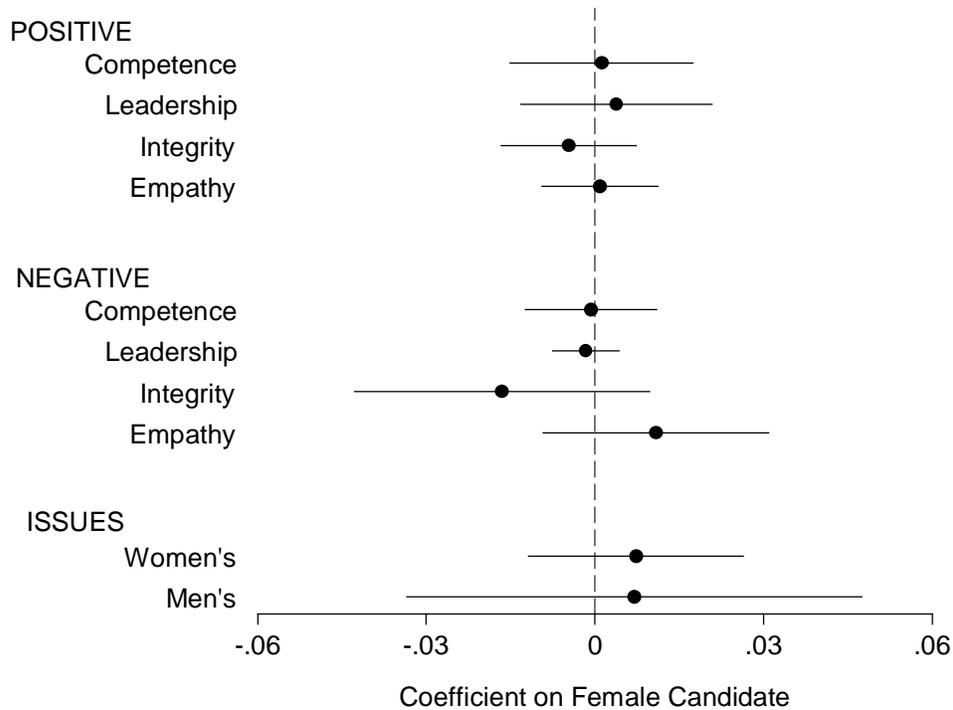
Notes: Dots represent unstandardized OLS regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. See Tables A4 and A5 for the full regression equations.

In sum, the results—which emerge from more than 4,000 articles, and hundreds of local newspapers, congressional races, and candidates—could hardly be more clear: Sex bears no relationship to media coverage of the 2010 House elections. If women face significant or additional hurdles when navigating the campaign trail, then those impediments are not raised by the media.

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[7] The dependent variable is the number of mentions of "men's issues" and "women's issues," divided by the total number of stories about the race.

Investigating Gender Stereotyping by Voters in U.S. House Campaigns

Our content analysis demonstrates that the media are not engaged in gender stereotyping in their coverage of U.S. House candidates, so candidate sex is not salient in the information environment voters navigate. But what about voters themselves? Perhaps voters are inclined to assess candidates in gendered ways that pose challenges for women pursuing elective office, separate and apart from the media coverage to which they are exposed. According to the conventional wisdom, voters are likely to assess female candidates as more empathetic and trustworthy than male candidates. By contrast, voters view male candidates as stronger leaders and as more competent than women. These personal attributes are particularly important because they are argued to underlie differential issue-handling evaluations for men and women (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993).

To examine the prevalence of stereotyping by the public, we designed the Candidate Stereotyping Study survey within the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study.[8] A nationally representative sample of 1,000 U.S. residents was asked a series of questions to gauge the extent to which they evaluate congressional candidates in ways consistent with gender stereotyping. More specifically, respondents were asked to rate both the Democratic and Republican House candidates in their districts on two ostensibly "feminine" traits – "really cares about people like me" (which we henceforth refer to as empathy) and "trustworthy" – and one "masculine" trait – "provides strong leadership." Following the wording of the National Election Studies trait measures and those in previous work (e.g., Fridkin and Kenney 2011), the questions were worded this way: "Think about Julie Lassa, the Democratic candidate for U.S. House of Representatives. In your opinion, how well

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[8] The CCES is a collaborative survey among dozens of academic institutions, conducted by YouGov/Polimetrix. Details about the survey design, sampling, and other technical information is available at http://projects.iq.harvard.edu/cces/.

does the phrase 'provides strong leadership' describe Julie Lassa?" Respondents could answer "extremely well," "quite well," "not too well," or "not well at all." Responses were assigned a numerical value, with 1 representing "not well at all" and 4 representing "extremely well."

Figure 3 presents the mean trait ratings, broken down by candidate sex. Because Democratic and Republican candidates tend to "own" certain traits (Hayes 2005), we control for this potential confound by separating the data by party. The results indicate that for all three traits – across party – the mean evaluation for each candidate fell in between "not too well" and "quite well." More important for our purposes, however, are the overlapping confidence intervals in each comparison, which show unequivocally the absence of gender differences.

