ROLE PLAY: CANDIDATES, POTENTIAL VOTERS, AND FAMILY/GENDER

ROLES

by

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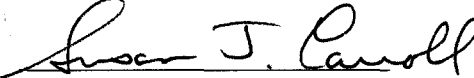
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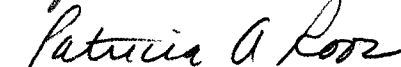Professor Susan J. Carroll

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Role Play: Candidates, Potential Voters, and Family/Gender Roles

by JENNIFER SCHENK SACCO

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This dissertation examines the ways in which male and female candidates for House of

Representatives, Senate, and Governor invoke their gender and family role information in

their campaign websites and printed campaign literature. I also examine the ways voters

evaluate a male and a female candidate portrayed in typical fashion in relation to their

family of origin and their present family. The candidate data are collected from the

website and printed campaign literature of candidates to office in 2002 in each race in

which a woman ran on a major party ticket. The experimental data are collected from

experiments conducted with nationally representative samples of the U.S. public. The

evidence suggests that traditional gender role expectations affect the ways male and

female candidates describe themselves in relation to their present families and families of

origin, and that candidates portray themselves strategically in different mediums and with

different audiences. Evidence that voters base their evaluations of candidates on

traditional gender role expectations when candidates discuss their families is also

presented.

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will take techniques she shared with me for teaching women and public policy everywhere I teach in the future, as she helped me figure out ways to get students to understand the relevance of politics in their own lives.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There is a weird and compelling website on the internet called "political

graveyard.com."[1] Aside from the interesting yet strange fact that this is a website built

around listing the places of burial of past politicians in the U.S., it indeed has lots of other

important pieces of demographic information about almost everyone (living or dead) who

has ever served in the United States Congress, as President or Vice President, in the

cabinet, as a federal or state judge, as a U.S. diplomat, as a state officeholder, as a

political candidate, as a state or national political party official, or as mayor of certain

cities, since the first Continental Congress.[2] The following are two entries from the site:

> **Gingrich, Newton Leroy** (b. 1943) — also known as Newt Gingrich — of
> Carrollton, Carroll County, Ga. Born in Harrisburg, Dauphin County, Pa., June
> 17, 1943. Republican. U.S. Representative from Georgia 6th District, 1979-99;
> defeated, 1974, 1976; Speaker of the U.S. House, 1995-99. Baptist. Reprimanded
> in 1997 by the House of Representatives, and fined $300,000, over false
> statements he had made during an investigation of his use of tax-exempt
> organizations for partisan advocacy. Still living as of 2003.[3]

> **Jordan, Barbara Charline** (1936-1996) — also known as Barbara Jordan — of
> Houston, Harris County, Tex. Born in Houston, Harris County, Tex., February 21,
> 1936. Democrat. Member of Texas state senate, 1967; U.S. Representative from
> Texas 18th District, 1973-79. Female. Black. Lesbian. Received the Spingarn
> Medal in 1992, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994. Died of leukemia
> and multiple sclerosis, January 17, 1996. Interment at Texas State Cemetery,
> Austin, Tex.[4]

Clearly, the site tracks a wealth of biographical information about politicians. Within

these two entries, one can learn a lot, such as where Newt Gingrich was born and what

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[1] Official site is listed as "politicalgraveyard.com/inqa.html" 7/19/2005.
[2] The creator of the site is Lawrence Kestenbaum, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and he credits his primary source of information as the Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, in addition to various national, local and state databases. 138,150 politicians, living and dead are included on the site, as of 7/20/05, and data collection is ongoing.
[3] http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/gilmour-givhan.html. Downloaded 7/20/05 site created and maintained by Lawrence Kestenbaum, Ann Arbor, MI.
[4] http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/jordan.html. Downloaded 7/20/05 site created and maintained by Lawrence Kestenbaum, Ann Arbor, MI.

his punishment was when he was reprimanded in 1997. One can learn the cause of Barbara Jordan's death, and that she was awarded the Medal of Freedom. But if you are like me, when you read her entry, three other identifiers hit you right in the face: "Female. Black. Lesbian."

It is not that such facts come as a shock,[5] but the way in which they are listed tells us something about American politics. Were Barbara Jordan not Black, not female, and not lesbian, her entry would likely be as silent as Newt Gingrich's about her gender, race, and sexual orientation. Of course, it is precisely because this site tracks such information that I find it useful and relevant to my own research. One can look up a list of politicians who are (or were, while living) female, a list of those who are black, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Native American, Hispanic, foreign-born, and gay or lesbian. If one clicks on those particular identities, everyone in the database for whom such information is known and verified comes up. And yet, a user could not as readily produce a list of only those politicians who are male, white, or straight. These are of course the overwhelming and therefore default categories—to be assumed unless otherwise stated—and as such are rendered unnecessary to indicate, and further, I am arguing, invisible. It is only those who are the exceptions to these defaults for whom gender, race, and sexual orientation are listed explicitly.[6]

Such is the case for those who are exceptions to "rules"—those who stand out because some aspect of their identity is less common and therefore not what a person

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[5] Jordan never publicly acknowledged being lesbian, however.

[6] It is interesting to note, however, that religion is not an identity with a default of the generic term "Christian" (unless that is all the specification a politician has ever given.) In this instance one can easily generate lists of politicians who are Methodist, Catholic, Episcopalian/Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregationalist, Jewish , Lutheran, Protestant, Unitarian-Universalist, Christian, Mormon, Disciples of Christ, Quaker, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Eastern Orthodox, Christian Scientist, Pentecostal, Swedenborgian, Seventh-Day Adventist, Muslim, Buddhist, Spiritualist, Nazarene, or Puritan.

would generally expect within a certain context—in this instance, among elected representatives and officials. In the halls of power in the U.S., the default identities (not the identities of all, but the most common) are white, male, and straight. Indeed, these identities are so common in these spaces—men constitute 85% of the 109th Congress, non-Hispanic whites constitute 86.8% of the 109th Congress[7]—that the gender, race, or sexual orientation of a politician rarely comes up unless a direct comparison is being made to a person or group of people who do not fit these demographics.

I argue that because certain "master status"[8] identities are assumed, those who have different identities are made to feel more fully the "weight" of their identity, which in the most extreme is that of an outsider identity. As Rosabeth Moss Kanter so ably identified these processes almost thirty years ago:

> "Skewed" groups [those that are roughly 85%/15% in composition] contain a large preponderance of one type (the numerical "dominants") over another (the rare "tokens")…Three perceptual phenomena are associated with tokens: visibility (tokens capture a disproportionate awareness share), polarization (differences between tokens and dominants are exaggerated), and assimilation (tokens' attributes are distorted to fit preexisting generalizations about their social type). Visibility generates performance pressures; polarization leads dominants to heighten their group boundaries; and assimilation leads to the tokens' role entrapment. (1977, 966)[9]

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[7] Gender statistics obtained from the Center for American Women and Politics, www.cawp.rutgers.edu; and racial statistics obtained from C-SPAN, www.c-span.org/congress/109congress.asp.

[8] Everett Cherrington Hughes, "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status," in *The American Journal of Sociology*, March, 1945.

[9] Later scholarship refined the applicability of Kanter's token thesis as not simply being a function of numerical proportions, but occurring specifically for group members whose social identities are considered to be of lower social status than those of the majority, in fields "inappropriate" to the tokens' identities (Yoder 1991). For our present purposes then, Kanter's thesis holds—women in politics are considered to have lower social status than men, and are in a traditionally masculine field. For consideration of women as tokens in academia, see Young, Mackenzie and Sherif (1980); as physicians, Floge and Merrill (1985); at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Yoder, Adams and Prince (1983); as correctional officers in male prisons, Jurik (1985) and Zimmer (1986), as policewomen on patrol, Martin (1980); and, as enlisted women, Rustad (1982). Additionally, scholars have demonstrated that simply increasing the number of tokens and balancing a group numerically is not enough to erase the stigmas of the "token" group due to backlash from majorities. (Yoder 1991).

The burden of difference is, as Kanter points out, increased scrutiny that comes with heightened visibility, and an exaggerated attention paid to comparing the member of the outsider group to others of the outsider group. Additionally, stereotyped expectations exaggerate differences between the outsider and insider group members, and mute distinctions between the outsider token and other outsiders.[10] People who differ from the norms carry the burden of their difference; on the other hand, those who fit the predominant identities are for the most part freed from the burden of having anyone call attention to their specific identities.[11] In an attempt to build a discourse around the entwined processes of "racing" and "gendering" in the U.S. Congress, Mary Hawkesworth (2003) refers to these identity-free white men as "the unmarked norm."[12]

Descriptive Representation Discourse

Theoretical discussions of the concept of "descriptive representation" seem to share the same focus on particular identities, while leaving dominant identities

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[10] It is precisely this phenomenon that Mansbridge (1999) identifies as essentialism. In response to critics who assert that attempting to increase the number of "descriptive" representatives relies on essentialism, she correctly argues that the problem can only be overcome by a larger number and wider range of outsiders participating in government.

[11] For an interesting example, see Ross K. Baker's House and Senate, pp. 11-13. To illustrate the relative anonymity of House members as compared to Senators, Baker uses a comparison of the treatment two black women members of Congress received on their first day at work. While Senator Carol Moseley-Braun (D-IL) was identifiable to security guards and cafeteria employees in and around the Senate offices because of, according to Baker, her "novelty-value" which being one of four new women in the Senate brought her (and, arguably, due to being the only black woman ever elected to the Senate), Representative Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) was told three times the elevator in the Capitol that she was attempting to ride was reserved for House members only. The elevator operator, upon finally realizing that McKinney was indeed a member of Congress, apologized and commented positively on the new diversity in the House. McKinney has since reported being routinely assumed in the wrong place by Capitol security guards, who she says "just don't think about people of color as members of Congress" (as reported in Hawkesworth, 2003). An alternative explanation to Baker's is that indeed, both women, despite receiving different treatment, were regarded as distinctive from other members of Congress. McKinney was reportedly stopped at a security checkpoint on March 29th, 2006, and struck a police officer, an incident she later apologized for on the floor of the House. An incident of her being stopped by a Capitol Hill police officer is documented in *American Blackout* (Inaba 2006), a documentary film tracing her career in Congress and depicting voting rights and irregularities since 2000.

[12] "Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender: Toward a Theory of Raced-Gendered Institutions" *American Political Science Review*, p. 532.

unquestioned, as if a person who is white and male does not descriptively represent

anybody. Though Hanna Pitkin[13] defines descriptive representation as:

> ...depend(ing) on the representative's characteristics, or what he *is* or *is like*, or
> being something rather than doing something. The representative does not act for
> others; he 'stands for' them, by virtue of a correspondence or connection between
> them, a resemblance or reflection. In political terms, what seems important is less
> what the legislature does than how it is composed. (p. 61)

Although she does not specify any particular "type" of person who is a descriptive

representative, descriptive representation has come to be associated with women and

minorities. This is understandable, given the history of their under-representation in the

halls of U.S. government. And yet, again, whiteness and maleness are treated as if

completely disembodied characteristics, such that no one ever asks if a particular man is

"truly representative of men." This is precisely the dynamic, I argue, that makes it harder

for non-Anglos, non-whites and females to run for office. For example, Suzanne Dovi

defines a "descriptive representative" as an office or position that has been "set aside"

"for members of historically disadvantaged groups" (2002, 729). Jane Mansbridge

(1999) defines descriptive representation thus: "In 'descriptive' representation,

representatives are in their own persons and lives in some sense typical of the larger class

of persons whom they represent. Black legislators represent Black constituents, women

legislators represent women constituents, and so on." Although Mansbridge does not

exclude white men from the possibility of being descriptive representatives (given

additional specifying circumstances, such as being from a rural area or the parent of a

child with disabilities), she focuses her attention on what she calls the "selective"

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[13] Though she did not coin the term, Pitkin's work has popularized it. According to Mansbridge (1999) the term itself was coined in 1960 by Griffiths and Wollheim, "How Can One Person Represent Another," in *Aristotelian Society*, Suppl.34: 182-208.

descriptive representation of disadvantaged groups in contexts of political subordination, perpetuating the lack of attention paid to white Anglo male identities.[14]

Dovi (2002) goes even farther down this path of scrutinizing only the identities of minority and female representatives by identifying criteria for what constitutes a *good* descriptive representative—which appears at base to be an authenticity test—something that might be less questionable if only *every* representative would be held to such a standard and not just minority and/or female candidates.[15] Her argument is useful in that it articulates ideals of descriptive representation that may be helpful in guiding the selection of political appointees, specifically, yet reserving the application of "descriptive representative" only for identities that have been historically disadvantaged again removes the burden of a specific, embodied identity of one who is white, Anglo, and male from those who embody these particular identities. Melissa S. Williams, in her excellent book considering fair representation, writes of the theory of liberal representation (that based on the principles of individual equality and individual autonomy) that:

> [w]ithin the theory of liberal representation, the social identity of elected legislators is entirely irrelevant to the question of whether representation is fair. In this theory, fair representation for marginalized groups does not depend on their members' legislative presence; it is guaranteed by the principle of 'one person, one vote,' in open and free elections. If women or minorities fail to organize around their identities, this reflects either their lack of a sense of the political salience of those identities or the fact that they are minorities.

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[14] See also Katherine Tate, 2003, *Black Faces in the Mirror*. While her work is also focused on the descriptive representation of Black Americans, she does call attention to the apparent desire of all Americans to be descriptively represented, as evidenced by the signaling of the fact in appeals to voters by members of Congress.

[15] If one were to add other types of representation expected of such representatives, i.e. Mansbridge's 2003 articulation of "surrogate representation"—representing people outside of one's home district—then the expectations for "descriptive representatives" add up, while those who come into office without the expectation on them that they must be descriptive representatives for "their kind" do not. Anne Phillips cautions us that "The search for authenticity...makes it difficult for anyone to represent an experience not identical to her own and, taken to this extreme, renders dialogue virtually impossible" (1995, p. 9).

While this is Williams's critique of liberal representation, her alternative commitments to "voice," "trust," and "memory" still pertain to the identities of marginalized groups, and do not go so far as to call out the liberal theory of representation, as it has been experienced in the U.S. thus far, as *already* being embodied with particular identity groups. In these discussions, it is as if "identity" will appear when marginalized groups are given access to power, and is not there already. Yet it may be just as instructive to ask "have white men, as a class, been well represented and benefited from having white men in power?" as it is to ask the same question of any other group and their descriptive representatives.[16]

To say that white men are descriptive representatives of other white men does not preclude the idea that they can be made to stand for members of other identity groups as well. Indeed, Carol Swain (1995) has made a powerful argument to that point. It is similarly fruitless to assume that women and/or minorities who run for office can *only* represent women and/or other minorities. My use of the debates over descriptive representation is to point out the way the concept of descriptive representation has been linked to women and minorities to further illustrate the dis-embodiment and invisibility of white Anglo male identities, and in comparison the added attention paid to the identity and descriptive characteristics of the underrepresented.

Though it is just one slice of a person's identity, and not easily disentangled from the other master statuses—race, class, religion, and sexual orientation, etc. — I focus this

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[16] I do not wish to perpetuate essentialism of identities which under close scrutiny are hardly monolithic, and yet neither do I wish to ignore the fact that such identities, historically, have been privileged in many ways, even if not in a completely uniform way.

project on the status of gender.[17] I do not argue in this study that women's gender alone

precludes them from winning elections; indeed, the evidence from the scholarly literature

indicates that it does not (Carroll 1994, Burrell 1994, Darcy and Schramm 1977). Fewer

women running and apparently gender-neutral structural barriers such as a dearth of open

seats, lack of resources like time, money, people and party support, as well as a lack of

incumbency status appear to explain more about why so few women are in office than

does gender alone.[18] But, neither can women's gender be completely discounted as one

of the barriers women seeking office face. Susan J. Carroll notes:

> Nevertheless, the fact that individual men as well as individual women
> confront barriers in the structure of political opportunity does not negate
> the importance of these barriers to women as a group. The absence of a
> differential, gender-related impact at the individual level does not mean
> that a gender-related bias is absent in the aggregate. Barriers in the
> existing political opportunity structure work to keep outsiders out,
> regardless of gender, and to perpetuate the power of those who hold
> political positions. Since those who are in power are disproportionately
> men, the present structure of political opportunity helps to maintain the
> power of those men. Because far fewer women than men presently hold
> elective office, the barriers in the political opportunity structure work
> against women as a group to a far greater extent than they would work
> against men. (1994, 158-159).

If indeed it is women's relative absence from powerful elected positions already

that is contributing to their continued relative exclusion, then the dynamics surrounding

their status as "tokens" needs to be further examined.

Being Feminine in Masculine Politics

According to Kanter, as tokens in the political realm, women's gender identity

will be highly salient in a way that men's gender identity is not. Women politicians have

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[17] For alternative accounts of the "intersectionality" of identities, see, for example, Crenshaw (1997, 1989)
and Hawkesworth (2003).
[18] Delano and Winters (1999) do, however, find that there is a gender effect that remains net of structural
barriers to gubernatorial office for women.

oft-noted such a phenomenon (Witt, Paget and Matthews 1994; Mandel 1992). Ruth Mandel attributes a greater image problem for women politicians to the fact that men's competency is assumed, as constituents are accustomed to men running for political office and have trusted them in these offices for a very long time (p. 34). Men may have image problems as well, but she argues that they are less constrained because the public is accustomed to a wider variety of men seeking office than they are to women, thus men do not have to conform to one particular type of male identity. Susan J. Carroll and Richard L. Fox (2006) point out that the language used to describe politics is frequently drawn from military and sporting analogies—traditional domains of men—and is evidence of masculinized political expectations surrounding candidates, which are then, by definition, easier for men to achieve.[19] Women, on the other hand, are beset by two problems: 1. the historical exclusion of women from the public life, and 2. ideals of womanhood. In some ways, these two problems are the same, as the ideal of womanhood in the U.S., historically, has *not* been that of "public women" (Matthews 1992).[20]

The notion that the ideals of femininity were unsuited for public life never completely subsided, catching women in a double-bind: to command respect in the public realm, she had to be a woman beyond reproach in her morals, personal conduct, and family life, yet people of this sort were hardly associated with the tough and dirty world of politics, and alas, perhaps could not cut it in that realm. A 1972 survey of politically active men and women showed that holding office was considered by most of the

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[19] For an interesting discussion of how the norms and institutional structures of citizens' political participation in the U.S. may generate differences in women's participation along lines of race, ethnicity, and language group, see Jane Junn (1997) "Assimilating or Coloring Participation? Gender, Race, and Democratic Political Participation," in *Women Transforming Politics*, C.J. Cohen, ed. New York:NYU Press.
[20] Indeed, the term is a euphemism for prostitute.

otherwise politically engaged women to be "'improper'—that is, such activity is not

included in their image of what a woman should do or is even capable of doing well"

(Lee 1976, p. 306). The same study found that two-thirds of the men surveyed agreed

that "most men would prefer women to participate in politics in ways other than running

for office" (p. 309). More recent evidence suggests that little has changed over 20 years,

with experiments demonstrating that stereotypically feminine women are at a

considerable disadvantage among voters (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a), and that there is

a net handicap beyond structural barriers to office for women in gubernatorial contests

that did not diminish in the period from 1972-1997 (Delano and Winters 1999). As

Mandel (1992) writes:

> The desirable image for political women seems to be conceived as an
> idealized projection of womankind—a bit of everything that is pleasing,
> including many contradictory characteristics. Emerging from the
> experiences of real women who collided with the platonic ideal is a long
> string of no-no's. They include: not too young, not too old; not too
> voluptuous, not too prissy; not too soft-spoken, not shrill; not too
> ambitious, not too retiring; not too independent, not too complaining about
> being excluded; not too smart, not uninformed. During the seventies
> one statewide candidate was urged to modify her "1950s college
> dean" image; a congressional candidate worked hard to counter a
> "suburban housewife" image; several women were advised to
> soften the "tough, hard old biddy" image; while others were advised
> to toughen up the "soft, sweet kitten" image. Bouncing between pillar and
> post with little space in between, women in politics found themselves
> pressed to mold and present an "I" who appealed to everyone's bias and
> offended no one, who approached a fantasy of "woman as candidate." (p
> 35)

It has been hard, historically, for women in American politics to conform their personal

lives and images to contradictory pressures of political life and femininity. Though

entrance into formal labor markets in the late 19th century gave some women a greater

claim on participating in public life, working class women were excluded from

established images of respectability and femininity (Matthews 1992). Without the cloak

of respectability, women lose the only apparent advantage historically available to them

in political life.

Further, though claims of expanding motherhood into the civic realm allowed

some women entry into public political life (Rosenberg 1992; Baker 1990; Mink 1990),

there appears to be a lingering ambivalence about whether political women should, in

fact, be mothers and wives in their personal life. For instance, Americans recently

witnessed bitter debates over the fitness of Jane Swift to serve as Governor of

Massachusetts. The mother of a toddler, she was also pregnant with twins and then gave

birth while in office. Voters may indeed prefer a woman politician to have a family and

yet require reassurance that she is not neglecting the family life by engaging in politics

(Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001). Whether a woman is married or single, and has

children or not, extra attention is paid to her personal life by voters and reporters (Mandel

1992; Witt, Paget and Matthews 1994). If a male politician is single, his priorities are not

necessarily questioned, yet single women in politics may have it held against them, as if

they are violating some sort of natural order (Mandel 1992). All public figures, male and

female, may struggle to balance their personal and private lives, yet women appear to

find it more difficult than men to do so, potentially due to expectations that women will

assume the primary responsibility for family life. Indeed, Carroll (1989) found that

though male and female politicians in elected office may have children at similar rates,

the women's children were older than the men's children, and women in elective office

are less likely than men to be married. Additionally, women in appointed office are

much less likely to be married or have children than men in appointed office or women in

elected office, indicating that there may be a greater conflict for women between their public and private activities. Yet the fact that there were not drastically different rates of marriage and children[21] between women and men in *elective* offices may suggest the broader the audience a woman has to appeal to for a political position, the more likely she is to follow traditionally expected family roles.

The Continuing Relevance of Gender Roles

I argue that the relevance of gender to political candidates can be attributed in part to the particularly strong set of *role* assumptions, beyond the simple identity of male or female, that come with it. It is true that gender roles are not static and in many ways appear to have changed dramatically over time. Women have entered higher education and the workforce in dramatic fashion such that they now constitute the majority of undergraduates and undergraduate degree recipients (NCES 2005), and constitute 46% of the total labor force (U.S. Department of Labor 2005), yet there is evidence that traditional gender roles, where women are expected to be the primary caretaker of home and family, persist despite these changes. Indeed, even when women work for wages outside the home, if they are married or partnered to a man, on average, they will spend twice as many hours on housework than their partners or husbands (Robinson and Godbey 1999, p 100.) This phenomenon is often referred to as the "double day" or "second shift" (Hochschild 2003) and is evidence of the stubbornness of traditional gender roles, even after the traditional sexual division of labor in which a man is the sole breadwinner in a household has been eroded.

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[21] Keeping in mind, however, that Carroll did find that though women and men in elective office were about equally likely to have children, the children of the women in elective office were older, suggesting that they required less care at the time their mothers were serving in office.

Gender roles do not necessitate a family setting in which to be performed; there is plenty of evidence of gender roles extending beyond the home. In fact, the majority of men and women around the world work in jobs that are considered "male" or "female" (Anker 1997, p. 334). Within the U.S., about one half of all women work in pink-collar sales and clerical jobs, while only one sixth of American men hold similar jobs (Albelda and Tilly 1997 p. 47). Despite the advances noted above that women have made into education, even after controlling for undergraduate fields of study, men earned higher average annual salaries than women in at least half of the fields examined in a study reported by the NCES, and the gender gap in wages actually grew in the period 1994-2001 for those who majored in engineering, math, and science fields, as well as those who majored in the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, health, vocational technical applications, and other technical/professional fields. Though the way in which gender causes the gender wage gap is often debated,[22] those who consider it evidence of discrimination and those who consider it evidence of the different choices women make regarding paid labor all acknowledge the effect of gender roles in the workplace.

It is an old conundrum about whether a particular job is seen as feminine that it is lowly-paid, or whether because it is lowly-paid that it becomes feminized, but evidence of "tipping points" within certain professions indicate that as more women entered a profession—such as bank-telling and school teaching—historically, men left and both the pay and the status of the job declined. (Alternatively, computer-programming was originally considered a low-status job and was assigned to women, though today it is neither low-status nor the domain of women (Canada and Brusca 1992)). Reskin and

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[22] See, for example, Zillah Eisenstein's 1988 description of the arguments at stake in the E.E.O.C. vs. Sears case, *The Female Body and the Law*.

Roos (1990) found that in eight feminizing occupations (those where the majority sex and the occupation's "sex label" have shifted from male to female) over the period 1969-1979, that:

> Women's progress relative to men, both occupationally and economically, was disappointing. Though women did make progress in desegregating traditionally male occupations, by the time women gained access to them, the occupations had lost much of their attraction to men and were becoming less advantageous for women as well. Women's success in these occupations was in large measure hollow. (87)

Expanding on the notion of labor queues, where groups of workers are ranked by their employers in order of attractiveness, and job queues, where jobs are ranked by prospective employees in terms of attractiveness, Reskin and Roos identify "gender queues," where employers rank workers by gender when considering their attractiveness as employees, to help explain the phenomenon of differentiation by gender in the workplace.

