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If She Were a Man: the Role of Gender in Perceptions of Candidate Qualifications

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If She Were A Man:

The Role of Gender in Perceptions of Candidate Qualifications

By.

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A Thesis Submitted to the Honors Council

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Table of Contents

Abstract

My thesis is interested in voter behavior and the role gender plays in their choice of candidates. Specifically, I seek to understand the significance of gender in voters' perceptions of candidates for higher office. First, I analyzed previous academic literature about voter considerations, political ambition, and the reasons for the representation gap in American politics. Then, I completed a qualitative study asking respondents about characteristics of preferred candidates to look for gender cues, and a quantitative study asking respondents to evaluate potential candidates for higher office. Because of the increasing importance of partisanship, I found that contrary to public perception, gender was not a significant consideration for voters. Otherwise identical potential male and female candidates were evaluated equally by voters. These results suggest that while gender stereotypes may have previously impacted voter perception of female candidates, it is not a major barrier to women running for office. It shows us that public perception has not caught up with political reality, and that the only way to address the underrepresentation of women in politics is for social perceptions about voter behavior to realign with how views of female candidates have progressed.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The 2016 United States Presidential election served as a pivotal moment for women in politics. For the first time, a woman was nominated for President by a major political party. With the polls in her favor and unprecedented experience and qualifications, Hillary Clinton was positioned to finally break the glass ceiling in American politics that had seemingly kept so many women out of the political process. Her loss to a candidate known for sexist and misogynistic comments who had no political experience only further solidified the belief that women face additional barriers while running for office and still struggle to secure these seats because of perpetuated gender stereotypes.

When studying voter behavior, however, these seemingly prevalent gender stereotypes are not playing as large of a role as we have been led to believe. Sexism exists, but it's not significantly impacting voter choice (Hayes 2016, Lawless 2014). In numerous studies, voters have not evaluated candidates differently based on their gender (Dolan 2004, Hayes 2016) and when asked what mattered most to them in a candidate, gender was never cited as significantly important to voters (Campbell and Cowley 2014, Cowley 2013). When women were first entering the political arena, they faced the challenge of being a novelty. Their candidacies were framed in a way that made women's lack of political capital and gender expectations appear unfit for office and provided additional barriers for women to overcome. As more women have been elected and appointed to public office and secure high level positions in business and law, though, a

female politician is no longer seen as an unnatural choice. Despite this, the public perception still exists that politics isn't a place for women, that they will face additional barriers, be judged more harshly than their male counterparts, and must therefore be 'overqualified' to run for political office. This in turn negatively impacts the way women considering a run for office view their chances and the environment they would have to endure if they chose to enter the race.

Women already face efficacy issues- the belief in one's ability to succeed- but the perpetuated stereotype that voters view them as underqualified discourages women from running. In regards to factors that encourage political ambition, women are behind. Women are less likely to be politically socialized to see politics as a viable career path, receive encouragement to run, participate in competitive environments that would make them care about winning, and most importantly, to view themselves as a qualified candidate. Therefore, when you have a country of qualified women getting the message from an early age that politics isn't a place for them, it's no surprise that we have so few female representatives and women interested in running for political office.

When women run for office, they win at the same rates as men (Dolan 2004), but are women being perceived differently by voters? Are qualified female candidates being evaluated equally to men or is the assumption that women need to be 'overqualified' accurate? Does partisanship influence how voters perceive the qualifications of candidates? My thesis will use both qualitative and quantitative research in order to address these questions. Most of the academic research examining voter behavior has been focused on candidates who are running for office. Because those studies

consistently found that voters were not punishing women at the ballot box, I felt it important to step back and understand how these perceptions might be exhibiting themselves during the candidate emergence phase. One of the biggest barriers to women running for office is that they don't think they are qualified and are getting the message that they will be perceived differently based on their gender. The candidate emergence phase, where potential candidates put out "feelers" about their chances to win, is an essential time for women to gain the confidence that they will succeed if they run. Once they see that others in their community view them as qualified and have an opportunity for success, they are much more likely to enter the race. Therefore, my study is important in two ways. First, I evaluate 'perceived qualifications' because women believe this is where they will be evaluated differently, particularly feeling they need to be overqualified to consider competing against a man. Second, the crucial candidate emergence stage and voter perception of *potential* candidates has never really been studied before. Therefore, my experiment will provide information not only about how voters perceive the qualifications of female candidates, but how they view them as a potential candidate during an earlier stage of the election process. I will proceed in three steps. First, I will review and analyze academic literature that seeks to understand what matters to voters and the impact that biases, stereotypes, and media coverage might play in influencing voter choice. This background research will address the reasons that women exhibit lower levels of political ambition, particularly the role of candidate efficacy in the decision to run for office. Second, I will conduct a qualitative study of the factors that voters care about when deciding who is qualified to run for office,

interviewing Bucknell students to see what they are looking for in their "preferred" political candidates. I am particularly interested to see if gender-related cues emerge in their answers. I will also ask about their own political ambitions to see if women are less likely to exhibit the desire to run and to see if the reasons respondents cite for not wanting to run are related to gender barriers or stereotypes. Third, I will conduct a quantitative study of how voters perceive qualifications for higher office, looking to see if they evaluate otherwise identical candidates of different genders differently. In my quantitative experiment, I will use a national sample, presenting respondents the biographies of hypothetical potential candidates and randomly varying the candidates' gender. Respondents will evaluate whether they are qualified for three levels of office. This will allow me to examine the role of gender and determine if voters perceive men or women to be more or less qualified for political office. Combined, these studies will provide valuable insight into what matters to voters and how they evaluate potential candidates during the vital candidate emergence process. Because this phase is the time when many women are discouraged from running, the outcome will show us whether gender is negatively impacting voter's evaluation of candidates as much as it is publically perceived to be.

In my studies, I found consistent results with previous research: gender is not a significant consideration in voters' decision making and potential candidates' qualifications were evaluated equally, regardless of gender. During my qualitative study, gender wasn't brought up in conversations about preferred candidates unless prompted and in my quantitative study, there were no real significant differences for potential

candidates who would be likely to run. If men and women are being evaluated equally throughout the electoral process and gender isn't a significant consideration for voters, we need a better understanding of why the opposite reality is being perpetuated in our society. The effects of these contrary beliefs, that women are viewed unfairly, are important because they are depressing the number of qualified women who see themselves as potential candidates, and who will ultimately run. In my thesis I will explain the reasons for this lack of efficacy, how actual voter behavior doesn't match with what we believe to be true in regards to gender discrimination, and what further steps we can take for this message of confidence to women-that they are qualified and will be evaluated equally- to be spread and understood to encourage more women to run for office.

Chapter 2: What Matters to Voters

There is still a perception that women face additional barriers when running for office. Although women, once entering the race, win at the same rates as men, people still believe that women will be evaluated differently by voters and face gender stereotypes that will negatively affect their chances of winning. In order to understand what makes women not run, we must understand how voters behave. When evaluating candidates, what matters most to them? Does gender matter as much as it is perceived to? Do voters evaluate men and women differently? Does the media or gender stereotypes have a significant effect on our vote choice? And if gender doesn't actually make a significant difference to voter choice, why is this stereotype still being perpetuated? If gender doesn't actually matter to voters, but potential candidates still think it does, then women will be held back from pursuing political office unnecessarily. In this chapter, we will explore what voters truly care about and examine if gender plays as much of role as it is perceived to.

As noted above, the perception that voters might behave in ways that punish female candidates or make it hard for them to win office when they decide to run is widespread. This feeling was re-ignited after the 2016 Presidential Election, when Hillary Clinton lost the election to a candidate that was, by all of the conventional measures, less qualified. There is still a strong misconception that gender stereotypes and overt sexism occur at the voting booth, sending a signal to women that they are both less likely to win and less prepared to handle the mechanics of running a campaign. Most recently, news

broke that Vice President, Mike Pence, had been using a private email server for government business, a crime Hillary Clinton was berated for throughout her campaign. One article in response to the scandal was titled "Can We Finally Admit It Was Always About Sexism, Never Emails" (Gray 2017), claiming a sexist double standard for the unequal treatment and coverage of the situation. No matter your party, you will always try to harp on something the other party does and hide it when your party does it. This is not a situation of sexism, but merely playing the party public relations game. Throughout the entire election cycle, there was a constant cry of how Clinton would be treated if she did or said the things Trump says and does. Again, this situation is not a matter of sexism, but of a historically unique Presidential race with an unprecedented response and outcome. Any other standard politician running, regardless of gender, would not be able to act like Donald Trump and get away with it. The rare race and Donald Trump's behavior is not indicative of the majority of elections in the United States. The high-profile nature of it, however, has continued to perpetuate that gender barriers and sexism influences voters. Most scholarly literature on the subject of gender stereotypes and their impact on voters' decision making, however, show that candidate gender is not an important indicator for most voters.

Explicit Prejudices Against Women

First, we know that nearly all voters are open to voting for a female candidate for office: ninety-five percent of the public, for example, said they would vote for a qualified woman for President (Gallup 2012), overtly sexist voting behaviors are not significant enough to account for the barriers they are currently perceived to be.

A large body of experimental research also shows that candidate gender is often the least important considerations to voter decision making. Campbell and Cowley's (2014) study asked voters about the importance of age, gender, education, and location to the home district in their preferred candidate. After manipulating for all these characteristics, having the candidate be your preferred gender caused only a 2-percentage point difference in who voters would ultimately prefer. The impact of location, however, was 15 times more impactful than gender to voters.

When asking British voters to articulate the preferred identity characteristics of their Member of Parliament (MP), the majority said that having their MP be the same gender as them was "not at all important". In fact, of all the other characteristics considered (sharing the same political viewpoint, the same gender, the same area, the same social class, the same racial group, the same religious views, the same age, the same education level, or the same sexual orientation), gender was dead last with only 2 percent listing it as the most important characteristic (Cowley 2014).

The lack of importance to elect female representatives was not unique to the United Kingdom. In a survey of Iowa Caucus voters in 2008 asking them about what characteristics mattered most to them in a presidential candidate, being the same gender as the candidate was also considered unimportant (Trent 2010). While Democrats in this study saw electing a woman as more important than did Independents or Republicans, and women considered it more important to elect a female president, prioritizing gender as a reason to vote for a candidate is not a strong enough identity factor to ultimately influence someone's voting choice. These results should have been even more salient

during the 2008 Iowa Caucus, where we saw a woman running for the first time. When Hillary Clinton was not successful in securing the 2016 election, confusion surmounted as to why she didn't win more of the female vote. In short, it's not that she lost because she is a woman. It is because partisanship identity outweighs the importance of gender identity for voters.

Gender Related Stereotypes of Voters

Explicitly-stated prejudice against seems to not matter all that much to what voters decide to do. But do women face other, perhaps more subtle difficulties, when being evaluated for higher office? Gender schema theory states that voters' baseline gender preference is a pre-existing predisposition rather than an evaluation that occurs during a particular electoral contest. This means that voters tend to have a subconscious inclination for which gender they prefer to vote for. Therefore, it is argued that voters' evaluations of candidates are influenced by these predispositions instead of with a blank slate for each race. These baseline preferences are believed to be a result of gender stereotypes about issue competency. Consistent with traditional stereotypes, men tend to be viewed as being better at handling crime, international affairs, and finance, while women are stereotyped as being better at Social Security and domestic issues (Sanbonmatsu 2002, Dolan 2014). These predispositions are likely to impact voters' choice in low-information elections, but these stereotypes aren't always necessarily a bad thing from the perspective of female candidates. Female candidates can capitalize on these stereotypes by excelling in campaigns that play to their strengths (Kahn 1996). Women can also increase their likelihood of winning by running in races in which these

issues are salient to the campaign and the constituents. Depending on the particular electoral context, for example, stereotypes about gender in elections can either work to female candidates' advantage or disadvantage.

While gender stereotypes on issue competency do potentially influence vote choice, gender is by no means the most important lens through which candidates are viewed. Among other things, candidates are much more likely to be viewed through the lens of partisan stereotypes than gender stereotypes (Dolan 2014). When thinking about Democrats, you would likely associate them with liberal views, increased government spending, and wealth redistribution. For a Republican, you would likely associate them with being conservative, a proponent of small government, and wealthy. So, while women may be seen as more liberal, there also tends to be more women running for office as Democrats and more men running on conservative platforms. Women may believe that even if they are incredibly qualified, especially in areas where women are stereotyped as less competent, that these gender stereotypes will inhibit their chances. The important finding to understand, though, is that while gender stereotypes may exist and potentially inform voters in a low-information election, partisanship is going to be a much more influential indicator to uninformed voters. Voters are almost uniformly likely to support the candidate of their party, and think that this candidate is more competent on the issues, regardless of the gender of the candidates running.