Figure 3: Evaluations of 2010 U.S. House Candidates' Leadership, Empathy, and Trustworthiness, by Candidate Party and Sex
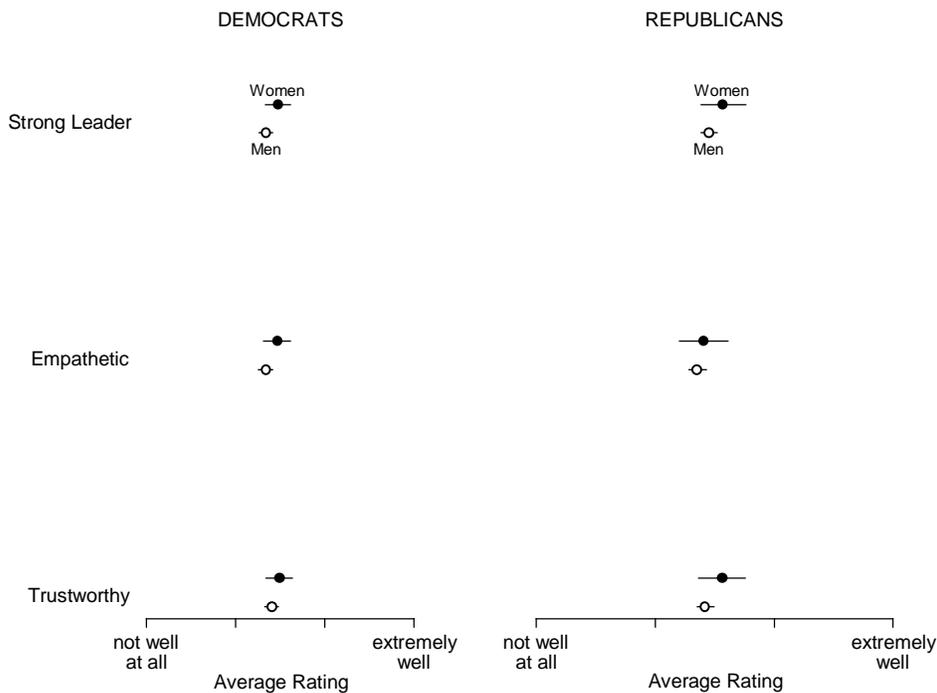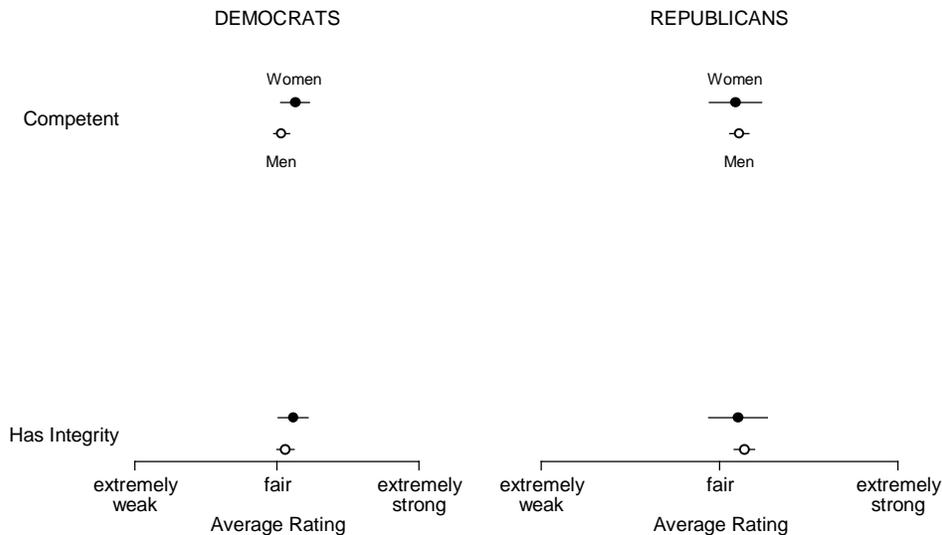

Notes: Dots indicate the mean rating on a 1 – 4 scale (with 95% confidence intervals). For female Democratic candidates, N = 202; for male Democratic candidates, N = 674; for female Republican candidates, N = 91; and for male Republican candidates, N = 805. N varies slightly across traits, as some respondents did not answer all 3 questions. See Table A6.

Beyond the three trait measures designed specifically to be included in the Candidate Stereotyping Study, two additional trait measures were administered as part of the larger "Common Content" survey in the CCES. All CCES respondents, including those from the Candidate Stereotyping Study sample, were asked to assess the "competence" (a masculine trait) and "personal integrity" (a feminine trait) of their Democratic and Republican House candidates on a 7-point scale that ranged from "extremely weak" to "extremely strong." [9] These trait ratings further undermine the expectation that voters judge candidates in gendered terms. Just as with the ratings of House candidates' leadership, empathy, and trustworthiness, the data presented in Figure 4 reveal no statistically significant gender differences in candidates' competence and integrity ratings. (See Table A6 for details.)

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[9] The trait items from the Candidate Stereotyping Study and the Common Content differed in that the Common Content questions included a "not sure" option, whereas that the Candidate Stereotyping Study questions did not. About 34% of respondents chose "not sure" for the competence and integrity measures. To determine whether the absence of the "not sure" option affects our findings, we eliminated the respondents who answered "not sure" to the Common Content competence and integrity measures, and then re-ran all of our analyses. In every case, candidate sex had no influence on voters' assessments of candidate traits. Thus, the absence of a "not sure" option in the leadership, empathy, and trustworthiness measures does not appear to influence our conclusions. We restrict our analysis of the competence and integrity questions to the sub-sample of respondents who did not answer "not sure" (this is why the number of respondents is smaller in Figure 4 than in Figure 3).

Figure 4: Evaluations of 2010 U.S. House Candidates' Competence and Integrity, by Candidate Party and Sex

Notes: Dots indicate the mean rating on a 1 – 7 scale (with 95% confidence intervals). For female Democratic candidates, N = 154; for male Democratic candidates, N = 496; for female Republican candidates, N = 64; and for male Republican candidates, N = 589. N varies slightly across traits, as some respondents did not answer both questions. See Table A6.

Regression analyses confirm the descriptive findings. We ran a series of models that predict respondents' evaluations of Democratic and Republican House candidates' leadership, empathy, trustworthiness, competence, and integrity. In addition to the sex of the candidate, we include in the ten equations three sets of variables that could influence a respondent's evaluations of the House candidates in his/her district. First, we control for the respondent's party identification, ideology, interest in the news, and a host of socio-demographic variables. We also include indicators of the candidate's incumbency status and vote share, so as to account for a respondent's likely exposure to the candidates running in the district (Jacobson 2009). Finally, we leverage our content analysis to determine the extent to which the information the media provide to voters affects trait evaluations (Druckman 2004; Fridkin and Kenney 2011). More specifically, each model includes measures of

the total number of positive trait, negative trait, "women's issues," and "men's issues" mentions the candidate received.[10] In addition, we include a measure of the total number of references to the candidate's sex, which we interact with the sex of the candidate so as to capture any gender differences in effect.