Within the political realm, Irene Diamond (1977) documented a similar phenomenon regarding gender and status. Among state legislatures, she found that more women were likely to be in office when competition (and prestige) was low. The more competitive the seat was, the less likely women were to be in office, but for those who were, the more like men the women were in terms of their career paths. Gender roles, though perhaps based in conceptions of home and family life, affect our public activity as well.

Gender Roles Research in Political Science

Examinations of the ways in which gender (or "sex" or "sexual") roles have affected politics in the U.S. have been conducted by researchers and political analysts for several decades. Very early studies premised on sex-role socialization sought to explain

why women appeared to participate in politics less than men and posited that women had

been taught passivity as children (Flammang 1997, 116). Betty Friedan offered one of

the earliest explications of the effects of gender roles on women's status (including their

role in politics and world affairs) in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). In this classic text of

the second wave of U.S. feminism Friedan brought attention to "the problem which has

no name"—the unfulfillment of housewives who were encouraged to abandon worldly

aspirations in favor of perfecting homemaking and childrearing. She called for the re-

education of women, to place less (or no) emphasis on homemaking and more emphasis

on worldly interests, and for women to pursue careers and endeavors outside the home, to

alleviate the lack of fulfillment she documented among largely middle and upper-middle

class, white suburban housewives.

Other social scientists, observing what appeared to be women's lower levels of

political knowledge and interest than males, also turned to sex role socialization as

explanation, and argued for reforms in the socialization of young women and men.

Martin Gruberg (1968) called for changes in the education of girls and women, arguing

that young women needed role models in the form of politically active women, and that

school curricula should teach girls to value many assorted aspects of themselves, and to

aspire "higher." He argued that young boys must be taught to accept competition from

girls, and not be taught that the proper role of women is limited to housekeeping and

childrearing. Gruberg advocated that girls with aptitude for leadership be sought out and

encouraged to consider careers in government, and that women in politics be brought into

schools so that "(t)he boys will see that political women need not be battle axes, and the

girls will have models to emulate" (40). Gruberg also re-envisioned the traditional work

and activities that women already engaged in as having political merit—work such as volunteering and service on the PTA—at a time when most conventional scholarship regarded these forms of participation as irrelevant to politics.

In 1974 Jeane J. Kirkpatrick published a book, commissioned by the Center for the American Woman and Politics,[23] based on the experiences and insights of fifty female state legislators on what precisely are or are not barriers to American women serving in political office. Kirkpatrick was one of the first researchers to truly examine hypotheses about women's lower level of political participation (in the form of office-holding) than men's in the U.S., and dealt with four different explanations in turn. She found little support for theories of physiological differences (regarding strength, reproductive capacities, and hormonal distinctions) between men and women which were thought to suppress women's involvement in politics, and also dismissed explanations premised on conspiracies of men acting knowingly and concertedly to exclude women from office. Kirkpatrick's framework is somewhat distinct from those of other researchers' in that she distinguished "role constraints" from "cultural constraints" as her final two explanations to consider. Cultural constraints, to Kirkpatrick, were explanations premised on the differential psychology of women and also on sex stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, including cultural norms and expectations. Though she acknowledged that "(c)ulture and role are aspects of a single social whole," where "(c)ulture explains, justifies and protects role distributions" (229), she defined sex roles as the actual "jobs" that women filled—those of wife and mother, which she found structurally impeded women from serving in public office, though it did not prevent it fully, as the majority of

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[23] Today, CAWP is known by the more pluralistic "Center for American Women and Politics."

women legislators interviewed were indeed wives and mothers.[24] She found that it was these specific tasks of being primary caretakers of families that meant women would be obstructed from a life in political office, as they would be less likely to be able (willing) to change their place of residence to accommodate government service, and would be unlikely, compared to men outside of these specific roles, to develop the skills and acquire experience considered necessary for political careers. On the less structural and more cultural side of sex roles, Kirkpatrick found that the women she studied were in fact socialized to fulfill traditional women's roles as wives and mothers, but that they were *also* socialized to be concerned with community affairs and were raised expected to participate.

Marcia Manning Lee (1976) also found having children inhibited or prohibited female political activists from seeking office, she speculated due to concerns that the women she surveyed would not be able to find adequate child care on short notice. She also found that "female role perception" inhibited women from seeking office. At the time, she found over three quarters of the women in her sample (of 301 men and women active in local politics in the suburbs of Westchester County, New York) believed that "most men would prefer women to contribute to politics in ways other than running for office," and that about half of the women in her sample thought other women would also prefer women participate in a way other than running for office (306). Lee also found that women held a fear of sex discrimination which also may have inhibited them from running for office. Significantly, Lee's work demonstrated that explanations premised in

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[24] Kirkpatrick's terminology is premised on difficult distinctions. Krauss (1974), I believe, more correctly describes this phenomenon as "feminine life-cycle and occupational differentiation," and her "gender roles" are more in line with Kirkpatrick's "cultural constraints."

politics being considered "dirty" did not prevent politically active women from seeking office, nor did a lack of interest or commitment to politics.

In 1979, Berenice A. Carroll published a challenge to political scientists who attributed what they saw as political differences between men and women to sex role "learning," who did not question their own assumptions that led them to see women as different and/or less political than men. In fact, similar concerns were raised in 1976 by Jane S. Jaquette, who requested that attention be paid to the political aspects of personal interactions, so that the "private sphere" could not remain unstudied because it was seen as apolitical, and also that women be seen as self-interest maximizing agents, though operating within constraints. Carroll's 1979 piece extended the criticism of some sex role literature as overgeneralizing about women being relegated to an apolitical private sphere, raised concerns that sex role explanations might reinscribe traditional stereotypes, and argued that not enough attention was being paid to structural and environmental influences on women's participation. To the extent that researchers ignored structural constraints, Carroll argued, sex role explanations implicitly blamed the victim. For this reason she credits Irene Diamond's *Sex Roes in the State House* (1977) for her attention to the structural considerations that coincide with women's roles to suppress their representation in state legislatures.

New Work on Gender Roles

Over the last 40 years, political analyses have shifted in focus, from using gender roles to explain women's (and men's) political behavior, to examinations of structural constraints on women's full participation (see, for example, Carroll 1994 [1985], Burrell 1994). Yet scholarly trends favoring structural explanations for women's lack of

representation in political office that developed in response to the perceived limitations of gender role socialization studies have not been able to account for all the discrepancies that persist in women's rates of representation in political office, and so very recent scholarship has returned to explanations premised in part in gender role socialization to explain women's lower likelihood of running for office (Lawless and Fox 2005).

Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox find that many of the same explanations offered by Kirkpatrick (1974) and Lee (1976) still hold true for women today. In fact, in 1968, Gruberg cited the President's Commission on the Status of Women's findings that if there is to be a "breakthrough" in the rates of women's participation,

> First, women will have to enter the occupations which lead to a political career, law, public and business administration. Second, women will have to extend their concern beyond the home and family and into the community. The years of child-rearing must serve as a training period for political activity once home responsibilities lessen. And third, women must be willing to compete with men for policies and positions. (38-39)

Lawless and Fox have taken up the study of women's political participation as potential candidates for office at exactly this spot, almost 40 years later. They find that women are now in professions that are the most likely to serve as feeder streams to political careers, and yet these women indicated less likelihood to consider running for office than their male peers. Lawless and Fox find that these women were less likely than similarly situated men to discuss politics with their parents when in their childhood homes, were less likely than men to be encouraged by their parents to run for office, if married they were more likely to be responsible for a majority of household tasks, if parents they were more likely to be responsible for the majority of child care, and were less likely to be encouraged by family members, friends, colleagues, party leaders, elected officials, and political interest groups to run for office. Majorities of both male and female eligible

candidates in their study indicated that they believe they work in sexist corporate and professional environments, and believe there is bias against women in the electoral arena. The women in this study also indicated they believe a woman must be twice as good as a man to fare evenly in the political arena, are less likely than similarly situated men to believe they are qualified to hold office, and are less likely to believe they would win if they ran for office.

My Contribution to the Literature: Strategic Deployment of Family Information

Gender (or "sex") roles then are hardly new subjects for research, and yet neither have they been dismissed in regards to women's unequal representation in political office in the U.S. My study has a similarly retrospective angle as Lawless and Fox's, though unlike some of its forebears or Lawless and Fox's study, I do not seek to explain the origin of gender roles nor use gender role socialization to explain the political behaviors of women and men. I ask rather how the performance of gender varies between male and female candidates in front of their audiences of potential voters. I expand upon previous research by disaggregating the different types of family and gender role information candidates give voters, and I examine both what candidates do, and how voters may react. My study is based on the supposition that candidates are in fact strategic, calculating actors, though operating within constraints (Dolan and Kropf 2004, Jaquette 1976, Kahn 1996), and I seek to use candidate behaviors to help identify those constraints. The constraints in question here are not structural, though they may be associated with structural barriers either currently or historically in existence. The constraints I am concerned with are premised in perception and attitudes, both on the part of candidates toward voters, and on the part of voters toward candidates.

In addition to suppressing the ambitions of potential candidates, gender, which entails both an identity, male/female, and *roles* (mother, father, husband, wife, etc.), can elicit particular assumptions about a person's fitness for office on the part of voters as well. For instance, a study about women as candidates to gubernatorial offices found that:

> When both male and female voters imagine a woman with children as the executive leader of their state, they also express some anxieties. How will she balance the needs of her family with the responsibilities she has at work? If she really had to choose between managing a family emergency and a statewide crisis, would she choose her state? Moreover, *should* she choose her state? [emphasis in the original.][25]

The context of family life and the traditional sex division of labor is a major contributor to why we expect gender roles to be filled in certain ways, even outside the home, such as in the realm of politics. Because of the history of notions about the gendered nature of the public and private spheres (Rosenberg 1992; Elshtain 1981), women candidates face a unique set of challenges when they run as political candidates. And specifically unlike men who run, their gender identity seems somehow more relevant to voters considering the type of job they would do than does a man's gender identity. It has been noted that all women who run for office "run as a woman," simply because observers will not let them do otherwise (Witt, Paget and Matthews 1994).

This ambivalence about candidates' gender and familial roles raises major questions as yet unanswered: how do women candidates balance these conflicting pressures in their campaigns? And how do voters respond? I investigate empirically to see what actual women candidates choose to strategize around when it comes to presenting family and gender role information, how their strategies differ from those of

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[25] Barbara Lee Family Foundation, The. "Keys to the Governor's Office: Unlock the Door: The Guide for Women Running for Governor," 2001. p 36.

their male counterparts, and how these messages affect voter perceptions of male and female candidates.

Why Gender Matters

The gender of officeholders and candidates matters to many members of the public, in some instances with good reason. For better or worse, gender remains one of the most salient aspects of both candidates' and voters' identities, and is often a factor in elections, whether one is seeking to perfect a democratic ideal, wishes to right an historical wrong, hopes to change the focus of politics, or simply prefers that particular people hold public office (or that others do not). The concept of descriptive representation—representation based on a resemblance to constituent groups, either physically or on the basis of shared experience— may be deemed largely unnecessary or as second-rate representation in some quarters, with the exception of providing points of pride and role models for group members (Pitkin 1967, Swain 1995), yet it has its more ardent defenders as well. Such defenders see a need for descriptive representation in cases of historical subordination of particular groups, and tend to emphasize the benefits of descriptive representation not just for role-modeling purposes, but for political deliberation and the generation of trust within a polity (Guinier 1992, Mansbridge 1999, Phillips 1995, Williams 1998). Regardless of whether a public preoccupation with the gender of a candidate is indicative of an attempt to make a representative democracy more representative, or simply a persistent sex bias or stereotyping, there is evidence that when it comes to gender identity, having women as candidates and in office affects how legislatures and candidates act, not just what they look like.

Officeholders

Susan Carroll, Debra Dodson, and Ruth Mandel (1991) have demonstrated that once in office, women state legislators do indeed act differently than men. In terms of legislator-constituent relations, Carroll et. al. found that women state legislators are more likely to engage citizens in the processes of government, are more likely to favor transparency in the activities of government, and are more responsive to groups previously excluded from the policymaking process—specifically, the economically disadvantaged. They found that women state legislators are more liberal and feminist in their attitudes toward major policy issues, have different policy priorities, place more emphasis on women's rights policies and those related to caregiving, and they are more *active* on women's rights legislation, even when not their top priority. David Niven and Jeremy Zilber (2001) similarly found that women in the 105th Congress were much more likely than men to have introduced legislation on a women's issue, again, even when not their top priority.

Candidate Gender and Voters

The effect of gender identity on the behavior of voters has been noted as well.[26] Specifically in relation to voter behavior surrounding women candidates, Kathleen Dolan (1998), in her analysis of the 1992 ("year of the woman") election, found that women voters in House elections were more likely than men "to use gender-related issue positions in determining their vote choice when there is a woman candidate" (272). As for Senate elections, she found that issues figure more prominently in determining voters' choices, and men and women voters exhibit different issue concerns, with women using more "gender-related issue concerns in their evaluations" (272). Women voters with

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[26] Literature on the "gender gap" among voters abounds. See for example Costain and Berggren 1998, Klein 1984, Pomper 1975, Sapiro with Conover 1997, Shapiro and Mahajan 1986, and Wirls 1986.

positive attitudes toward feminism were more likely to support women candidates in

House elections, while those with negative attitudes toward feminism were more likely to

choose a man. Other studies (Dolan 2004, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, McDermott

1997) have demonstrated the perceptual links in the minds of potential voters between

women's gender identity and the types of elected officials women would make. Monika

L. McDermott (1997) has found that a candidate's gender appears to work as a proxy for

that candidate's political ideology for potential voters in low-information settings (House

elections). When little else is known about a candidate other than their gender and their

party affiliation, gender cues in low-information elections serve as means to estimate the

ideological differences between the candidates. Leonie Huddy and Nayda Terkildsen

(1993a) found that male and female candidates may be seen as competent in different

issue areas due to gender stereotyping on the part of the voter about personality traits.

Specifically, any candidate, male or female, described as being family-oriented was seen

as more capable at dealing with "compassion" issues, but less competent at dealing with

issues like defense. Candidates described as having stereotypically masculine traits were

perceived as more competent on a wider range of issues—not just issue areas

traditionally considered a masculine domain, like defense, but also women's interests. In

an earlier examination of how women and men as candidates are evaluated by viewers,

Kaid et al. (1984) found that in an experiment using mock tv ads, both men and women

candidates were evaluated better in a setting not traditionally associated with their

gender—a hard hat setting for women, an education setting for men. But the results were

mixed, as females also did better than males in a grocery store setting, generally

considered a domain of women. Interestingly, in what they deemed a neutral setting—

being pictured with one's family, no significant differences were found in how male and female candidates were evaluated. In 2001, the Barbara Lee Family Foundation published a study examining the persistent barriers to women in the governor's office, and found that while women voters were ambivalent about the gender of the candidate, male voters preferred a man for governor. In a telephone survey and an embedded experiment conducted with Ohio residents, Kira Sanbonmatsu (2002) found that of people with a preference, most men preferred to be represented by a man, most women by a woman, and that for individuals preferring female candidates, having the option of voting for a female candidate leads them to change their vote choice.

Whether it is voters basing choices on other issue positions when a woman is running, a predisposition on the part of voters toward feminism, assumptions about ideology of women candidates, stereotyping assumptions about candidate competence, or a simple desire by some to be represented by a person who shares an identity, candidates (particularly women) who run for office face a lot of assumptions on the part of voters about the relevance of their gender identity to the types of representatives they are likely to make once in office. It is in this climate that women candidates have to make choices about how to portray themselves to voters.

Differential Press Coverage

The studies cited above have demonstrated the assumptions based on candidate gender that potential voters make about candidates' ideology and their areas of competency. The press has also been shown to make similar assumptions about male vs. female candidates, as evidenced in their differential coverage of men's and women's candidacies (Kahn 1992, 1993), emphasizing particular traits and characteristics about

their appearance and personal characteristics, (Devitt 1999; Heldman, Carroll and Olson 2005), as well as framing them as novelty candidates (Heldman, Carroll and Olson 2005).

Gender, Campaigning, and Self-Presentation

Whether it is despite particular potential reactions by voters and the press or in part because of them, women and men do differ in some of their campaign styles. In addition to women senatorial candidates having been found to be more likely than men to make issues a major part of their campaigns, and to be more likely to talk about "female" issues (Kahn and Gordon 1997), both male and female senatorial candidates have been shown to emphasize issues that coincide with gender stereotypical strengths (Kahn 1993, 1996). In these studies, Kim Fridkin Kahn demonstrated that women senatorial candidates focus more on social issues and programs in their television ads while comparable men candidates focus on foreign affairs or economic issues in their television ads. However, Kahn found the opposite was true for gubernatorial candidates, with women more frequently emphasizing traditional masculine traits like leadership, experience and toughness than the men, while the men were more likely than the women to emphasize traditionally feminine traits like honesty, sensitivity, and compassion. In terms of issues, compared to the candidates for Senate, male gubernatorial candidates were more likely to discuss social programs, and women running for governor were more likely to emphasize economic issues in their television ads (Kahn 1996). Playing counter-to-type does not suggest the erosion of traditional gender stereotypes so much as it indicates a different strategy for how to deal with them in the political realm.

Banwart and Kaid reported in 2002 that in a comparison between candidates' styles on the web and their styles in tv ads, men were more likely to tell voters their party

affiliation in both mediums, and that they were also more likely than women to identify what office they were seeking in video ads. Men were more likely to make "eye contact" with viewers on both mediums than were women, and women were more likely to make eye contact with viewers in their websites than in their tv ads. Banwart and Kaid (2002) also found that there really was not a large difference in the use of negative ads by men and women, either on tv (around 52% for each gender) or on the internet (around 17% for each). Compared to what is displayed in television ads, both men and women were more likely to include pictures of their families on their websites than in their television ads, though men were more likely than women in both forms to include pictures of their families, a finding replicated in a study of candidate homepages by Gulati and Treul (2003). In specific relation only to web-based campaigning, it has been noted that women campaigning for the U.S. Senate in 2000 had a greater percentage of website interactive capabilities than the men running for Senate on their campaign websites (Puopolo 2001), though Bystrom et al. (2004) found few differences in the overall communication strategies of male and female candidates.

Regarding the self-presentation of men and women who already hold office, research also shows that women members of the House of Representatives are more likely to mention their records on women's issues and their affiliation with women's groups and women's rights organizations than are comparable men in the House on their office websites (Niven and Zilber 1998). Men in the House of Representatives have been found to be slightly more likely to describe their legislative experience in terms of their leadership capabilities, though women in the House are more likely to dedicate space to their personal qualifications for their positions (Niven and Zilber 2001). Consistent with

other findings (Carroll, et al. 1991), women Representatives were also found to be more likely than men to mention women's issues on their websites, though they gave more attention to non-women's issues overall. A study of the homepages of members of both the House and Senate (Gulati 2002) revealed that females were more likely than males to present themselves in an "outsider" fashion—using local imagery rather than imagery suggestive of the Capitol or Washington D.C., and that Democratic women and Republican men were more likely than their party counterparts to use an outsider appeal as well.

Personal Style of Candidates

In terms of personal style, when presenting themselves in political communications, men and women differ in the manner of their dress, with women dressing more formally than men (Gulati and Treul 2003, Kahn 1996). Women congressional candidates are more likely than men to appear actively engaged with constituents in photos on their website homepages, and less likely to appear with their families (Gulati and Treul 2003). Though dressed more formally, women candidates use a more informal tone in their website welcome messages, and emphasize their personal connections with voters (Gulati and Treul 2003). Such differences persist despite similarities between men and women senatorial and gubernatorial candidates on their campaign webpages in terms of eye contact, facial expressions, postures, production strategies, and interactive capabilities (Bystrom, et al. 2004).

My Focus: Gender Roles in Campaign Literature

Knowing that they may be received differently than male candidates by voters and the press, women candidates are traditionally faced with a choice when crafting their

campaign communications: either they can de-emphasize their gender, or they can play it up as a major motivation for running for office (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001; Witt, et. al 1994; Lake 1990; Kanter 1977). But beyond their simple gender *identity*, they are faced with similar choices regarding how they portray their family life and gender *roles* within their families:

> Voters want to connect with candidates in a personal way. Does this person have life experiences like mine? Does she understand the issues that are most important to me? Voters look to see how a candidate connects with her family—parent, sibling, spouse or child—for reassurance that she understands voters' lives…While most voters say a candidate's marital status is irrelevant, voters who do care about a candidate's marital status prefer married candidates to single candidates. For male candidates, voters prefer a married man to an unmarried man by 32 percentage points. Voters prefer a married female candidate to one who is single by 25 percentage points.[27]

The same study found that of voters who preferred candidates to have children, voters preferred a male candidate to have teenage kids but a female candidate to have adult children.

The guiding questions I address in this study are: given the persistence of traditional gender roles despite changes in women's educational and labor force participation, and the public's concurrent desire to see a candidate in relation to their family, how do women present information about themselves and their families when running for office? Do men, who face different gender role assumptions, portray themselves in relation to their families differently than do women candidates? Does the medium of the message make a difference—i.e., do the space constraints and broader audience of direct mail and printed materials lead to different aspects of identity and family being emphasized by male and female candidates? And finally, how do voters

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[27] The Barbara Lee Family Foundation. "Keys to the Governor's Office," p. 35-36.

respond to candidate information about their gender and family identities in terms of their

evaluations of candidates?

Data, Methods, and Hypotheses

To conduct this study I used three sources of data: candidate websites, candidate

print materials, and experiments testing candidates' presentations on potential voters.

<u>The Internet as New Medium for Campaigning</u>

At the same time as women are increasingly participating in American politics as

candidates for office, technological developments have opened up new realms for

candidate communication—specifically, the internet. While relatively new, in less than a

decade candidate websites have become staples of campaigns for office. Internet

campaigning offers candidates a relatively low-cost way of reaching large numbers of

potential voters.[28] Indeed, in 1996, Senator Phil Gramm established a website for $8,000

that received 197,425 hits, almost eight times the number of people he would have been

able to reach through direct mail contact at the same price (Trent and Friedenberg 2000,

13). Of course, websites vary in their quality and extent, ranging from basic information

about candidates, with nothing specific to the internet about a site, to the high-tech, with

numerous means for interaction between the candidate and viewers, as well as among

viewers (Bentivegna 2002). Yet even the least sophisticated sites are used to convey

basic information about candidates, introducing them to the public and signaling the type

of representative they would make in office. Though the audience reached by such media

may be limited by a number of factors, including income, education, age, and ethnicity,

(Wilhelm 2003) as well as by differing motivations to seek out particular candidates'

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[28] They also appear to reach large numbers of people who are not potential voters, as viewers may not live within the district. Davis (1999) reports that in 1996, candidates who did not screen viewer mail received large proportions of mail from nonconstituents.

sites, by early 2001 59% of American households had internet access, and 16% of the

public went online to gather information about an election in 2000 (Arterton 2003).

Forty percent of those who went online for campaign information in 2000 used it when

deciding for whom to vote (Arterton 2003). Because of the ever-increasing reliance of

both candidates and the American pubic on information conveyed via the internet, this

research seeks to expand our understanding of gender dynamics in campaigns using

candidates' websites, in addition to more traditional direct mail materials.

Context of 2002 Elections

The races of 2002 were mid-term elections. There were significant numbers of

women candidates running as major party nominees—11 for the Senate, 124 for the

House of Representatives, and 10 for Governor (CAWP 2005), yet unlike the 1992 "Year

of the Woman" elections, these figures did not represent significant increases over

previous years, and gender was not a major focus in the campaigns or in press coverage

of the elections. Similar numbers of women ran for Congress in the previous five

elections, dating back to 1992, when the number of women running for the House jumped

by 54% from 69 in 1990 to 106 (CAWP 2005). The years 1998 and 1994 also saw 10

women running as major party candidates for governor (CAWP 2005). The jump in the

number of open seats due to redistricting in 1992 contributed to the upsurge in the

number of women House candidates at the time, but 2002 did not produce a similar

increase in the number of women candidates (Jones 2002).

The issue that garnered the most attention in the 2002 election was homeland

security and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The emphasis on security

probably did not help women candidates as this is an area that favors male candidates and

Republicans (who run fewer women candidates), yet despite this, still more women ran in 2002 than ran in 2000, when six women ran for Senate, 122 ran for the House, and 5 ran for governor (CAWP 2005). In 1992, women's issues such as workplace policies and underrepresentation were highly salient following the 1991 Clarence Thomas Senate confirmation hearings, which made women's underrepresentation on the Senate Judiciary Committee (painfully) obvious. While 1992 was a watershed year for women in American politics, 2002 was not distinctly focused on the gender of candidates, or on women's issues. In the end, the number of women serving in Congress was the same after the election as it was before, though the number of women governors increased from five to six.

Content Analysis

The first component method of this study is designed to examine how candidates with atypical identities (female, in this instance) present themselves and their lives to voters, to see how they bear the weight of their atypical identity and try to navigate with it, and how that compares with their male counterparts. Additionally, I take into account that the medium of the message (and the related differences in the demographics of the audience) may have an effect on its content, and so I look at two modes of candidate communication.