Implicit Biases Against Women

Unlike explicit biases in which preferences are definitively stated, implicit biases are judgements or behaviors that occur due to subtle unconscious stereotypes or attitudes,

such as gender stereotypes. For example, while someone may not make outwardly sexist comments, they may hold subtle attitudes about the proper role for women in government that they would never explicitly state. These biases occur without conscious control, but could potentially have significant impacts on voter decision making if they are implicitly biased against female politicians or women in power. Thus, even though similar numbers of men (74%) and women (76%) said that men and women make equally good political leaders (Pew 2015), implicitly held biases may impact voters' decisions, even if it doesn't align with their explicitly stated beliefs. We use implicit biases as heuristics that are consistent with our expectations. If something isn't consistent with information we normally encounter, it can cause us to negatively attribute the same behavior differently based on the gender of the participant. For example, if a woman takes on a leadership role (something we might not be used to seeing), she is likely to be perceived more negatively than a man would be. Eagly and Karau (2002) explain that women and leadership roles are not always an instant connection or heuristic in people's minds. This incongruence, they argue, makes it more difficult for women to achieve positions of power.

In a study looking at implicit gender biases in voting behavior, however, when individuals are paying attention to only candidate qualifications, the more qualified candidate is more likely to be selected, regardless of gender (Mo 2014). During the implicit bias test, implicitly pro-female voters will vote for the female candidate when she is clearly more qualified, but are more resistant to selecting the male candidate, even when there is a large qualification gap (Mo 2014, 389). Implicit biases formed by gender

stereotypes have traditionally been thought to work negatively against women by voters'
not implicitly viewing female candidates to be as qualified or competent as male
candidates. This study, however, shows that a "women for women" mentality may
actually benefit female candidates. In reality, however, this advantage is small and
inconsequential when it comes to influencing voter behavior (Hayes and Lawless 2016).

Media Coverage of Female Candidates

While voters are relying on partisanship more than gender stereotypes, there is
still a concern that the media coverage of women in politics puts them at a greater
disadvantage. In low-information elections during our heightened media consuming
society, the coverage of candidates can have a significant effect on how voters perceive
them. Media is the way that most people receive information about candidates, and thus
form their perceptions of them. Because voters want to vote for the candidate who best
represents their views, the way the media represents candidates has an effect on how
voters will view their ability to connect and align with candidates (Cohen and Tsafti
2009). Due to the "horse race" content coverage of most campaigns, candidates must
focus on finding creative ways to integrate policy and positive personal coverage into the
media stream. Successful candidates are those who are charismatic, likeable, and able to
manipulate the media's image of them. If the media offers differing levels of coverage,
overt or subtle language choices that seem to marginalize or discriminate against women,
or negative critiques of women that are not matched by similar negativity toward male
candidates, it will likely impact voters' choices.

Falk's (2010) study of all nine female presidential bids, (many of which occurred before women had earned the right to vote, and mainly in third parties), argues that the media presents women as unnatural, incapable, and unviable candidates. Even after being updated for Hillary Clinton's 2008 Presidential bid, she says that due to the lack of women in political office, female candidates, particularly those for President, are faced with the novelty factor. Being consistently framed as a "first" de-normalizes women in the political world, making it seem shocking and even risky for a woman to aspire to or assume that level of power (36).

She argues that this point is even further articulated when it comes to trying to understand whether a woman can handle crises, particularly because women's perceived biological "nurturing and emotional" nature makes them less likely to handle the responsibility (37-8). While important to acknowledge the stereotypes that women may have to overcome, Falk's argument, much of which is based on presidential bids from the late 1800s to mid-late 1900s, is a bit outdated. Media coverage and the openness to female candidates has progressed significantly since some of those female candidates initially run. For some of those races, there weren't even any female representatives at all. What's important about acknowledging this recent publication, however, is that many continue to believe these gender stereotypes are serving as greater barriers than they realistically are.

Multiple studies regarding coverage of more recent House elections, by contrast, show that female candidates were covered with the same frequency as male candidates and received equitable issue-based and personal coverage. There were also no nods

towards females performing better on traditionally female topic areas or having feminine specific traits (Lavery 2013; Hayes and Lawless 2016). In contrast to Falk's argument, female candidates are no longer a novelty. Yes, there may be few female Presidential candidates, but women are now more visible leaders in local, state, and national government. Women aren't running their campaigns in gendered ways, so there is no need for media to frame them in that way. News coverage of elections (apart from the horse race aspects of it) tend to focus on the candidates' message. Because the issues and traits that candidates talk about don't significantly vary by gender, neither does the media coverage of it (Hayes and Lawless 2016, 16). Political scientists have argued that women have to campaign differently because gender stereotypes could lead voters to believe that women will be less capable leaders than men, especially when it comes to traditionally male-dominated subject areas such as national security and crime. Women may also seek to take advantage of their potential female advantage by focusing on "women's issues" such as contraception and pay equity. However, female candidates are no longer a novelty. They have gained leadership positions in every level of government, making it unnecessary for women to overcome gender stereotypes by playing them up as a strength (Hayes and Lawless 2016, 18). Secondly, increased polarization has made party identity-nearly always the strongest indicator of vote choice-even more important to voters. As parties have become more divided, they have become more unified internally. Congressional campaigns tend to become "nationalized" and focus on the party's agenda rather than on individual gender subject areas (Hayes and Lawless 2016, 19). While

highlighting gender negatively was seen in previous elections, it is not a part of our modern electoral system.

When women run for office, they win at the same rates as men. Potential voter stereotypes and perceived barriers discourage potential female candidates from running because they believe it will be harder for them to succeed. As I've shown in this chapter, barriers such as gendered campaign coverage, gender stereotypes, and explicit and implicit bias are not influencing voter behavior to the degree we believe them to be. Instead, partisanship is the strongest influence-serving both as a cultural identity and a heuristic for the types of policies and viewpoints to be expected from the candidates. In working to identify the reasons that women continue to see gender stereotypes and bias lessening their chances of winning, we explored what really matters to voters. While some gender normative forces are at play, most people don't vote for or against someone simply based on their gender. Gender identity is not yet strong enough to compete with partisan identity. As our country continues to become increasingly polarized, I'm not sure that gender identity will be able to overtake the importance of voting for your party. In fact, it appears that gender will become increasingly less important to voters as party identity and polarization strengthens.[1]

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[1] Additionally, it is important to recognize the limitations of studies on public perception of female political candidates. Up until 2008, surveys always asked if a person would vote for a female president if presented with one. In abstract terms, it is much easier to have positive feelings about progressive representation. Since then, however, voters have really only been presented with one female choice: Hillary Clinton. While incredibly qualified, she is flawed and rife with scandal, potentially blurring the lines as to whether respondents don't want to vote for a female candidate, or if they just don't want to vote for Hillary.

Even if gender isn't a dominant factor in voters' decision making, the perception that gender is significant is just as important. There are a few reasons why these perceptions still exist. First, by simply looking around, it is still primarily men who hold positions of power. That sheer gap is enough to make people question why more women aren't in political office and assume sexism is the answer. Some women may experience sexism in their personal or professional lives and assume that the same would be the case for female candidates. Even if the research shows them to be rare, anecdotal examples of sexist politicians (most notably, the current president) winning without serious punishment also strengthens the belief that these kinds of comments will provide a barrier to potential female candidates. These noteworthy displays of sexism, however, are not indicative of the majority of races in the United States. And as Lawless and Hayes explain, "…there is a distinction between occasional, albeit high-profile, examples of sexist behavior and systematic gender bias in campaigns. These two facts of modern political life — sexism sometimes happens, *and* women do not face a systematically biased campaign environment — can coexist" (Hayes 2016).

Because of the importance of having a likeable and charismatic personality to succeed in politics, it has been a cliché to say that people vote for the "person, not the party". In reality though, it's the other way around. Most citizens vote for party rather than person. Using data from the 2010 and 2014 midterm elections, Hayes and Lawless' (2016) showed that voters assessments have little to do with gender and everything to do with whether the candidates are Republican or Democrat. Citizens almost never mentioned gender, family roles or appearance (the most popularly cited discriminatory

tactics towards women) when speaking about candidates, and judged men and women to be equally capable of policy issues and exhibiting leadership and empathy traits (Hayes and Lawless 2016, 94). Voters make decisions based on the information that is most easily accessible to them. Because the electoral environment and the news media coverage of campaigns do not focus on candidate gender, there is no reason for voters to think about gender when making political decisions. Because political campaign coverage is focused primarily on partisan divide and polling data, voters instead view the political environment through a partisan lens. Therefore, staying true to your own party is far more important than electing a woman of either party into office.

Despite the reality of men and women running equal campaigns, though, we still see significant gender gaps in representation at all levels of government. Most research suggests a simple answer to this question: though women *win* when they run for office at essentially the same rates as men, they are substantially less likely to even run for office in the first place. The issue, in other words, is one of deciding to run, not one of voters punishing women once they do. In order to address this gap, the following chapter will seek to understand why women don't want to run for office and why the political ambition gap continues to persist.

Chapter 3: Political Ambition Theory/Gender and the Political Ambition Gap

Women are not only underrepresented in government at all levels, but they are also less likely to run. Because of the perceived barriers and feelings that they need to be overqualified in order to run, this results in less women running for office and less women contemplating it at all. In high school, similar amounts of boys and girls consider running for office. As they enter college, however, that gap continues to widen as more men believe they would be qualified to run for office in the future, and less women believe they would be qualified. This ambition gap and lack of female political efficacy is evidenced by the low numbers of female representatives in the United States. As of 2017, women hold only 19.4% of the 535 seats in the United States Congress, 23.7% of 312 statewide executive seats, 24.8% of the 7,383 seats in state legislatures, and only 20% are mayors of the 100 largest US cities (CAWP 2017). With women comprising 51% of the population and continuing to enter male-dominated fields and exceed educational attainment of men at all levels, we are certainly not short of qualified women to run for office. Why then, are we still falling behind in female representation? In short, women exhibit lower levels of political ambition than men. Formed by socialization and cultural elements that tend to be lower for women, political ambition informs both the desire, willingness, and likelihood that someone would consider running for office. Although some political ambition factors, such as family obligations, financial barriers and gender socialization may depress political ambition rates in women, we have also found that some of the perceived stereotypes holding women back from running are not

important to voters. With this dichotomy in mind, this next chapter will offer greater explanation as to why the political ambition gap continues to persist. First, I will look at the reasons people run and the development of ambition theory in explaining what factors will influence someone's consideration of running for office. Then I will analyze these ambition factors and how they express themselves in women. Finally, I will delve into the most adverse reason for female political ambition: lower levels of political efficacy and perceived lower qualifications.

The first and most notable foray into political ambition theory was started by Joseph Schlesinger in the late 1960s. The main assumption of his theory is that politicians respond to their office goals. Since there exists no straight path to higher office, politicians must act strategically when considering which races to enter. They must think steps ahead about which office they would like to possess in the future and how that will align with successfully satisfying the electorate and winning votes (Schlesinger 1967). Politicians move up on a hierarchical ladder, gaining experience in lower levels of political office before aspiring to higher ones. Only when the time is right and the opportunity presents itself to run for the next level will a politician take the risk of running for a higher level of office.

This opening, called the "opportunity structure", means that the number of open seats, legislative experience, partisanship, timing, and likelihood of winning are the main considerations to take into account before running for political office. Political ambition is a strategic choice based on the current climate and your decision to run for office is based primarily on the available opportunities, not external or social factors. This

hierarchical structure prescribes different paths and ambition levels based on the level of office. As you aspire to higher levels of office, electoral tensions become stronger and weighing the opportunity structure becomes even more important (Schlesinger 199). Strategic considerations must be made when presented with the political opportunity structure to ensure that as you reach higher up the political ladder, you have a good chance of achieving that office and career path. The development of Schlesinger's theory allowed the further study of expressive ambition- whether individuals will enter particular races, and whether they will seek to maintain their current office (static ambition), strive for higher office (progressive ambition) or choose to retire (discrete ambition).

Why people run for office

Most early studies of political ambition, then, focused on whether people running for office decided to pursue higher office. But Lawless (2012) argues that conceptualizing political ambition decisions in cost-benefit analysis in regards to a particular political opportunity terms excludes the group of people who considered running for office, but ultimately did not.

The idea of "opportunity structure" provides a way to understand the goals of sitting officeholders, but must be expanded to include understanding what motivates people to run for office at all, focusing on people who considered running generally, but made the decision not to. Historically underrepresented groups often need more encouragement to run, and individuals have to consider their family and financial obligations, work flexibility, and many other factors before deciding to enter the race. By

understanding what made them interested, and ultimately disinterested, could provide valuable insight into how we recruit future candidates.

Nascent political ambition

In order to fully understand the dynamics at play in the transformation from "potential office holder" to "actual office holder", Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox developed a theory of nascent political ambition- the inclination to consider a candidacy in the first place. Nascent ambition can be defined as the factors that influence your thoughts about running for office before you are presented with the opportunity structure. It is comprised of the things that you think about if someone were to ask you if you've ever thought about running for office, instead of why you do or don't want to run for a specific seat. Anything from your political upbringing to family obligations to financial circumstances could affect your potential political ambition.