The most striking finding to emerge from the analysis is that candidate sex consistently fails to achieve conventional levels of statistical significance. Figure 5 presents the coefficient and 95% confidence interval on the female candidate variable from the ten equations (see Tables A7 and A8 for the full regression results). In no case does the sex of the candidate influence respondents' evaluations of candidate traits.[11]

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[10] The results are unchanged when we include interactions between vote share and female candidate, and respondent party identification and female candidate. We also ran models in which we used media coverage of a specific trait to predict evaluations of candidates on the corresponding trait. For instance, in the leadership model, we included news variables that represented the amount of positive and negative leadership coverage, not overall trait coverage. We found, however, that voters' assessments were best explained by overall trait coverage, not coverage of the specific trait. This finding is consistent with an on-line processing model (e.g., Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau 1995), in which voters update their attitudes about a candidate based on the positivity or negativity of information.

[11] Because of an interaction term included in the regression models, the coefficients in Figure 5 represent the effect of candidate sex when there are no mentions of a candidate's gender in news coverage (see Tables A7 and A8). We summarize the data in this simple way for two reasons. First, mentions of candidate sex in our content analysis are infrequent – 68% of candidates received none – which means the "no mentions" scenario captures the vast majority of congressional campaigns.

Figure 5: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Evaluations of U.S. House Candidates, 2010
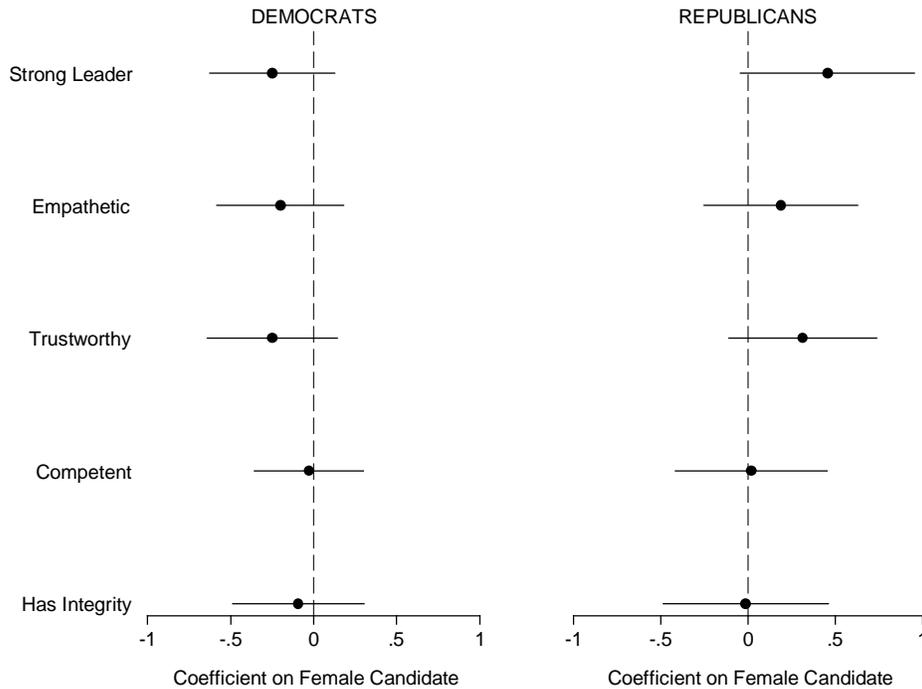
Notes: Dots for "Strong Leader," "Empathetic," and "Trustworthy" are ordered logistic regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. Dots for "Competent" and "Has Integrity" are OLS regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. See Tables A7 and A8 for the full regression equations.

A candidate's sex might be apparent to voters, but it does not override what are clearly more political salient considerations. Indeed, partisanship and the information environment structure the manner in which voters arrive at their evaluations. The strongest and most consistent predictors of voter opinion are whether the candidate shares the respondent's partisan and ideological orientation; party and self-reported ideology are significant in all ten models. In addition, in five of the ten

Second, the interaction terms demonstrate that mentions of candidate sex in the news do not promote stereotyping. While three of the interaction coefficients are significant, they all work to women's advantage, even on the supposedly "male" trait of leadership. Seven are statistically insignificant. Thus, Figure 5 accurately summarizes the substantive effect of the presence of a female candidate – namely, that it does not affect voters' assessments.

models, at least one indicator of positive or negative trait coverage is statistically significant.[12] The regression coefficients and confidence intervals presented in Figure 6 are, once again, taken from the regression equations predicting respondents' assessments of Democratic and Republican candidates on the five traits. Positive trait mentions are associated with higher competence evaluations for Democratic candidates. By contrast, negative trait mentions depress respondents' evaluations of Democratic and Republican candidates' integrity, as well as GOP candidates' empathy and competence. The news does not always shape candidate evaluations, and the traits it affects vary across party. But the data indicate that, at least in some cases, media portrayals can influence voters' assessments. Because gender differences were not evident in the media's coverage of these traits, however, the power of the local media to affect voters' evaluations of House candidates does not promote gender stereotyping.

The results from the Candidate Stereotyping Study provide compelling evidence of the absence of gender stereotyping by voters. For none of the five traits we examine does the sex of the candidate affect respondents' assessments of Democrats or Republicans. Moreover, voters' reliance on media coverage to shape their evaluations of the candidates – while prevalent – does not foster gender stereotyping, but does underscore the importance of specifying models so as to take into account these effects. Overall, the findings suggest that perhaps voters are just as willing to elect women as men because they evaluate them similarly on a range of trait dimensions.

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12 In terms of other media-related effects, mentions of "women's issues," "men's issues," and candidate gender are not statistically significant in any equation. Neither are interactions between candidate sex and the issue coverage variables.