To examine candidate self-presentation, I amassed a collection of 206 (out of a possible 264)[29] U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, and gubernatorial candidate webpages. All webpages are from the 2002 election, and represent every race where at least one of the major party candidates was a woman. I began my collection with the

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[29] Not all candidates had websites, and not all who did had dedicated campaign (as opposed to incumbent office) websites. Only campaign sites were included; office sites were not. Races in Louisiana had more than 2 major party candidates, and all those with websites are included here.

universe of women running on a major party ticket for Congress or governor. The collection of men's websites is composed of those major party men who ran against a woman, and this was done in order to keep the context of the race constant. Due to races where more than one woman ran, races where a major party woman did not face a major party opponent, and slightly differential rates at which men and women candidates had campaign websites, this dataset includes 117 women's sites and 89 men's sites. All the websites were preserved between 9/1/02 and 11/4/02, using software designed to archive websites.[30] The preserved sites include each page of the candidate's main site.

Because website communication is only viewed by those potential voters with computer skills and access to the internet, and requires viewers actively choose to view candidates' sites, I solicited their printed campaign brochures as well. Print materials were solicited via a letter addressed to each campaign requesting their candidate brochure (Appendix A, B), and the letters were followed up with telephone calls and emails. My solicitations for print materials garnered a 50% response rate. As candidate campaign materials are not standardized, different types of materials were contributed in response to my requests. I received back brochures, postcards, bumper stickers, campaign buttons, and a few handwritten notes from candidates. The items which did not meet my criteria of containing basic introductory material geared toward a general audience were not included for study, and so the bumper stickers, buttons, and notes are not analyzed. If a brochure or postcard[31] was specifically targeted to a particular group of voters, such as seniors or sportsmen, it was not included in my analysis. The items ranged in printing

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[30] The software used was Webzip by Spidersoft, and can be found online at http://www.spidersoft.com/default.asp (6/08/06).

[31] I did not distinguish between "postcards" and "brochures" because the differences between them appeared to be a distinction based on the price of production and/or postage, rather than one of content.

quality from photocopied black and white information sheets to multiple-color printing on card stock with multiple folds. The range in quality is reflective of campaign expenditure, and no campaign was excluded from analysis based on whether their materials were professionally printed or not. If it was introductory in nature, targeted to a general audience, and could be mass produced in some fashion and be mailed or handed out to voters, I included it for analysis.

To assess how the candidates present their gendered identities to voters, I conducted content analysis on each website and printed document. Content analysis was conducted on every page of a website, with the exception of press releases and news stories. As many sites had hundreds of press releases and news stories on the site, only the titles of the press releases and news stories were coded. If full text was printed directly on the site, without having to follow a link, the substance of these articles was also coded. Links to pages external to the candidate's original website were not followed and coded, as they are outside the scope of the pages candidates can safely be presumed to have direct control over. However, titles of the links to other pages were coded when relevant. Most of the website information reported in this study was generally located on homepages, biography pages, and issue pages. Each page of the candidates' printed brochures was fully coded as well.

My content analysis focused on presentation of candidates' gendered identities, their family members, and their gender roles. To begin, I disaggregated the ways in which candidates make mention of their families as part of their self-introduction to the public. Candidates' entire websites were coded for references to their current family— children and/or spouse, similar to previous studies. However, I also coded the sites for

reference to the familial *roles* played by a candidate. Aside from the simple fact of whether or not they make mention of their children and spouse on their websites, I examined if there were differing ways in which women and men highlighted their identity/experience as a parent or spouse.

Further, I broke basic family information down again, to assess if there are different portions of families being featured on candidate websites. Besides current immediate family members, do men and women feature members of their *birth* families, their families of origin (parents and/or siblings)? And, do they highlight their roles as sons and daughters of their families of origin? I distinguished between the portions of families candidates mention because of the different types of "credit claiming" mentioning different aspects of one's family seems to allow. Discussing one's present family may give a sense to the reader what the candidate's day to day life entails. Mentioning one's family of origin, on the other hand, seems to be used differently, often as a source of values and/or as a way of taking credit for an experience the candidate him or herself has not actually experienced, such as facing poverty or serving in the military. Because candidates appear to be using different family information to convey different ideas, I probe the campaign materials to identify distinct strategies so that their effectiveness can be tested with voter responses.

With the website content analysis, the first questions I address are: how do women present information about themselves and their families when running for office, and do men, facing different gender role assumptions, portray themselves in relation to their families differently? Within the website content, I expect women candidates to find ways to de-emphasize their roles as wives and/or mothers, due to historical assumptions

about conflicts between these domestic roles and the public sphere, while I do not expect men to use strategies to de-emphasize their roles as husbands and/or fathers, as these domestic roles have not historically been presumed incompatible with the public sphere. I also expect that women will be less likely than men to mention their current family members on their websites; women will be less likely than men to invoke their current familial roles as mother and/or wife than men will be to invoke their roles as father and/or husband; women will be more likely to use gender-neutral terms to describe family roles than men; Republicans will be more likely than Democrats to give family information because of their party's emphasis on "traditional family values." Women overall will be less likely to mention their families of origin than men, because it could make them appear less independent, particularly if the family is prominent, and because of the history of coverture and patrilineage which made sons and not daughters heirs to a family's lineage, often rendering daughters dependents of sons-in-law. I expect that incumbents (both male and female) will be less likely to give any family information than non-incumbent candidates because they are already familiar to the public.

As for the printed materials, I expect space constraints and different audiences to affect how candidates mention their families and familial roles. I believe both men and women will be more likely to mention any portion of their families in print than they would be on their websites, since they have less space to become familiar to voters through careful discussion of specific issues, and must rely on brief pieces of information to convey a background that familiarizes them as a whole person in the eyes of the reader. I expect this also because direct mail audiences are likely less familiar with a candidate to begin with, since website viewers are actively seeking out such information

on candidates, but mail recipients are receiving the ads more passively. I expect candidates' printed materials to be most similar to their biography pages on their websites, meaning that they have to give a quick overview of who they are, so I expect brief mentions of their family members, though not many details, as they are limited in the space that they have to write. Because of the ambivalence of this pressure—need to give family information to seem familiar to voters, yet limited amounts of space in which to do it—I believe both men and women may in fact be *more* likely to mention their role as mother or father in their print materials than on their websites, because it ultimately is a shorthand way of conveying a lot of information about who a person is on a day to day basis. However, I believe women will still be less likely than the male candidates to use these terms in their print materials.

Who Had Websites

It is important to note at the outset that not everyone who ran in the races studied here had a website presence in 2002. In particular, non-white and non-Anglo candidates were less likely to have campaign websites and therefore are under-represented in this analysis. This may be due to their presence in relatively safe majority-minority districts, and it may also be due to constituents' lack of access to the internet, as the "digital divide" tends to run along lines of ethnicity and socioeconomic status (Wilhelm 2003). The U.S. Department of Commerce (2002) reports that as of September 2001, whites and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders were the ethnic groups most likely to use the internet, at rates around 60%, while use rates for African Americans and Hispanics were much lower, at 39.8% and 31.6%, respectively.

Table 1.1: Candidates in 2002 Who Had Campaign Websites, in Races
Where at Least One Candidate Was Female

Candidates:	Had Campaign Websites:	Did Not Have Campaign Websites:	N=
	%	%	
Office			
House	76	24	(224)
Senate	86	14	(22)
Governor	94	6	(18)
Seat Status			
Challenger	75	25	(104)
Open Seat	98	2	(55)
Incumbent	70	30	(105)
Party			
Republicans	80	20	(132)
Democrats	76	24	(132)
Gender			
Men	75	25	(119)
Women	81	19	(145)
Race/Ethnicity*			
White	88	12	(204)
Af. American	50	50	(24)
Hispanic/Latino	61	39	(18)
Asian American	57	43	(7)
Seat Safety**			
Candidate Safe	68	32	(90)
Candidate Favored	79	21	(14)
Leans Toward Candidate	100	0	(4)
Candidate Not Safe	83	27	(156)

* figures indicating ethnicity do not total 264 because ethnicity could not be
ascertained for 11 candidates.
** data based on CQ Weekly (2002) characterizations of races.

As Table 1.1 shows, men and women candidates in races with at least one woman

running as a major party candidate were roughly equally likely to have campaign

websites in 2002 (75% and 81%, respectively), as were Republicans and Democrats (80%

and 76%) in these types of races. The use of websites varies drastically by race/ethnicity,

with white candidates in these races the most likely to have campaign websites while

African Americans were the least likely to have websites (88% and 50%, respectively). Similarly, only 57% percent of Asian American candidates and 61% of Hispanic/Latino candidates had campaign websites. The internet presence of candidates by ethnicity thus does not directly correspond with internet usage rates by ethnic groups in the U.S. (see above), particularly for candidates of Asian/Pacific Islander descent. The pattern of internet use and internet presence of candidates by ethnic groups for whites, African Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos roughly correspond, however. Across the levels of office sought, candidates in this study in the statewide elections for Senate and governor were more likely to have websites than candidates in the smaller House districts, and this most likely reflects the size of their budgets and sophistication and prominence of their campaigns. Incumbents were the least likely (70%) to have a campaign website, and this is likely due to both the relative safety of their status as incumbents and to the fact that they may already have had an internet presence via their office website.[32] Virtually all candidates in this study in open seat races, which are the most competitive, had campaign websites. According to ratings of which candidates were safe or not, candidates whose seats were categorized as "safe" were the least likely to have campaign websites (68%, N=90), and again this is likely due to two factors: 1. they are likely to be incumbents with internet presence through their official office site, and 2. they do not need to campaign as heavily to win their seats. Candidates in seats that were not safe or were marginal were the most likely to have campaign websites (83%, N=156, and 100%, N=4, respectively).

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[32] Senate rules prohibit campaigning on one's office website. Though the rate for the incumbents may be the lowest, a large majority of them do, in fact, have an additional website dedicated to their campaign.

Whose Print Materials are Included

Table 1.2: Candidates in 2002 Who Submitted Print Materials, in Races Where at Least One Candidate Was Female

Candidates:	Submitted Print Campaign Materials:	Did Not Submit Print Campaign Materials:	N=
	%	%	
Office			
House	43	27	(224)
Senate	68	32	(22)
Governor	89	11	(18)
Seat Status			
Challenger	41	59	(104)
Open Seat	78	22	(55)
Incumbent	39	61	(105)
Party			
Republicans	48	52	(132)
Democrats	48	52	(132)
Gender			
Men	43	57	(119)
Women	52	48	(145)
Race/Ethnicity*			
White	55	45	(204)
Af. American	21	79	(24)
Hispanic/Latino	33	67	(18)
Asian American	43	57	(7)
Seat Safety**			
Candidate Safe	39	61	(90)
Candidate Favored	57	43	(14)
Leans Toward Candidate	50	50	(4)
Candidate Not Safe	53	47	(156)

* figures indicating ethnicity do not total 264 because ethnicity could not be ascertained for 11 candidates.
** data based on CQ Weekly (2002) characterizations of races.

As seen in Table 1.2, candidates running for governor in this study were the most likely to send materials back in response (89%), while those running for district-based House seats were the least likely to participate (43%). This is likely reflective of the size of the campaign budgets. Candidates in open seat races, which are the most competitive

races, also participated at a very high rate—78%, while candidates in races where there

was an incumbent sent materials only around 40% of the time (N=104 challengers,

N=105 incumbents). This lower participation by challengers and incumbents may reflect

campaigns with lower resources for challengers due to lower competitiveness, while at

the same time incumbents may rely more heavily on reaching voters through official mail

coming out of their office which technically does not qualify as campaign literature.

Candidates in this study of both parties contributed materials at the same rate (48%),

although women were slightly more likely to participate than men (52% v. 43%). As

with the websites, white candidates were also the most likely to be included (55%

responded) and African American candidates were the least likely to participate, with a

response rate of only 21%. Unlike the situation with the websites, it is important to note

that inclusion of materials in this study required the active response of the campaigns

under study. While the collection of websites represents every campaign that actually

had a working website, the collection of print materials may not be as fully reflective of

all extant campaign literature for those campaigns as it is impossible to ascertain whether

the non-participating campaigns *had* no print literature to contribute, or if they simply

chose not to send any. As with the websites, candidates in seats that were considered safe

were the least likely to contribute print materials for this study—39% (N=156). This may

be due to the fact that they may use official mail such as newsletters to constituents in

lieu of explicit campaign literature, or it may be due to the fact that they have less need to

campaign heavily to preserve their seats.

Experimental Design

I used the results from the content analysis to generate prototypical campaign messages to be tested on potential voters. While my previous questions were how do men and women candidates present themselves in relation to their families, and does the medium and audience have an effect, the third question I examine is what effect do those presentational strategies have on voters? To that end, I conducted two experiments in October, 2004.

I obtained the experimental data through Knowledge Networks, using self-administered surveys on the internet. Respondents were selected using random-digit dialing, and therefore represent random probability samples of U.S. residents.[33] The experiments took two presentational frames that were present in the actual candidate materials and measured participant responses to male and female candidates under those frames. The first frame tested the appeal of one aspect of familial roles: that of the candidate as parent in a current family setting. With this frame, I tested a particular appeal strategy used by some women candidates on their websites: using gender-neutral language to convey a family/gender role of "parent," instead of the gender-specific terms "mother" or "father." The strategy of presenting one's gender/family role in this way is to convey family information to a curious audience of voters, yet in a limited way, without going so far as to explicitly invoke "motherhood" in a candidate's self-presentation. With this experiment I tested if this strategy is able to mitigate any effect of gender on participant responses. If such a strategy is effective, there should be no difference between the participants' evaluations of the male candidate and the female candidate. I expected, however, that a gender effect could not be fully eliminated by

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[33] This study was done in conjunction with a study by Jane Junn (2005) at Rutgers University, and is weighted to be representative of the U.S. population.

using gender-neutral language, given the historical assumed incompatibility of such a role and political office for women, regardless of the word used to name it. Experimental subjects were presented with this frame describing either a male or female candidate, who varied from one another only by first name and gendered pronouns, and then were asked to evaluate the candidate presented to them on seven different items, including their likelihood to vote for the candidate.

The second frame tested the effects of highlighting a candidate's family of origin and class background. Because candidates often use their family information to invoke class markers,[34] this experiment consisted of a short candidate introduction that emphasized working-class family roots, denoting the profession of the fictional candidate's parents (factory worker and hair dresser) and personal experience as their family of origin struggled through a plant closing. My expectation was that the woman candidate would receive lower evaluations then men because emphasizing herself in connection to her parents might undermine the perception of her as an independent actor, and because of the historical incompatibility between working class status and respectability as a woman. Because the text is based on real candidate appeals found on the candidate websites, I am able to assess the effectiveness of this sort of familial and working-class strategy for male and female candidates alike. As in the first experiment, this frame was used to describe two candidates who varied only by gender. In both experiments, I made brief reference to two issues—education and the economy, and to the candidates' personal values of honesty, hard work, and accountability.

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[34] Take, for example, the 2004 Democratic National Convention speeches by John Edwards, Dick Gephardt, and Barrack Obama. Each man indicated the job his father held as a way to convey working class roots.

Respondents were given one candidate (either male or female) under one of the two frames: working-class family background, or role as parent. All respondents were asked to evaluate their given candidate on seven measures. To gauge their first, overall impression, respondents were asked to agree or disagree on a seven-point continuum whether the candidate given "would make a good representative in Washington." To probe the respondent further I asked if the candidate had any "qualities that I look for in an elected official." To probe if a more personal connection may have been activated between the given candidate and the potential voter, respondents were asked if they believed the candidate "would probably understand my concerns," and if the candidate "remind(s) me of people I know." To gauge if there is a difference between feeling a person is familiar and if they are viable political candidates, I asked respondents if the candidate seemed successful, and if the candidate seemed "qualified for office," on the hypothesis that a candidate may score high on question such as the personal connection questions, but still not seem fit to represent a voter. Finally, I asked how likely they believed they would be to vote for the candidate (assuming he/she was of the party the respondent tended to vote for most often.)

Chapter Outline and Summary

The chapters to follow will be laid out in the following way: Chapter 2 answers the questions: how do candidates invoke their present families (spouse and children) to voters? What are different strategies candidates engage in when presenting their gender roles? Chapter 3 asks how potential voters respond to such strategies. I analyze the content analysis data by gender and again by office sought, party, and seat status to identify patterns of common appeals that suggest what candidates perceive voters want to

hear about them, and also what candidates consider politically relevant about themselves. I report the experimental findings on the effectiveness of the strategy of using gender-neutral language when giving information about a candidate's present family. Chapter 4 examines what candidates convey to voters when giving information about their families of origin (parents and siblings) and whether there are different patterns in their use of this information along lines of gender, seat status, party, and office sought. In this chapter I not only report what actual candidates are doing with this information, I offer empirical evidence from my experiments to evaluate the effectiveness of invoking a candidate's family of origin to convey a working class background in candidate campaign materials. Chapter 5 considers strategies for presenting family information that both male and female candidates use at roughly similar rates, and asks if there may be differences in the response to them by potential voters along lines of gender. Chapter 6 summarizes the findings of this study and offers suggestions for future research.

This project expands the state of knowledge in the field of gender and American politics by expanding our understanding of the dynamics of gender in campaigns. I go beyond previous research to look more closely at family information, and distinguish between the aspects of family presented to voters by candidates. The content analysis of website materials allows examination of how candidates portray themselves in relation to their families via a medium that has the least space constraint and the widest possible audience.[35] Content analysis of the print materials is a new contribution to a body of literature around gender and candidate communication that has thus far been concentrated

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[35] It has the widest possible audience in the sense that anyone, including people outside the candidate's state/district, may view their campaign materials online. However, though the *potential* audience reached online may be broader, the audience reached through direct mail may be more diverse in terms of age, socioeconomic status, and education as this more traditional form of communication transcends the digital divide.

on television ads, newspaper coverage, and more recently, websites. The print materials allow a view of what candidates prioritize the most when forced by space constraints to be highly selective about how they introduce themselves to their constituents. The inclusion of gubernatorial, senatorial, and house candidates also provides a comparison not available in other large studies in the field (Kahn 1996; Bystrom et al. 2004). The experiments allow for inferential analysis about the way in which messages about candidates' families and their roles within them are received by nationally drawn samples of respondents. While the actual candidates' materials provide a view of their presentation of self to their specific district or state, the experiments gauge a wider set of responses to gender and gender-role related messages and will detect broader patterns of reactions to such messages.

I expand our understanding of gender and family information in campaigns by distinguishing between the mention of family members and the invocation of gender and family *roles* played by the candidate him or her self. By looking at family of origin (parents and siblings) information in addition to present family (spouse and children) information, I go beyond previous studies that have included only present family information in their analyses of candidate presentational strategies. By distinguishing between information about a candidate's family members and his or her gender and family roles invoked in relation to family members, my research captures more of the gender and family signals conveyed by candidates to voters in their campaign advertisements than studies that have not disaggregated this information.

Beyond identifying such candidate strategies, I then move to the other end of the campaign equation, and evaluate empirically the effect of such strategies on potential

voters. By designing experiments based on actual candidate material and testing the effect of respondents' evaluations of male and female candidates, I contribute to the knowledge of what are effective strategies for candidates when they invoke information about their families to voters. Through these evaluations, I am able to tease out more of the dynamics of gender. Because my study addresses male candidates as well as female candidates, I am also able to bring to light some of the ways in which male identity and masculine family roles are also important to potential voters, a subject particularly neglected in both the empirical and theoretical literature on representation.

Chapter 2: Marriage, Parenthood, and Gender Role Information in Campaign Materials

Introduction

What do candidates tell voters about their spouses and children, and why? Do different candidates use different strategies when presenting such family and gender role information? This study delves into how candidates use family information and gender-role cues in their website and print campaign materials. Previous studies (Gulati and Treul 2003; Banwart and Kaid 2002) have noted the rates at which candidates are pictured with their families, but do not delve further into the specificities of how male and female candidates invoke family and gender roles. In this study, I disaggregated different aspects of a candidate's family information to determine if candidates may suspect that different types of information about themselves and their families mean different things to voters.

In this chapter I report the results of content analysis I performed on candidates' websites and print materials from 2002 to ascertain whether gender, party, office sought, and seat status, as well as the medium of communication, affects the ways in which candidates present themselves in relation to their present family members (spouses and children) and their related family/gender roles. To determine this, I address four questions: (1) Do male and female candidates convey information about different members (children and/or spouses) of their families at different rates as expected, suggesting that perhaps they believe this information is not of equal significance and does not convey the same information about a candidate to voters? (2) Aside from mentioning different members of their families, is there a difference in the rates of explicit invocation of gender family roles? (3) When the roles are invoked, do male and

female candidates employ different language, perhaps to minimize the effects of invoking what are traditionally very gender-laden identities? To the extent that they may suggests male and female candidates may be trying to accomplish two different things at once—convey family information to voters curious to know more about a candidate, but not over-emphasize those family and gender-related roles that have historically been perceived as incongruous with political office-holding in the U.S. And, (4) Do strategies vary across campaign mediums, giving evidence in support of the idea that the deployment of gender identity information is due to strategic considerations on the part of campaigns, and not simply of fact?

Expectations

Previous studies have suggested there should be evidence of the following phenomena:

1. Women should exhibit attempts to balance their portrayals of their family information.

Rather than shy away from giving such information altogether, women should find a balance between giving voters the sort of personal information that voters want to know (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001), and not overemphasizing the traditional connotations and expectations that accompany women's familial roles as wives and mothers (Matthews 1992, Mandel 1992, Witt et al. 1992). To be clear, I *do* expect to see women candidates give voters information about their family lives. However, I expect that they will not portray their gender roles in the same manner as the male candidates. I expect women to describe their gender/family roles using different language than the men that may mitigate the idea of the women candidates as mothers and wives, first and foremost.

2. Party should also prompt differences in strategies, as many Republicans tend to be more socially conservative than Democrats, so that Republican women candidates will differ from Democratic candidates and Republican men by portraying themselves more readily as mothers and wives, in anticipation that this is what some of their constituents would prefer to see about them.

3. Women in state-wide races should be less likely to emphasize their traditional gender/family roles to voters than candidates in district-based House races because of the higher prestige of such offices (Diamond 1977), as well as increased scrutiny and wider, more diverse audiences that candidates in state-wide offices must appeal to compared to candidates running for district-based seats. I also expect female candidates running for executive, rather than legislative, positions to be more reticent to emphasize their gender/family roles, due to the necessities of executive leadership in moments of crisis, and voters' documented concerns about women having to choose between the state and their families during such times (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2002).

4. Women in open-seat races, which are generally the most competitive, should be less likely to portray themselves in traditional gender/family roles (Diamond 1977).

5. The medium of the campaign materials should have intervening effects on the findings.

Audiences of websites can be largely expected to be younger, due to the fact that young people are more likely to be online than older people. The age group of Americans most likely to be using the internet is 18-25 year olds, 65% of whom are online (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2002). The rate of internet usage for Americans aged 50 and up is only 37.1% (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2002), and (in 2003) the rate for those aged 65 and up was only 29.4% (U.S. Census Bureau, as cited in Burns 2006). Younger audiences are less likely to hold traditional attitudes about gender roles. A number of studies have demonstrated differential attitudes toward gender roles by age (Ciabattari 2001, Mason and Lu 1988, Rice and Coates 1995, Rosenthal 1995, Wilkie 1993). Though most studies have found that, over time, the entire U.S. population has become less traditional in their gender role attitudes, older people are more likely to hold conservative attitudes toward

gender roles than are younger people (Ciabattari 2001, Mason and Lu 1988, Rice and

Coates 1995, Rosenthal 1995, Wilkie 1993). Internet audiences are more likely already

to be supportive of the candidate whose materials they have chosen to view online, as

solidary benefits are a major reason why people go to internet sites (Just, et. al as cited in

Trent and Friedenberg 2000, p 344). Recipients of print materials, by comparison, are

more likely to be older, and as such are more likely to have more conservative views of

gender roles, and are less likely already to be supportive of the candidate they are reading

about, as they did not choose to receive the print materials. I expect candidates will alter

their strategies between the two mediums in light of their expected audience's likely

characteristics.

Quantitative Website Findings
<u>Spousal Information on Websites</u>

Table 2.1: Married Candidates Who Mentioned Spouses and Spousal Roles on Websites, by
Gender and Party

	Mentioned a Spouse		Mentioned Being a Spouse	
	%	N=	%	N=
Males	90.0	(70)	14.3	(70)
Females	81.1	(74)	5.5	(73)
Republicans	89.2	(83)	9.8	(82)
Democrats	80.3	(61)	9.8	(61)
Republican Men	92.0	(50)	10.0	(50)
Republican Women	84.8	(33)	9.4	(32)
Democratic Men	85.0	(20)	25.0	(20)
Democratic Women	78.0	(41)	2.4	(41)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the
webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

Since my concern in this chapter is with how candidates with families portray

themselves in relation to their families, the results reported in Table 2.1 are based only on

those candidates with websites who were actually married[36] in 2002. Sixty-nine percent of the female candidates with websites were married, as were 81% of the male candidates with websites. Of those who were married, women were less likely than men to mention having a spouse—(81.1% women, 90.0% men.) The married female candidates were also less likely to invoke their status as a "wife" on the campaign websites than were married male candidates to invoke their role as "husband"—5.5% and 14.3%, respectively.[37]

Democrats were less likely than Republicans to mention having a spouse (80.3% vs. 89.2%), though members of each party mentioned their roles as "husband" or "wife" at equal (low) rates— ~10% each. Within each party, the women were less likely than the men to mention having a spouse (84.8% and 92.0% for Republicans, 78.0% and 85.0% for Democrats). The Republican men and women did not vary in the rates at which they invoked their roles as husband or wife (10.0% and 9.4%). However, there is an interesting difference between Democratic men and women in references to their spousal roles, specifically. Though married Democratic men and married Democratic women do not differ significantly in the rates at which they simply refer to their spouses on their campaign websites (85.0% vs. 78.0%), they differ rather drastically when it comes to referencing their own identities as a "husband" or as a "wife"—25.0% and 2.4% respectively. The interesting question is why the Democrats differ from the Republicans in this way, with Democratic men so likely to mention their roles as

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[36] This information was obtained through a variety of sources, including Vote-smart.org, Cnn.com, Foxnews.com, Usatoday.com, Wikipedia.org, Reviewjournal.com, and Senate biographies.