Because we have so few people interested in running for office, it is important for us to understand how these nascent characteristics affect ambition so that we can find a way to recruit and retain the highest quality candidates and encourage more people to run. The theory of nascent ambition is split into two stages: considering candidacy and deciding to enter the race. First, men and women may approach the political opportunity structure differently. "Patterns of traditional gender socialization- as manifested through traditional family role orientations, a masculinized ethos, and the gendered psyche-provide ample reason to suspect that women and men's attitudinal dispositions and personal experiences differ such that they are not equally likely to consider a candidacy and ultimately face the political opportunity structure" (Fox and Lawless 34, 2010).

Therefore, Fox and Lawless' work derived a few nascent ambition characteristics factors that could likely effect someone's predisposition to consider, and eventually run for office. The characteristics found to be the most impactful were family dynamics, minority status, competitive traits, political attitudes and recruitment, and stage in life (Fox and Lawless, 644-7, 2005, Lawless 2012).

The first factor to be examined is the influence of family dynamics and a politicized upbringing. The political legacies of families like the Kennedys and Bushes show that early exposure and "inheritance" of the drive and decision to run for office are reason enough without the consideration of other personality and sociodemographic factors. Just as those in political families see the value of a career in public service, positive orientations towards political activism within the family have positive correlations with an interest in running for office. "…highly politicized parents often create a family environment 'charged with positive civic orientations…thus endowing their children with the motivation prerequisites for later political participation" (Beck and Jennings 1982, 98). A politicized upbringing had a lasting impact, in other words, on even considering running for office, proving that situational factors that seem irrelevant to politics can have an influence on considering candidacy. Those who were raised in homes where politics was frequently discussed or whose parents encouraged them to run were significantly more likely to possess nascent ambition characteristics (Fox and Lawless 2005, 653). Considering the importance of parental involvement in nascent ambition formation, women remain at a disadvantage in this area with women reporting

being 22 percent less likely to receive parental encouragement to run for office (Fox and Lawless 2005, 654).

The second significant nascent ambition characteristic is minority status. White men continue to overwhelmingly control elected offices in the United States (CAWP 2017). Due to the lack of women and minorities in politics, it may send the message to these groups that politics isn't a world open or accessible to them. They may not even consider a career in politics prior to being presented with the opportunity to run simply because they did not see it as a possibility for "someone like them". When studying the difference in nascent ambition between minority groups, the average female had a much lower probability of running for office than the average male. When considering the political career ladder and aspiration for higher office, there remained a 32 percent gender gap in eventual interest in running for a high-level position (Fox and Lawless 2005, 644). A Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001) study found that "women who live in areas with higher densities of female-elected officials are more likely to express interest in politics" (2001), suggesting that seeing visible female candidates is especially important for women to see that running for office is a real possibility. By seeing women succeed in political contests and bring new ideas and perspectives to politics allows women to see running for office as more attainable instead of something too ridden with sexist barriers for them to try. Women in public office stand as symbols to other women. Because women were excluded from the political sphere for so long, it makes the election of women in their communities even more significant (Burrell 1996, 151).

Perceived qualifications and the decision to run

The final, and likely most significant characteristic informing nascent political ambition is feelings of political efficacy. If a potential candidate doesn't view themselves as qualified to run for office, their chances of running when presented with the political opportunity structure are unlikely (Fox and Lawless 2005, 645). When running for office, confidence is key. You need to believe that you are qualified and worthy of the office you are running for and have peers, family members, and professionals be supportive of your endeavor as well. Perceived qualification is so important to the political ambition formation process because if individuals do not view themselves as qualified, or believe that others will perceive them as unqualified, they are increasingly less likely to run. Professions such as law and business are seen as gateway or feeder careers to politics, in part because their career expertise would make people feel the most qualified to tackle political office. Thus, those who rise to the top of these professions would be potentially more likely to consider running for office (Hain and Pierson 1975). Having this level of professional accomplishment may increase personal efficacy and confidence in their political knowledge base. Importantly, women hold themselves to a much higher standard than men when asked to think of themselves as qualified candidates: all else equal, women are less likely to perceive themselves as qualified to run for higher office than identically qualified men. They also remain much more pessimistic about their likelihood to win electoral contests (Lawless and Fox 2005) despite women winning at similar rates to men once entering the race (Dolan 2004). Considering that women are less likely to have political role models, less likely to be

encouraged to run by family members and party elites, or have been socialized through gender norms and political socialization that they would not be welcome in politics, it is no surprise that women are less likely to hold nascent ambition traits, particularly a sense of self-efficacy.

Above all else, a sense of candidate efficacy and self-perceived qualification has the greatest effect on nascent ambition and the decision to run for political office. If perceived qualifications matter most, and women are choosing to run for office less, women think they are less qualified. Although there are barriers to running for office for all citizens, many of them may be perceived as more difficult to overcome for women. Even when opportunity structure factors (ex: open seats, professional status, or life circumstances) change, perceived qualifications continuously fluctuate and shifts in candidate efficacy can have large effects on political ambition. In a study comparing political ambition factors in 2001 and 2008, even minor changes in candidate efficacy from feeling 'very qualified' to 'qualified', increased the likelihood by 4 percent that the potential candidate would completely write off the idea of running for office in the future. Even among changes in family circumstances, income, interest in politics, race, gender, age, etc. a change in an individual's self-perceived qualifications was the one of the most significant factors. (Fox and Lawless 2011, 454). In trying to understand why perceived qualifications of candidate efficacy are lower for women, gendered perceptions and socialization appear to be the largest contributing factor. The historical exclusion of women from politics, coupled with gender role expectations and the lack of prominent female representatives, makes it difficult for women to view and perceive themselves as

politicians. This results in women, who are otherwise qualified and well positioned to

run for public office unable to envision themselves as candidates.

Understanding the role of perceived qualifications: a broader perspective

Outside of considering themselves as political candidates, women continually

undervalue themselves and their qualifications in other measures. Despite progress in

entering new areas of the workforce, women, even those at the top of their career, still

feel unqualified and unsure of themselves. They attribute their success primarily to luck

and being "in the right place at the right time" instead of on their merits. In academics

such as math, language, and arts, female students offer poorer self-assessments than their

male counterparts despite equal competency rates (Wigfield, Eccles, and Pintrich 1996)

and female MBAs are more likely to accept lower salary offers, and in turn have lower

mid-career salaries than men (Bowles, Babcock and McGin 2005). In addition to a

gender gap in self-assessment, women also have a harder time exhibiting confidence

about their backgrounds, skills, and experience. Men tend to be more overconfident in

their skills (Kling et. al. 1999), more self-congratulatory about their achievements

(Wigfield, Eccles, and Pintrich, 1996), they overestimate their intelligence (Beloff 1992),

and are unlikely to incorporate criticism in self-evaluations (Roberts 1991). Despite

women offering poorer evaluations of themselves, they are still exceeding men in college

graduation rates and increasingly taking on male-dominated fields (Goldin 2006). There

has been an increased emphasis on encouraging women to enter STEM related fields to

continue combating the unequal representation and demand in this field. We can gain a

lot of insight into the gender disparity in politics by looking at the gender disparity in

science fields. In fact, many researchers use the same reasons (the influence of gender norms, lack of encouragement from family and teachers, and balancing family obligations) for why women don't pursue science careers and why they don't pursue political careers. Ehrlinger and Dunning's (2003) study had male and female students rate their scientific skills before taking a scientific reasoning test. Similar to other studies in this area, women rated themselves lower than did men, while still performing just as well. Following the exam, they invited the participants to take part in a science competition without knowledge of how they performed on the exam. Women were significantly less likely to express interest in participating in the competition, with only 49% interest from women compared to 71% of men. The invitation to the science competition served as a proxy as to whether women would seek out more opportunities. "Because they are less confident in general in their abilities, that led them not to want to pursue future opportunities" (Ehrlinger 2003). The same case can be made for women in politics. Although they are just as capable, personal and political efficacy is holding them back from running. As it turns out, success correlates as closely with competence as it does with confidence (Kay and Shipman, 2014).

Conclusions

Despite women winning elections at the same rate as men, women perceive the electoral process to be harder to tackle, and thus feel they need to be 'over-qualified' to consider running. The differences in political socialization and messages that politics is not a place for women make it less likely that a qualified woman would both perceive herself to be qualified to run and envision herself as a candidate. For historically

politically underrepresented groups, seeing others you identify with in these positions can have a significant impact on seeing yourself in those roles as well. And perhaps as we continue to see more women run for office, it will continue to encourage other women to do the same. Particularly during the 2016 election, women were waiting for the first female President to "break the glass ceiling". They argued that only when a woman holds the highest position in the country will other women finally be able to see themselves as potential candidates. However, this mindset will not get us anywhere. We can't and shouldn't continue waiting for a figure to reach this point. Because we have found that voters treat male and female candidates equally, more women need to run. By having more women gaining the political experience that is important to running for President, we will have a larger pool to choose from when presenting the country with a new female candidate to attempt the feat. Although there are plenty of women qualified to run for office, potential internalized stereotypes from voters about perceived qualifications affects women's own perceptions of their qualifications, and in turn, their ability to see themselves as a candidate and consider running. Therefore, we need to see whether voters are actually sending cues to women that they are less qualified. In the following chapter, we will explore what voters perceive as a 'qualified candidate' and the important characteristics required of someone running for political office.

Chapter 4- Qualitative Design and Results

Women continue to believe that they are unqualified to run for office and that they will face barriers once entering the race. Of the many contributing factors as to why women don't run for office, I wanted to examine the perceived qualifications of potential candidates, attempting to understand whether citizens exhibit gender biases when thinking about who is qualified to run for office. Despite many studies showing that gender does not affect how voters think about candidates when they are already running for office, less academic literature exists about how people perceive potential candidates for office. What makes someone qualified to be a representative? Can much of gender differences in political ambition be explained by these feelings of potential inadequacy in the voters' eyes? In previous chapters we have already identified that gender is not a *primary* concern for most voters, but what is important to voters when evaluating potential candidates for higher office? To provide a qualitative exploration of this question, I conducted interviews asking participants about what they perceive to make a qualified candidate, what they perceive as potential barriers to those running for office, and their own political ambition.

Reasons for Research

When considering running for office, one of the most important factors informing someone's decision is knowing that others perceive them as qualified. A lot of gender stereotypes focus on women not possessing traditional male qualities of strength, power, or knowledge of topics like security and finance. The perception that voters inherently

hold these stereotypes when they think of the person they would want to vote for could potentially hold women back from running for office. Therefore, I wanted to understand what characteristics and experiences were most important to voters. By speaking about these traits abstractly about their 'ideal' candidate, I would be able to discover if any gender-related cues emerged and if traditionally non-female traits or characteristics were important to voters-and would thus serve as a barrier to women running for office. Second, previous research has shown us that the political ambition gap widens significantly during the college years and that early socialization factors such as parental encouragement of civic participation and leadership experience can have significant impacts on how people both view politics as a profession, and the likelihood that would see their experiences as making them more qualified to run for office. Therefore, I wanted to speak with college students to see if political ambition was split along gender lines. Finally, many view women as facing more barriers when running for office. Because of that, I wanted to see what voters viewed as some of the largest barriers someone might face when running for office. If gender was a common theme in these responses, it would show me that these perceptions are important to voters and could have significant impacts on young women when they think about running for office. By understanding what backgrounds voters value most, how political ambition manifests itself during a life phase when the political confidence gap among gender widens, and what barriers are viewed as most significant to voters, I will add context to both previous studies on these issues and for my future quantitative study about candidate qualifications.

Research Design

In order to conduct interviews with students, I was required to have my research proposal approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University. As a requirement of this proposal, I completed a Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative's (CITI Program) Basic Course and Social Behavioral Track Course to conduct interviews with human subjects. The CITI Program completion form and the questions asked during the interview are included in Appendix 1 and 2.

My subject pool consisted of 30 undergraduate students currently enrolled in Professor Ellis's 'Introduction to American Politics' course. Students were recruited by Professor Ellis by offering them a small amount of extra credit for their participation in my study. This does mean that the subject pool was skewed towards first and second year students with a likely higher than average interest in politics. Because these students opted into the study, it is a convenience sample and not a randomized sample from the Bucknell undergraduate population, or the population at large. Another limitation is that in addition to these students not being taken from a random sample, Bucknell University's student population is not representative of a typical voter in the United States. The students I interviewed were predominantly white and on track to graduate within the next few years with a bachelor's degree from an elite, private, liberal arts university. Therefore, most likely 100 percent of participants will have a higher education degree. Only 41% of 18-24 year olds are enrolled in college and the majority of those degrees will be from public schools (Census 2015). Therefore, my subject pool

is more educated and likely more politically engaged than the average American in this age group.[2]

Interviews took place over the course of two weeks and at varying times during the day to allow for wider participation. Students signed up for a specified 15-minute time slot and were informed by Professor Ellis of the location. I spaced the timing of the interviews so no more than one student would be in the room with me at one time. Interviews took place in classrooms in Academic West to ensure privacy and a quiet environment. Upon arriving, students were asked to complete an informed consent form and affirmation that they are at least 18 years of age. These forms were also used to determine who will receive extra credit for Professor Ellis' class by participating in the study. After receiving a completed consent form, I introduced myself and gave them a short overview of what to expect from our interview. I also explained that the interview would take no more than 15 minutes and they had the option to not answer a question or terminate the study at any point. Before starting the recording, I explained that I would be asking them some questions about their perceptions of politics, how they evaluate political candidates, and some information about their own political ambition. Data was collected on a voice recorder obtained through Bucknell's Library and Information

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[2] In a sample that is skewed to be both more educated and more liberal than the greater population, this sample allows me to see how those who possess these traits evaluate candidates. If those who are more politically engaged do not place value on gender when evaluating candidates, I could infer that those less politically engaged and educated would be less likely to value this as well. Additionally, during my questioning I discovered that a surprising amount in my population didn't understand some basics of civics, such as the presence of a state legislature. Therefore, despite the limitations of a sample that is not fully representative, I am still able to gain insights into how voters evaluate candidates and what characteristics and experiences are important to them.