Figure 6: The Impact of Trait Coverage on Evaluations of U.S. House Candidates, 2010
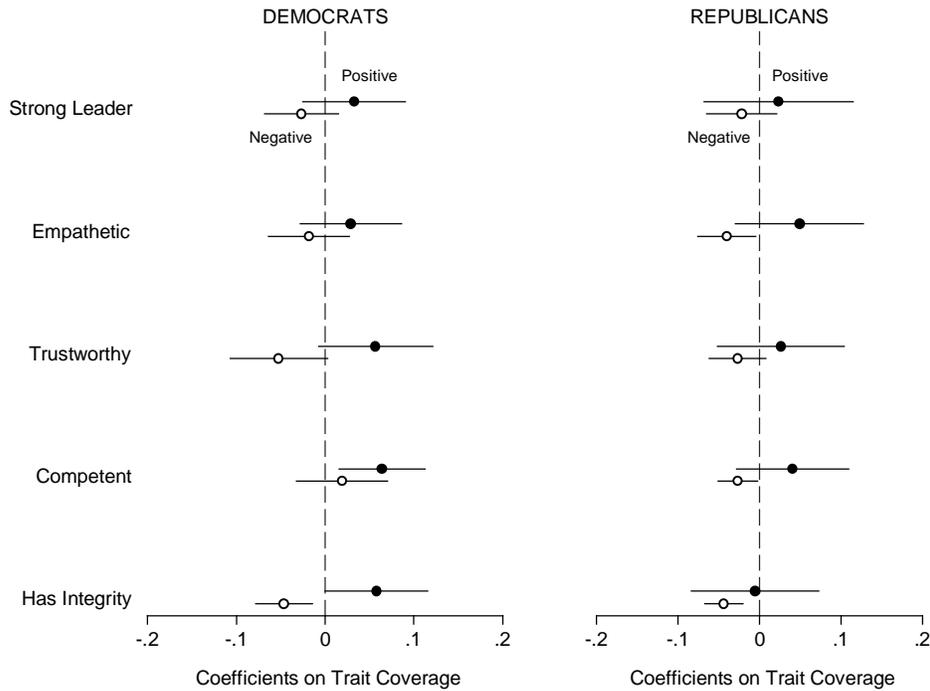
Notes: Dots for "Strong Leader," "Empathetic," and "Trustworthy" are ordered logistic regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. Dots for "Competent" and "Has Integrity" are OLS regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. See Tables A7 and A8 for the full regression equations.

Leveraging the CCES Common Content Sample: A Robustness Check

The Candidate Stereotyping Study includes just a handful of respondents from any single House district, so it is important to rule out the possibility that our findings are somehow driven by a relatively small sample. To do so, we rely on the two trait measures – competence and integrity – that were administered to all 50,000 respondents as part of the larger "Common Content" survey in the CCES.

Turning first to the average trait ratings, the data reveal that the evaluations of candidates running for the U.S. House offered by the respondents in the Candidate Stereotyping Study are very similar to the assessments rendered by the full CCES sample (see Table A9). Particularly important for our purposes is the fact that we uncover – even with an unusually large sample of respondents –

no significant gender differences in the mean trait ratings on competence or integrity for Democrats or Republicans.

Our multivariate findings also do not appear to be an artifact of the limited number of respondents in each congressional district. When we expand the regression analyses to include the full CCES sample and focus on the competence and integrity trait measures from the Common Content survey, the findings are generally similar to those from the Candidate Stereotyping Study (see Table A10). That is, party and ideological congruence between the respondent and the candidate drive trait assessments, as do positive and negative trait coverage (and incumbency). The sex of the candidate, however, does not predict evaluations of GOP candidates' competence or integrity. Nor does it predict assessments of Democratic candidates' integrity.

There is one exception to the null findings: female Democratic candidates receive lower competence ratings than men, a result that is – at least at first glance – consistent with gender stereotyping. But more detailed analyses suggest otherwise. When we run the models separately for Democratic, Republican, and pure independent respondents, only among Republicans does the effect of a female candidate remain negative and significant. Although this could mean that Republicans are stereotyping female Democratic candidates, a similar pattern occurs when we run the Democratic candidate integrity models separately by respondent party identification. Here, too, Republican respondents assess Democratic women as having less integrity than their male counterparts. This result is inconsistent with gender stereotyping. Together, these findings suggest that Republican voters are not *stereotyping* Democratic women; rather, they just evaluate them less favorably, regardless of whether the trait in question is "male" or female." While delving more deeply into this finding is beyond the scope of this paper, it is likely that these lower evaluations are driven not by candidate sex, but rather, by the districts in which these women sought congressional seats. Women are more likely to emerge as candidates in districts with higher-income, highly

educated, and ethnically and racially diverse electorates (Palmer and Simon 2008). In other words, women tend to run in particularly liberal districts. Republican voters in those districts, therefore, are – on average – less ideologically in sync with Democratic candidates than in the districts where Democratic men run for office. Even with this finding, though, the Common Content data do little to undermine our public opinion results. In fact, they provide confirmatory evidence in nearly all cases.

Conclusion

By merging public opinion data with media coverage of candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives in nearly 350 districts, we offer clear evidence that gender stereotyping by the media and the voters does not permeate contemporary congressional elections. Our detailed content analysis of the newspaper coverage candidates received in 2010 reveals no gender differences. Not only did journalists devote a comparable number of stories to men and women running for office, but those articles looked the same. And our analysis of data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study indicates that voters are just as unlikely to rely on gender stereotypes when they assess candidates as journalists are when they cover them. Partisanship, ideology, incumbency, and news coverage – long-identified as key forces in congressional elections – shape voters' evaluations of candidate traits; the sex of the candidate does not. Together, these findings refute claims and assumptions that gender stereotyping systematically contributes to women's numeric under-representation.