[37] The terms used were always "wife" or "husband;" none used the gender-neutral "spouse." Four candidates in this collection with websites are openly gay, and two referenced their identity as gay/lesbian on their websites. None made any reference to a present family—partner or children, though one such candidate does in reality have children. It was not as feasible to ascertain whether or not they were in a committed partner relationship. The issue of how to categorize their partners (as spouses or not) therefore did not arise, though if it had I would have included them as spouses.

husbands, and Democratic women so unlikely to mention their roles as wives, when Republican men and women both do so around 10% of the time. Perhaps the more feminist ideology espoused by the Democratic Party explains these differences. Being a spouse, unlike being a parent, suggests a partnership between two adults. Democratic men may be using an invocation of their role as husband disproportionately to the rate at which any of the others mentioned their roles as spouses because they are trying to signal a sort of feminist sympathy by readily portraying themselves in a partnership with a woman. Democratic women may also find that their party's feminist leanings *dis*courage emphasizing a partnership with a man, so as not to detract from the idea that she is an independent woman. Democratic women were, as expected, less likely than Republican women to both mention their spouse and their spousal roles, consistent with their parties' respective conservative/liberal ideological bents, though the differences are small.

Alternatively, rather than feminist ideology driving the differences in the rates at which Democratic men and women highlight their roles as spouses, it could be that Democratic men feel a pressure to prove that they are family-oriented, as Republicans have in recent years cemented their image as the party embodying "family values." This explanation, while plausible, does not explain why Democratic women do not appear to be accommodating this same deficit since they, too, are Democrats. It is possible that Democratic women do not feel as much pressure to counter Republicans' images as having "family values," since they are women, and as such will already be assumed to be the primary caretaker of their families. A third explanation could be that there is a combination of feminist ideology and family values pressures on the Democratic

candidates which explains why the men and women differ so drastically in their

invocations of their spousal roles.

Table 2.2: Married Candidates Who Mentioned Spouses and Spousal Roles on Websites, by Gender, Seat, and Status

	Mentioned a Spouse		Mentioned Being a Spouse	
	%	N=	%	N=
Office Sought				
House Men	87.3	(55)	9.1	(55)
House Women	76.7	(60)	6.8	(59)
Senate Men	100.0	(8)	50.0	(8)
Senate Women	100.0	(7)	0.0	(7)
Governor Men	100.0	(7)	14.3	(7)
Governor Women	100.0	(7)	0.0	(7)
Seat Status				
Challenger Men	94.4	(18)	22.2	(18)
Challenger Women	78.6	(28)	7.4	(27)
Open Seat Men	95.2	(21)	19.0	(21)
Open Seat Women	80.0	(25)	0.0	(25)
Incumbent Men	83.9	(31)	6.4	(31)
Incumbent Women	85.7	(21)	9.5	(21)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

Table 2.2 shows the rates at which married candidates mention their spouses and spousal roles by the type of office sought and gender, as well as by the candidate's seat status and gender. Married women running for the House of Representatives were somewhat less likely than married men running for the House to mention their spouses (76.7% and 87.3%), though women running for Senate or governor were just as likely as their male counterparts to mention having spouses—indeed, all such candidates mentioned their spouses. Interestingly, no woman running for the Senate or governor went the next step to refer to herself as a "wife," though 50.0% of men running for the

Senate referred to themselves as "husbands," as did 14.3% of men running for governor, though this last number should be viewed cautiously, as there were only 7 men running for governor. These findings appear to support the hypothesis that women in statewide races (Senate and governor) would be less likely than their male counterparts to mention their family/gender role as a spouse, as well as being less likely than women in House races to highlight their family/gender roles, even though the rate at which women running for the House did so was not large—6.8%.

The seat status of the candidates also appeared to play a role in men's and women's decisions whether or not to reference their families and roles. As predicted, women running in the tougher positions either as challengers or as open seat candidates were ~15% less likely than men running with the same status to mention having spouses. There was no discernible difference for male and female candidates running as incumbents in the mentions of their spouses (83.9% and 85.7%, respectively). Again, a similar effect is apparent in their references to their spousal roles—women running as challengers and women running for open seats were both less likely than men running with the same status to mention their roles as wives or husbands. Women running as incumbents were not less likely than men running as incumbents to mention their role as a spouse, and in fact, were the most likely of any category of women to do so. These differences suggest that women running from the positions of greatest strength—those who run as incumbents—may perceive less need to minimize or parse their family information to voters, while women who run from positions of greater vulnerability (as challengers or for open seats) are more reticent to emphasize family information relative to men in the same positions and to women incumbents.

Parental Information on Websites

Table 2.3: Candidates with Children Who Mentioned Children and Parental Roles on Websites, by Gender and Party

	Mentioned Children		Mentioned Being a "Parent," "Mother" or "Father"		Mentioned Being a "Mother" or "Father"		Mentioned Being a "Parent," Gender-Neutral	
	%	N=	%	N=	%	N=	%	N=
Males	84.7	(72)	35.2	(71)	28.2	(71)	8.5	(71)
Females	85.2	(81)	47.6	(84)	40.5	(84)	18.5	(81)
Republicans	83.5	(85)	37.2	(86)	30.2	(86)	12.9	(85)
Democrats	86.8	(68)	47.8	(69)	40.6	(69)	14.9	(67)
Republican Men	84.9	(53)	28.8	(52)	23.1	(52)	5.8	(52)
Republican Women	81.3	(32)	50.0	(34)	41.2	(34)	24.2	(33)
Democratic Men	84.2	(19)	52.6	(19)	42.1	(19)	15.8	(19)
Democratic Women	87.8	(49)	46.0	(50)	40.0	(50)	14.6	(48)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

Table 2.3 shows there is no difference in the rates at which men and women with kids mention their children on their websites (~85% each). Women in 2002, however, were more likely than their male counterparts to invoke their roles as parents, using both gender-neutral and gender-specific language to do so. Republicans and Democrats with children were roughly equally likely to mention their kids on their websites (83.5% and 86.8%), though Democrats were more likely than Republicans to highlight their roles as parents, though the difference was for the most part in the use of the gender-specific terms "mother" and "father," as the two parties did not differ much in their usage of the gender-neutral "parent."

Democratic men and women did not differ drastically from each other in the rates at which they invoked information about having children or being parents, though Republican men and women did demonstrate distinct patterns. Republican men were the group least likely to invoke their roles as parents using either gender-specific or gender-neutral terminology, when compared to Republican women and Democratic men and women. By contrast then, the rates at which Republican women invoke their

family/gender roles as parents are interesting. Republican women were more likely than Republican men to refer to their parental roles using *both* gender-specific language ("mother") and gender-neutral language ("parent"). Republican men, then, are the anomaly to explain. They are the most inconsistent with any other group of candidates in their very low rates of mentioning their parental identities. It is not the case that they are any less likely to refer to *having* children; they do so at a rate of 85% of the time which is consistent with the rates of every other party/gender group. But surprisingly, they do not invoke their *roles* as fathers at a similarly consistent rate.

Republican women with children, meanwhile, invoke their status as mothers at rates higher than the Republican men and Democratic women, but their rates are closer to Democratic men's and Democratic women's rates than to Republican men's. The area in which they begin to differ dramatically from the Democrats is when it comes to using the gender-neutral term "parent," specifically. Republican women employ this language at a markedly higher rate than their Democratic counterparts (24.2% v. 14.6%). Within the Republican Party, more Republican women are signaling that their parental role is central to their identities, but they are also the ones most likely to use the gender-neutral term "parent" when invoking that role, perhaps revealing the conflicting pressures that they confront to both fulfill traditional gender roles but also to mitigate the associated assumptions about women belonging primarily in the private sphere that may come along with traditional conceptions of gender roles. Republican men, on the other hand, may de-emphasize their roles as fathers because they may feel that their identities as fathers and good family men do not need to be emphasized to voters, either because they believe these roles are inconsequential to the work they want to do in office, or perhaps due to the

assumptions voters are likely to make about who already embodies family values. This is

consistent with the idea that Republicans consider their party to be the party of traditional

family values, and the party is not typically affiliated with espousing feminist principles.

It thus makes sense that Republican women would emphasize their roles as mothers,

though at the same time, feel the possible historical disjuncture between their identities as

mothers and that of a person running for office, and therefore attempt to stem invoking

notions which are *too* traditional about the mother role by seizing on gender-neutral

language as a way of trying to balance the presentation of these identities.

Table 2.4: Candidates with Children Who Mentioned Children and Parental Roles on Websites, by Gender, Seat, and Status

Office Sought	Mentioned Children %	N=	Mentioned Being a "Parent," "Mother" or "Father" %	N=	Mentioned Being a "Mother" or "Father" %	N=	Mentioned Being a "Parent," Gender-Neutral %	N=
House Men	80.7	(57)	32.1	(56)	25.0	(56)	8.9	(56)
House Women	83.8	(68)	50.7	(71)	45.1	(71)	17.4	(69)
Senate Men	100.0	(8)	62.5	(8)	62.5	(8)	0.0	(8)
Senate Women	100.0	(7)	28.6	(7)	14.3	(7)	28.6	(7)
Governor Men	100.0	(7)	28.6	(7)	14.3	(7)	14.3	(7)
Governor Women	83.3	(6)	33.3	(6)	16.7	(6)	20.0	(5)
Seat Status								
Challenger Men	81.0	(21)	38.1	(21)	38.1	(21)	0.0	(21)
Challenger Women	91.2	(34)	61.8	(34)	55.9	(34)	18.2	(33)
Open Seat Men	95.0	(20)	45.0	(20)	35.0	(20)	15.0	(20)
Open Seat Women	71.4	(21)	28.6	(21)	23.8	(21)	10.5	(19)
Incumbent Men	80.6	(31)	26.7	(30)	16.7	(30)	10.0	(30)
Incumbent Women	88.5	(26)	44.8	(29)	34.5	(29)	24.1	(29)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

Table 2.4 shows the results for children-related information on websites taking

into account office sought, seat status, and gender. Among candidates for the House, it is

the women candidates who were more likely to invoke their roles as parents, and when

they did, they were more likely to use the gender-specific term "mother," as well as the

gender-neutral term "parent," to do so. Among Senate candidates, the opposite occurs.

While all Senate candidates (male and female) with children made reference to their

children on their sites, male Senate candidates and female Senate candidates differed in their invocations of their parental identities. The female Senate candidates were much less likely to use the gender-specific word "mother" to describe themselves (14.3%) than male Senate candidates were to use the gender-specific term "father" in reference to themselves (62.5%). And, female candidates for the Senate were more likely to use gender-neutral language to refer to themselves than were male candidates for the Senate (28.6% vs. 0.0%). This is counter to Kahn's (1993) findings that women running for Senate played up to traditional gender stereotypes, emphasizing gender stereotypical strengths when presenting themselves to the public. However, it is not apparent if those strengths were ever mentioned in relation to the candidate's personal and family lives, or solely in relation to the public, as may have been the case. In the present study, it is women running for the House who actually seem to play up their gender identity, by highlighting their roles as mothers significantly more frequently than men running for the House, though the men and women in each category report the fact of *having* children at about the same rate. The difference between the House and Senate candidates' patterns is consistent with the expectation that women running for statewide office would be less likely to play up their traditional gender roles because of the necessity of appealing to a larger and more diverse constituency for a more prestigious office. The data regarding candidates for governor, the other statewide office in this study, do not paint a clear picture, as the rates were close and the number of candidates small.

Though not predicted at the outset of this study, it is interesting to note the rather high rate at which men running for the Senate invoked the gender-specific role of "father" about themselves, when compared to women running for the Senate and to men

running for the House. Perhaps they perceived a need to soften their images a bit by appearing more family-oriented, particularly since they are running against women. Since women candidates are generally presumed to be more competent on compassion issues and those involving children and families, the men may be trying to co-opt women's virtually only advantage in a political race. A comparison with male candidates running in all-male races would be necessary to ascertain if this is indeed the case, though that is beyond the scope of the current study. Considering women only across the three types of office, women running in House districts, as expected, are less reticent than women in statewide races to portray themselves in the traditional role of mother. They were both *more* likely to invoke the role of parent (using any language) and *less* likely to use a gender neutral term, specifically, to do so.

When looked at by seat status and gender, women running as challengers were more likely to invoke their roles as parents than men running as challengers, though when they did, they were also more likely to use gender-neutral language. The interesting finding among open seat candidates is that even though all the candidates considered in Table 2.4 *have* children, the women were less likely to even mention this fact about themselves to voters (women 71.4%, men 95.0%). While I predicted women would be more reticent to extend the discussion of their family status to the gender roles involved, I did not actually expect women to be less likely to even *mention* the fact that they had families. But if any group of candidates was going to demonstrate significant differences in giving even just this very basic piece of information about themselves, it is not surprising that the difference occurred between men and women in open seat races. These are the races that are generally the most competitive and so candidates may be

particularly circumspect about the impressions they give to voters. While women in these races may wish to avoid association with traditional ideas about circumscribed behaviors for women with children, men in such competitive races *against* women may be more likely to mention their own children in part to soften their own images and perhaps to get voters thinking about the family lives of the candidates, with the assumption that this would be to the women's disadvantage. Comparing between women only in the three types of races, there is evidence that women in the most competitive open seat races were the least likely to portray themselves as having children and being mothers.

Qualitative Printed Materials Findings
Spousal Information in Print

Table 2.5: Married Candidates Who Mentioned Spouses and Spousal Roles in Print Materials, by Gender and Party

	Mentioned a Spouse	Mentioned Being a Spouse	
	%	%	N=
Males	73.2	7.3	(41)
Females	63.5	9.6	(52)
Republicans	78.4	9.8	(51)
Democrats	54.8	7.1	(42)
Republican Men	71.0	3.2	(31)
Republican Women	90.0	20.0	(20)
Democratic Men	80.0	20.0	(10)
Democratic Women	46.9	3.1	(32)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

Table 2.5 depicts marital information contained in the print materials of those candidates who were married, by gender and party. Women were less likely than men to mention having a spouse in their printed materials (63.5% vs. 73.2%), though they did not differ significantly in the rates at which they invoked their roles as husband or wife.

This is partially inconsistent with the websites where female candidates were found to be less likely to do both than male candidates. Democrats were significantly less likely than Republicans to mention a spouse in their print materials, though they were not drastically less likely than Republicans to mention their role as spouse. It is the Democratic women, specifically, who are bringing down the rate for Democrats overall. While married Democratic men mentioned their spouses 80.0% of the time in their printed campaign brochures, only 46.9% of the married Democratic women did so. When it comes to whether or not candidates referred to their gender/family roles as wives or husbands, Democratic women were significantly less likely to do so than were Democratic men (3.1% vs. 20.0%), and this is consistent with differences found on the websites. Interestingly, a difference also emerged for the Republicans by gender, which did not exist on the websites: Republican women were both more likely to mention having a spouse than Republican men (90.0% vs. 71.0%) and were significantly more likely than Republican men to refer to their spousal roles.

The findings for Democrats are consistent with the expectation that a more feminist party ideology may encourage Democratic men to portray themselves in partnerships with their wives, while at the same time *dis*courage Democratic women from emphasizing being in partnership with a man, as that could make her seem less independent. Alternatively, if it is the case that Democratic men are emphasizing their marriages because of the need to demonstrate that they have "family values" to counter their Republican opponent, Democratic women may be subject to cross pressures and therefore not respond in the same way. While they, too, might feel pressure to display "family values," emphasizing their marriages could make them seem less like their own

person in front of voters. Why such a difference for Republican men and women should also emerge where one did not exist on the internet may be due to a combination of factors. Party ideology, typical age of viewer, and likely audience have potentially combined in this situation to prompt a different strategy on the part of Republican women and men. Given that the viewership of internet sites is younger than the average population, and that younger people tend to hold less traditional views of what constitutes "appropriate" gender roles (Ciabattari 2001, Mason and Lu 1988, Rice and Coates 1995, Wilkie 1993), it is not surprising that Republican women are portraying themselves more readily in the role of "wife" to an older and potentially more conservative audience with their print materials. It may be the same reason prompting Republican men to shift their strategies a bit in this regard between audiences as well; for the internet audience, they may feel it will be better received to portray themselves as in a partnership (ostensibly an equal one) with a woman, as the younger audience may be likely to have more egalitarian views of gender roles. Alternatively, the fact that Republicans are already assumed to have solid "family values" may make it seem unnecessary for Republican men to emphasize their marriages, however that explanation could not fully account for why Republican women would by contrast emphasize their families, as their identities as Republicans theoretically would extend the same assumptions about who has "family values" to them as well.

Table 2.6: Married Candidates Who Mentioned Spouses and Spousal Roles in Print Materials, by Gender, Seat, and Status

	Mentioned a Spouse	Mentioned Being a Spouse	
	%	%	N=
Office Sought			
House Men	71.4	7.1	(28)
House Women	66.7	12.8	(39)
Senate Men	66.7	16.7	(6)
Senate Women	71.4	0.0	(7)
Governor Men	85.7	0.0	(7)
Governor Women	33.3	0.0	(6)
Seat Status			
Challenger Men	75.0	16.7	(12)
Challenger Women	73.3	6.7	(15)
Open Seat Men	81.3	6.3	(16)
Open Seat Women	66.7	14.3	(21)
Incumbent Men	61.5	0.0	(13)
Incumbent Women	50.0	6.3	(16)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

Table 2.6 presents the proportions of candidates who referenced their spouses and spousal roles in their print materials by the office they sought, gender, and their seat status. Married men and women running for governor differed markedly in the rates at which they mentioned their spouses in print—85.7% vs. 33.3%. By contrast, all of the candidates for governor, male and female, mentioned their spouses on their websites. The difference between the women's reluctance to mention their spouses in print vs. their readiness to mention their spouses online is likely also due to audience considerations that differ between the two media. Candidates for governor are running for executive office, unlike candidates for the House and Senate. The significance of the differences of job-related duties comes into sharpest relief when considering the role of the executive in

emergency management of the State. Women running for governor may be less likely to mention their spouses (and children, as seen below) because they do not want more traditional voters conjuring dilemmas for female state executives between running a state and caring for their families in a time of crisis for the state. They may, however, not shy away from mentioning their spouses online because they expect their online viewing audience is already more likely to support their candidacies (Just et al., as cited in Trent and Friedenberg 2000, p 344), and therefore they have less of a tightrope to walk with voters in that medium.

Women running for the House were slightly more likely than men running for the House to mention their role as a spouse, though in contrast, no woman running for a statewide seat ever referenced being a wife. This is consistent with the hypothesis that women running in wider races with broader audiences are less likely to draw attention to their roles within their families to voters.

Women running in open seat races or as incumbents were less likely than similarly situated men to mention their spouses in print, though men and women running as challengers did not really differ in this regard. It is noteworthy then that, in contrast, women running for open seats or as incumbents were slightly *more* likely than similarly situated men to highlight their roles as spouses in print. The split in behaviors of the women suggest that they may be anticipating an audience with more traditional views of gender roles. This may be leading many of these married women not to even mention their spouses to a print audience, but those who do may expect that a more traditional print audience may view their willingness to identify in a traditional role approvingly.

Parental Information in Print

Table 2.7: Candidates with Children Who Mentioned Children and Parental Roles in Print Materials, by Gender and Party

	Mentioned Children	Mentioned Being a "Parent," "Mother" or "Father"	Mentioned Being a "Mother" or "Father"	Mentioned Being a "Parent," Gender-Neutral	
	%	%	%	%	N=
Males	65.1	30.2	25.6	7.0	(43)
Females	62.3	27.9	27.9	0.0	(61)
Republicans	67.9	23.2	21.4	1.8	(56)
Democrats	58.3	35.4	33.3	4.2	(48)
Republican Men	60.6	24.2	21.2	3.0	(33)
Republican Women	78.3	21.7	21.7	0.0	(23)
Democratic Men	80.0	50.0	40.0	20.0	(10)
Democratic Women	52.6	31.6	31.6	0.0	(38)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

Table 2.7 gives the rates at which married male and female candidates mentioned their children and roles as parents in their print materials by gender and party. Democrats with children were less likely to mention having children than were Republicans (58.3% vs. 67.9%), though this difference is being driven by Democratic women, not Democratic men (52.6% vs. 80.0%). Republican candidates differed in the rates at which they mentioned their children as well—Republican women mentioned their children 78.3% of the time in print, while Republican men did so only 60.6% of the time. These patterns, which did not exist on the websites, suggest that audience considerations may be prompting candidates to alter their presentational strategies. When faced with a broader, less supportive, and more traditional audience, Democratic women may be trying not to draw attention to their families because they may believe readers would conceive of this as incompatible with officeholding. Republican women, however, are not actually varying their strategy much in this regard between the two mediums—81.3% mentioned their children online, and 78.3% mentioned their children in print as well. It is interesting to note, however, that women of both parties were less likely to refer to themselves as

"mothers" or "parents" in print than online, suggesting that Republican women may in fact be adapting their messages to a more traditional audience as well, and are trying not to *over*emphasize their identities as women with children. No woman ever used the middle-of-the-road strategy of using the gender-neutral term "parent" in relation to herself in print, though they did use this strategy online. Each of these distinctions suggests that women do not necessarily perceive much middle ground regarding their identities as mothers in front of a print audience.

As for the men, the Democrats did not really show a shift in strategies between their online and print literature, though Republican men did. Republican men were less likely to mention their children in print than online, and were actually less likely than Republican women to mention their children in print as well. Perhaps in front of a more traditional audience they perceived less of a need to demonstrate that they were family men, that perhaps this would be assumed by a more traditional audience. They did not drastically decrease references to themselves as "fathers" or "parents" between the two mediums, which suggests that they are not fully downplaying their identities as fathers. It may be the case that they do not believe they need to overtly make reference to a family, that as members of the party of family values that may just be assumed by an older, more traditional audience.

Table 2.8: Candidates with Children Who Mentioned Children and Parental Roles in Print Materials, by Gender, Seat, and Status

	Mentioned Children	Mentioned Being a "Parent," "Mother" or	Mentioned Being a "Mother" or "Father"	Mentioned Being a "Parent," Gender-	
	%	%	%	%	N=
Office Sought					
House Men	63.3	30.0	26.7	6.7	(30)
House Women	65.3	30.6	30.6	0.0	(49)
Senate Men	50.0	16.7	16.7	0.0	(6)
Senate Women	71.4	14.3	14.3	0.0	(7)
Governor Men	85.7	42.9	28.6	14.3	(7)
Governor Women	20.0	20.0	20.0	0.0	(5)
Seat Status					
Challenger Men	64.3	35.7	35.7	0.0	(15)
Challenger Women	81.0	38.1	38.1	0.0	(21)
Open Seat Men	80.0	26.7	20.0	6.7	(15)
Open Seat Women	70.6	35.3	35.3	0.0	(17)
Incumbent Men	50.0	28.6	21.4	14.3	(14)
Incumbent Women	39.1	13.0	13.0	0.0	(23)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

Women running for governor (Table 2.8) who had children were reticent to even mention their children, as they were reticent to mention their spouses, in their print materials. Again this difference for women is likely due to the executive function of this office. In the words of "Keys to the Governor's Office":

> When both male and female voters imagine a woman with children as the executive leader of their state, they also express some anxieties. How will she balance the needs of her family with the responsibilities she has at work? If she really had to choose between managing a family emergency and a statewide crisis, would she choose her state? Moreover, *should* she choose her state? [emphasis in the original] (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001, 36)

It seems that women running for this office may have been anticipating a less supportive audience among the viewers of their print materials, compared to the viewers of their websites, and that they have may have taken professional advice of this sort to heart.

Women running for the Senate were less likely to mention their children in print than on their websites (71% vs. 100%), and were also less likely to refer to themselves as

"parents" in print than online, suggesting they may not have perceived that a middle way of presenting this information was a viable alternative; instead, they made less reference to this aspect of their lives in print than online. Curiously, men running for the Senate were also less likely to reference their children or roles as parents in print than online. This is difficult to explain, though it is possible that they did not think older, more traditional audiences need to have this image displayed to them; perhaps it would be simply assumed.

Women running as challengers were actually more likely than men running as challengers to mention their children in print, though this appears to be due to the fact that between the two mediums, men became much less likely to mention their children in print than online (64.3% vs 81.0%). Men running as challengers did not alter the rates at which they highlighted their roles as fathers, though women were less likely to portray themselves as mothers or parents in print than online, suggesting that audience considerations shaped their presentational strategies, leading them to not place as much emphasis on their children and status as mothers.

Curiously, women running in the most competitive open seat races actually were more likely to refer to themselves as "mothers" in print than online, and in this medium outpaced men in the rates at which they used gender-specific language to invoke these gender/family roles. Coupled with the fact that women running as challengers were also less likely to use the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe themselves in print than online (0% vs. 18.2%), these findings are suggestive that women in open seat races were playing up their traditional identities in front of a more traditional audience, rather than

downplaying them as predicted. However, the differences between the mediums were modest.