Technology department. After a number of surveys were completed, I transcribed the recordings-without any identifying information, into a Word Document. Following this transcription, all of the recordings were deleted.

Question Choice and Expectations

My questions were broken down into three main subject areas: preferred qualifications and traits, political ambition, and barriers. In my first subject set, I asked the following questions:

- How would you describe an ideal/qualified political candidate?

- What are necessary personality traits required of someone considering running for office?

- What are necessary skills, backgrounds, or expertise required of someone considering running for office?

- What are some factors someone should take into account when deciding whether or not to run for office?

- Do you think qualifications should vary based on the level of office being sought? If so, what changes?

I asked this series of questions for a number of reasons. First, I wanted participants to conceptualize what they would want in an ideal candidate. After a few rounds of interviews, I found consistent with similar studies, people had a hard time articulating what they want from a politician. It's often not a question that they've needed to consider before. It is much easier for them to criticize candidates that they've seen for not

doing certain things or possessing specific traits, but they struggled to describe what they wanted conceptually. In the second half of interviews, I rephrased the question, asking the participants to explain their idea of a *qualified* political candidate. This often helped them to think more about qualifications (similar to the follow-up questions I ask) instead of forcing them to think in more abstract terms.

Second, I asked about necessary personality traits and background to most directly see what mattered to voters and how they evaluated candidates. I also believed that this would be the time when gendered words or phrases would emerge. For example, if terms traditionally stereotyped as male descriptions, such as strong, tough, or rational were the dominant traits most important to voters, I would be able to extrapolate those word choices as subconscious gender stereotyping. When asking about background requirements, I expected traditional feeder fields such as experience in law, politics, or business. I then asked about things a potential candidate should consider before deciding to run for office. I expected this question to show potential for gender bias. With the open-ended option, I thought participants would talk about balancing family needs, needing support both financially and from the political party, or potential barriers someone might face. Although family is important to most political candidates, it can often be used to question female candidates about who will look after their children, a question not regularly asked of male candidates. Finally, I asked whether participants would evaluate candidates' qualifications differently based on the level of office they were running for. This is a question designed to give context to my quantitative study in which I will ask survey participants to evaluate whether potential candidates of varying

experience backgrounds are qualified for different levels of office (from city council to Congress).

My second series of questions were aimed at the political ambition of the participants themselves. I wanted to see how many participants were interested in running for office or had been socialized to believe they could. More importantly, after having just articulated what they would want in an ideal candidate, could they hold themselves to that standard? I asked the following questions:

- Do you see yourself as someone who is qualified or would be qualified in the future to run for political office?

- Have you ever considered running? Why/why not?

- Have you ever been encouraged to run?

- Have you ever run for any type of elected position?

I asked these series of questions, primarily to see if they viewed themselves as someone capable of achieving the standards for an officeholder that they had just articulated. Similar with previous research about young people, I expected many of them to be turned off to politics and have no interest in running. I also expected female participants to be less likely than male participants to see themselves as someone who is qualified or would be qualified in the future to run for political office. I asked about whether they had ever considered running or been encouraged to in order to get a better understanding of how encouragement and political socialization impacts a desire to run. Therefore, I expected those who had been encouraged by family members or peers to be more likely to see

themselves as qualified. Along the same vein, I expected those who have run for

leadership positions in the past to have a greater chance of running for political office in

the future and to have greater levels of efficacy because they had previous electoral

successes (even if on a smaller scale).

Finally, I asked what barriers someone might face when running for office. This

is when I expected the most gender related topics to emerge because it is often the

expectation that women face greater barriers running for office than men do. I believed

that the stereotype that running for office was more difficult would persist and

particularly after the 2016 election, gender barriers might sooner come to mind.

Initial Challenges

During my first round of interviews, I launched immediately into the first

question "How would you describe an ideal/qualified political candidate?". While I was

able to get relatively good responses, I recognized that participants were struggling to get

into the mindset of these questions so abruptly. In the following sets of interviews, I

started off by asking them how they were feeling about politics as of late and their

thoughts and feelings on the recent election to get them open to talking and thinking

about politics. Because this past election, for many, was a choice of voting *against* a

candidate rather than voting *for* one, many students began by expressing their dismay at

the contentiousness of the election, the poor choice in candidates, or their disappointment

with the election results. While their unhappiness with the Presidential candidates

provided a good segue way into asking them how they would describe an ideal or

qualified political candidate (instead of the ones they were actually presented with) in this cycle, the prevalence of this election and the timing of my study created conversation shifts I was not prepared for when initially designing my study before the election.

For many participants, when asked to articulate qualifications, they immediately jumped to what they would want in a President, often forgetting that they were voting on a number of other candidates for lower levels of office this election cycle. Because our new President, Donald Trump, is such an anomaly when it comes to traditional qualifications and background of a Presidential candidate, some participants would backtrack or question their initial requirements saying things like "I would like someone with political experience, but Donald Trump didn't have any and he still became President." Another student was stuck on Ben Carson's choice to run for office this past cycle, stating: "I'm thinking about Ben Carson and how he was a surgeon, does that make him qualified? I'm not sure." Some traits people listed were directly related digs at either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. For example, one student when asked to describe necessary personality traits of a potential candidate for office replied, "They can't say things that would cause a lot of controversy and they can't be sexist or racist". Another said, "They have to stick to their beliefs. They can't flip-flop on their beliefs like Hillary has done throughout her career and the campaign."

What makes a qualified candidate?

When asked to describe an ideal or qualified political candidate, three key characteristics emerged: previous political experience, being well-educated, and having viewpoints that aligned with their own. None of the 30 participants, when asked about an

ideal political candidate, mentioned gender. This shows us that prioritizing or punishing gender in and of itself is not a primary concern for respondents. Additionally, although the lack of political experience of our new President was a seemingly positive trait for his supporters, most students still viewed political experience or work within government or policymaking as a necessary characteristic for someone considering running for public office. One male student explicitly said he was in favor of the career politician. "I don't think that because you've been on a plane you get to fly the plane. If you're a doctor, you shouldn't be a politician, you should be a doctor. A lot of politicians have been working on legislation and different departments for their whole career and understand how things work". This shows us that traditional candidate characteristics were still valued and important to respondents despite the backlash against career politicians in the 2016 election.

Education was another important characteristic to participants. Considering a college degree is a requirement for most jobs now, it's not surprising that this was also a perceived requirement for a political candidate. A few mentioned that political candidates would ideally have a law degree, and many mentioned the need to have taken classes in political science and economics. One female first-year student emphasized the importance of having expertise in policy areas you will work on, making specific reference to Cabinet appointees. "[As President they should have] some background in politics, policymaking, government to show they can do this job and take on the caliber of this job and prove they can deliver. If someone is leading the country you would hope they would have experience in government. Or if someone is the Secretary of Education

you would expect them to have experience in that area so they can effectively do their job". With women now outpacing men in educational attainment at all levels, the education requirement should not be any kind of set-back for potential female candidates.

Finally, the other important characteristic to voters was that the candidate they vote for would have viewpoints and ideals that aligned with their own. While a few students mentioned the challenge of not identifying with a particular party or feeling "boxed in" to our two-party system, as long as the candidate agreed with their views, they would support them. For one female student, when asked to describe an ideal candidate, her answer was focused solely on having a candidate that would pay attention to issues important to her. "[My ideal candidate is] someone who focuses on interests that align with me. I feel very strongly about the environment, education, how women are regarded in society and how our rights are equal or not as equal. My ideal candidate would be someone who focuses on all those issues".

Having political experience, being well educated, and having viewpoints that align with yours were the most important qualifications for someone running for office. None of these characteristics had subtle sexism or would provide additional barriers to female politicians. Despite the small sample size, these results show us, at least anecdotally, that voters are not evaluating candidates on gender stereotypes, but on the most basic qualifications and values.

Political Ambition

Having just articulated what they deemed a qualified political candidate, I was interested in seeing if students thought that they were or would be qualified in the future to run for political office. Because I have focused so much of my thesis on understanding political ambition, I particularly wanted to see if any of the traits that have encouraged or depressed political ambition would be mentioned when someone was asked to evaluate themselves. Of the thirty students interviewed, only five saw themselves as qualified now or in the future to run for political office. Of those, three were women and two were male, inconsistent with my hypothesis that male respondents would be more likely to view themselves as qualified. My other hypotheses held true, though. For the five who saw themselves as qualified, all of them had been encouraged to run for office at some point by family, peers, or teachers and all of them had previously run for some type of elected office. One female student came from a long line of politicians, with both her grandfather and great grandfather serving as Senators. Another male student was encouraged to run by the City Prosecutor for whom he interned, showing the importance of mentorship and encouragement from someone who has done the job and knows the challenges associated with it.

For the majority of those who didn't see themselves as qualified to run for office, the most common responses as to why they couldn't view themselves in that role were that they didn't want to make the sacrifice or that they may be qualified in the future only if they had enough education and experience. In my analysis, I made a distinction between those who said they *may* be qualified to run in the future, reliant on a number of

variables, and those who confidently said they *would* be qualified. Based on the

perceived qualifications that respondents viewed as important (educated, political

experience, and aligning viewpoints), many of the people in the sample on the path to

achieve a college degree, have the potential to run for office. The weak and iffy

responses from many respondents that they may be qualified in the future only if they did

certain things is possibly the pitfall that women, who would otherwise be qualified to run,

face. Being able to envision themselves as a candidate and have the confidence that they

could successfully run for office in the future is more difficult to find, showing even more

the importance of nascent ambition factors in developing political ambition. Although a

small sample size, this reinforces findings that political socialization factors, particularly

previous leadership and parental encouragement, and candidate efficacy are likely to

improve political efficacy and ambition.

Barriers

The final set of questions I asked was what barriers potential candidates would

face when running for office. The overwhelming majority of responses focused on

polarization, with smaller groups focusing on the power of money and media scrutiny.

One male first year was not interested in running for office because of the fear of intense

examination and the ability to pursue a different career path where your whole life

wouldn't be on display. "The publicity scares me. You could be so well intentioned and

hard-working, but you will always have enemies. I could work in another job where I

could have zero enemies". In regards to media scrutiny, students cited the prevalence of

social media catching everything you do. One female first-year student said

> "I think [the media] discourages so many millennials from pursuing anything in
> government because if anything on them gets leaked that they don't want to, that
> could hurt them for so many other jobs. It's permanently out there. One kid could
> say they had a video of you drunk and it totally takes away all their credibility and
> anything people could hold them to be is trashed. That's scary because that's a
> make or break, ruin the rest of your life situation. You don't want Fox to display a
> video of you in college messing up because everyone in our generation is taking
> videos of people being stupid. I think that if you don't have anything bad on
> yourself or your reputation, it looks like they're a stick in the mud, they didn't
> have any fun in college or their lives. If there's nothing bad on that person, you
> have to question them as a whole. Why are they so careful? Stepping around
> everyone? Did you have friends or pursue anything other than academics in
> college? Our generation is obsessed with exposing people in a way that's not
> okay, but videos are out there and people are afraid of those videos or pictures
> getting out into the work world. Even if they did run and something got leaked,
> they couldn't pursue an alternate career path because of their newfound
> reputation".

In addition to the fear of media scrutiny, money was also mentioned as a barrier. Because

of electoral campaign laws, money is considered speech and people have the ability to

donate as much money as they want to a candidate's campaign. Campaigns often require

millions, even billions of dollars to keep up with the opposition. As one first year female

stated, "If you don't have a few initial significant donors, you're not going to get your

name out there". This is consistent with previous research that raising funds can be a

significant barrier to potential candidates and the thought of having to raise that much

money may turn people off to running completely. One female first-year student, was

interested in running for office before she got experience working on an actual campaign.

"Working [on the campaign] last summer and seeing my local congressman blow all his

money and call people desperate for donations. I don't want to be in a position where I

owe anyone anything after I would potentially run because he's in such debt right now…Even if you win you will still have to owe people".