In drawing these broad conclusions, we recognize that we rely on data from only one election cycle. What we lose in breadth, however, we gain in depth. No previous study of gender stereotyping approaches the level of detail in media coding or the number of candidates – more than

600 – as does ours. In short, our research design allows us to offer an unusually thorough assessment of gender stereotyping – or, more to the point, the lack thereof.

Moreover, the data suggest that the results are not driven by anomalies of the 2010 election cycle. The emergence of the Tea Party and some of its very conservative female candidates, for example, does not appear to influence our results. After all, when we break down our analysis by party, the sex of the candidate is an insignificant predictor of trait evaluations across the board (see Figure 5). The results are also likely not a product of the issue environment. If stereotypes are enhanced or diminished by the particular issues of an election cycle, then 2010 provided ample opportunity for stereotypes to work against female candidates. Yet despite the strong role the economy – a "men's issue" – played in the congressional elections, women's media coverage and voter assessments were no different than men's. Our findings are also consistent with the only other analysis of this type. Hayes's (2011) assessment of gender stereotyping in the 2006 U.S. Senate elections, while more limited in scope, finds that journalists tend not to cover candidates in gendered ways, and that candidate sex is much less powerful than candidate party affiliation in shaping voters' perceptions. Given that 2006 was a wave election that the Democrats rode into power, whereas 2010 swept the GOP back into control, it is difficult to make the case that our findings are the product of electoral idiosyncrasies or a particular political context.

Overall, the results carry important implications (and mixed prospects) for democratic politics and women's numeric representation. As far as the media are concerned, our findings paint a normatively attractive picture. The analysis demonstrates that news coverage can affect voters' assessments of congressional candidates. This relationship can be problematic if the media mislead voters or reinforce their biases and prejudices. But such is not the case. The media cover male and female candidates similarly on numerous dimensions. The information environment, therefore, does not disadvantage women.

From the perspective of prospects for women's fuller inclusion in elite level politics, the prognosis is less rosy. Our study includes far more female candidates – more than 100 – than any previous analysis of gender stereotyping. The fact remains, however, that women continue to represent only a fraction of federal candidates across the country. Women occupy only about one-quarter of the seats held by Democrats in the House, and they account for only 10% of the Republican conference. Media bias against women is rare, and voters may no longer assess candidates' attributes through a gendered lens. But because the media devote more coverage to incumbents and voters evaluate incumbents more favorably than challengers, relatively few women reap the benefits. Continuing to study the reasons that women are less likely than men to emerge as candidates in the first place (e.g., Lawless and Fox 2010), therefore, will produce larger payoffs than devoting attention to gender stereotyping in the electoral arena. It might seem a bit unsettling to suggest that it may no longer be legitimate to blame the media and the public for women's under-representation, but the data make it hard to argue otherwise.

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Supplementary Information – Appendix

Description of Newspaper Coding

Very little political science research has sought to analyze media coverage of House elections from more than a handful of districts. Thus, there is no accepted method of identifying the local news outlets that serve a particular House contest. We focus on newspapers because most of the information available to voters during congressional election campaigns comes from local print media (Graber 2009; Vinson 2003).

To identify the appropriate newspaper for each House race, we first consulted maps of the 380 congressional districts represented in our 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study survey data. We identified the largest city in each district, and then determined whether the city had a daily newspaper that we could access through one of several electronic databases or through the newspaper's online archives. In the vast majority of cases, this was a straightforward, though time-consuming, task. In the few cases for which we could not gain access to newspaper coverage from the district's largest-circulation daily paper, we relied on coverage from the largest paper in an adjoining congressional district.

Before undertaking the content analysis, two coders participated in several hours of practice coding, using news stories from House elections in previous years. This allowed us to refine and improve the coding scheme and to minimize confusion and maximize consistency between the coders.

After the practice coding, we identified every news story in each congressional district from October 2 through November 2, 2010 (Election Day) that mentioned at least one of the two major party candidates. We included in the sample straight news reports, news analyses, editorials, and op-ed columns. We did not code letters to the editor. We did not restrict the analysis strictly to "campaign" stories because we assume that any information about the House candidates is

potentially relevant for voters. As a result, our coding includes a comprehensive analysis of the media coverage to which voters could have been exposed in the lead-up to the election. Our analyses do not include independent and minor-party candidates.

Coders read the full text of each article, recording a number of pieces of information. The key variables were references to a candidate's sex or gender, references to a candidate's character traits, and references to issues in connection with a candidate.

Table A1 provides an overview of our media data. The figures in the table represent summary statistics on the circulation size of the newspapers in our sample, the number of stories about the congressional race, and the length of those stories. The circulation of the newspapers and the amount of attention to the House race varies quite a bit, as one would expect, given differences in district composition and competitiveness. In all, we coded 4,748 stories in 342 districts. There are 38 districts for which we did not find any coverage of the race, but the absence of coverage is unrelated to the presence of a female candidate.

Table A1: Summary Statistics on Newspaper Sample and News Stories

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Daily Circulation of Newspaper	196,462	200,763	6,772	876,638
Number of Stories	14	13	1	81
Average Number of Words in a Story	700	253	34	1,967

Notes: Data are based on 342 districts with at least one story mentioning a candidate in the 2010 House race. The total number of stories is 4,748.

Coding of Media Coverage Variables

Mentions of Candidate Sex: Coders read the full text of each story and recorded the number of times a candidate's gender was mentioned. References included explicit mentions of a candidate

being a man or woman (e.g., "As a woman running for political office..."), as well as gender-specific roles. For example, if a candidate was referred to as juggling her role as campaigner and mother, then that was coded as a gender mention. In other words, we coded material that clearly identified a candidate as one gender or the other – "mother," "father," etc. – and we counted references to a candidate's physical appearance, style of dress, clothing, hair and makeup, and so forth. In short, we sought to capture a wide range of references in news coverage that would draw a reader's attention to the sex of a candidate. (We should note, however, that we did not count use of feminine and masculine pronouns, such as "she" and "he.")