Compared to their online presentations, incumbent women were much less likely to mention their children and identities as mothers in print than online. Men running as incumbents were much less likely to mention their children in print than online (50.0% vs. 80.6%) but did not vary much in the rates at which they made reference to their parental roles. This suggests that perhaps even though women running as incumbents run from positions of relative strength, they may be highly conscious of how they present their gender/family roles to audiences anyway, particularly if that audience is comparatively more likely to be older, more traditional, and less supportive.

Qualitative Findings

An examination of the candidates' actual texts of websites and print materials further illustrates the ways in which women and men candidates appear to be trying to navigate with very different cultural assumptions about office-holding and family roles. Though at times they use references to their present family information to create similar impressions about themselves with voters, their words reveal rather telling distinctions as well.

Websites

On the websites, the roles of "mother" and "father" were invoked in order to serve several purposes for candidates. In part, they convey a sense of the everyday, common aspects of a candidate's identity, and this is sometimes done to indicate that the candidate can relate to their potential voters, perhaps in spite of the fact that the person is running for an elite office:

As a mother of three children involved in her community, Susan can relate to the challenges facing families in our district.
Susan Cleary, R New York, candidate for House District 11

He is a husband and father and he understands the needs of real people and families.
James M. Talent, R Missouri, candidate for Senate

Candidates also invoked the roles of mother and father to indicate that they have

experience or firsthand knowledge of issues facing the families in their districts, which

will guide them when making policy in the future:

As a mother, wife, former small business owner, Delegate, and now Congresswoman, Jo Ann has the benefit of serving in Congress with real-world experience.
Jo Ann Davis, R Virginia, candidate for House District 1

His experience as a successful businessman, as White House Chief of Staff, as Chairman of the North Carolina Rural Prosperity Task Force, as Chairman of the Early Childhood Initiative, as Administrator of the Small Business Administration, as Vice Chair of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital Authority, as National President of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, and as a husband and father will help him get real results in the fight for more jobs, better schools and more affordable health care for North Carolina families...As the father of two sons with juvenile diabetes, Erskine understands first hand how important health care issues are in the lives of every family.
Erskine Bowles,D North Carolina, candidate for Senate

Men and women candidates also invoked the role of father or mother to indicate a source

of values and a set of priorities that they believe voters will understand and share:

As a six-term state legislator, preservationist, educator and mother of three, Martha Fuller Clark has been a leading figure in the fight for New Hampshire families and New Hampshire values for nearly thirty years.
Martha Fuller Clark, D New Hampshire, candidate for House District 1

Dr. Cooksey, a husband, father of three children, and laity leader in his church is committed to traditional family values. That commitment is evident from his voting record.
John C. Cooksey,R Louisiana, candidate for Senate

Both male and female candidates in 2002 invoked their roles as mother or father on their websites in order to convey these ideas of commonality, firsthand knowledge, and values to voters. However male and female candidates also invoked these roles in different ways, which give a fuller sense of the complex dynamics of gender roles and the gender role expectations that candidates perceive they are up against.

When women invoked the role of mother on their websites, they sometimes did so in order to introduce the idea of safety or security as an issue or priority to voters:

> As a wife, a mother, and a small business owner, security means many things to me.
> Lynette Boggs-McDonald, R Nevada, candidate for House District 1

> As a physician, former nurse, mother and small business owner, I am committed to providing safety and security for our homes and neighborhoods, good jobs, quality education for every child, protecting Medicare and Social Security for our seniors and ensuring availability of open space, clean air and water for generations to come.
> Melissa Brown, R Pennsylvania, candidate for House District 13

> She is the mother of two wonderful sons ~ Ryan and Logan...I have spent countless hours writing and revising the dozens of reasons for going slow in this endeavor [war in Iraq]. But time after time, revision after revision, it comes down to only two reasons ~ Logan and Ryan, my two sons. My opponent has two sons as well. She voted for the president's plan. Does she know enough about this proposed war to ask her sons to put their lives on hold and on the line for this resolution? Would she risk her sons on the information she has?
> Heidi Behrens-Benedict, D Washington, candidate for House District 8

Nineteen percent of the women who mentioned their role as mother online did so in part to highlight the idea of safety or security in her campaign website, while no men ever used the role of father to introduce the concept of safety to voters.[38]

Women also invoked their roles as mothers online to highlight particular issues that men did not. Most common was the issue of education. Thirty three percent of the

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[38] Statistical significance of these differences cannot be ascertained because there are too few cases under discussion here.

women who featured their gender/family role of mother did so in relation to the issue of

education.[39] For example:

> As a working mother and a breast cancer survivor she understands the importance of a good education and adequate health care coverage.
> Annie Betancourt, D Florida, candidate for House District 25

> As a mother of two daughters and six stepchildren, when it comes to education, Jo Ann realizes that local folks know best about education.
> Jo Ann Emerson, R Missouri, candidate for House District 8

> A mother and grandmother, Nancy has taken an active interest in improving our education system...As a mother of three children who attended public schools in New Britain, Nancy believes we should improve, not give up on, our public schools.
> Nancy Johnson, R Connecticut, candidate for House District 5

> As the mother of two adolescent daughters, it is important to me that we narrow the education gap between school districts and have more local control in developing the standards for programs and curricula in our schools.
> Elaine Dugger Shaw, D California, candidate for House District 11

Women who invoked the role of mother on their internet sites used their identities as

mothers to signal their commitment to women's issues, as well, 15% of the time, while

no man raised women's issues in relation to their identities as fathers:

> As the mother of four children, including a teenage daughter, the issue of a woman's right to choose is very important to me personally. I am proud of my 100% pro-choice record, and will continue to represent your views by supporting family planning and teen pregnancy prevention initiatives, while opposing attempts to limit a woman's constitutional right to choose.
> Jane Harman, D California, candidate for House District 36

> Drawing from the wisdom she gained as a mother, Congresswoman Northup voted to increase the resources to fight crime, to reduce drug abuse, and to protect women from domestic violence.
> Anne Northup, R Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

Women were more likely to link their status as mothers to issues in general, doing so

48% of the time, while men did so only 20% of the time.

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[39] Only 10% of the men who mentioned being a father did so in relation to the issue of education.

Besides raising the concept of safety and introducing issues, perhaps the most interesting way in which women and men differed in the invocation of their mother/father roles online was the way they situated the role. Men often presented their role as father very simply: 40% of the time, it was not linked to any particular value, issue, or shared experience with voters. For instance, when they invoked their roles as fathers, they said things like:

> Marlinga is the father of five children.
> Carl J. Marlinga, D Michigan, candidate for House District 10
>
> McConnell is the father of three daughters: Elly, Claire, and Porter.
> Mitch McConnell, R Kentucky, candidate for Senate

Women, on the other hand, never invoked their mother roles in so simple a way. Women always expressed their identity as mother in a way linked to something else—whether that was an issue, a set of values, relevant experience, or other identities. This difference in the way male and female candidates reference their present families is consistent with the findings of Fox (1997), who found that men gave very brief references to their present families, while women were more likely to expound on the relevance of their families to the type of candidate they were.

Mentioning one's identity as a mother or father amidst a list of other identities was a common strategy for both women and men online—48% of the women signaled at least one additional identity at the same time they mentioned "mother," and men who invoked the role of "father" did so alongside at least one other identity 70% of the time. Looking closer at what other identities they listed is telling, however. Below are some samples of what they wrote:

> As a physician, former nurse, mother and small business owner, I am committed to providing safety and security for our homes and neighborhoods, good jobs,

quality education for every child, protecting Medicare and Social Security for our seniors and ensuring availability of open space, clean air and water for generations to come.
Melissa Brown, R Pennsylvania, candidate for House District 13

As a farm girl, mother, public servant, and community volunteer; Mel Fox has experienced the full range of country and urban life with all of its challenges and benefits.
Melina Fox, D Indiana, candidate for House District 6

A thirty year resident of Charlotte, Sue Myrick is a wife, mother, grandmother, former small business owner and current Member of Congress who is working to return power to the people by advocating a smaller, streamlined and more efficient federal government.
Sue Myrick, R North Carolina, candidate for House District 9

As a doctor, mother and small business woman, I am committed to targeted tax-relief, good jobs, quality public education, protecting Medicare and Social Security and ensuring clean air and water for generations to come.
Anne Sumers, D New Jersey, candidate for House District 5

Men also invoked other roles at the same time as they referred to their roles as "father,"

but the website texts begin to reveal a difference from the other identities women

mentioned:

He is married to Johanna Meulink and is the father of four adult children and the grandfather of three.
Vernon J. Ehlers, R Michigan, candidate for House District 3

As a father of 3 and a grandfather of 6, Dave Hobson knows how important education is to Ohio families.
David Lee Hobson, R Ohio, candidate for House District 7

As the oldest of ten children, and the father of teenage daughters Adele, Anna, and Ellen, Jim understands the challenges our families face.
James H. Maloney, D Connecticut, candidate for House District 5

Fully half of all the men who mentioned being a father alongside another identity(ies)

only mentioned other family roles—husband, grandfather, and the like. Only 15% of

women who mentioned other roles alongside that of mother strictly mentioned only other

family identities. Women tended more frequently to mention identities apart from family roles: citizen, small business owner, experienced legislator, etc.

Fewer candidates mentioned their family/gender role as wife or husband online than they did that of mother or father, but both similarities and differences emerge in the way they deployed the identity of wife and husband, regardless. Similar to the gender/family roles of mother and father, the roles of wife and husband were also used at times to convey experience or firsthand knowledge, an understanding of the needs of others, or an everyday, person-of-the-people quality to voters. One of the more interesting uses of the role of husband was to introduce the idea of devotion:

> Lincoln is a devoted husband, father and grandfather.
> Lincoln Davis, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 4
>
> A devoted husband and loving father
> Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4
>
> A devoted husband and father, Matt is married to the former Nancy Huish.
> Matthew Salmon, R Arizona, candidate for Governor

What is interesting about the men's use of their role as husband on their websites in this way is that no woman ever invoked her role as wife to convey a notion of commitment or devotion. This idea was unique to men's use of the role of husband. Possible reasons for this may be that common American cultural assumptions about men and women hold that men are more likely to engage in extra-marital affairs, or put their families last on their list of priorities than are women. The 2002 election cycle coming relatively soon in the wake of the Clinton impeachment scandal may have contributed to the male candidates' perception that this was a quality they needed to reassure voters that they possessed. A comparison with candidate campaign materials prior to the Clinton impeachment would help to ascertain if this is in fact the case. But women can engage in extra-marital affairs

as well, and therefore this begs the question—how would voters perceive a woman who described herself as a "devoted wife"? I do not answer that question in this study, and yet I suspect that voters would consider a woman candidate who described herself in that way as not independent or powerful in her own right, or one who would not prioritize the work she would be expected to do as an elected official. Alternatively, it may be the case that women are simply assumed to be devoted, and do not therefore need to assert the idea explicitly.

All of the women and the men couched the identity of husband or wife among other identities. Seven out of 10 men who referred explicitly to their role as husband did so only alongside other family identities:

> As the son of a 27-year school board member and the husband of a teacher, he knows that local school boards, teachers and parents know how to best educate our children.
> Mark R. Kennedy, R Minnesota, candidate for House District 6
>
> A husband and father who knows the importance of family values.
> Anthony Richard Perkins, R Louisiana, candidate for Senate
>
> As the son, son-in-law and husband of federal workers, I am personally aware of the quality and commitment that exists in our federal workforce.
> Christopher Van Hollen, D Maryland, candidate for House District 8

Women also listed their identities as wives alongside other family identities online; in fact, no woman ever mentioned being a wife in a sentence where she did not also mention her role as a mother on her website. But nor did any woman mention being a wife in a sentence where she did not *also* mention her business/professional identity:

> Melissa Bean brings her 20-year business and entrepreneurial background combined with a deep commitment to her community as a wife and mother, to her candidacy for Congress in Illinois' 8th District.
> Melissa Bean, D Illinois, candidate for House District 8

> A mother and wife, Real Estate Broker, Small Business Owner, former member
> of the Virginia House of Delegates, and now a Congresswoman
> Jo Ann Davis, R Virginia, candidate for House District 1
>
> Carolyn McCarthy was an everyday Long Islander - a wife, mother and nurse -
> until gun violence altered her life forever.
> Carolyn McCarthy, D New York, candidate for House District 4

Men listed their identity as husband alongside their business or professional identity only

30% of the time on their websites.

<u>Printed Materials</u>

Qualitative gender differences that emerged on the candidates' websites were not

as visible in their print materials. For instance, no candidate, either male or female, ever

listed the identity of husband or wife apart from the identities of father or mother, and so

these spousal roles were not invoked to convey anything unique, such as the idea of

devotion, as was evident in the website texts. There were no striking or drastic

differences between the ways men and women described their family roles and identities

in their print materials, but the comparison to the differences that *did* exist on the

websites is interesting and is likely an indication of both the compressed amount of space

and time to describe oneself and the potentially assumed differences between the

viewing/reading audiences of the different media.

In print, candidates of both genders used their roles as mother or father to express

to voters that they possessed a background relevant to the office they sought, either in

terms of issue priorities or values:

> A wife and mother of two daughters, Melissa is a graduate of Roosevelt
> University who brings a 20-year business and entrepreneurial background to her
> candidacy for Congress... A background that drives her commitment to holding
> our nation's leaders to a greater level of fiscal responsibility.
> Melissa Bean, D Illinois, candidate for House District 8

More and more, she has parlayed her experience as a nurse and mother into a growing expertise-- and influence-- on health and education issues.
Carolyn McCarthy, D New York, candidate for House District 4

As a father and as a lifelong West Virginian, I know the importance of fighting for a better future for our state's families...And as a father, I've worked to instill sound West Virginia values in my kids, Megan and Owen.
Jim F. Humphreys, D West Virginia, candidate for House District 2

Candidates of both genders also used their experience as a mother or a father to introduce the idea that they are similar to their constituents, or that they understand the lives and concerns of their constituents, as was common on the websites:

A wife, mother and grandmother, Marilyn Musgrave is running for Congress because she understands many of the struggles Coloradans face. Marilyn and her husband of thirty-four years live on a farm near Ft. Morgan and are active in their church and community. Born and raised in rural Weld County, Colorado, Marilyn graduated from Eaton High School. Marilyn married Steve Musgrave while attending Colorado State University, where both worked their way through college. After graduating from CSU, Marilyn taught public school and then put her heart and soul into raising their four children. With four grown children and four grandchildren, kids remain a big part of Marilyn's life. Steve and Marilyn have had an agricultural business for more than twenty years, involving the entire family and instilling a strong work ethic in their children.
Marilyn Musgrave, R Colorado, candidate for House District 4

As a father of three young daughters, like all parents, I want my children to grow up in a nation and world free of terror.
James H. Maloney, D Connecticut, candidate for House District 5

Tony and his wife of 16 years, Lawana, want their four children to be able to secure good jobs and raise their families here in Louisiana. As a husband, father, businessman and taxpayer, Tony is an ordinary citizen...in touch with ordinary people across Louisiana.
Anthony Richard Perkins, R Louisiana, candidate for Senate

Both men and women invoked their family roles in conjunction with raising particular issues in their print materials, though as on the websites, women did so more frequently than did the men (29% vs. 18%). Both men and women who raised issues in

relation to their status as mothers or fathers did so predominantly to introduce the issue of

education:

> A mother and teacher, Lois Capps has worked to modernize our schools, reduce class size, and make sure our teachers are well-trained.
> Lois Capps, D California, candidate for House District 23

> She's a public school mother, a PTA member and a former YMCA volunteer so you know she'll invest in our kids' education.
> Denise Majette, D Georgia, candidate for House District 4

> As a mother, a grandmother, and an educator, I strongly support increased federal dollars for education to broaden the pool of qualified teachers, fund special education and reading programs, reduce class sizes, reward high standards, repair crumbling schools, and promote school safety.
> Lois Combs Weinberg, D Kentucky, candidate for Senate

> A father of three boys, Brose McVey wants to give parents and their children more educational choices and a tax credit to pay for tutors, computers, and tuition.
> Brose McVey, R Indiana, candidate for House District 7

Also similar to the pattern seen on the websites, candidates who mentioned the fact that

they were mothers or fathers in print couched this identity within a list of other roles,

which were both family- and non-family related:

> Mother; Neighbor; Business Owner; Community Activist
> Heidi Behrens-Benedict, D Washington, candidate for House District 8

> Wife, Mother, Grandmother
> Janice Bowling, R Tennessee, candidate for House District 4

> Lifetime Civic Volunteer; Wife, Mother, and Grandmother; Former Small Business Owner; Former City Council Member; Former Mayor of Charlotte
> Sue Myrick, R North Carolina, candidate for House District 9

> An army veteran and married to Pat for 43 years and father to Cole, Ken has been a leading voice in the Colorado legislature for 16 years.
> Ken Chlouber, R Colorado, candidate for House District 1

> Who is Ray Chote? He is: 1. Veteran WWII & Korea (2 Tours) 39 yrs Navy Fighter Pilot 2. Husband 3. Father 4. Grandfather 5. Democrat for Congress 18th District.
> Ray Chote, D Florida, candidate for House District 18

> Clement Leroy Otter -- 'Butch'-- is a father and grandfather, businessman and public servant.
> C.L. "Butch" Otter, R Idaho, candidate for House District 1

Seventy-six percent of the women listed their identity as mother among a list of other identities, but the vast majority of women who mentioned "mother" listed it alongside a business/professional or public identity as well. The men listed their identities as fathers among a list of other identities just as frequently (73%), but they were somewhat more likely than the women (27% and 12%) to only mention "father" among a list containing *only* other family-related identities, such as "husband" or "grandfather."

Where the qualitative findings from the print materials drastically differ from the website findings is that women were actually *more* likely than the men (41% vs. 27%) to include their roles as "mothers" in statements that conveyed only basic family information, and nothing else:

> Mother of two sons, Neville and Cyrus Patel.
> Ayesha Nariman, D New York, candidate for House District 26
>
> Neighbor is a mother of three and currently resides in Ontario.
> Wendy Neighbor, R California, candidate for House District 43
>
> Cynthia is a wife of thirty-five years, mother of three, and grandmother of three.
> Cynthia Van Auken, R Georgia, candidate for House District 4

What explains why this pattern is different from what is found on the websites? This may be a function of the more broadly targeted audience of print materials. It is impossible to ascertain precisely which voters were targeted for distribution of such materials as are included here. It is likely that the introductory and biographical materials solicited and examined in this study were designed for an audience that was targeted to some extent, such as to likely voters, but these audiences are certainly more diverse than

the relevant voting audience one is likely to reach on the internet, where all viewers are self-selected. Websites, unlike print materials that are either mailed to the home or distributed by hand, are likely to have a more specific viewing audience, because they require active seeking out of a candidate's information in a way that receiving and glancing at print materials does not, even though much of political direct mail is targeted demographically. Because viewers of candidate websites are self-selected, it is also likely that these viewers will be more willing to read texts in-depth. Further, those viewing websites are likely to be supporters of a candidate anyway, as "solidary" effects are one of the biggest reasons people view candidate websites (Trent and Friedenberg 2000). Print materials are likely to be read only briefly or skimmed and then promptly discarded by the recipient (Maarek 1995, 104), and it is possible that this behavior encourages candidates to be very terse with the information they give. It has already been demonstrated that women's strategies for presenting themselves in parental roles shift between websites and the print materials, with women mentioning their children and parental roles less frequently in their print materials than on their websites. That the women who still *do* invoke these roles then in their print materials do so in a simple, direct way makes sense—those who were more likely to try to do so in a more tempered way may have opted simply not to present this information at all.

Conclusion

Based on the quantitative evidence gathered from the websites, it is apparent that women are in fact less likely than men to mention their spouse or role as wife, though women and men were equally likely to indicate that they have kids online, and to reference their parental role. Party ideology appears to be interacting with expectations

about traditional gender roles, prompting candidates to pursue different strategies of presenting their personal and family information to the public. Democratic men may have disproportionately invoked their roles as husbands to portray themselves in partnerships with women or to show their commitment to family values, but Democratic women refrained from reciprocating, and did not draw attention to their roles as wives. Both are consistent with the party's more feminist leanings. When Republican women gave family information about themselves, they were more likely than their male counterparts to invoke their status as parents. Yet in doing so, they more frequently utilized gender-neutral terminology, as if to limit voters' perceptions of a disjuncture between motherhood and women's political candidacy. Married Democratic women were in fact less likely to mention having a spouse or being a wife than Republican women, consistent with their party's less traditional gender ideology.

The type of office sought also appears to have had an effect, with women running for Congress appearing to utilize two opposite strategies for discussing their gender roles, depending on which house they sought. Women senatorial candidates were less likely to invoke the gender/family roles of wife or "mother" than their male counterparts mentioned being fathers or husbands, but women running for the House outpaced their male opponents when invoking their roles as parents. This is consistent with my expectation of the function of the amount of competition for the type of congressional seat sought: Senate seats are usually fewer, and generally considered more prestigious, more desirable, and attract more professional candidates. The more professional the seat, the less compatible women's traditional gender roles may seem to female candidates wanting to present themselves to voters in the best possible light. At the same time, the

men in this study running for the same senatorial seats may have felt an opposite pressure to soften their image a bit by highlighting their traditional gender roles of husband and father because they were running against women. Women in statewide races for Senate and governor were less likely than women in smaller House district races to mention their roles as wives or "mothers," though they were more likely to use the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe themselves than women running for the House. In the most competitive races—those for open seats—women were found to be less likely than men to even mention having children or a husband, contributing to the idea that the more competition there is, the less women candidates wish to appear traditionally feminine to their constituents. Women in open seat races were also less likely than women in races either as challengers or as incumbents to invoke the gender roles of wife, mother, or even "parent." Women running as challengers were less likely than men running as challengers to mention their spouse or their role as spouse, though women running as incumbents were as likely as men to mention their spouses and to mention being a spouse, themselves. They are even more likely than men running as incumbents to portray themselves as parents, suggesting that women running from positions of safety are not more hesitant than their male counterparts to portray themselves as married or as a mother.

As expected, the medium did appear to make a difference in the message of the candidates when comparing their printed messages to their website messages about their present families and family/gender roles. Married Democratic women were much less likely to mention their spouses in their printed materials compared to Democratic men in their printed materials, though also when compared to their own websites. This is

consistent with my expectations that Democratic women would be the least likely to portray themselves in the traditional light of married woman, and that when confronted with a more traditional, less supportive audience for the print materials, Democratic women simply chose to play down all of their family information, rather than employ a more complex strategy of trotting it out but then trying to walk it back. Indeed, they gave all family information at lower rates in their print materials than on their websites.

By contrast, Republican women did the exact opposite when it came to giving spousal information. Republican women more heavily emphasized their roles as wives in their print materials than the Republican men emphasized being husbands, and the rate for the Republican women doing this in their print materials was also higher than the rate they did so on their websites.

While online Republican women used the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe themselves, they never did so in their print materials. Republican women were less likely to mention their roles as mothers or parents in their print materials than on their websites, though when they did they solely used the gender-specific term "mother" in reference to themselves, suggesting that when confronted with an older, and therefore potentially more traditional audience, they chose between refraining from referring to themselves as parents altogether, or just using the gender-specific role of mother directly, suggesting they may not have seen a middle-ground possible with that type of audience. The fact that Republican women portray themselves as a wife to their print audiences more readily than to their online audiences, but are still less likely to portray themselves as mothers to their print audience, suggests that perhaps even though Republican women may suspect a more traditional audience would receive them well if portrayed in a

traditional gender role such as wife, emphasizing that they are mothers may still be pushing it for a more traditional audience, as motherhood has historically been perceived as a larger distraction to holding office than marriage alone.

While in the print materials the interesting differences existed between candidates for governor, online the bigger differences existed in House and Senate races. In print, female gubernatorial candidates demonstrated a real reluctance to even mention having families at all, though they did so more readily online, suggesting they may have perceived a more accepting audience among their online viewers. Neither House candidates nor Senate candidates displayed significant differences by gender when it came to invoking parental roles in print, while online House women increased their rates at which they referred to their parental roles such that they outpaced the House men in this medium, while Senate *men* were the ones to really step up the rate at which they referred to their roles as fathers online, creating the difference between themselves and the Senate women. The expectations of a younger, more educated, less traditional, and more supportive audience online may have made both female House candidates and male Senatorial candidates believe they would find more receptive audiences here for portraying themselves in these more personal, non-professional ways.

Online, the differences that emerged in open seat candidates' mentions of having children appear to have been driven by the men when compared to the same statistics for their print materials. Men in open seat races across the board were more likely to give family information about themselves online, suggesting they, too, expected a less traditional audience, one which would perhaps allow them to co-opt women's perceived advantage at being "compassionate" and having softer images through portrayals of their

families. Perhaps they perceived this as less of an option in front of a more conservative audience such as that more likely to be encountered with their print materials. Women running as challengers may also have held similar expectations when it came to mentioning their children and their roles as parents, though they did temper this a bit in their online presentations by using the gender-neutral term "parent" more frequently than the men and than they, themselves, did in the print materials. Compared to their presentations online, incumbent women were less likely to mention having children and being parents in print, suggesting that they may have been anticipating a less approving response from the print audience.