The most prevalent barrier people cited was polarization or running in a district comprised of the opposing party. Many students said that because we are so polarized, it's difficult to win over people from the other side. As a politician, you have to represent everyone and try to appeal to everyone, but with partisans becoming increasingly separated and more radical in their views, it is becoming more difficult to find common ground. One male student said that the major barrier is "polarization and being able to appeal to everyone. You don't want someone in the middle because you want someone who's on your side".

Through asking about barriers, I was looking to see if students would immediately say something regarding gender. A few students jumped to that point, referencing the loss of Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election. One male student said, "You could argue there could be some gender based barriers. Male vs. female, how more likely than not, the male candidate usually wins and gets elected. Versus the female candidate, we just saw that happen most recently in our election and throughout the country". A female student spoke about how lack of diverse female politicians plays a part. "The lack of diversity is a big thing…Now it's discouraging for anyone who's not a white male to run because of the lack of representation of basically everyone else". Another female sophomore student spoke about the heightened level of scrutiny women face. "I think you see a lot of women choose not to run because they're worried about their families and how they'll be evaluated and you don't necessarily see that same level of evaluation

for men". Although there were a few gendered responses prior to me priming the participants after the first few rounds of interviews, gender was rarely the barrier that came to mind. Because of that, in my later interviews I began directly asking if gender was a barrier or not. Because previous research has shown that gender is still perceived as a barrier to running for office, I expected most participants to echo the same feelings when asked frankly about the subject. Therefore, I directly asked them if gender was still considered a barrier in running for office. Research proves that men and women are treated equally once entering the race, but the *perception* that it is unequal continues to perpetuate the stereotype. For the most part, when asking students directly, they believed gender barriers still existed. While I was concerned respondents may simply answer with a socially desirable response, their comments felt thoughtful and genuine, making me believe that they viewed stereotypical gender biases as real and true. One male student said "Men present themselves in a more dominant way and as stronger leaders. It's difficult for women to overcome that stereotype. Women could be more qualified or better for the job but it's definitely harder for them". A female student referenced the lack of visible female representatives and our lack of progress compared to other industrialized countries. "Our society is still deeply rooted in a patriarchal society. We still don't have a female leader while many other developed countries do. A lot of it has to do with people being raised in a society that sees white males as being more dominant in politics. We don't have that many diverse, female leaders. It stems from when you see C-SPAN all you see are white males, and nobody else". A number of other students believed that Hillary Clinton faced additional scrutiny, that she would have won if she

was a man, and that Donald Trump's representation of masculinity and power were more attractive to voters. Despite the majority of responses believing that gender was still a barrier, a few students disagreed. One male student said, "[gender is] not as big an issue as people make it out to be. While maybe there are some people less likely to elect a woman than a man, the media exaggerates it". Others who disagreed recognized that while there may be some people who are still "stuck in their ways", gender is no longer a barrier.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I sought to understand how voters evaluated candidates, what they perceive as a qualified candidate, and if perceived barriers still included gender stereotypes that have disproven. Consistent with previous studies, I found that gender was not an important characteristic for respondents. None of the perceived qualifications participants noted referenced gender differences or favored one gender over the other and instead evaluated potential candidates on the most basic of qualifications. When asked about their own political ambition, few could confidently say they would be qualified to run for office in the future, often citing their lack of knowledge or need to acquire more education or political knowledge. Although we have found in previous chapters that gender isn't actually serving as a barrier once women enter the race, most respondents still believed it was. This misconception is perhaps the greatest problem holding women back from running for office. Even though voters don't consider gender or evaluate female candidates differently when voting, people still think they do. Overt displays of

sexism in high profile campaigns make people believe that this is commonplace in all electoral contests. What I've discovered is that a greater discussion needs to be had showing women that the gender stereotypes and additional scrutiny they believe exists does not impact voter choice.

If gender isn't a primary concern for voters, both at the ballot box and when articulating their preferred candidate abstractly, perhaps there are gender differences when evaluating candidates at an earlier stage of the electoral process. In the next chapter I will examine how voters perceive qualifications of *potential* candidates for office to see if gender plays a role during the candidate emergence phase.

Chapter 5: Quantitative Design and Results

Past research has discovered that gender is not a primary concern when voters actually make choices and my work has shown that when interviewed, gender-related stereotypes do not emerge when thinking abstractly about potential candidates for office. In practice, however, do subtle and implicit biases on the part of voters affect who runs for office at a more basic level? Women are concerned that voters, even subconsciously, evaluate them differently than men. They fear they will face heightened levels of scrutiny and need to be over-qualified to seek the same office as an equally qualified man. Having the confidence and encouragement from those in your community that they believe you to be qualified is essential to someone making the decision to run for office. Therefore, my research design is focused on evaluating *perceived* qualifications for *potential* candidates during the candidate emergence stage, which will allow us to see if these preconceived perceptions are happening. Because women will be presented in the same context, with the same qualifications, and evaluated for different levels of office as men, we will be able to see if a woman actually needs to be overqualified, such as evaluating the same candidate as qualified for Congress as a male but not as a woman. If women can see that they are being evaluated equally, it will likely increase their candidate efficacy and likelihood to run. To explore how voters behave, I will conduct an online survey experiment to identify if citizens view women as particularly unqualified for different levels of political office as otherwise identical men. The purpose of this

survey, in other words, is to see if women say that they are less qualified at least in part because regular citizens perceive them as less qualified.

Research Significance

When trying to understand voter behavior, almost all previous research focuses on how voters evaluate actual candidates for office in the context of an electoral race. Through these studies, we have consistently found that gender is not a significant factor and that voters do not evaluate equally qualified male and female candidates differently. We also know that once women enter the race, they tend to win at the same rates as men (Dolan, 2004). What existing research lacks, however, is a look at how *potential* candidates are evaluated during the candidate emergence stage. Before someone decides to enter the race, they must be confident that others view them as qualified and capable of the position they are seeking. This is often a time when women who may have considered running for office are discouraged from running due to perceptions that voters will view them as unqualified. Therefore, I found it important to address this gap in literature to understand if non-biased gender behavior during electoral contests, as shown in previous research, also exists during the candidate emergence stage where respondents would evaluate *potential* candidates. Because so little research exists about how voters evaluate candidates before they decide to enter the race, and women are not running at the same rates as men, gender bias during an earlier stage in the political process could account for this disparity. My research seeks to address this research gap and understand if gender stereotypes are affecting potential female candidates before they actually decide to enter the race.

Experimental Design

Prior to facilitating the survey, I needed to get approved by Bucknell's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I submitted a research proposal detailing the content and purpose of my study and completed a Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative's (CITI Program) Basic Course and Social Behavioral Track Course. The CITI Program completion forms can be found in Appendix 1 and 2 and the questions asked during the interview are included in Appendix 3.

My subject pool consisted of 429 people self-selected from Amazon's Mechanical Turk service. Mechanical Turk is an on-line, opt-in service run through Amazon.com, through which people agree to take short online surveys and complete other tasks in exchange for small payments to be credited to their Amazon account. Subjects are at least 18 years of age and live in the United States.[3] Research subjects set up a user account on Amazon's Mechanical Turk website and opt-in to studies based on the description given. After the survey experiment is entered into the Amazon system, it is listed in a searchable database of Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs) that Mechanical Turk workers can use to find projects in which to participate (the database can be found at (https://www.mturk.com/mturk/findhits). Respondents on this page are presented the title of the project, a brief one or two-sentence description of what the study entails, estimated

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[3] Relative to other convenience samples used in political science research, MTurk respondents are often more representative of the general population and substantially less expensive to recruit. However, it is important to note that MTurk respondents are younger and more ideologically liberal than the general population. Despite these limitations, MTurk is able to provide us with a larger and more representative sample of a typical voter than we would otherwise have using a student sample (Berinsky 2012).

time for completion, and the payment that respondents receive upon completion of the study. For this project, respondents saw the following information:

Title: Political Candidate Survey (~5 min)

Description: Complete a short survey evaluating the qualifications of candidates for higher office.

Compensation: $0.50

Participants self-select into the study. If respondents are interested in the study, they were directed to a sample page that provides further information about the sorts of questions that they will be asked. Respondents who wish to continue will click a button that says "Accept HIT." Upon doing so, they will be directed to this study's informed consent page. Before starting the survey, a welcome screen will appear with directions about how to complete the survey. The welcome page will also express that all of their responses as well as their identity will be kept confidential and that they may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. It will also inform them that by proceeding to the next page and pressing 'Continue', they are affirming their consent to participate in the study.

The structure of the experiment is to tell participants to evaluate qualifications and competence of *potential* candidates for different political offices including city council, mayor of a large city, and Congress. The experiment begins by asking respondents basic demographic background (such as gender and age) as well as party affiliation to get a better understanding of the respondent's contextual circumstances that might influence the way they evaluate candidates. They were then asked their level of agreement with the

statement "Most elected officials are qualified for the positions they hold". This statement would allow us to see how they view the qualifications of elected officials generally, as well as prime them for the task they were about to undertake. The main part of the survey asked respondents to assess the level of qualification of potential political candidates at three different office levels based on a short biography presented. The biographies and the candidates were fictitious and made up for the experiment, with some possessing common political experiences and others appearing less qualified with little to no political experience. All had some type of experience with community involvement, and some had experience in law, business, or politics. The biographies included background information on each candidate that included their age, family life, educational background, and work and political/community involvement experience. An example of a biography can be seen below:

> Joanne Davis is 45 years old and a mother of two. She is a long-term resident of the area that she hopes to represent, leaving only to get a college degree in Business Administration. She has been married for 15 years. She now works at a regional office of a local marketing firm and has served two terms on the local school board. [4]

Following the biography, respondents were then asked in three separate questions how qualified they believed this person would be to run for town council, mayor of a large city, and the United States Congress from "not at all qualified" to "very qualified". These three levels of office were selected because they are easily recognizable positions and would traditionally be viewed as having significant qualification gaps between them.

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[4] The full list of candidate biographies can be found in the Appendix.

After the six political candidates were evaluated, a final set of four questions were asked. One asked respondents how they would identify ideologically to see the impact ideology might have on evaluation of candidates and attitudes about gender equity. We also asked about respondents' attitudes regarding the importance of traditional political feeder qualifications such as experience working on a campaign or in politics. The final two questions asked about gender equity and opportunity in the United States to understand if voters believe gender equity is a problem and if they correspondingly evaluated female candidates differently based on these attitudes. The full questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

The experimental portion was in varying the gender assigned to potential candidates with the same biography- in version A of a particular experiment, for example, the bio was accompanied by the name "Joanne Davis", while in version B, the identical bio will be accompanied by the name "John Davis". I selected the first and last names by looking at common names in the United States according to the Census. I created faux candidate biographies by attributing common political and community involvement experience, jobs, and educational attainment. I purposefully created a mix of feeder field backgrounds (has an advanced degree, political or law experience, etc.). with those who would otherwise be considered unique political candidates (nurse, owner of hardware store, etc.). Political feeder fields are occupations that are typically sourced from to recruit potential candidates, such as law, business and politics, and represent the most common previous occupations of current legislators. The biographies were modeled after previous, similar studies evaluating candidate qualifications (Campbell and Cowley

2014). I divided the descriptions and attributed genders into two versions of the survey. Respondents received only one version of the survey. Apart from the gender of the potential candidate, every other aspect of the survey remained the same, including the same biography, qualifications, and order. The experiment was set up to isolate the effect of gender from how people evaluate the candidates. Because all biographies remained the same regardless of the gender of the candidate, it is reasonable to expect that any differences in evaluation would be due to gender alone.

While the survey presents valuable information about how voters evaluate potential candidates, there are some limitations to my experiment. First, respondents were drawn from a convenience sample and were not necessarily an accurate representation of a typical American voters. Mechanical Turk survey respondents are generally younger and more ideologically liberal than the public at large, but still provide insight into voter's behaviors and priorities. Mechanical Turk users are slightly more representative than an undergraduate student population, which is otherwise standard for researchers at my level (Berinsky 2012, Huff and Tingley 2015).

It is also important to note that the data was obtained through an informal, online survey about hypothetical candidates. Candidates were not presented in the context of a specific race, but were instead considered for multiple levels of office with no information about their political party, opponent, or policy stances. Although I attempted to make the biographies as realistic as possible, the experiment was presented in an artificial, abstract context. In a real-world context, however, it would be impossible to determine if gender was the only significant factor affecting vote choice due to the

infinite number of variables that occur during an election cycle. However, this also lends itself to the advantage of presenting potential candidates in an experimental setting. By doing so, we are able to isolate gender specifically to determine its effects on voter perception of candidate qualifications. In previous studies during election years, however, gender has consistently not been an important factor to voters (Trent 2010, Cowley 2014, Campbell and Cowley 2014).