Mentions of Candidate Traits: Coders also recorded the number of explicit references to candidate traits, both positive and negative (e.g., "honest" and "dishonest"). These references could come from candidates themselves ("I have shown the leadership abilities to represent this district effectively"), their opponents ("My opponent does not care about the people of this district"), or reporters ("Questions about Thompson's trustworthiness have been a problem for her campaign").

We coded for traits that fell into one of the four dimensions that previous research has identified as salient for voters: competence, leadership, integrity, and empathy (see, e.g., Kinder 1986). A few traits for which we coded did not, however, fall into one of these four categories (e.g., "loyal"). In this paper, we do not focus on this small subset of traits, but we found no differences in coverage on this "general character" dimension for male and female candidates.

Although we began the coding with a list of traits commonly included in previous studies, coders also recorded references to additional traits they encountered in coverage. In total, we coded for 131 separate specific trait references that fell into the four trait dimensions. Table A2 displays the full list.

Table A2: Specific Trait References Coded for in News Coverage

	Competence	Leadership	Integrity	Empathy
Positive	accomplished, articulate, assertive, careful, cautious competent, consistent, contemplative, creative, dedicated, determined, diligent, effective, experienced, focused, good speaker/orator, hardworking, has common-sense, intelligent, knowledgeable, open-minded, pragmatic, proactive, rational, reasonable, reliable, responsible, savvy, thoughtful, understated, wonky	active, ambitious, brave, committed, confident, consistent, courageous, decisive, direct, effective, energetic, enthusiastic, entrepreneurial, feisty, fighter, independent, independent thinker, maverick, optimistic, passionate, persistent, straightshooter, strong, strong leader, team player, tough	decent, earnest, ethical, has integrity, honest, honorable, principled, reliable, sincere, trustworthy	accessible, affable, caring, compassionate, concerned with needs of district, courteous, empathetic, engaging, friendly, good listener, in touch, kind, likeable, listens to constituents, nice, personable
Negative	careless, clueless, incompetent, ineffective, inexperienced, irrational, irresponsible, not pragmatic, reactive, superficial, unfit, uninformed, unintelligent, unprofessional	adversarial, afraid, argumentative, combative, fearful, flip-flopper, inconsistent, lack of confidence, lackadaisical, lacks vision, not independent, party puppet/lapdog, rigid, scared, unsure, weak, weak leader	dirty fighter, dishonest, disingenuous, greedy, hypocritical, immoral, lacks integrity, liar, malicious, manipulative, not trustworthy, unethical	aloof, not caring, not engaged, out of touch

Mentions of Issues in Connection with a Candidate: As with the sex and trait coding, we tracked every time an issue was mentioned. For instance, if a candidate was quoted as pledging to fight for more federal money for public schools, then we coded that as a reference to education. We began with a list of issues commonly included in previous studies and then recorded references to additional issues as they emerged in the coverage. We then classified them in two ways. First, we classified them as "women's issues," "men's issues," or neither. Second, we divided them into eight broad categories following previous scholars' coding schemes: (1) Civil and Social Order, (2)

Defense, Security, and Military, (3) Social Welfare, (4) Taxes and Spending, (5) Foreign Affairs, (6) Race and Social Groups, (7) Government Functioning, and (8) Economy (see Hayes 2010; Petrocik 1996). Table A3 presents a list of the 173 issues we identified.

The results we present in this paper are unchanged when we predict issue coverage for each of these eight issue classifications, as opposed to just "women's issues" and "men's issues." In none of the eight categories was candidate sex a statistically significant predictor of issue coverage (p < .05). In fact, for the three most "male" categories – Civil and Social Order, Defense, Security, and Military, and Taxes and Spending – the coefficients are positive, indicating that women were more likely than men to be mentioned in connection to these issues.

Table A3: Specific Issue References Coded for in News Coverage

"Women's Issues"	"Men's Issues"	Defense, Security, Military	Taxes and Spending	Race and Social Groups
abortion, advocacy for women, birth control/contraception, children's issues (child care), domestic violence, ERA/pay equity, family planning, pornography, women's health care, women's issues (not abortion, contraception)	Afghanistan, crime, criminal justice system, death penalty, defense, defense spending, Guantanamo Bay, guns, hunting rights, intelligence, Iran, Iraq, military, national security, nuclear weapons, Pakistan, Patriot Act, public safety, securing the border, security, terrorism, war	Afghanistan, defense, defense spending, GI bill, Guantanamo Bay, intelligence, Iran, Iraq, military issues (bases, benefits, health care, pay), NASA/space, national security, nuclear weapons, Pakistan, Patriot Act, security, veterans' affairs, war	arts programs, balanced budget, budget/spending, Bush tax cuts, business, debt ceiling, debt or deficit, earmarks/pork, funding for local projects, government size/power, oil subsidies, other program funding, research and development, spending, taxes/tax breaks	advocacy for women, affirmative action, civil rights, Don't Ask, Don't Tell, ERA/pay equity, gay rights, marriage equality, Native American issues, race advocacy, racial equality, seniors, workplace discrimination, workplace diversity

Civil and Social Order	Social Welfare	Economy	Foreign Affairs	Government Functioning
abortion, alcohol, assisted suicide, bullying, civil liberties, crime, criminal justice system, death penalty, domestic violence, English as the national language, gambling and casinos, guns, hate crimes, hunting rights, illegal drugs, immigration, police of fire funding, pornography, privacy, public safety, religion/religious issues/creationism taught in schools, school prayer, securing the border, separation of church and state, social issues, stem cell research	9/11 workers health plan, birth control/contraception, BP oil spill, cap and trade, children's issues/child care, climate change, education, energy/electricity/coal/nuclear power, entitlements, environment, family planning, health care/health insurance/Obamacare, homelessness, Medicaid, medical research, Medicare, mining, natural gas, oil drilling, oil pipelines, prescription drugs, school vouchers, social security, social services, student loans, teacher salaries, utilities, water, welfare, wildlife/forests, women's health, women's issues (not abortion, contraception), work safety, workers' compensation	agriculture, auto industry, bailout, banks, business, Cash for Clunkers, consumer protection, credit card reform, economy, ethanol subsidies, farms, federal employee wages, Freddie Mac/Fannie Mae, free enterprise, gas prices, global currency, housing/foreclosures, inequality (economic), infrastructure, jobs, labor, manufacturing, minimum wage, mortgage rates, net neutrality, outsourcing, personal finances, poverty, redistribution of wealth, regulations, retirement, stimulus, TARP, technology, tourism, transportation, unemployment, unions, Wall Street reform	Africa, China, diplomacy, foreign policy, human rights, international issues in health, Israel, Mexico, Middle East, other specific country, spending on foreign aid, trade	campaign finance reform, constitutional amendments, decreasing partisanship in Congress, disaster relief/ FEMA, ethics, FDA, government reform/transparency, insurance reform (not health care), lobbying, PACs, personal scandal, reforms to congressional campaigns, term limits, tort reform, wages for members of Congress and other elected officials