Looking directly at the candidates' website texts reveals the more subtle ways in which gender and family roles are being employed in campaigns. Both male and female candidates use their family information to convey what they consider important features about themselves to voters, in the hopes of attracting more votes by being appealing to constituents. Both the men and women in this study used their gender/family role information to convey to voters a sense of commonness, or an everyday quality, perhaps to counter the sense of being among the elite that may naturally arise from standing for high political office. Men and women also employed their gender/family roles to convey the sense that they are knowledgeable about their potential constituents' daily lives and concerns, and also that they share the values and priorities that the voters in their districts are likely to hold.

Where male and female candidates differ in the usage of their gender/family roles on their websites is that the male candidates often portrayed such information very bluntly and simply. The portions of the texts where they mention their family identities

often *only* convey family-related facts about themselves. Women never presented their family roles on their websites so simply. When they invoked their family roles, they did so in relation to political issues they wanted to raise (including safety, security, education, and women's issues), and/or alongside business-related identities. By presenting their family roles in this way, women candidates gave voters the facts about their family life that voters may be curious to know, but also did it in way that either made their family roles into politically relevant experiences, or tempered them with other non-family, professional roles. No woman mentioned a present family identity (wife or mother) apart from these other facets of public life on her website. On the websites, men used their identities as husbands at times to convey the notion of being "devoted," which no woman ever did in relation to her status as wife.

In the print campaign materials, the identities of husband and wife were never invoked separately from the identities of mother and father, and so there are fewer discernible distinctions in the ways in which candidates invoke their family information. Similar to how candidates used their family identities in their online presentations, candidates in print used their family roles to indicate they had a relevant background, were similar to constituents, or that they would understand the needs of constituents. Women, as online, were more likely to raise issues alongside their family roles in print, but men did so as well, and when they did often raised the issue of education. Men and women in print listed their identities as parents alongside at least one other identity at roughly the same rates, though women still listed their family identities more frequently among business and professional identities than did men when other identities were mentioned. Curiously, women were more likely than the men to list their identities as

mothers in very simple, blunt ways, separately or alongside only other family-related information, a technique employed more frequently by the men on the websites. This could be due to space and time considerations, prompting women to write more simply about their family information and roles than they do online, instead of elaborating in an attempt to minimize the emphasis placed on their family information. Coupled with the fact that women are simply less likely to give any family information in print than online, it could just be that those women who do choose to give family information in print are more comfortable doing so without tempering that information while those who would not be comfortable doing so simply are not giving any family information in front of a more traditional, older, less supportive public.

Quantitative and qualitative content analysis of candidates' websites and print materials provides evidence that men and women candidates do not convey their present family information in exactly the same ways. Indeed, as expected, women candidates employed strategies such as using gender-neutral language, tempering traditional women's family roles with professional and public identities or issues, or refraining from mentioning their families at all. At the same time, there is evidence that some men disproportionately invoked their familial roles and information in what may be attempts to soften their own images in their races against these women candidates. Party ideology appears to have had an effect, as male and female candidates at times altered their presentations of themselves ostensibly to appeal to voters who are likely to have more or less traditional views of appropriate gender roles, consistent with the general social leanings of their party. The type of office sought also played a role, as women candidates in more prestigious statewide races for the Senate put less emphasis on their roles as

wives and mothers on their websites than did men on their roles as husbands and fathers, and women running for governor were less likely than similarly situated men to mention their role as spouse. In the print materials, there is evidence of the possible effect of professional advice regarding women seeking executive power as governors, as married women and women with children withheld even these very basic facts from voters. At all times, as expected, the medium through which the candidates presented themselves played a role, with candidates approaching presumably more supportive and less traditional audiences online in different ways than they presented themselves to less supportive and more traditional audiences in print. Online, women candidates adopted strategies that combined presentations of family information with gender-neutral language or laundry lists of other professional or public identities, suggesting they believed they could find a middle ground that would allow them to present their family information, but in a way that would not paint them solely or primarily as figures belonging in the private sphere. In print, women were less likely to adopt such strategies as portraying their maternal role with gender-neutral language or combining that identity in a passage which also invoked a public or professional identity. Instead, women were simply less likely to make references to their family members and gender/family roles to the print audience.

Given that men and women candidates clearly differ in the ways they present their present family information and roles to voters, apparently in anticipation of how voters would react, the following chapter presents findings from an experiment testing one strategy employed by women candidates on voters to assess how voters actually respond.

Chapter 3: Gender-Neutral Parent Frame Experiment

Introduction

As seen in chapter 2, one of the strategies some women candidates with children used on their campaign websites in 2002 was to refer to themselves as "parents," rather than as mothers. While candidates may construct such descriptions of themselves because gender-specific terminology may seem more loaded with traditional ideologies, it is important to determine if such a strategy is effective with voters. To do this, I used data from the websites to create prototypical campaign advertisements for use in experiments. I described a fictional candidate for Congress was described using commonplace phrases found in the campaign materials, describing him/herself as a "parent," among other identities and experiences. (See Appendix C for full text.) Two versions of the same text were created—one version described a male candidate, Jacob Brown, and the other described a female candidate, Janet Brown. The two texts were in all ways the same with the exception of the first name of the candidate and the pronouns used to refer to him/her throughout, so that the gender of the candidate was the only distinction between the two prototypical campaign texts.

The text describes the candidate in gender-neutral ways—"is one of us," "is a local businessperson," "understands the needs of our community,"—with the exception of referencing his/her role as a parent of three children who attended local public schools. The gender differences between the candidates were minimized in this way, and this was done to test for a residual effect of candidate gender on respondents' evaluations. The gender-neutral term "parent" was used to describe the candidate's gender/family role, and not the more loaded term "mother" (or "father"), to determine if describing a woman in

this way could in fact eliminate an effect of her gender identity on respondents and garner her evaluations equivalent to those of the male candidate, as a means of testing the effectiveness of this strategy utilized by some of the real-life candidates in 2002. It is not possible to create a completely gender-free candidate in the real world, of course, and I did not create one here, either. The strategy I tested here incorporates two common real-life campaign strategies—mention the children, as 85% of all candidates who had children in 2002 did on their websites (they did so at a rate of around 64% in their print materials), but then use a strategy of gender-neutral language describing one's role as a parent to diminish the effect of the candidate's obvious gender and the traditional assumptions that gender roles may entail on voters' evaluations.

I asked respondents to read the text about one candidate, either the male or female version, and then respond to six statements. I asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with the statements using a scale of one to seven, with one being "strongly disagree," and seven being "strongly agree." The statements were used to assess how strongly a respondent agreed or disagreed that the candidate, either Jacob or Janet Brown, "would make a good representative in Washington," "has qualities I look for in a candidate," "would probably understand my concerns," "reminds me of people I know," "seems successful," and "seems qualified for office." Finally, I instructed respondents to assume that Candidate Brown was a member of the party they voted for most frequently, and then I asked a seventh question assessing the likelihood that they would vote for Candidate Brown on a scale from one to seven, with one being "Very Unlikely" and seven being "Very Likely."

This particular experiment was conducted with 788 respondents. Equal numbers

of men and women were asked to respond to the survey. The experimental manipulation

of the gender of the candidate attempted to prime gender role attitudes in a presentational

frame used by candidates in which they appear to diminish them, and so any failure on

my part to find differences constitutes success on theirs, and vice versa.   My

expectations at the outset were the following:

1. The woman candidate will be rated lower than the male candidate because of the
    stubbornness of traditional gender roles despite women's entry in to public realms
    such as paid labor and politics.

Even though the terminology used here is gender-neutral, the candidate in this frame is

still signaling to respondents that she has children. Given that historically womanhood,

and especially motherhood, have been considered incompatible with holding public

office (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, Lee 1976,

Matthews 1992) and lingering sentiments of this kind can be seen in the extra attention

paid to women candidates' personal lives (Mandel 1992, Witt, Paget, and Matthews

1994), I expect that a woman who is a mother, even when she tries to convey this in a

gender-neutral way, will still garner lower evaluations.

2. Republican respondents will rate the female candidate lower than the male
    candidate due to the more conservative ideology espoused by the Republican
    Party and the connection between conservative/liberal ideology and gender role
    attitudes, where conservative respondents are more likely to demonstrate a
    preference for traditional gender roles, while liberal respondents are more likely
    to hold egalitarian views of gender roles (Rosenthal 1995, Wilkie 1993, Mason
    and Lu 1988).

The Republican Party has in recent decades become known as the party of

"family values," and often tries to promote the traditional nuclear family model as ideal

(See for example the 2004 Republican Party Platform[40]). Such an "ideal" traditional family has ideals of traditional gender roles as well. To the extent that Republican respondents subscribe to such ideals, they should favor a male candidate for office, as this sort of public role is consistent with traditional gender ideology surrounding men, while it is inconsistent with traditional gender ideology about women. The Democratic Party tends to espouse more egalitarian gender roles for men and women and is less conservative socially; therefore, Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents should demonstrate more egalitarian evaluations of the male and female candidates.

Given that older voters are more likely to subscribe to traditional gender roles than younger voters (Ciabattari 2001, Mason and Lu 1988, Rice and Coates 1995, Rosenthal 1995, Wilkie 1993), I expect:

3. Older respondents will be more likely than younger respondents to give higher evaluations to the male candidate than the female candidate.

Finally, given that women voters have been demonstrated to be more likely than men voters to desire a woman in office (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001, K. Dolan 1998, 2004, Rosenthal 1995, Sanbonmatsu 2002),

4. I expect female respondents to be more egalitarian in their evaluations of the male and female candidate than men, who I expect to rate the male candidate higher.

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[40] "We also believe that while families exist in many different forms, there are ideals to strive for" (79). "We support the President's welfare reform proposals that promote child well-being and stronger marriages. We recognize the importance of having in the home a father and a mother who are married. The two-parent family still provides the best environment of stability, discipline, responsibility, and character. We recognize that fathers play a critical role in providing stability for their children. Studies show that children are much more likely to do well in school and avoid crime and drugs when they have a responsible father in their lives. Promoting responsible fatherhood will have long-lasting benefits for families and for communities. We support President Bush's initiatives to reaffirm the important role fathers play in their children's lives and to help men meet the responsibilities of fatherhood" (80). "We believe, and the social science confirms, that the well-being of children is best accomplished in the environment of the home, nurtured by their mother and father anchored by the bonds of marriage. We further believe that legal recognition and the accompanying benefits afforded couples should be preserved for that unique and special union of one man and one woman which has historically been called marriage" (83).

The evidence suggests that while some women candidates may use gender-neutral language to describe their roles as mothers, this strategy is unable to completely mitigate the effect of candidate gender on respondents' evaluations of candidates.

Experimental Findings

Column A of Table 3.1 indicates that when all respondents are considered together, candidate gender did not have huge effects on respondent evaluations. Statistically significant preferences for the male candidate emerged on two questions: "would make a good representative in Washington" and "has qualities I look for in elected officials." The vote measure captured a higher evaluation for the male candidate which approached statistical significance (p=.127) but on three of the seven questions a slight—though not statistically significant—preference for the female candidate emerged. Taken as a whole, these results suggest that candidate gender is not an insurmountable barrier to women candidates when they frame themselves with gender-neutral language.

The aggregated numbers may mask effects in various subgroups of respondents. Women on the websites made use of the gender-neutral language strategy, particularly Republican women, yet women did not make particular use of this strategy in their print materials, suggesting they anticipated different responses by different audiences. Party ideology appeared to have an effect on the rates at which women candidates employed this strategy, with Republican women both playing up their roles as "mothers" but also using the gender-neutral term "parent" on their websites, as if to portray themselves in traditional roles but not in *too* traditional roles, as "mother" carries a lot of gendered ideology about appropriate behaviors for women which perhaps "parent" might not. Since the choice of this strategy is influenced by the candidate's party, it is important to

Table 3.1 : Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Parent Frame; Overall and by Party of Respondent

Question:	Column A		Column B		Column C	
	All Respondents		**Republican and Republican-Leaning Repsondents**		**Democrat and Democratic-Leaning Respondents**	
	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	**4.72*** >	**4.55**	**5.18***** >	**4.54**	4.95 >	4.80
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	**4.83*** >	**4.67**	**5.34***** >	**4.60**	5.10 >	4.99
would probably understand my concerns:	4.65 <	4.68	**4.97^b** >	**4.77**	4.91 <	4.95
reminds me of people I know:	4.53 <	4.63	4.90 >	4.76	4.74 <	4.80
seems successful:	4.71 <	4.78	**5.12**** >	**4.83**	4.91 <	4.97
seems qualified for office:	4.67 >	4.65	**5.23***** >	**4.73**	4.79 >	4.66
likelihood to vote for candidate:	**5.00^a** >	**4.85**	**5.45***** >	**4.87**	5.25 >	5.07
	N=395	N=392	N=140	N=146	N=155	N=168

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

*** $p \leq .001$

[a] significant at p = .127

[b] significant at p = .185

disaggregate the participant responses to see if party ideology affects respondents' evaluations of candidates who make use of this strategy.

Column B of Table 3.1 reports the results of this candidate framing for respondents who identified themselves as Republican or Republican-leaning. As predicted, on five of the seven measures there are significant preferences for the male candidate. On measures "would make a good representative in Washington," "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "seems successful," "seems qualified for office," and in respondents' likelihood to vote for the candidate, Republican respondents demonstrated preferences for the male candidate. This suggests two possible conclusions: 1. the Republican women candidates are on track if they recognize a need to try to mitigate their gendered identities with the voters most likely to vote for them, and 2. their strategy of using gender-neutral language to do this may not be very successful. Additional experiments are necessary to assess this particular strategy in comparison to other strategies—using only the gender-specific terms for mother or father, or omitting all reference to one's role as a parent of children, but the results here indicate that the gender of the candidate is relevant to Republican constituents, even under a frame where that gendered identity is minimized.

Democratic women candidates did not disproportionately use the gender-neutral language strategy to describe themselves as parents on their websites, and did not use this strategy at all in their print materials. I expect that Democratic respondents will demonstrate a more egalitarian evaluation of the male and female candidate than the Republican respondents, given the more feminist ideology of the Democratic Party.

Indeed, as column C Table 3.1 indicates, this is borne out by the responses of the Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents. Among these participants, no statistically significant gender preferences emerged. These respondents even demonstrated small, though not significant, preferences for the female candidate on three measures: "would probably understand my concerns," "reminds me of people I know," and "seems successful." It would be interesting to assess whether a strategy of simply omitting references to one's role as a parent/mother altogether can increase the preferences for the female candidate among Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents, though that will be have to be assessed with additional experiments. Based on the findings reported here, though, it is not clear whether Democratic women are justified in *not* using gender-neutral language strategies because they have no need to mitigate any effects of their gendered family identities, or if this strategy, if actually adopted by more Democratic women candidates, would be highly successful, as the candidate framed here with this strategy was not at much of a disadvantage compared to the male candidate. These findings also suggest that male Democratic candidates who *did* employ the gender-neutral language to describe themselves as "parents" at a rate disproportional to the female Democratic candidates in their print materials would not gain a tremendous edge over their female counterparts by doing so among Democratic voters, if pitted against one another in a primary race.

One of the ways in which audiences of candidate materials differ between the print and website mediums is by age. Viewers of website material are likely to be younger than the average population. The findings reported in chapter 2 suggest that candidates may be anticipating such differences between their website and print

audiences, with female candidates adopting a gender-neutral language strategy before their website audience, but not for the audience of their print materials. The question then becomes is this strategy indeed more successful with a younger audience as expected?

Column A of Table 3.2 reports the average candidate evaluations by respondents between the ages of 18 and 44. On five of the seven measures this younger audience rated the female candidate significantly higher than the male candidate. Significant differences emerged favoring the female candidate using the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe herself on the statements "would make a good representative in Washington," "would probably understand my concerns," "reminds me of people I know," "seems successful," and in respondents' likelihood to vote for the candidate. Again, future experiments are needed to ascertain if this younger audience would have preferred the female candidate if she used the gender-specific term "mother" as well, or if she omitted all reference to her children and parental role, but these initial findings suggest that this is indeed a successful tactic for women presenting themselves to a younger audience, as they are given an edge over their male counterparts who also adopt such a strategy.

Women candidates did not use this strategy with an ostensibly older print materials viewing audience, but would they have found similar success with this group of voters if they had? Column B of Table 3.2 reports the results for respondents aged 45 years and up.

As is clear from the table, older respondents indeed rated the male candidate higher than the female candidate, contrary to the younger respondents. Older respondents gave a significant edge to the male candidate on four of the seven measures:

Table 3.2 : Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Parent Frame; Young and Old Respondents

Question:	Column A		Column B	
	18-44 Year Olds		45 Years Old and Up	
	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	**4.34*** <	**4.54**	**5.19***** >	**4.57**
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	4.50 <	4.58	**5.23***** >	**4.81**
would probably understand my concerns:	**4.32*** <	**4.56**	5.04 >	4.87
reminds me of people I know:	**4.18**** <	**4.50**	4.95 >	4.82
seems successful:	**4.42**** <	**4.70**	5.06 >	4.91
seems qualified for office:	4.39 <	4.54	**5.01*** >	**4.81**
likelihood to vote for candidate:	**4.66*** <	**4.89**	**5.39***** >	**4.78**
	N=215	N=235	N=181	N=157

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \le .1$

** $p \le .05$

*** $p \le .001$

"would make a good representative in Washington," "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "seems qualified for office," and again in their likelihood to vote for the candidate. These results suggest that older voters do indeed rate male candidates higher than female candidates even when the gender differences are minimized as they were in the description of the candidates they read. It is possible that the differences would be greater if the woman had been described as a "mother," or smaller if the candidate had omitted all reference to her children and role as a parent. It appears as if that may be what real-life candidates expected of an older print audience, as indeed a sizable proportion of the women candidates who had children did refrain from mentioning them at all in their print campaigns. This middle strategy of giving family information but in a gender-neutral way did not completely level the playing field for the woman candidate or provide her an edge against a male candidate with older respondents, however.

Regarding at the younger group of respondents it is important to note that a substantial portion of the preference for the female candidate is being driven by a subset of those respondents, those who are 30-44 years old (see Table 3.3) Looking at these subsets by age, the youngest respondents in this study (column A of Table 3.3) rated the male candidate higher than the female candidate in a statistically significant way on two measures, "would make a good representative in Washington," and "has qualities I look for in elected officials," and did not rate the female candidate higher in a significant way on any of the measures. Column B of Table 3.3 gives the findings for respondents who are aged 30-44, and on every measure the respondents in this age range gave a significantly higher evaluation to the female candidate than the male candidate in their mean evaluations. It

Table 3.3: Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Parent Frame; 18-29 and 30-44 Year Old Respondents, Respondents with Children at Home

Question:	Column A			Column B			Column C		
	18-29 Year Olds			**30-44 Year Olds**			**Respondents with Children (0-17 years old) at Home**		
	Male Candidate		Female Candidate	Male Candidate		Female Candidate	Male Candidate		Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	**4.79****	>	**4.45**	**4.06*****	<	**4.65**	**4.54***	<	**4.86**
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	**4.92*****	>	**4.38**	**4.24****	<	**4.82**	4.75	<	4.93
would probably understand my concerns:	4.50	>	4.37	**4.22****	<	**4.79**	4.70	<	4.86
reminds me of people I know:	4.36	<	4.45	**4.07****	<	**4.57**	4.58	<	4.71
seems successful:	4.57	<	4.64	**4.33****	<	**4.76**	**4.64**[b]	<	**4.86**
seems qualified for office:	**4.74**[a]	>	**4.45**	**4.17****	<	**4.64**	4.60	<	4.75
likelihood to vote for candidate:	4.94	>	4.84	**4.49****	<	**4.96**	**4.83**[c]	<	**5.10**
	N=130		N=82	N=133		N=106	N=110		N=119

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

*** $p \leq .001$

[a] significant at p = .101

[b] significant at p= .168

[c] significant at p= .115

may seem that this discrepancy between the younger respondents is potentially due to the issue of whether or not they have children at home who attend school. Respondents, male and female, aged 30-44 may find that their own status as parents is particularly salient at this age, and believe a woman in this situation who speaks of her children and her status as a parent is particularly appealing, even more so than a similar male candidate, because of the association between women and motherhood. The role of mother could certainly benefit women candidates if the voters considering them believe motherhood is both a catalyst for and an activity consistent with political activism, and not a distraction from it. Respondents aged 30-44 may believe parenting and good government go together at this stage in life, and therefore the traditional association between women and an emphasis on parenting is a political plus, not a minus, for women candidates.

As it turns out however, respondents who had kids at home significantly favored the female candidate on only one measure—"would make a good representative in Washington" (column C of Table 3.3). So either there is something else about the lifecycle occurring between the ages of 30 and 44 which is prompting respondents to demonstrate preferences for the female candidate, or the explanation is generational. Respondents born between the years 1958 and 1972 may have been influenced coming of age during the second wave of feminism (late 1960s and 1970s), in ways that respondents born after 1972 and prior to 1958 were not.

Interestingly, the gender of the respondent did not strongly bias a respondent toward the candidate of the same gender, as some theories of descriptive representation

would suggest would happen, where the assumption is that voters may desire to have someone who resembles them represent them in office.

Column A of Table 3.4 gives the mean evaluations male respondents gave to the male and female candidate described as a "parent." Contrary to what I expected, the men in this study did not give the male candidate higher evaluations than they did the female candidate. In fact, on one measure, "reminds me of people I know," they rated the female candidate significantly higher than the male, and on a second, "seems successful," they rated the female candidate higher in a way that approached statistical significance (p=.156). The men in this study, then, did not demonstrate any higher favorability for the male candidate, contrary to my prediction.

Column B of Table 3.4 lists the mean evaluations given to the male and female candidates by the female respondents in this experiment. The findings indicate that on no measure did the female respondents demonstrate a preference for the female candidate, and indeed, on three measures, demonstrated significantly higher evaluations for the *male* candidate. Women rated the male candidate higher on the measures "would make a good representative in Washington," "has qualities I look for in elected officials," and most poignantly, in their likelihood to vote for the candidate. The results for the male and female respondents indicate a phenomenon which perhaps many of us have already seen before, which is that women in this instance are actually tougher critics of the woman in politics than the men in this study. Far from demonstrating a preference for representation by the candidate who most closely resembled them descriptively, women respondents rated the female candidate lower than they did the male candidate. The good

Table 3.4 : Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Parent Frame; Male and Female Respondents

Question:	Column A		Column B	
	Male Repondents		Female Respondents	
	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	4.63 >	4.55	**4.84**** >	**4.55**
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	4.72 >	4.66	**4.98**** >	**4.68**
would probably understand my concerns:	4.58 <	4.65	4.74 >	4.72
reminds me of people I know:	**4.48*** <	**4.70**	4.60 >	4.55
seems successful:	**4.71^a** <	**4.88**	4.70 >	4.67
seems qualified for office:	4.56 <	4.60	4.82 >	4.72
likelihood to vote for candidate:	4.79 >	4.75	**5.27**** >	**4.97**
	N=225	N=209	N=167	N=183

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

[a] significant at p = .156

news to be derived here, however, is that the men in this study did *not* demonstrate any particular bias against the woman candidate they considered.

Given that the candidates in this study were described in such a way as to minimize indicators of gender roles, it would be interesting to see if women voters would rate more highly a woman described in the gender-specific role of "mother," or if they would demonstrate any favoritism toward a woman candidate who makes no reference to any family obligation whatsoever. It is difficult to ascertain if the women respondents in this experiment are exhibiting a latent bias against a woman with children in politics, or a recognition of the fact that the greater burden of raising a family generally falls on women and are indicating a legitimate concern that the woman candidate would not be as likely to be able to devote as much attention to the affairs of the nation as the male candidate. An additional experiment where a woman candidate is described with no family/gender roles would help to shed some light on the appropriate interpretation of what is occurring here. To me, however, it does not seem to be a particular demonstration of feminist solidarity if women respondents indeed concluded that the woman who has chosen to run does not actually know her own capabilities to balance her obligations to the state and to her family as well as the male candidate described in the exact same way.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the experiment reported here, the women candidates who adopted a gender-neutral language tactic for presenting their family information to the online audience seized on an effective strategy to be used when courting younger voters, specifically those aged 30-44. While it was specifically Republican women who made

the most use of this strategy in their website presentations, the findings here do not indicate that this was a particularly effective strategy with Republican respondents overall.

For the most part, respondents in this study evaluated the candidates as predicted. In the overall population, what bias existed favored the male candidate. Republican respondents gave solid and consistently higher evaluations to the male candidate under this frame as expected, and this suggests that though some Republican women may try to use gender-neutral language to minimize the effects of gendered assumptions about their fitness for office, it is not effective in reducing the gender bias toward the male candidate among Republican respondents. The Democratic participants, on the other hand, demonstrated egalitarian evaluations of the male and female candidate under this frame, demonstrating no bias toward one or the other. Age did not affect evaluations completely as predicted. While older respondents (45 years old and up) did show bias toward the male candidate as predicted, younger respondents, those aged 18-44, did not all respond the way I expected. The subset of participants aged 30-44 did give higher evaluations to the female candidate across the board, but the youngest subset of respondents, those aged 18-29, gave higher evaluations to the male candidate on several measures, and to the female candidate on none. This difference could not be fully explained by whether or not a participant had children in the home, and so there is either another lifecycle explanation, or it is generational. Given that respondents aged 30-44 at the time of the experiment would have been born between 1960 and 1974, their evaluations in favor of the female candidate could be an effect of being raised and coming of age at the height of the second wave of feminism. When looked at by gender, the responses were not at all as

predicted. The male participants in this study rated the male and female candidates differently on only one measure, and the difference was in favor of the female candidate. They demonstrated egalitarian evaluations on the other measures, including their likelihood to vote for the candidates. Women, on the other hand, registered higher evaluations for the *male* candidate on three measures, including their likelihood to vote for him. Contrary to the expectations suggested by previous studies (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001, K. Dolan 1998, 2004, Rosenthal 1995, Sanbonmatsu 2002) and the theory of descriptive representation, women in this study were actually more critical of a woman candidate than were men.