Expectations

Although previous research has shown that voters don't punish women at the ballot box, women still believe they will be evaluated differently than men. Women tend to start by running for office at more local levels and the qualification leap from a local position to Congress can seem daunting, especially without encouragement from family or party leaders. Therefore, it is essential for female candidates to both feel confident in their qualifications, and know that others feel the same, before ultimately entering the race. What we want to understand from this study is if the perception that voters evaluate men and women's qualifications differently holds true when voters are evaluating *potential* candidates for higher office. I am particularly interested in seeing how the feeder field candidates most likely to run will be perceived by voters because it will provide us with the best evaluation of how qualified women are evaluated. The most important questions in the survey are those asking respondents to evaluate potential candidates because their responses will allow us to understand the role of gender in voter decision making. There is a perception that women are evaluated as less competent than otherwise equally qualified men. Therefore, if we see that otherwise identical male

candidates are rated as more qualified than women, it would suggest that gender biases

do exist at the candidate emergence stage, which has not been evident once candidates

actually enter the race. It will show us that the perception that women are evaluated

differently occurs not when women actually enter the race, but during the critical

candidate emergence stage when underrepresented groups need more encouragement

than ever to actually run. If otherwise identical male candidates are evaluated as more

qualified than women, it would suggest a reasonable explanation for the low numbers of

women who decide to run. It might mean that when women considered the option to run,

they may have been perceived as less qualified during the time when they needed to

know others *do* view them as qualified. But if we don't see gender differences, as has

been shown in studies evaluating candidates who are already running, it would suggest

that gender is both not an important consideration to voters and that untrue *perceptions* of

unequal treatment of female candidates should not hold women back from running for

office. This finding would also suggest that during the critical stage of considering

candidacy, women are not being held back by voter evaluations of being less qualified.

There is also a possibility that gender differences may exist, but when aggregated do not

appear. Therefore, if we see gender differences, but only among people of one party, it

would suggest that women considering candidacy in districts with parties in power who

have an anti-female bias will face additional barriers when trying to gain support from

their communities. This would likely further depress the number of women who consider

running in these districts or communities. If we see gender differences among

Republicans, it might explain the lower numbers of female Republican representatives compared to Democrats.

Generally, we know there is underrepresentation and we know it's not about voters punishing female candidates at the voting booth. Therefore, maybe negative voter evaluation is happening during the earlier candidate emergence phase. Because candidate efficacy is essential to someone making the decision to run for office, the knowledge that others in your community believe you are qualified is very important to ultimately deciding to run. A number of studies already show us that voters are not evaluating men and women differently once they're already in the race. This study takes a new look at how voters evaluate *potential* candidates who may consider running by seeing if there are gender differences during the candidate recruitment and emergence stage. If differences do emerge during this phase, it will provide valuable insight into why fewer women run for office that has not been identified in studies of voter evaluation during races. There is the perception that voters will punish female candidates, which discourages women from running in the first place. We know there are other factors that shape political ambition formation and the desire to run, but this study allows us to examine the role of gender and see its impacts. Additionally, even if we don't see aggregate differences, we might see differences among parties, genders, etc. that even out when added together. We will further examine those differences if they arise.

Because the candidate emergence stage has not been studied before, it is important if we discover null results because it will show that gender bias when people are considering candidacy is not the reason fewer women run for office. Null results will

show us that, as has been proven in studies during actual election contests, that when voters evaluate *potential* candidates, they are doing so in the same way they evaluate actual candidates for office, equally regardless of gender.

Survey Overview and Demographics

The online survey was open from March 6th to March 12th, 2017. 429 people took the survey. 211 of those respondents took Version 1 of the survey and 218 took Version 2. Slightly more men than women took the survey, but it was generally pretty even with 51.7% and 46.4% respectively.

Gender of Survey Respondents
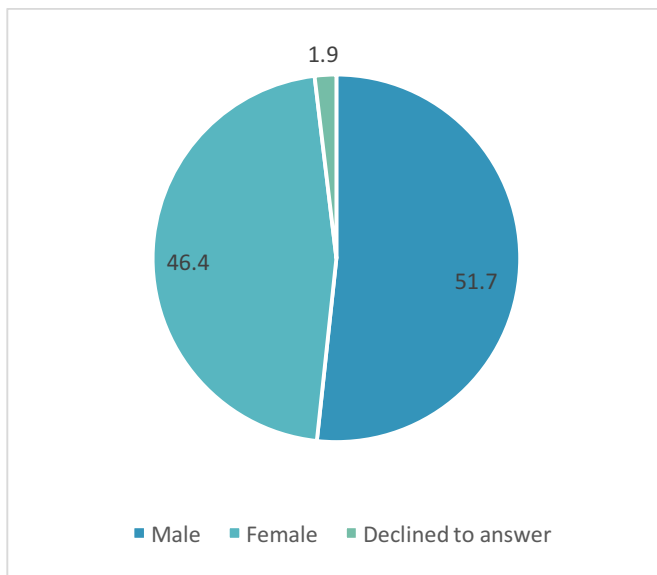
Party Identification of the Respondents
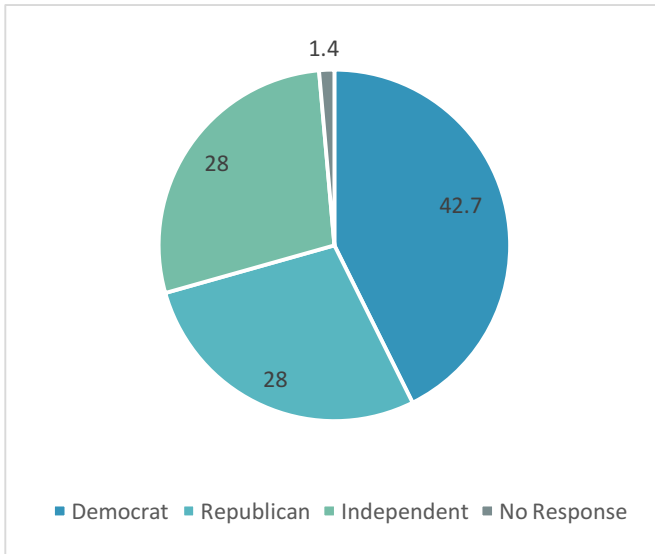
Most respondents categorized themselves in one of three political parties. As expected with most Mechanical Turk respondents, there was a significantly larger population of Democrats, comprising 42.7% of total respondents and Republicans and Independents each comprising 28% of the sample.

Ideological Identification of Respondents
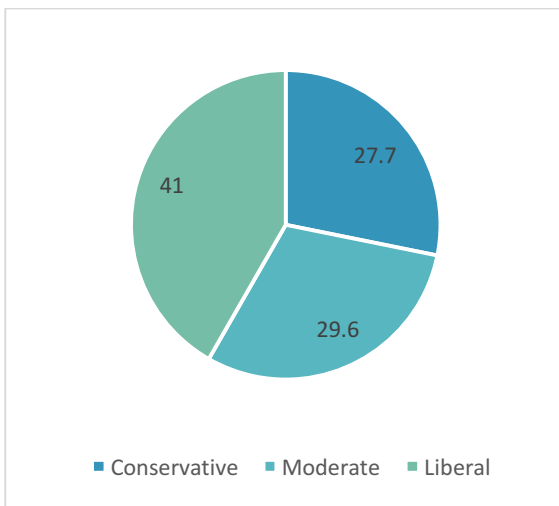
Similar to how respondents identified with political party, similar results were found when asked about their ideology. Liberals comprised 41%, Moderates 29.6% and Conservatives 27.7% of the respondent population.

Results of Overall Qualification for Each Candidate

John/Joanne Davis (Marketing) Qualification Evaluation

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	41.7	11.0	8.2
Somewhat qualified	49.2	38.2	24.5
Not very qualified	6.5	38.7	39.2
Not at all qualified	0.9	10.5	26.6

Mark/Marian Rodriguez (MPA/City Hall) Qualification Evaluation

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	77.9	57.8	41.0
Somewhat qualified	16.3	33.1	41.7
Not very qualified	3.7	4.4	11.9
Not at all qualified	0.2	3.0	3.7

Matthew/Margaret Brown (Nurse) Qualification Evaluation

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	12.1	5.4	5.1
Somewhat qualified	38.5	10.3	9.3
Not very qualified	33.8	33.8	21.4
Not at all qualified	13.8	48.7	62.5

Edward/Emily Wilson (Hardware Store) Qualification Evaluation

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	23.3	7.5	4.7
Somewhat qualified	47.1	17.9	12.1
Not very qualified	21.4	33.3	22.6
Not at all qualified	6.3	39.6	58.7

James/Jennifer (Lawyer)

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	65.0	41.5	35.
Somewhat qualified	27.7	41.5	42.0
Not very qualified	4.2	10.3	13.3
Not at all qualified	1.2	4.4	7.0

Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk/City Council)

	Town Council	Mayor of a large city	Congress
Very qualified	65.7	29.4	22.6
Somewhat qualified	28.4	45.2	38.9
Not very qualified	3.0	19.8	24.5
Not at all qualified	1.2	4.0	12.4

General Results:

In looking at the general results, regardless of which version of the survey respondents took, the aggregate scores of whether people viewed each candidate as qualified were consistent with what we expected based on the objective experiences of each potential candidate. The most "naturally" unqualified candidates (the nurse and hardware store owner) were perceived as such and were uniformly characterized as unqualified to run for higher levels of office beyond local positions. The most qualified

candidates (the MPA, lawyer, and law clerk) were viewed as the most qualified to run for the highest level of office. James/Jennifer (lawyer) had 35.9% of respondents believing they were 'very qualified' to run for Congress, Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall) had 41%, and Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk) had 22.6%. These three candidates all held traditional feeder field careers and had higher education in law or public administration. In the 114th Congress, 64% of House members and 74% of Senate members had an advanced degree. Additionally, public service/politics, law, and business were the top three occupations (Manning 2016). Therefore, these three candidates accurately represented a typical politician in Congress. There were clear differences across these three candidates, however. In assessing the biographies and experiences of the potential candidates, Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall) was the most experienced, followed by James/Jennifer (lawyer) and Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk). Respondents evaluated candidates in this hierarchical fashion with Mark/Marian having the highest score for being 'very qualified' for Congress and Michael/Michelle having the lowest of the three traditional candidates. Generally, the fact that respondents viewed the traditionally qualified candidates higher than the traditionally unqualified candidates shows that the respondents took the task seriously and the survey will yield real results about perceptions of candidate qualifications.

Quantitative Analysis

With these results in hand, we now move to a direct examination of the role of gender in candidate evaluations. In this study of the how potential candidates' qualifications are evaluated during the candidate emergence stage, we wanted to evaluate

a few questions that would allow us to determine whether or not gender played a significant role in voters' decision making. Most importantly, does gender matters in how otherwise identical candidates are evaluated for different levels of office? If no differences exist, does gender matter among people of one party? We will be answering these questions by conducting t-tests of candidate evaluations by gender. T-tests allow us to see if there are statistically significant differences between the means of two groups across the experiment, in this case, candidate evaluations and gender. If means are higher for men than women, it would suggest that women are being evaluated unfairly during the candidate emergence phase, likely depressing their likelihood to run for office and contributing to the low levels of female representation.

Does gender matter in how otherwise identical candidates are evaluated for higher office?

For John/Joanne (marketing), they were evaluated equally for both the city council and mayoral position suggesting that voters did not take gender into account when evaluating their qualifications. While their career in marketing/business would place them in feeder field profession, they were not evaluated at the same level as some of the other candidates, likely because of their regional, limited experience. While evaluated as generally unqualified, a gender difference existed at the Congressional level with a bias towards the female candidate. There isn't really a great explanation for this phenomenon. It could perhaps be due to voters rewarding the female candidate for achieving success in a formerly male dominated profession, or it could just be a fluke in the study. Regardless of the fluke, this candidate who objectively has experiences

consistent with those running for local positions, was evaluated equally for those levels of office.

Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall), objectively the most qualified candidate, was not only evaluated as the most qualified, but there were no gender differences at any level of office. These results suggest that voters recognize and reward traditional candidate qualifications as being well positioned to run for higher office and that for a candidate who would actually be likely to run, they were not evaluated differently based on gender. Therefore, for women who are highly qualified, they are both rewarded for their experience and evaluated equally to otherwise identical male candidates.

Matt/Margaret (Nurse) was another candidate who was objectively viewed as unqualified to run for office, likely because their skillset doesn't align with traditional feeder field occupations such as business, law, or politics. For this candidate, gender differences were present at all three levels of office, in favor of the female candidate. As I will explain later in this chapter, this difference can potentially be attributed to the novelty factor and the strict gender norms that still exist in the nursing profession. Although gender differences existed, this candidate's experiences make them an unlikely candidate for political office, but perhaps present larger themes about the gender barriers and stereotypes that exist in other occupations that have yet to become more gender neutral.

Ed/Emily (Hardware Store) was the other candidate whose experiences made them an unlikely candidate for political office. They were viewed as generally

unqualified for all levels of office, however their experience as President of the Rotary Organization likely gave them a higher mean score than that of the nurse. There were no gender differences at the town council and Congressional level, although gender differences emerged in at the mayoral level in favor of the male candidate. This outcome also suggests the impact of the novelty factor for non-traditional candidate experiences. Just as was the case for the nurse, the gender differences that do exist happened for an unlikely potential candidate.