Table A4: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Trait Mentions in 2010 U.S. House Campaign News Coverage
(Ordinary Least Squares Regression Coefficients and Standard Errors)

	Negative Competence	Positive Competence	Negative Empathy	Positive Empathy	Negative Leadership	Positive Leadership	Negative Integrity	Positive Integrity
Female Candidate	-0.001	0.001	0.011	0.001	-0.002	0.004	-0.017	-0.005
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.006)
Female Opponent	0.009	-0.008	-0.003	0.011	0.002	-0.002	-0.005	-0.017 *
	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.003)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.008)
Incumbent	0.006	0.012	0.011 *	0.013 *	0.010 *	0.014 *	0.021 *	-0.003
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.007)
Democrat	-0.002	0.005	-0.010	-0.000	0.000	0.007	-0.007	-0.013
	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Competitiveness	0.009	0.010	0.002 *	0.003	0.003 *	0.011 *	0.033 *	0.007
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.010)	(0.006)
Constant	0.018 *	0.018 *	0.004 *	-0.001	0.001	0.007	0.021 *	0.022 *
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.010)
Adjusted R²	0.008	0.008	0.019	0.025	0.019	0.030	0.061	0.003
N	663	663	663	663	663	663	663	663

Notes: Each dependent variable is scaled by the number of stories in a district. Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * $p < .05$.

Table A5: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Issue Coverage in 2010 U.S. House Campaign News Coverage

	References to "Women's Issues"	References to "Men's Issues"
Female Candidate	0.007 (0.010)	0.007 (0.021)
Female Opponent	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.007 (0.016)
Incumbent	-0.006 (0.007)	0.073 (0.013) *
Democrat	-0.010 (0.006)	-0.008 (0.012)
Competitiveness	0.012 (0.006) *	0.020 (0.008) *
Constant	0.025 (0.006) *	0.047 (0.010) *
Adjusted R^2	0.016	0.052
N	663	663

Notes: Each dependent variable is scaled by the number of stories in a district. Cell entries are unstandardized OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * $p < .05$.

Table A6: Evaluations of 2010 U.S. House Candidates' Traits, by Candidate Party and Sex

	Democratic Candidates		Republican Candidates	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
Strong Leader	2.48	2.34	2.57	2.45
	(1.01)	(0.97)	(0.90)	(0.99)
Empathetic	2.47	2.34	2.41	2.35
	(1.10)	(1.04)	(0.98)	(1.06)
Trustworthy	2.49	2.41	2.56	2.42
	(1.05)	(0.99)	(0.93)	(1.01)
N	202	674	91	805
Competent	4.39	4.10	4.27	4.33
	(1.90)	(1.95)	(1.76)	(2.00)
Has Integrity	4.35	4.18	4.31	4.41
	(1.98)	(2.00)	(1.92)	(2.07)
N	154	496	64	589

Notes: Cell entries are means, with standard deviations in parentheses. Measures for "Strong Leader," "Empathetic," and "Trustworthy" are on a 1 – 4 scale, with higher values indicating more positive evaluations. Measures for "Competence" and "Integrity" are on a 1 – 7 scale, with higher values indicating more positive evaluations. N varies slightly across traits, as some respondents did not answer all the questions. None of the gender differences is significant at $p < .05$.

Table A7: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Evaluations of Democratic U.S. House Candidates, 2010

	Strong Leader	Empathetic	Trustworthy	Competent	Has Integrity
Female Candidate	-0.25 (.0.19)	-0.20 (0.19)	-0.25 (0.17)	-0.03 (0.17)	-0.09 (0.20)
Incumbent	0.29 (0.18)	0.21 (0.20)	0.34 (0.19)	0.34 (0.17)	0.37 (0.19) *
Positive Trait Coverage	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.06 (0.03)	0.06 (0.02) *	0.06 (0.03)
Negative Trait Coverage	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.02) *
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex x Female Candidate	0.08 (0.04) *	0.10 (0.02) *	0.06 (0.03) *	0.06 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)
Coverage of "Women's Issues"	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.02)	0.02 (0.04)	0.01 (0.03)
Coverage of "Men's Issues"	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.03)
Number of Stories	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Vote Share	1.44 (0.57) *	0.49 (0.64)	0.89 (0.69)	0.57 (0.52)	0.11 (0.62)
Party Identification	-0.49 (0.05) *	-0.40 (0.05) *	-0.43 (0.05) *	-0.38 (0.04) *	-0.36 (0.09) *
Ideology	-0.27 (0.10) *	-0.57 (0.10) *	-0.40 (0.09) *	-0.35 (0.08) *	-0.36 (0.09) *
Sex	0.02 (0.14)	-0.03 (0.14)	-0.15 (0.15)	0.18 (0.14)	0.16 (0.15)
Race	0.08 (0.19)	0.11 (0.19)	0.16 (0.19)	-0.14 (0.16)	-0.06 (0.17)
Interest in News	0.12 (0.10)	0.22 (0.11) *	0.23 (0.10) *	0.09 (0.11)	0.22 (0.12) *
Education	-0.08 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	0.06 (0.04)	0.11 (0.05) *
Age	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01 (0.01)
Threshold 1	-3.33 (0.63) *	-3.46 (0.62) *	-2.76 (0.64) *		
Threshold 2	-1.42 (0.62) *	-1.84 (0.61) *	-0.95 (0.64)		
Threshold 3	1.02 (0.60)	0.25 (0.61)	1.36 (0.65) *		
Constant				5.31 (0.56) *	4.60 (0.59) *
Pseudo R² or R²	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.42	0.38
Log Likelihood	-974.46	-1003.46	-981.74	-1174.76	-1162.09
Chi-squared	317.12	276.95	282.79		
N	733	734	728	563	552