Thus far, I have focused on the ways in which candidates use information about their present families and their related roles, and the ways in which potential voters respond to one type of message about candidates' present families. The following chapters will shift in focus from candidates' present families to their families of origin, to assess the ways candidates use this sort of information, and how potential voters react to references to a candidate's family of origin in a campaign.

Chapter 4: Family of Origin Information in Campaign Materials

Introduction

Though previous studies have noted whether or not candidates make references to or appear with their families (Gulati and Treul 2003; Banwart and Kaid 2002), the level of family that candidates reference has not been disaggregated. Family, of course, often means different groups of people over a lifetime. The people one calls his or her "family" while growing up are often different from the "family" they are referring to as adults, as in the concept of "starting a family." As people age, their immediate family (generally speaking, those to whom one is not only related but with whom one shares a household) often shifts from a family of origin (parents and siblings) to a present family (spouse and offspring).[41] Candidates frequently make reference to both types of family. In this chapter I examine the ideas they convey in relation to their families of origin, showing that the ideas candidates convey regarding their families of origin differ from the notions they convey using their present family information (chapter 2).

In my content analysis on the candidates' websites and print materials, I examined both the frequency of and the meanings conveyed by references to their families of origin—parents and siblings. Family of origin relationships involve particular roles for candidates—those of "son" or "daughter," similar to the gendered roles of mother or father, husband or wife, entailed in present family relationships.[42] Family of origin relationships and the roles of son or daughter have the potential to make a candidate seem less like an independent adult if too much emphasis is put on this status. While this

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[41] Though throughout this study I use conventional role names for spouses and parents, a candidate who discussed a same sex or unmarried partner would have been counted among those who made reference to family members, as would adoptive/foster children, parents, or guardians.

[42] "Sister" and "brother" are gendered family of origin roles as well, but no candidates highlighted such identities.

theoretically applies to men as well as women, I expect women to be particularly wary of casting themselves in the role of daughter because of the traditional hierarchies which have existed in family structures. As power and property have traditionally shifted from fathers to sons in patrilineal societies like the U.S., it should be more commonplace for people to imagine a son at the forefront of a family line. Historically this has not been the case for daughters; they have legally moved to the forefront of family lines only when no male heirs existed, and even then, laws of coverture (which were in existence in the U.S. up through the late 1800s) subsumed a daughter's status under that of her husband's if she were married. I argue in this chapter that women today still face the legacies of a system of coverture, which rendered women dependents within their families, and therefore some background seems necessary.

The practice of coverture meant that "by marriage the very being or legal existence of a woman is suspended" (Blackstone [1765] as cited in Finn 1996, 705). Due to the practice of coverture, daughters could not control property the way sons could, as once women married any property would be at the disposition of their husbands. As a result:

> From early on, Americans have based their heirship practices on gender. Sons and daughters did not receive the same type or the same amount of bequests. During the colonial era, for instance, daughters received their shares of the estate in the form of a dowry, which excluded realty.[43] The need to avoid jeopardizing the functioning of the familial group as an economic unit constituted the rationale invoked to justify differences in the forms of capital transferred to sons and to daughters and in the timing of the transfer itself. Continuing contrasts in the educational and occupational opportunities enjoyed by individuals as a function of their gender have induced many generations of decedents to expect the returns to the investments made in daughters to be lower than those attached to the investment made in sons. As a consequence, testators kept considering income-

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[43] Generally speaking, this meant land and anything contained in it or structures attached to it—property which would not change over time, and is particularly valued given the likelihood of maintaining its value and/or producing income.

producing assets to be male properties. At a minimum, they used the principles of division of labor by gender operating in their families for dividing these forms of wealth. For example, the land would go to the sons, the houseware or the tools needed by a female craft to the daughters. (Clignet 1992, 160)

Such "personalty" (the "houseware" and tools mentioned above), became the absolute

right of a woman's husband once she married, meaning he could dispose of it however he

saw fit (Shammas, Salmon and Dahlin 1987, 209-210). If she had been left any realty, her

husband would receive "lifetime rights"—the use and control of it while he was alive

(Shammas, Salmon, and Dahlin 1987, 209-210). Remi Clignet (1992, 17) argues that

because of this system fathers were obliged to presume their sons-in-law were

trustworthy and reputable. Ostensibly, the flip-side of this reasoning was a disincentive to

leave property to daughters.

Recent scholarship has pointed out that the practice of coverture never left women

completely powerless; women often devised ways to assert their independence or turn

their status to their advantage (Finn 1996), and they did in fact, own property even under

the law of coverture, though their husbands would have use and management of it.

However, it is estimated that in the eighteenth century, colonial women owned about ten

percent of wealth in America, and men owned the other 90 percent (Gundersen 1998,

103-104), and that well into the 19th century men owned 85-90% of property in the U.S

(Shammas, Salmon, Dahlin 1987, 209). While women did express agency, there were

serious structural barriers to their full equality with men when it came to inheritance.

Other scholars have noted that there were strains of other, more egalitarian, systems of

inheritance during the colonial period in America which could have been adopted by the

fledgling nation, but were not (Gundersen 1998, 113).

The system of inheritance adopted in the U.S. increasingly turned the status of women into dependents; even though a daughter might inherit property from her parents, it was at the disposal of her husband during their marriage, and once he died, she was often left control of property only up until the time her children reached majority age or she remarried, indicating her status as a dependent (Gundersen 1998, 103). Often, widows who owned property were not even allowed to manage it; rather, those responsibilities would be left to a male executor (Gundersen 1998, 103). Courts in early America did sometimes recognize that the dependent status of women subjected them to possibly abusive exercise of patriarchal power, but the remedies courts provided "amounted to more careful protection of the dependant woman, not reforms that removed the dependency" (Ditz 1986, 124).

The law of coverture was always a disincentive for parents to leave much of their family estate to a daughter; by her marriage, it would pass into the patrilineal family of her husband. Ditz (1986) writes that even if sons and daughters were treated with formal equality with respect to their inheritances, a daughter who inherited and subsequently married faced a very dissimilar outcome from a son who married. While the *families* created by the son and the daughter would be "on equal footing," parents were "not giving their daughters proprietary powers equivalent to their sons'" (125). The only "sure way for a woman to benefit from an inheritance was to be single" (Miller and McNamee 1998, 11). Shammas, Salmon and Dahlin (1987) argue that

> (t)he type of family capitalism[44] that evolved in both England and America depended on propertied women agreeing to surrender ownership and control over

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[44] "Family capitalism" refers to a system where both the ownership and management of an enterprise (usually a farm) fell to the family. This is in contrast to corporate capitalism, which developed later, where ownership may be held by a private family but management be left to a professional corporation, and had to

their assets when they married. The husband's ability to command not only his resources but those of his wife was the keystone of family capitalism. (212-213)

In many states in the U.S. it was not until after the adoption of the Married Women's Property Acts after the Civil War that fathers could distribute property to their daughters with a degree of security (Gundersen 1998, 115), though the acts did little to improve how widows fared under intestacy (Shammas, Salmon, and Dahlin 1987, 210). Nor did the Acts actually remove coverture, which remained encoded in law in many ways until the 1960s, when the second wave of the women's rights movement prompted states to begin to reform laws in anticipation of the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (Gundersen 1998, 115).

The increasing formal equality of women in terms of inheritance rights in the U.S. did not completely erase the legacy of the system of coverture. Clignet (1992, 180) reports that in the first half of the twentieth century, American testators still distinguished between their children on the basis of their gender and the roles each child was expected to fulfill according to their gender. Sons, it was often assumed, were to focus their endeavors on the professional world, while daughters were still expected to marry a man capable of supporting them, and care for their aging parents, and these expectations were reflected in what was bequeathed to sons and daughters. Further, Clignet argues that even as ideology predicated on the distinction between the status of males and females was slowly eroded, the distinction between married and unmarried female offspring increased, as evidenced in the changing patterns of bequests in the U.S. between 1920 and 1944 (186). The view of a woman in a family as a dependent lingers, and has at times led to resentment on the part of entrepreneurial men in modern America, who have

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do with the rise of an industrial economic base, compared to an agricultural one (Shammas, Salmon and Dahlin 1987).

sometimes not wished to leave the capital accumulated from a business they built up to

family members (wives or children) who had not *directly* participated in the creation of

that wealth through labor in the company (Clignet 1992, 19).

Under the shadow of such a historical system, portraying oneself as a "daughter,"

then, may be more likely to call to the minds of voters rather traditional patrilineal family

statuses than making no reference at all to one's family of origin role, even though

women have gradually fought for and gained their own independent status in the

American legal system. Therefore:

1. I expect fewer female than male candidates to invoke their respective family of
   origin and related roles in their appeals to voters.

2. I expect Republicans, including Republican women, to be more likely to portray
   themselves in relation to their families of origin than Democrats, given the party's
   emphasis on the importance of the traditional nuclear family unit (see, for
   example, the Republican Party Platform 2004), including emphasizing their
   traditional family roles as sons and daughters.

3. I expect that women running for statewide office will be less likely than women
   running in smaller House districts to invoke their roles as daughters in relation to
   their families of origin, due to the comparatively higher profile and status of these
   seats, which should make them avoid more traditional feminine family/gender
   roles (Diamond 1977).

4. I expect women in the most competitive races, those for open seats, will be less
   likely than similarly situated men to emphasize their roles as daughters/sons, and
   also less likely than women running as challengers or incumbents to do so.

5. Finally, I expect candidates will alter their strategies between online and print
   media, due to different likely audiences.

Website References to Families of Origin

Of candidates who did in fact have spouses and/or children, 85% of them

mentioned their spouses and/or kids on their websites, and 67% of those with present

families mentioned them in their print materials. Candidates were less likely to mention

their *families of origin* in both places, doing so 53% of the time on their websites and 31% of the time in their print materials. The lower rates at which candidates made mention of their families of origin can indicate several things. In the first place, it could indicate that candidates believe information about their families of origin is less relevant to voters' decisions than their present family information is or should be. Alternatively, they may withhold such information because it might put them in a less independent light, drawing too much attention to their relationship with their parents, which is generally one in which deference is given to the older generation, not to the younger one, no matter how old the family members become. Another possible indication is that these family relationships have been superceded in importance by present family relationships or work-related endeavors. This study cannot truly ascertain what the reasons are for candidates why they might be less likely to spotlight their families of origin than their current ones, but it can determine the messages conveyed to voters using family of origin information when candidates did include such material, as well as find evidence that party ideology may play a factor, as well as the type of office sought and seat status of the race, in whether or not candidates feature their family of origin information and roles to voters.

The Influence of Gender and Party on Family of Origin Information

Table 4.1 reveals that as expected, women were slightly less likely than men to make references to their families of origin online. However, they were not much less likely to mention their roles as daughters than men were to mention their roles as sons, though both men and women did so very infrequently. Democrats, overall, were more likely to make reference to their families of origin on their websites than were

**Table 4.1 : Candidates Who Mentioned Birth Families and Roles on Websites,
by Gender and Party**

	Mentioned Birth Family		Mentioned Being Son or Daughter	
	%	N=	%	N=
Males	56.3	(87)	7.0	(87)
Females	49.5	(107)	5.6	(107)
Republicans	43.9	(98)	9.4	(96)
Democrats	61.5	(96)	3.1	(97)
Republican Men	49.2	(61)	6.7	(60)
Republican Women	35.1	(37)	13.9	(36)
Democratic Men	73.1	(26)	7.7	(26)
Democratic Women	57.1	(70)	1.4	(70)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

Republicans (61.5% vs. 43.9%). This is contrary to what I expected to find, as I hypothesized that Republicans, with their emphasis on traditional nuclear families, would be more likely than Democrats to emphasize their families of origin. However, Republicans were more likely to reference their family of origin role as son or daughter, as predicted. Truly, not many candidates made the extra step from referencing their families of origin to referring to their family of origin roles, and there may be good reasoning for this if most candidates consider this as appearing in a dependent role. Still, it is difficult to explain why this contradiction by party appears. One possible explanation is that candidates who come from politically prominent families of origin are more likely to mention their parents to suggest to voters a family legacy of service, and that there may be party differences in which candidates are parts of political legacies. Democratic candidates could be more likely to be from political families, which could prompt them to mention their parents, but that does not mean they would necessarily also want to emphasize their dependent-sounding roles as "son" or "daughter." This study does not control for the prominence of the family of origin, though I do address the issue to the extent possible in discussions below.

Women account for the difference in the rates at which Republicans and Democrats, overall, refer to their family of origin roles as sons or daughters. As expected, Democratic women play down their roles as daughters when they give family of origin information, while Republican women comparatively seem to play this up. Labeling oneself in the role of child/offspring could potentially make a person seem dependent on an older generation and less independent in their own right, which I postulate is an impression easier for a male to overcome than a female. However, given

that voters in the Republican Party base are more socially conservative than those in the Democratic Party base, Republican women may anticipate more approbation from voters by portraying themselves in a more traditional role as daughter, while Democratic women may feel particularly disinclined to present themselves in such a fashion to their likely supporters, even despite the fact that all Democrats were more likely than all Republicans to include references to their families of origin on their website campaign materials.

<u>The Influence of Gender, Office, and Seat Status on Family of Origin Information</u>

Across levels of office (Table 4.2), though women running for the House and for governor were less likely than their male counterparts to mention their families of origin, women running for the Senate were actually *more* likely than men running for the Senate and women running for the House and for governor to mention their families of origin on their websites. Of the women in this study, women running for the House were actually the least likely to refer to their families of origin online. This is not what I expected; I had expected women running for statewide seats to be less likely than women running for the House and than men to refer to their families of origin. The fact that 9 out of 10 women running for the Senate made reference to their families of origin cannot necessarily be explained by taking into account whether or not they are from politically prominent families. Based on the statements they made about their families, only three women running for the Senate did so to indicate a political position held by a parent or a commitment to public service within their family of origin, intimating a political legacy. Two of the eight men running for the Senate made similar references when discussing their families of origin, and so this explanation for why women running for the Senate

Table 4.2 : Candidates Who Mentioned Birth Families and Roles on Websites, by Gender, Seat, and Status

	Mentioned Birth Family		Mentioned Being Son or Daughter	
	%	N=	%	N=
Office Sought				
House Men	52.8	(72)	7.0	(71)
House Women	44.3	(88)	5.7	(88)
Senate Men	62.5	(8)	0.0	(8)
Senate Women	90.0	(10)	10.0	(10)
Governor Men	85.7	(7)	14.3	(7)
Governor Women	55.6	(9)	0.0	(9)
Seat Status				
Challenger Men	65.5	(29)	6.9	(29)
Challenger Women	43.9	(41)	4.8	(42)
Open Seat Men	78.3	(23)	8.7	(23)
Open Seat Women	56.7	(30)	0.0	(30)
Incumbent Men	34.3	(35)	5.9	(34)
Incumbent Women	50.0	(36)	11.4	(35)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory. N values fluctuate due to errors in the webpage preservation that made it impossible to tell if such information was present or not.

were more likely than men to mention their families of origin is not clearly supported by the data.

Gender differences emerged in the rates at which candidates gave family of origin information for candidates running as challengers or for open seats, with women running for these types of seats less likely than men running for these types of seats to mention their families of origin. Among incumbents, women were actually more likely than men to refer to their families of origin. These data are for the most part as expected, with women running in positions of greater vulnerability less likely than their male counterparts to allude to their families of origin. Women running in open seat races or as challengers may be more cautious about giving family of origin information compared to men because it could render them less independent in the minds of voters. Incumbent women have the advantage of being the incumbent and their records to rely upon, and so may be at less risk for seeming dependent.

Print References to Families of Origin

<u>The Influence of Gender and Party on Family of Origin Information</u>

Looking at what was found in the candidates' print materials (Table 4.3), women and Democrats were actually more likely than men and Republicans to refer to their birth families, contrary to what I expected. In contrast to the pattern which existed on the websites, within each party, the women outpaced the men in referring to their families of origin in print. The fact that the websites were likely to have audiences which were younger, less traditional, and more supportive of candidates than print audiences may have had an effect, though not one I expected. All candidates were less likely to refer to their families of origin in print than online. This could be due to the lesser amount of

Table 4.3: Candidates Who Mentioned Birth Families and Roles in Print Materials, by Gender and Party

	Mentioned Birth Family	Mentioned Being Son or Daughter	
	%	%	N=
Males	23.5	3.9	(51)
Females	36.8	5.3	(76)
Republicans	23.4	1.6	(64)
Democrats	39.7	7.9	(63)
Republican Men	21.1	2.6	(38)
Republican Women	26.9	0.0	(26)
Democratic Men	30.8	7.7	(13)
Democratic Women	42.0	8.0	(50)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

space they had to do so in print, though it could also be due to their expectations about how they would be received by a print audience. Perhaps anticipating an older, more traditional audience, women seized on a traditional family relationship that could win approval by a more traditional audience, yet it is a relationship that should be less problematic for women candidates than the roles of mother or wife, since being a daughter generally should not pose as much conflict in a candidate's day to day schedule as her relationships to members of her present family might.

The Influence of Gender, Office, and Seat Status on Family of Origin Information

Only among women and men running for the Senate were there notable differences in the frequency with which candidates mentioned their families of origin in print (Table 4.4). Contrary to what I had expected, these women were more likely to mention their families of origin in print than were the men. This behavior is consistent with the pattern for Senate candidates on the websites, though in the print materials it is even more pronounced. Across both mediums Senate women seem to be cultivating an image of themselves in relation to their families of origin, while they were relatively unlikely to emphasize their roles in relation to their present families in their campaign communications. These two trends together suggest that women running for the Senate may be trying to find "safer" ways of portraying themselves in relationship to family members. They definitely make mention of members of both their present families and families of origin; indeed, they are the most likely out of any group mention their families of origin. But they do not emphasize the associated gender roles that come along with those families.

Table 4.4: Candidates Who Mentioned Birth Families and Roles in Print Materials, by Gender, Seat, and Status

	Mentioned Birth Family	Mentioned Being Son or Daughter	
	%	%	N=
Office Sought			
House Men	21.1	2.6	(38)
House Women	25.9	3.4	(58)
Senate Men	16.7	0.0	(6)
Senate Women	100.0	11.1	(9)
Governor Men	42.9	14.3	(7)
Governor Women	44.4	11.1	(9)
House Women	25.9	3.4	(58)
Senate Women	100.0	11.1	(9)
Governor Women	44.4	11.1	(9)
Seat Status			
Challenger Men	27.8	0.0	(18)
Challenger Women	48.0	8.0	(25)
Open Seat Men	27.8	5.6	(18)
Open Seat Women	44.0	8.0	(25)
Incumbent Men	13.3	6.7	(15)
Incumbent Women	19.2	0.0	(26)

Note: percentages indicate frequencies within each subcategory.

Women running for the House actually turned out to be the group of women *least* likely to mention their families of origin in print, as they were online. Though this was not what I had expected to find, the fact that women running for the House were still the women most likely to mention their roles as wife and mother both online and in print demonstrates that they do not suppress all family-related information. Rather, they are emphasizing the more traditionally conflictual identities as wife and mother above the perhaps comparatively "safer" identity as daughter, while women running in statewide races are doing the opposite.

Also contrary to my hypothesis, women running as incumbents were less likely than women running either as challengers or in open seat races to make any reference to their families of origin. They are only slightly more likely than men running as incumbents to mention their families of origin in print, and perhaps this is due to less need to introduce oneself in relation to their family of origin background to voters in a medium where space is limited, and one's record in office and more current personal information may seem more pressing.

Ideas Conveyed by Family of Origin Information on Websites

Candidates, both male and female, use their family of origin information to indicate what it means to be *American*. Candidates use their family of origin information to indicate their foundational experiences and values, and these pieces of information add up to tales about American ideology, work ethic, values, views on public policies and the responsibilities of liberal individuals (though for some this is tempered with a nod to the concept of a welfare state.) It is not the case that each separate candidate tells an entire

tale about American ideology, but when aggregated together, the ideas presented by

candidates when they give family of origin information convey a sense of American

ideology or stories which are predominantly consistent with the American dream. The

information candidates give at times references an immigrant background, the value of

hard, largely blue-collar or working class work, persistence and self-sacrifice, personal

responsibility and integrity, and the concept of civic responsibility, including the value of

military service. Family of origin information is used to convey how a candidate's views

on a particular public policy were formed, how they themselves became politically

activated, and what sorts of values they want voters to think they would bring to office.

In giving personal family history and information, at times candidates appear to be trying

to take credit[45] for the accomplishments of their parents (though some may be omitting

information about their families of origin to avoid this perception). The idea that

candidates use family of origin information to claim particular desirable qualities and

achievements about themselves, rather than doing so in a more direct fashion, is

consistent with Richard F. Fenno, Jr.'s findings that:

> (a)ll House members present themselves as personally honest. *It is not something*
> *they proclaim directly...* But expressions conveying a sense of their honesty
> flicker through their statements concerning financial disclosure, limitations on
> campaign contributions, refusals to go on junkets, return of office allowances to
> the treasury, appointment of citizen watchdog committees to oversee campaign
> finances, etc." (1978, 58) (emphasis added)

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[45] The concept of "credit claiming" in a political sense was developed by David Mayhew (1974). In what is
now considered a classic piece of literature on Congress, Mayhew asserted that members of Congress
publicly took personal credit for the work of government as part of their strategy to be re-elected, and
therefore spent much of their time in search of opportunities to take such credit. In recent scholarship, Julie
Dolan and Jonathan S. Kropf (2004) are the first to apply an analysis by gender to the concept of legislative
credit-claiming, and find that men and women in Congress engage in legislative credit-claiming in their
district newsletters at differential rates and in reference to a different mix of issues. They suggest, as a
result, that this may be evidence that women in Congress are cognizant of voter stereotypes and are actively
behaving to counteract the possibly negative consequences of those stereotypes.

Virtually at all times, candidates who give family of origin information in their campaign materials are conveying something about what is supposed to be best about Americans, and in this fashion may be avoiding taking direct or blatantly self-aggrandizing credit for demonstrating these ideal qualities.

Definitions of "American ideology" vary from scholar to scholar. Theodore J. Lowi and Benjamin Ginsberg (2000, 356) highlight the centrality of liberty, equality, and democracy as commonly held American "values." As John Kingdon (1999, 25) points out, a scholar's *own* definition of American ideology may vary over time from its earlier versions. In his own search for a commonly held scholarly definition of American ideology, he notes that definitions of American ideology have included the following: constitutionalism, liberalism, democracy, egalitarianism, achievement, antistatism, populism, liberty, capitalism, and more specifically, laissez-faire notions of capitalism. Kingdon (1999) focuses his own work on two ideas, those of individualism and equality, as he believes these two seem to incorporate strains of the other aforementioned values. The stories given by candidates about their families of origin in this study heavily emphasized ideologies about liberal individualism and achievement through the reliance on personal labor. Candidates' stories about their parents are often populist in nature; they are written to appeal to common people, of working class status, or appeal to supposed particular regional qualities of people. There are also strains of civic republicanism present, as candidates highlight the concept of service as a virtue taught them by their parents.

While a few very significant gender differences exist, in general they are much less apparent in candidate stories about their families of origin than they are in the

information given about their present families, suggesting that women who do choose to give tales about their families of origin may believe that crafting messages similar to men's messages about their families of origin is the best strategy. As I will argue throughout the chapter, this may be due to the fact that references to one's family of origin seem to be able to be shaped in any number of ways, while even the simplest of references to a woman's present family may very readily call to mind the specter of motherhood and caretaking, jobs traditionally considered inconsistent with officeholding. Family of origin information is used to convey a more generic sense of what it is to be American, rather than conveying ideas about how candidates fulfill their own gender roles.