For James/Jennifer (laywer), the candidate's qualifications were evaluated equally for all levels of office. As one of the most objectively experienced for political office, voters evaluated them as such, once again rewarding traditional feeder field qualifications with higher mean scores at all levels of office. These results suggest that for someone with the experiences typical of someone you would expect to run for office, no gender differences emerged.

Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk/City Hall) followed the same trends of the other two traditionally qualified candidates. They were evaluated as more qualified for all levels of office compared to the unqualified candidates and were evaluated equally, regardless of gender, at all levels of office. Because all three likely potential candidates with traditional political feeder field experiences were evaluated equally regardless of gender and were appropriated higher mean scores for their experiences, shows us that voters value and recognize these experiences and don't evaluate men and women differently for those most likely to run for office.

Results from the survey were consistent with previous findings that most candidates were not viewed significantly differently based on their gender. Most importantly, all three candidates with traditional qualifications and feeder field occupations did not have any significant differences in evaluation by gender at any level of office.

A unique trend emerged for some of the other professions, however. As I mentioned in a previous chapter, female politicians used to face the challenge of being presented as a 'novelty factor'. Eagly and Karau (2002) explained that people generally use heuristics to make informed decisions with little information. When people are presented with candidates that have unfamiliar circumstances or traits, they are more likely to view them more negatively. As women have become increasingly more visible in positions of power, the challenge of facing this incongruence in people's minds has faded. When respondents were evaluating these candidates, the occupations of lawyer and City Clerk were known connections to current politicians. When respondents were presented with the nurse, hardware store owner, and in certain cases, the marketing director, running for office was not perceived as immediate connection to someone who normally runs for office. Therefore, these occupations were affected by the novelty factor and viewed negatively. Obviously, nurses or hardware store owners are unlikely people to pursue running for office. However, the significant results among these occupations perhaps has a larger story to tell.

The most significant results happened when evaluating Matt/Margaret (nurse). In the case of both the nurse and the hardware store owner (which produced some

significant results), both occupations still maintain rigid gender norms: most nurses are women and most hardware store workers are men. When the norms were switched, however (when respondents were given bios from people with the wrong gender given their profession), they did not respond well. Although both genders were considered relatively unqualified at every level of government, the male nurse was evaluated statistically significantly lower than the female nurse. For Edward/Emily (hardware store owner), a similar thing happened, though only at the mayoral level. This shows us that gender norms about traditionally gender rigid occupations are impactful based on how unfavorably the prospect of "murses" or female hardware store owners was perceived.

Candidate Evaluations[5]

John/Joanne (Marketing) Compared Means of Qualification

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.36	3.32	.04	.497
Mayor	2.45	2.56	-.11	.142
Congress	2.05	2.24	-.19*	.028*

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall) Compared Means of Qualification

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.74	3.76	-.02	.628
Mayor	3.47	3.49	-.02	.738
Congress	3.28	3.16	.12	.101

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

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[5] Candidates were evaluated on a 1-4 scale with 1 being 'not at all qualified' and 4 being 'very qualified'

Matt/Margaret (Nurse) Means of Qualification

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	2.40	2.60	-.20*	.025*
Mayor	1.62	1.81	-.19*	.021*
Congress	1.46	1.67	-.21*	.013*

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Ed/Emily (Hardware Store) Means of Qualification

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	2.96	2.82	-.14	.105
Mayor	2.08	1.78	.30*	.001*
Congress	1.69	1.55	.14	.125

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

James/Jennifer (Lawyer) Means of Qualification

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.55	3.64	-.09	.156
Mayor	3.18	3.28	-.10	.235
Congress	3.08	3.09	-.01	.873

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk/City Council) Means of Qualification

|	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.64	3.58	-.06	.299
Mayor	3.03	3.00	.03	.765
Congress	2.69	2.77	-.08	.415

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Ideological Voter Perceptions

Because most candidates were not evaluated differently based on gender, could

there be additional factors influencing voter perceptions that we cannot see when

evaluating aggregated results? In order to explore this further, I looked at attitudes

regarding the question 'How large of a problem is discrimination against women?" I

believed that if someone believed discrimination was still a serious problem that they

might believe this was the case in politics and be more sensitive to evaluating female

candidates equally. I noticed pretty large differences between how Republicans and

Democrats responded to this question. For example, among Democratic women, none

responded saying that discrimination against women was 'not at all a problem' and only

2.5% of Democratic men responded the same way compared to 25.3% of Republican

men and 31.7% of Republican women who agreed with the statement. The results

became even more different among those who believed discrimination was only a 'minor

problem'. Among Democratic women this was 17.8% and 19% for men, among

Republican men this was 44.3%, which is closer to the rate of Democratic women (52.5)

and men (54.4) who believed discrimination against women was a 'moderately serious

problem'.

How large of a problem is discrimination against women?
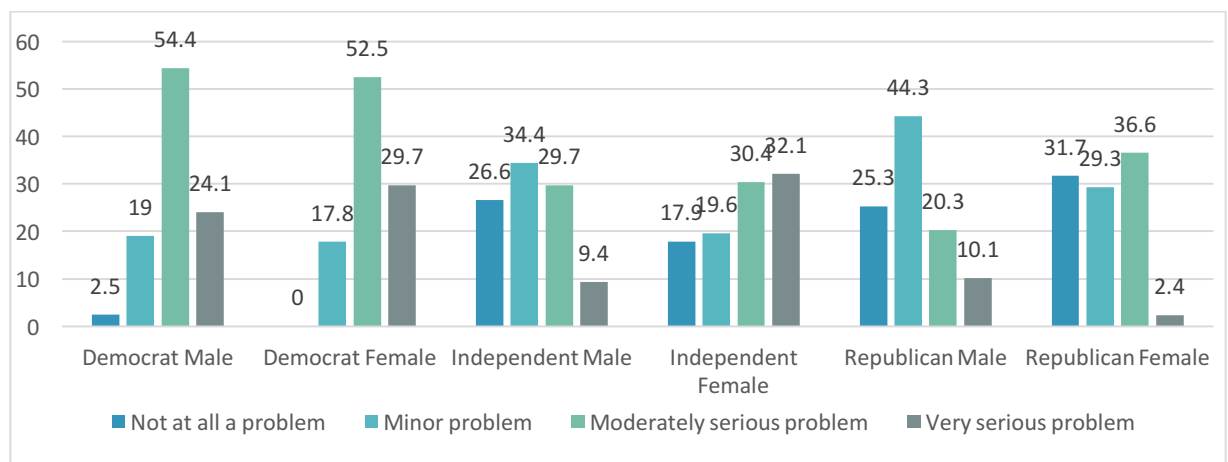
When examining voter behavior, we have found that partisanship, not gender, is the most significant factor influencing voter choice. Because there existed no significant differences among candidate evaluation when aggregated, perhaps there might be differences among political parties. Democrats have more female representatives than Republicans (CAWP 2017) and more Democrats hope to see a woman elected as President in their lifetime. Democrats have more female representatives, are more concerned about electing a female President, and are more likely to believe that discrimination is still a problem for women. We know that perceived gender barriers and stereotypes are holding women back from running for office, but if Democrats believe this is happening more, would they also be more likely to evaluate female candidates equally because of conscious thoughts that female candidates face these issues?

When asked about whether discrimination against women was still a problem, there were more significant differences across party than there were across gender. This shows us that there are partisan differences in how people view the world. Do these worldview differences distill down to how people view potential political candidates? Political parties are responsible for recruitment and cast judgement during primaries. Because my study was particularly focused on how potential candidates are perceived during this candidate emergence stage, the partisan differences I discovered about views on the prevalence of gender discrimination could potentially impact candidates when party perception matters most. Therefore, I wanted to see how the candidate qualification evaluations differed by party identification. Additionally, because there were no apparent differences among the aggregate scores, perhaps a partisan analysis could provide further

explanation as to whether gender discrimination existed, but only among one political party.

In the initial analysis, Matt/Margaret (nurse) had the most significant results. Controlling for partisanship, there were no differences across *parties* and the results found earlier about candidates being evaluated the same still held for both parties. This appears to show that the both parties evaluated the candidates similarly and once aggregated, the potential 'novelty' factor of the potential candidate was significant. There were also two other circumstances where results were significant: at the Congressional level for John/Joanne (Marketing) and at the Mayoral level for Edward/Emily (hardware store).

Once segmented by party, the significance for John/Joanne can be attributed to Republican attitudes and for Edward/Emily it can be attributed to Democratic attitudes. For Edward/Emily, there was an additional Democratic significance at the town council level as well. A new significance developed for James/Jennifer among Republicans. For both the town council and mayoral level, there was a significant gender difference, but displayed a counterintuitive response in favor of the female candidate.

John/Joanne (Marketing) Party ID Evaluation

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.38	3.26	.12	.222
Mayor	2.53	2.49	.004	.711
Congress	2.02	2.02	0	.985

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.35	3.32	.03	.780
Mayor	2.44	2.64	-.20	.179
Congress	2.11	2.48	-.37*	.023*

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall)

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.79	3.87	-.08	.187
Mayor	3.51	3.62	-.11	.242
Congress	3.27	3.22	.05	.662

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.67	3.67	0	1.00
Mayor	3.41	3.33	.08	.608
Congress	3.26	3.04	.22	.148

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Matt/Margaret (Nurse)

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	2.41	2.52	-.11	.404
Mayor	1.55	1.73	-.18	.118
Congress	1.40	1.54	-.14	.184

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	2.48	2.70	-.22	.212
Mayor	1.83	1.86	-.03	.864
Congress	1.59	1.76	-.17	.365

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Ed/Emily (Hardware Store)

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.04	2.79	.25*	.037*
Mayor	2.04	1.74	.30*	.025*
Congress	1.63	1.49	.14	.253

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	2.91	3.00	-.09	.542
Mayor	2.06	2.04	-.02	.901
Congress	1.62	1.80	-.18	.295

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

James/Jennifer (Lawyer)

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.65	3.62	.03	.678
Mayor	3.24	3.19	.05	.638
Congress	3.00	3.00	0	1.00

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.39	3.67	-.28*	.039*
Mayor	3.08	3.46	-.38*	.013*
Congress	3.05	3.30	-.25	.104

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk/City Council)

Democrat

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.64	3.59	.05	.614
Mayor	3.03	3.04	-.01	.955
Congress	2.67	2.75	-.08	.589

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

Republican

	Male candidate	Female Candidate	Difference (male-female)	p-value (male-female)
Town Council	3.67	3.58	.09	.430
Mayor	3.07	2.92	.15	.312
Congress	2.87	2.70	.17	.307

* indicates that the difference between male and female ratings is significant at .05 level.

For John/Joanne (marketing), the results when controlled for party were the same

as the aggregated analysis. There were no significant differences among gender in

candidate evaluations except at the Congressional level. The political party results show us that this difference is attributed to a more favorable view of the female candidate by Republican respondents. While not a result I expected, this finding could likely be chalked up as a fluke. This also shows us that partisanship doesn't matter during the candidate emergence stage.

For Mark/Marian (MPA/City Hall) there were again no gender differences at any level of office. This shows us that for the most qualified candidate, both political parties viewed them equally, regardless of gender. This shows us promise for equal gender recruitment and support of qualified candidates in both political parties, an essential component for emerging candidates. This also suggests that among partisans, traditional qualifications were still valued.

While Matt/Margaret (nurse) had significant responses at every office level when aggregated, once broken down to political party, there were no gender differences. This leads us to believe that both political parties had biases towards the male nurse, but the differences only mattered when aggregated and were not attributed to the bias of one party over the other. This candidate was still viewed as objectively unqualified by both parties, suggesting that no matter your partisan identity, having traditional candidate feeder field qualifications is still important to voters.

For Ed/Emily (hardware store), we discovered the anti-female bias was due to Democratic respondents. During this analysis, gender differences also emerged at the town council level, but only for one party. This leads us to believe that perhaps

Democratic voters are more sensitive to traditional feeder field qualifications and are uncomfortable with unqualified candidates in non-traditional roles. Both parties, however, viewed this candidate as generally unqualified, which was evident at both the aggregated and party level. This shows us that regardless of gender, having relevant qualifications is what matters most to voters.

James/Jennifer (lawyer) did not experience any gender differences in the aggregated study, but Republicans viewed the female candidate as significantly more qualified than the male candidate at both the town council and mayoral level. This shows us that her advanced qualifications were appreciated by voters, and that the existence of women in a male-dominated field may have even been rewarded by Republicans. Based on the results that Republicans are less likely to believe discrimination is a problem for women, we had expected that Republicans would be less receptive or encouraging of female candidates. The results that Republicans viewed the female candidate as more qualified suggests important results that in a party that might be perceived as less open to female candidates due to the small number of Republican representatives, they are both interested and encouraging of female candidates.