Notes: Cell entries for "Strong Leader," "Empathetic," and "Trustworthy" are ordered logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Cell entries for "Competent" and "Has Integrity" are OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * p < .05.

Table A8: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Evaluations of Republican U.S. House Candidates, 2010

	Strong Leader	Empathetic	Trustworthy	Competent	Has Integrity
Female Candidate	0.45 (0.25)	0.19 (0.22)	0.31 (0.22)	0.02 (0.22)	-0.01 (0.24)
Incumbent	0.18 (0.19)	0.17 (0.20)	0.37 (0.19)	-0.05 (0.19)	-0.07 (0.18)
Positive Trait Coverage	0.02 (0.05)	0.05 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
Negative Trait Coverage	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.02) *	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.01) *	-0.04 (0.01) *
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.05)
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex x Female Candidate	-0.14 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.10)
Coverage of "Women's Issues"	-0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)
Coverage of "Men's Issues"	0.03 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)
Number of Stories	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Vote Share	0.58 (0.55)	-0.41 (0.60)	-0.51 (0.57)	0.60 (0.56)	0.43 (0.57)
Party Identification	0.34 (0.04) *	0.45 (0.05) *	0.36 (0.05) *	0.38 (0.04) *	0.36 (0.04) *
Ideology	0.54 (0.09) *	0.56 (0.09) *	0.45 (0.09) *	0.42 (0.08) *	0.48 (0.09) *
Sex	0.11 (0.14)	0.26 (0.14) *	0.03 (0.14)	-0.21 (0.13)	-0.23 (0.15)
Race	0.11 (0.18)	-0.22 (0.19)	-0.02 (0.19)	-0.23 (0.18)	-0.23 (0.17)
Interest in News	0.03 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.10)	0.06 (0.10)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.02 (0.11)
Education	0.01 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)
Age	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Threshold 1	1.83 (0.65) *	1.90 (0.62) *	1.65 (0.60) *		
Threshold 2	3.68 (0.67) *	3.67 (0.63) *	3.32 (0.61) *		
Threshold 3	6.04 (0.69) *	5.63 (0.65) *	5.50 (0.63) *		
Constant				1.59 (0.64) *	1.12 (0.69)
Pseudo R^2 or R^2	0.16	0.19	0.14	0.42	0.42
Log Likelihood	-993.58	-1015.17	-988.51	-1157.89	-1147.45
Chi-squared	237.59	281.32	250.54		
N	744	742	731	551	536

Notes: Cell entries for "Strong Leader," "Empathetic," and "Trustworthy" are ordered logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Cell entries for "Competent" and "Has Integrity" are OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * $p < .05$.

Table A9: Evaluations of 2010 U.S. House Candidates' Competence and Integrity, by Candidate Party and Sex (Full CCES Sample)

	Democratic Candidates		Republican Candidates	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
Competent	4.14	4.16	4.36	4.54
	(2.03)	(1.92)	(1.89)	(1.84)
Has Integrity	4.25	4.21	4.52	4.61
	(2.04)	(1.97)	(1.92)	(1.91)
N	8,172	26,068	7,146	28,547

Notes: Cell entries are means, with standard deviations in parentheses. Measures are on a 1 – 7 scale, with higher values indicating more positive evaluations. N varies slightly across traits, as some respondents did not answer both questions. None of the gender differences is significant at p < .05.

Table A10: The Impact of Candidate Sex on Evaluations of U.S. House Candidates, 2010 (Full CCES Sample)

	Democratic Candidates		Republican Candidates	
	Competent	*Has Integrity*	*Competent*	*Has Integrity*
Female Candidate	-0.17 (0.05) *	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.14 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.09)
Incumbent	0.14 (0.05) *	-0.02 (0.05)	0.37 (0.05) *	0.32 (0.06) *
Positive Trait Coverage	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01) *	0.02 (0.01)
Negative Trait Coverage	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01) *	-0.01 (0.00) *	-0.02 (0.00) *
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00) *	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Coverage Mentions of Candidate Sex x Female Candidate	0.00 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)
Coverage of "Women's Issues"	0.02 (0.02)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Coverage of "Men's Issues"	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Number of Stories	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00) *	0.00 (0.00)
Vote Share	0.44 (0.14) *	0.33 (0.18)	0.06 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.14)
Party Identification	-0.34 (0.01) *	-0.34 (0.01) *	0.32 (0.01) *	0.32 (0.01) *
Ideology	-0.41 (0.02) *	-0.43 (0.02) *	0.44 (0.01) *	0.46 (0.01) *
Sex	0.12 (0.02) *	0.09 (0.02) *	0.09 (0.02) *	0.06 (0.02) *
Race	-0.04 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	-0.14 (0.03) *	-0.10 (0.03) *
Interest in News	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	0.04 (0.02) *	0.05 (0.02) *
Education	0.05 (0.01) *	0.06 (0.01) *	0.00 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01) *
Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00) *	-0.00 (0.00) *	0.00 (0.00)
Constant	6.26 (0.10) *	6.16 (0.11) *	1.50 (0.10) *	1.27 (0.11) *
Adjusted R^2	0.41	0.38	0.40	0.39
N	27,075	26,619	27,794	27,490

Notes: Cell entries are OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Level of significance: * $p < .05$.