Finally, Michael/Michelle (Law Clerk/City Council) experienced no gender differences during both the aggregate and party analyses. Importantly, for two of the most highly qualified candidates, there continued to be no gender differences across political parties. This shows us that regardless of political party, voters still evaluate potential candidates equally. For any gender differences that did exist for the candidates most likely to run during the party analysis, it was a bias in favor of the female candidate.

Survey Conclusions

The results of the survey showed consistency with similar studies of its kind: overall, voters are not exhibiting sexist behaviors when evaluating candidates and determining their qualifications. Although there exhibited a few instances of significance for unqualified potential candidates in strict gender normative occupations, there was no difference among the three traditional feeder field candidates. Despite this study's limitations, we learn that voters evaluate those most likely to run-and those who are qualified to do so- equally, regardless of gender. Obviously in a normal electoral context voters would be presented with much more information about a candidate's beliefs, personal background, and support of policies. What's key to remember, however, is that oftentimes voters are uninformed. The information we presented them with was probably more than a voter might actually know before voting, especially for down-ballot contestants. Therefore, even if we presented a similar model in an actual electoral setting, I believe we would see similar results.

This study provides other valuable insight as well into voter behavior during the candidate emergence process. While a good amount of academic literature exists about how voters evaluate actual candidates-both historically and in simulation- little exists about how voters respond to *potential* officeholders. So many women get turned off to politics during this crucial time because they don't believe they are qualified or that they will be judged more harshly because of their gender. Therefore, the results of this study are essential for women to know and understand. The perception that voters will evaluate your qualifications differently based on your gender is, it appears, no longer a reality.

There are barriers to office for all potential candidates, but women, especially those who

have ever considered running, should not let this hold them back from entering the race.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Through previous studies on voter behavior, we discovered that gender is not a significant consideration for voters because partisanship always matters more. Implicit and explicit biases, gender stereotypes, and media coverage are not informing voters on how they evaluate candidates and as more women have entered into previously male dominated fields, the novelty factor of female politicians, that used to present a large barrier to female candidates, has begun to wear off. With the recent loss of the first female major party nominee for President to someone who is by all traditional measures, unqualified, the perception that women face additional barriers while running for office was only strengthened. Because of socialization factors, women are less likely to possess political ambition traits or predispositions, and are much less likely to view themselves as qualified and capable of taking the risk of running for political office. The presence of stereotypes that women are evaluated differently to otherwise equally qualified men only continues to perpetuate the belief that women will have a harder time running for office or gaining support. With already lower levels of confidence about their abilities, this perception of inequality leads to less women being interested or willing to enter political races.

In my studies, I contributed to previous research about candidate evaluations by asking voters to evaluate potential candidates for office during the phase when women who might consider running are discouraged by socially perpetuated stereotypes. In my qualitative study asking respondents about their preferred candidates, gender related cues

did not emerge and when asked about barriers potential candidates might face, gender was not a major theme until prompted. In my qualitative study, we discovered that when evaluating potential candidates, there were no significant gender differences, particularly among the candidates most likely to run.

When it comes to gender differences in the electoral system, we have discovered that it's not about voting or recruitment. It's a perception issue. Women don't run for office because they believe that they will be perceived unfairly. When voters make decisions, however, this isn't actually happening, mostly because gender is not an important consideration for voters. Because most voters are uninformed, partisanship continues to be the most impactful factor informing voter choice and evaluation. Our political system is so polarized at this point that people won't cross parties for gender and any "women for women" effects within parties aren't significant enough to influence larger effects. Therefore, it's not necessarily a political issue of the electoral process being biased against female candidates, but a social one. During my quantitative study, when asked if gender was still a barrier, almost all who were asked the question responded with sentiments about the double standard women face, the need to be overqualified, or the impact of sexism. Sexism occurs in our society, female representatives receive derogatory comments, and women, due to their lack of confidence, feel an additional level of scrutiny about how they might be perceived, both intellectually and physically. The reality that women aren't being evaluated differently than equally qualified male candidates hasn't caught on in public perception yet and the discussions about female representation is missing the point. Women don't run because

they lack candidate efficacy and confidence, in part because they believe they will be perceived as unqualified by voters. Once women actually enter the race, they win at the same rates as men. Therefore, the only way to address female representation issues is for more people to become aware of the reality that women aren't being perceived unfairly, and to have more women run for office.

Because we have found that women aren't being perceived differently by voters, what we must focus on is the confidence gap. As Richard Petty, a psychologist at Ohio State explains, "Confidence is the stuff that turns thoughts into actions" (Kay and Shipman 2014). We are in a society surrounded by some of the most intelligent and qualified women, many of whom would serve as incredible public leaders, but also many who don't see how that could actually come into fruition. Women hesitate, hold back, and wait until they are overqualified, over-prepared, and perfectly timed before even considering taking the risk of running for office. The problem of striving for perfectionism is something that follows women throughout their entire lives. Instead of taking risks like men do, women refuse to take the risk until they are *certain* they are overqualified (Kay and Shipman, 2014). Therefore, the perception that women need to be overqualified to run for office is not wrong, but it's not for the reasons we think. It's not a social cue from voters, but instead an intrinsic confidence issue women face.

In order for female representation to improve we need the following things to occur. First, the public dialogue needs to shift to recognize the reality of the electoral process and the insignificance of gender in voters' decision making. Both anecdotally and in my study, many people still believe that gender discrimination is a significant reason

as to why female representation continues to lag. Once public perception is on the same page with consistent studies showing the insignificance of gender relative to partisanship, then the confidence gap that women fundamentally possess can be challenged. Second, qualified women must be encouraged to realize their potential. It is essential that potential candidates feel that others view them as qualified. In turn, they will be able to view themselves as a viable candidate. Because women particularly struggle with seeing how the thought of running for office and navigating the electoral process can be possible for them, they need to see that others view them as qualified so they will be more willing to go against their protective instincts and take the risk. As Senator Kirsten Gillibrand argues, women should take the risk, regardless of whether or not they think they're ready. "It doesn't matter if you haven't worked your way up. The guys run every time. I can't tell you how many 30-year-old dudes believe they should be Senator or President. Women, we're like, 'Well, maybe after ten years of working …' No. Just run for the office you want to run for and run on the issue you want to fix" (Traister 2017). Ultimately the only way we will address the issue of female representation is having more women to run for office. If women don't feel confident enough to run or don't have the resources or flexibility to enter a race, they must find another woman to support and encourage to run.

When I started this research, most political experts believed we were on the brink of breaking the ominous "glass ceiling" holding women back from succeeding in politics. While the timing and outcome of the 2016 may have led to a resurgence in the belief that "if she were a man, she would have won", gender was not the deciding factor in this

election, or any other. Especially as we become more polarized as a country, partisanship will always matter more. Women can no longer wait for the glass ceiling to feel comfortable enough to enter the political arena. The only way we can improve female representation and aim for another female Presidential nominee is to have more qualified female candidates running for office. In order to address the confidence and candidate efficacy gap holding women back from entering politics, we must align public perception with political reality. Voters care most about political party and are not actively discriminating against qualified female candidates. While the historic movement of female equality is still a work in progress, the way voters evaluate female candidates has progressed significantly from when women first sought elected office. Gender may have been a significant factor influencing voter choice, but as women have become more accepted into male-dominated fields and achieve equal qualifications, voter perception has also evolved. With this evolution of voter behavior, public dialogue must also shift to show that equally qualified men and women aren't being evaluated differently by voters. When this message can be accepted and spread to address the confidence gap among women, the sooner we will be to breaking the glass ceiling once and for all.

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Appendix

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI)
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH CURRICULUM COMPLETION REPORT
Printed on 11/18/2013

LEARNER	Holly Grosholz (ID: 3872172) 701 Moore Avenue C1276 Bucknell University Lewisburg Pennsylvania 17837 USA
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EXPIRATION DATE	

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH COURSE 1. : This course is for investigators, staff and students with an interest or focus in Social and Behavioral research. This course contains text, embedded case studies AND quizzes.

COURSE/STAGE:	RCR/1
PASSED ON:	11/18/2013
REFERENCE ID:	11773490

REQUIRED MODULES	DATE COMPLETED
The CITI Course in the Responsible Conduct of Research	11/16/13
Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research	11/16/13
Introduction to Research Misconduct	11/18/13
Research Misconduct (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Case Study Plagiarism (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Data Management (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Case Study - Data Management 'Who Owns Research Data?' (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Case Study - Data Management 'The New Clinical Data Manager' (RCR-Biomed)	11/18/13
Authorship (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Peer Review (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
What is Responsible Peer Review (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Responsible Mentoring 01-1625 Archived 1625	11/18/13
Mentoring Case Study: O, What a Tangled Web We Weave (All Disciplines)	11/18/13
Mentoring Case Study: The Graduate Student Laborer (All Disciplines)	11/18/13
Conflicts of Interest (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
CoI Case Study -The Case of the Entrepreneurial Psychologist (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Collaborative Research (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13
Bucknell University	11/18/13
The CITI RCR Course Completion Page	11/18/13
ELECTIVE MODULES	**DATE COMPLETED**
Case Study - In the Field, No One Will Know (RCR-Humanities)	11/18/13
Case Study No News Is Not Good News (RCR-SBE)	11/18/13

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI Program participating institution or be a paid Independent Learner. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI Progam course site is unethical, and may be considered research misconduct by your institution.

Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
Professor, University of Miami
Director Office of Research Education
CITI Program Course Coordinator

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

* NOTE: Scores on this <u>Requirements Report</u> reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Holly Grosholz (ID: 3872172)
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- **Institution Unit:** Psychology
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- **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Social Behavioral Track
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Report ID:** 11773489
- **Completion Date:** 26-Sep-2016
- **Expiration Date:** 26-Sep-2018
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score*:** 87

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)	25-Sep-2016	3/3 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	25-Sep-2016	4/5 (80%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	25-Sep-2016	5/5 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	25-Sep-2016	3/5 (60%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	25-Sep-2016	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	25-Sep-2016	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	25-Sep-2016	4/5 (80%)
Populations in Research Requiring Additional Considerations and/or Protections (ID: 16680)	26-Sep-2016	4/5 (80%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

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Appendix 3: Interview Questions

1. *How would you use to describe an ideal political candidate?*
2. *What are necessary personality traits required of someone considering running for political office?*
3. *What are necessary skills or experiences required of someone considering running for political office?*
4. *Are there any factors someone should take into account when considering running for political office?*
5. *Do you think qualifications should vary based on the level of office being sought? If so, what changes?*
6. *Do you see yourself as someone who is qualified/would be qualified to run for political office?*
7. *Have you ever run for any type of elected position?*
8. *Have you ever been encouraged to run for political office?*
9. *In our current political environment, what do you see as some of the biggest barriers for someone considering running for office?*

Follow-up question asked in later interviews:

10. *Do you still see gender as a barrier for someone considering running for office?*

Appendix 4: Candidate Biographies

1. John/ Joanne Davis is 45 years old and a father of two. He is a long-term resident of the area that he hopes to represent, leaving only to get a college degree in Business Administration. He has been married for 15 years. He now works at a regional office of a local marketing firm and has served two terms on the local school board.

2. Mark/Marian Rodriguez is 45 years old. He holds a Masters degree in Public Policy and has worked as an administrator in city government for 25 years. He has been married for 18 years, and has two children. He has also volunteered on a number of Congressional campaigns.

3. Matthew/Margaret Brown is 40 years old. He went to community college and then went on to become a registered nurse at the local hospital. He is married and has two young children.

4. Edward/Emily Wilson is 50 years old. He has three children. He started working at his family's local hardware store when he graduated high school and has been there ever since. He has served as the President of the Rotary organization for the past three years.

5. James/Jennifer Miller is 60 years old. He is a partner at a local law firm and attended Law School at Princeton University. He spent the early years of his career working in a Congressional office in Washington D.C. before beginning his law career.

6. Michael/Michelle Kromer is 55 years. He has a law degree from Penn State University and has served as a clerk for a district judge. After working in law and business for a number of years, he now Chairman of the Board for a local charity.

Question asked following each biography:

1. How qualified do you think this person would be to run for office as a candidate for city council?

- Not at all qualified
- Not very qualified
- Somewhat qualified
- Very qualified

And how qualified would they be to run as a candidate for mayor of a large city?

And how qualified would they be to run as a candidate to be U.S. Congress Member?

Survey Questions

1. How would you describe your party affiliation?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other

2. Gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. Age

4. Generally speaking, do you think most elected officials are qualified for the positions they hold?

- Yes
- No

5. Please assess how important you think it is that candidates for public office have the following experiences in their background (Not Important, Somewhat Important, Important, Very Important)

- Having worked in business
- Having expertise on policy issues

- Having a law degree
- Having campaign experience
- Having public speaking experience

6. Do men or women have more opportunity for achievement in the U.S.?

- Men have more
- Women have more
- Equal opportunities for both

7. How large a problem is discrimination against women?

- Not a problem at all
- A minor problem
- A moderately serious problem
- A very serious problem
- An extremely serious problem