Work

The stories candidates give using information about their families of origin is, first and foremost, a story about *work*. Thirty percent of the male candidates and 23% of the female candidates in this study used mentions of their families of origin to convey that work, specifically *hard* work, is something they were taught to value by their parents:

> "Some of the most important conversations I've ever had occurred at my family's dinner table," Bob recalls fondly. "We discussed politics, but we also talked about the importance of hard work, personal responsibility, living within your means, keeping your word. Those lessons stay with you throughout your life."
> Robert Ehrlich, R Maryland, candidate for Governor

> While growing up the son of an electrician in the small town of Baxter Springs, Tim Shallenburger quickly learned the meaning of dedication and hard work.
> Tim Shallenburger, R Kansas, candidate for Governor

> Hard work. It was a Romero family tradition.
> Richard Romero, D New Mexico, candidate for House District 1

My father only had an elementary school education, but he was the smartest man I ever knew. He taught me that character counts, to be honest and work hard, not to compromise my integrity and to always keep my word.
Jo Ann Davis, R California, candidate for House District 1

Her parents instilled in Anne and her siblings the importance of faith, family, education, hard work, and commitment to the community.
Anne Northup, R Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

At times candidates indicated that they learned about hard work not only through instruction received from their parents, but through watching their examples:

Tim's parents taught him the value of hard work by sometimes holding three jobs to provide for their children.
Tim Escobar, R California, candidate for House District 39

It was through the example of his parents that Ron learned and developed the ethics of hard work, honesty, and persistence.
Ron Greer, R Wisconsin, candidate for House District 2

His father was a garbage collector and his mother a clerk, and they taught him the values of hard work, respect and responsibility.
Jim F. Humphreys, D West Virginia, candidate for House District 2

They taught me about hard work and faith and about the immigrants who came to make a better life, forged communities and built churches...Both my parents worked hard, my mother in a dress shop and at Winchester's, and they both understood the struggles of people and devoted themselves to making things better.
Rosa DeLauro, D Connecticut, candidate for House District 3

My father taught me the value of hard work, building a business from scratch. My mother taught me to always give something back.
Myrth York, D Rhode Island, candidate for Governor

Of all the possible values a person could convey about themselves in discussion of their formative experiences with their families of origin, it may seem odd that work is the most commonly cited virtue/experience. But the concept of work as virtue has deep roots in foundational American ideology. For John Locke, upon whose work much of American government is based, *labor* is the key to all property, as it is the mechanism

which bestows value in raw materials and resources. Because labor transforms land

which is fallow into land which is fruitful, labor holds a great deal of value. As,

according to Locke,

> ...every man has a *property* in his own *person*...(t)he *labour* of his body, and the work of his hands... are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state of that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his *labour* with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his *property*. (*Second Treatise of Government* 27 [1690] 1980) (emphasis in original)

The subsequent enshrinement of property rights in the design of American legal

institutions reifies the primacy of labor in American ideology. In 1835, Alexis de

Tocqueville commented on what to him, as a European accustomed to the ways of

aristocratic societies, was the strange centrality of work in American life and ideology:

> Among a democratic people, where there is no hereditary wealth, every man works to earn a living, or has worked, or is born of parents who have worked. The notion of labor is therefore presented in the mind, on every side, as the necessary, natural, and honest condition of human existence. Not only is labor not dishonorable among such a people, but it is held in high honor; the prejudice is not against it, but in its favor. In the United States a wealthy man thinks he owes it to public opinion to devote his leisure to some kind of industrial or commercial pursuit or to public business. He would think himself in bad repute if he employed his life solely in living. (*Democracy in America*, 2.2.18, [1835] 1981)

In the U.S., work has a long tradition as the activity by which a person proves him or her

self. In a comment on the centrality of work in modern-day U.S. society, Benjamin R.

Barber (2003) writes:

> Work has anchored our value system and centered our civic culture from the earliest days of the modern era. Protestants associated work with virtue because they believed it was God's price for redemption in the face of human sinfulness...In our democracy today, work serves as a vital key to status, dignity, income, republican virtue, and most of the other things our society values. (99)

When candidates use their family of origin information to emphasize work, they are both

expressing to voters that they share the rather American idea that work is virtuous, and

are also taking credit for sharing such a value, but not in a blatantly self-aggrandizing way, as it is attributed to their parents' instruction. If the implication is that they are virtuous, the credit in this regard is laid more humbly at the feet of their elders. Interestingly, since Americans *do* tend to share an understanding of work as virtuous, even candidates who are themselves wealthy and ostensibly can afford more leisure than most are able to take credit for the hard work performed by the generation *before* them (as even de Tocqueville pointed out—see above passage) à la John Edwards in his 2004 bid for the vice presidency, when he heavily emphasized the working class status of his family of origin despite his own current considerable personal fortune.

The story of the virtue of work being conveyed from parent to child in the U.S. by statesmen is not new. None other than Benjamin Franklin himself provides us with a wonderful, if perhaps slightly embellished, account of his own instruction in the value of work:

> My original habits of frugality continuing, and my father having, among his instructions to me when a boy, frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," I from thence considered industry as a means of obtaining wealth and distinction, which encourag'd me, tho' I did not think that I should ever literally *stand before kings*, which, however, has since happened; for I have stood before *five*, and even had the honor of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner. (*The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, 1996 [1868], 61-62)

Hard work as the path to success, and indeed, political success, has for a long time been attributed to the teachings of parents in the U.S. Other candidates indicate learning the value of hard work through their own labor while growing up, helping out their families of origin:

> As a boy, Domenici was raised in the heart of Albuquerque, learning the lessons of hard work and honesty by working in his father's small wholesale grocery business.
> Pete V. Domenici, R New Mexico, candidate for Senate

Most explicit in this regard was Mazie Hirono, candidate for governor of Hawaii:

> Growing up poor, sharing adult duties with a single parent, working from the age of ten, Mazie Hirono acquired a youthful strength, a sense of responsibility and an independent character that have served her well throughout her political career. To escape an abusive marriage in Japan, Mazie's mother brought her and her older brother to Hawaii in 1955, traveling steerage on the President Cleveland. They arrived safely, but hard times continued for the family. They shared a single room in a Makiki boarding house, and her mother worked two jobs to support them. Mazie's mother risked everything for a goal she fervently believed in—a better life for her children in Hawaii. When Mazie started school, she had no shoes, hand-me-down clothes, and no command of the English language. But she was an intelligent, motivated student with a love of learning. In the fifth grade, Mazie delivered newspapers, learning the value of working and the satisfaction of making a contribution to the family finances.
> Mazie Hirono, D Hawaii, candidate for Governor

I quote Hirono at length because of the complete tale of the American dream that she weaves. A child immigrant whose mother came to this country seeking a better life for her children, Mazie and her family of origin struggled to make it in the U.S. They are dirt poor and Mazie is English-illiterate at the beginning of their American journey, but with self-sacrifice, hard work, and perseverance, they triumphed. The successful end implicit in her story, while not part of her own text, is evidenced by her own status and stature as a political elite woman, running for the top executive seat in the state of Hawaii.

While it may be implicit in the ideas conveyed by candidates who invoke stories about their families of origin to emphasize their belief in the importance of hard work, only one candidate made an explicit connection back to the demographics of the district

she was representing, suggesting that the importance of work is part of what makes her descriptively representative of the constituents in her district:

> Representative Kaptur, of Polish-American heritage with humble, working class roots, mirrors the bootstrap nature of her district. Her family operated a small grocery where her mother worked after serving on the original organizing committee of an auto trade union at Champion Spark Plug Company in Toledo.
> Marcy Kaptur, D Ohio, candidate for House District 9

By reading the texts of candidate mentions of their families of origin, there are other messages about work that are left implicit as well. Many times, even when a candidate did not go into much depth about the *meaning* of work to them when referring to their families of origin, they were sure to give a sense of what occupations their parents held. Men were more likely to give this information on their websites than were women: 63% vs. 35% of the time. Republican candidates also made reference to at least one parent's occupation more frequently than did Democrats, 58% vs. 42%, and this overall proportion was due to the number of Republican men who gave such information. Of the 25 men who gave such information, 56% were Republicans and 44% were Democrats, while of the 15 women who gave such information, 27% were Republicans and 73% were Democrats.

> His father worked for Rath Packing Co. and his mother was a waitress.
> Clyde Billington, R Minnesota, candidate for House District 4
>
> The son of a milk truck driver and a legal secretary.
> Dick Gephardt, D Missouri, candidate for House District 3
>
> The son of a post office branch manager and a public school bookkeeper.
> R. Bradley Miller, D North Carolina, candidate for House District 13
>
> Born in the small village of Tome, New Mexico, Richard's mother Frances spent much of her teen years as a migrant farm worker, harvesting vegetables in southern Colorado. His father, Alcadio, took the family to California during the Second World War where he found work as a welder in the Oakland shipyards, a trade learned in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Richard M. Romero, D New Mexico, candidate for House District 1

Daughter of a teacher & a highway patrolman.
Kay Granger, R Texas, candidate for House District 12

Nancy Jane is Irish and traces her roots to the docks of East Boston where her
father started out as a truck driver working for Mobil Oil.
Nancy Jane Woodside, D Utah, candidate for House District 3

While the above passages are examples, and may seem to simply convey factual

information, it may or may not be coincidental that candidates appear to be actively

trying to convey working class or blue collar backgrounds. A legal secretary or a teacher

may certainly be considered a professional, but arguably few would consider these

occupational titles to convey a sense of great ensuing wealth.[46] Even candidates who

mentioned that their parents had professions which may suggest greater than average

wealth seem to temper the messages with additional descriptors:

The Collins name is well known in Caribou. Her family founded not only the
community, but also the oldest continually operating lumber business in the state.
The fifth generation of the Collins family is now involved in the family business.
Susan Collins, R Maine, candidate for Senate

My father was a country doctor and my mother was a teacher.
Cathy Rinehart, D Missouri, candidate for House District 6

His father, Tom, was born on a family farm in Western Kentucky's Union
County. After serving in the Army during the Berlin Crisis of the 1960s, Tom
Conway moved to Louisville, where he taught and coached football at Fairdale
High School. He worked his way through law school at the University of
Louisville, taking night classes. Jack's mother, Barbara, grew up on Louisville's
South End, the daughter of a union blacksmith.
Jack Conway, D Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

While the description of Susan Collins's family suggests "elite," given that their business

is "the oldest continually operating lumber business in the state," and that her family

founded the community of Caribou, Maine, the fact that it is a lumber business suggests

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[46] Particularly since occupations such as these are traditionally considered "female."

that there is still a blue collar, manual element involved in the work. The fact that it is described as a "family business" also suggests that while they are clearly very successful, they may not be on a par with a company like Exxon or Haliburton. There is still a sense of commonness conveyed about her roots. Similarly, Rinehart, while relating that her father is a doctor, modifies the term and calls him a "country" doctor. Regardless of what the reality is of his professional life, describing someone as a "country doctor" more readily conveys the idea of a humble physician who travels out into the fields to serve patients who may pay him in kind from the bounty of their farms rather than in cash than does describing a physician simply as a "doctor." So long as the information is not complete fabrication, the reality of the situation probably does not really matter. What does matter is the impressions formed in voters, and therefore it is informative to pay attention to the sometimes subtle ways candidates shape the stories about their families of origin. Jack Conway could have just as easily had said that his father was a lawyer and left it at that, but he chose to include the fact that his father "worked his way through law school at the University of Louisville, taking night classes." Ostensibly if the Conways were otherwise wealthy, his father would not have worked at the same time as he got his law degree, and Jack Conway has decided that of all the pieces of information he could choose to give about his own life, that one is somehow relevant to voters. Not to put too fine a point on it, but he also then is sure to mention that his mother, while giving no information about what she did with her own time, was the "daughter of a union blacksmith." There is a narrative and a text in the messages about their families of origin, as surely as there is in the messages about their own character, their own experiences, and their present families.

Organized Labor

Jack Conway is not alone in emphasizing a family of origin tie to organized labor:

His father, Ben, was a Union Electrician for the local I.B.E.W. 291 in Boise.
Butch's mom, Regina, continues to reside in Caldwell.
C.L. "Butch" Otter, R Idaho, candidate for House District 1

To help the family make ends meet, Dick's mother worked as an AFL-CIO
factory worker.
Dick Posthumus, R Michigan, candidate for Governor

I was raised in the labor movement. My dad was a Boilermaker, as is my brother.
I have a strong, personal connection to the issues Long Island workers care about.
Carolyn McCarthy, D Missouri, candidate for House District 4

One of the ways in which some candidates, both Democrats (8%) and Republicans

(5.5%), are using information about their families of origin, and more specifically about

the work their families of origin do/did, is to make a connection to organized labor

groups. Candidates may send signals to labor apart from the mentions of their families of

origin, but connecting the two—family of origin information and signals to organized

labor—is one usage of their family of origin information. Such connections then may

serve two purposes: they indicate to union voters that a candidate may be sympathetic to

the concerns of organized labor, and it also reinforces the tale of the American dream told

about a candidate's family of origin, where success is achieved through hard, often blue

collar work.

Rural and Immigrant Backgrounds

Stories about work are the most prevalent uses of references to a candidate's

family of origin information, but apart from information about the type of work or class

background a candidate comes from, some candidates give a further sense of their

origins, emphasizing at times that they are from rural background or an immigrant one:

Both of my grandfathers were farmers. At a young age, I was exposed to the "good" and "bad" days of farming. My memories of the "good" days would be riding with my grandfather to the gin with a trailer load of picked cotton. The sounds of the gin running and appearance of the "white gold" was breathtaking. The "bad" memory would be the summer that my grandfather gave me the task of keeping two acres of okra cut for the summer. Early in the harvest season, okra was bringing $4.00 per bushel. Midway through the summer the price adjusted to $2.50 per bushel. Same work...same conditions...less money. This same memory relates to our nation's farmers today. Farmers can't justify the expense of farming when cotton is booking at $.37 cents per pound and the "breakeven" point is $.58 per pound. America must be a friend to our nation's farmers and provide a farm bill that contains the necessary elements to make farming a profitable business again. Farmers should not suffer for global conditions that adversely affect the value of their crop at time of harvest...Since my father was born in 1913, he understood first-hand the severity of the Great Depression and its impact on the people of the United States, especially of rural roots. He believed in conservation of all resources and despised needless waste. My greatest tribute to my parents is to carry forward their values, and pass these values forward with my children.
Timothy L. Barron, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 7

Growing up in a rural community, I learned that the "rest" of Colorado has different needs from those living in our bigger cities.
Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

At an early age, he had instilled in him a respect for the land and for those who farmed it to earn their livelihoods, and that is something that stays with him to this day. His earliest memories as a child were of the huge barns filled with hay, mules and cattle, and the gardens his mother kept. Later, as an adult, Gene worked for the State of Missouri on a survey party doing preliminary surveys of much of the land in the Mississippi Delta. Gene has known, worked, and loved the land of Missouri all of his life.
Gene Curtis, D Missouri, candidate for House District 8

Jill Long Thompson was raised on a grain and dairy farm in Whitley County, Indiana, where milking cows, feeding hogs, making hay, and participating in 4-H were all part of her formative years; the experience directly influenced her involvement in agriculture.
Jill Long Thompson, D Indiana, candidate for House District 2

Of the candidates who gave information about their families of origin, slightly more men indicated a rural background in relation to their families of origin than did women (12% vs. 7%), and slightly more Democrats indicated a rural background in relation to their families of origin than did Republicans (12% and 6%, respectively). The function of

such information appears to be largely the same as making reference to organized labor:

indicate to voters that a candidate will be sympathetic to the needs of a particular interest

group—in this case, farmers and/or rural populations. Candidates may include signals to

rural voters apart from references to their family of origin information in their campaign

materials, but using one's family of origin experiences with agriculture or rural

communities seems a particularly valid way to convey a connection between a candidate

and all things rural.

If indeed it is the case that candidates use their family of origin information to

weave tales about the American dream, it is not surprising then to see reference made to

immigration. The women candidates in this study made more frequent reference to

immigrant status in relation to their family of origin information than did men—14% and

5% respectively. By party, the differences were much smaller, with 10% of Democrats

and 8% of Republicans working in references to immigration when describing their

families of origin. Candidates wrote things like:

> His parents, both of immigrant backgrounds, stressed the importance of hard work
> and a good education.
> Anton Srdanovic, R New York, candidate for House District 14

> My parents were immigrants who found freedom and opportunity in America.
> Carol Roberts, D Florida, candidate for House District 22

> That great man was my father, the son of an Italian immigrant, who believed that
> each of us had the capacity to make positive changes in our world. My father,
> Elihu R. Monica, was a public school teacher for over 40 years, teaching
> American History in high school. He effected positive change one student at a
> time. Dad would take the poor kids and those cast off by society and show them
> how education could lead to a brighter life and self-dignity.
> Monica L. Monica, R Louisiana, candidate for House District 1

Recalling from above the lengthy tale told by Mazie Hirono about her mother's choice to

move the family from Japan to the U.S. to flee a battering husband, it is clear that

references to immigration are used to set up a story of struggle and success, in a land of opportunity, to be achieved through education and, of course, hard work. Monica L. Monica's account of her father's life starts with him as the son of an immigrant, who not only forges his own way by becoming a teacher, he then goes on to teach *other* young people about the possibilities of the American dream.

It is possible to look at the details of the families of origin discussed here and think that they are simply a function of the truth; that some candidates make reference to immigration because some candidates' families emigrated to the U.S. more recently than others, or that others reference rural roots because that is simply a fact of their life. My argument is not that candidates can create *any* origin story they want to create about themselves; indeed, their stories should be based in truth, because wild fabrications are likely to be ferreted out by an attentive press. My argument is rather that candidates do not have to highlight these aspects of their families simply *because* they are true. Taking for instance the references to immigration, note the different generations to whom immigrant status is assigned: in the case of Hirono, she and her mother are immigrants. Carol Roberts indicates that her parents were immigrants. Monica L. Monica indicates that her *grandparent(s)* were the ones who emigrated, and Anton Srdanovic does not even quite specify what it means that his parents are "from immigrant backgrounds"— perhaps they emigrated, perhaps a generation or two before them did. Referencing the immigration of one's grandparents means the story of one's status in the U.S. *could* be told several different ways. I myself could describe my parents as being the children of immigrant families, whose parents, through military service to the country in WWII, found a foothold in American life in the housing projects in Newark, NJ, that at the time

catered to returning service members. I could describe my parents as the first generation

of their families to not only graduate high school, but finish college *and* get advanced

degrees as well—of course while working hard to put themselves through school. Or I

could just as truthfully and more simply describe my parents (by the time I met them) as

being highly educated and upper-middle class people who were born in the U.S. There

are a million pieces of information a person *could* give about their formative years

growing up with their families; the pieces of information that the candidates in this study

are choosing to convey aggregate to a story about the American dream.

Public Service

Candidates use references to their families of origin to convey a sense of how

important public service is to them as individuals:

> The son of a U.S. foreign service officer, Chris Van Hollen spent part of his childhood overseas living in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Turkey. This experience left a deep impression -- it underscored the many advantages most of us in this country enjoy and how others in the world look to America to lead the way. These experiences also formed the basis of Chris' early commitment to public service.
> Christopher Van Hollen, D Maryland, candidate for House District 8

> My parents always taught my brother and sisters and me that you should look for ways to help your neighbors and make a difference where you live. My father called it "adding to the community woodpile."
> My father taught me, and I've tried to teach my children, the importance of service and the value of committing yourself to something larger than yourself. It is in that spirit that I have decided to become a candidate for the Senate.
> Erskine Bowles, D North Carolina, candidate for Senate

> Adam's father, Ben, worked as a ramp serviceman at SeaTac airport and was active in the local Machinists' Union. He taught Adam the value of community involvement, public service, and participating in our democracy.
> Adam Smith, D New Jersey, candidate for House District 9

> Jo Bonner grew up in a family where public service is looked upon as an obligation, not an option.
> Jo Bonner, R Alabama, candidate for House District 1

JoAnn was born in Washington, D.C., on September 16, 1950 and was raised in a family dedicated to public service.
JoAnn Emerson, R Missouri, candidate for House District 8

Growing up in a family committed to public service instilled in me at an early age a desire to follow in the same path.
Stephanie Herseth, D South Dakota, candidate for House District AL

Men and women candidates who gave information about their families of origin on their websites related that information to the notion of public service at equal rates— 19% each. Democrats did so at a higher rate than Republicans, however, (22% vs. 14%) and this may be consistent with party ideology, as Democrats tend to favor government solutions to social and economic problems more so than Republicans. By contrast, a few Republican candidates made an effort to emphasize the virtue of taking care of oneself:

"Some of the most important conversations I've ever had occurred at my family's dinner table," Bob recalls fondly. "We discussed politics, but we also talked about the importance of hard work, personal responsibility, living within your means, keeping your word."
Robert Ehrlich, R Maryland, candidate for Governor

My parents were both self-employed, small business owners, and they worked very hard to build a home and a life for our family. They did so with hard work, honesty and determination, and without assistance from wealthy family members or government programs. I remember very well what it felt like to watch them struggle through hard economic times and family crises. We were taught very young that you earn your own way in life. Personal responsibility, accountability and a strong work ethic were present early on.
Brose A. McVey, R Indiana, candidate for House District 7

Of course, public service and taking care of oneself are hardly mutually exclusive values, but the differences between the two party ideologies may help explain why Democrats may be more likely to emphasize service in relation to their families of origin and why only Republicans emphasized "personal responsibility" when relating information about their families of origin on their websites.

<u>Military Service</u>

Military service is also a characteristic considered desirable among American politicians, as it indicates patriotism and devotion to the U.S., as well as the personal virtue of (potential) self-sacrifice and understanding of military issues. It is not surprising, then, that candidates who themselves may not have served readily point out the military service of their parents or other family of origin members, in a form of credit-claiming that also signals to military families that a candidate is likely to understand their concerns, in the same fashion they signal organized labor or rural populations:

> His father made a down payment on the farm with money from a veteran's bonus he earned serving his country in World War I.
> Gene Curtis, D Missouri, candidate for House District 8

> Anne learned many lessons from her father who served in WWII, and one of those was the need for a strong military.
> Anne Sumers, D New Jersey, candidate for House District 5

> Having grown up as the daughter of an Air Force Sergeant, Rep. Thurman is a devoted advocate on behalf of veterans, military retirees and our men and women on active duty.
> Karen Thurman, D Florida, candidate for House District 5

> Sarah has been a strong voice for the Armed Forces and its members. She learned at the age of eight that "Freedom isn't Free" when her brother lost his life while serving the cause of liberty in the Military.
> Sarah Casada, R Washington, candidate for House District 9

Women candidates were more likely than the men candidates to indicate that someone in their families of origin had served in the military—21% vs. 12%. Democrats were just slightly more likely to indicate a member of their family of origin had served than were Republicans; by party, the rates were 18% and 14%, respectively. It is possible that in a larger study such differences would disappear, or that in this study fewer men and fewer

Republicans actually had family of origin members who served, but the differences found in this study are consistent with the notion that Democrats and women are at a disadvantage with voters when it comes to military issues (Alexander and Andersen 1993, Fox 1997, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, Kahn 1996). To the extent that they can do so factually, it makes sense that women and Democrats would attempt to establish themselves with credibility in this area, even if they never served, themselves. Giving family of origin information in one's campaign materials allows candidates to take credit for at least *someone* in their family having served and also to establish themselves as people who understand issues facing particular groups such as veterans and military families. Immediately post-September 11th 2001, these issues were particularly salient among the general public in ways that they would not be at a time of peace, nor perhaps in a period when fewer WWII, Korean War and even Vietnam veterans were becoming senior citizens and cashing in on the Veterans Affairs health care guaranteed to them due to their service, and therefore a comparison study would be needed to verify if claiming ties to military service is always a function of candidates giving information about their families of origin, or if this might be unique to the election year in this study. I suspect these references would be found to be perennial, however.

The composite story being told thus far by candidates when referencing their families of origin is one of the American dream/ ideology, where a candidate, or more likely, a candidate's parents, begin from humble, working class roots and achieve success in the U.S. through hard work and stresses service, perhaps military service. The stories told about American dreams and candidates' families of origin are imbued with American ideology, which emphasizes the efforts and successes of the individual, the primacy of

work, and the civic virtues of service and integrity—necessary to have a legitimate and functioning democracy.

Values and Integrity

One of the primary functions of family of origin information appears to be giving voters a sense of the character of the individual running for office. Candidates in this study used discussions of their families of origin to list for voters the things that they value and emphasize their belief in personal integrity:

> While growing up... my parents, Raymond and Louise Barron, believed in "old school" parenting. The "old school" principles involved their firm belief of regular church attendance, respect for others, and let your word be your bond. My parents stressed the importance of honoring your commitments and upholding honorable business practices.
> Timothy L. Barron, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 7

> By his living example, my dad, Harry Matsunaka, taught me the most important lessons a father can teach a son: maintain your personal integrity, stand up for what is right, and work hard for what you believe in. Do these things, and you will live a life without regrets.
> Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

> My father only had an elementary school education, but he was the smartest man I ever knew. He taught me that character counts, to be honest and work hard, not to compromise my integrity and to always keep my word.
> Jo Ann Davis, R California, candidate for House District 1

Interestingly, men and women candidates differed rather significantly in the rates at which they used their family of origin information to construe a notion that integrity is important to them. Men were twice as likely to use their family of origin information on their websites to emphasize their own personal integrity than were women: 23% and 12%, respectively. This is consistent with the notion many voters hold that women are more honest and trustworthy than men in politics, and therefore the male candidates may feel a need to make explicit their sense of the importance of their own integrity in order

to compete against women who may already be assumed by voters to be trustworthy (Alexander and Andersen 1993, Kahn 1996). The way in which gender ideology does or does not relate to the idea that women are more honest and trustworthy as political candidates has not been fully ascertained. It may be due to gender stereotyping on the part of voters, whereby all women are considered on the whole to be more honest than all men, regardless of whether or not they are in politics, but it may also be due to the relative exclusion of women from the public political realm, historically. With a lack of women in high political office, any scandals involving corrupt politicians, historically, were simply more likely to center on male politicians. It is possible that voters may hold the notion that women politicians are more honest than male politicians simply because they have not seen as many women involved in political scandals because of the comparatively low number of women politicians. The difference in the rates at which candidates of the two major parties used their family of origin information to convey a notion of personal integrity was very small, with Republicans conveying this idea 19% of the time on their websites and Democrats doing so 16% of the time.

Candidates used their family of origin information to indicate what they value, as people and as public servants. The women in this study who mentioned their families of origin did so to bring up the issue of values 9% of the time, while the men did so 14% of the time. By party, Democrats used family of origin information to raise the notion of values to voters 14% of the time, which Republicans did so 8% of the time. For example, candidates wrote things like:

> Born in Albuquerque in 1932 to Italian immigrant parents, Domenici and his four sisters were taught early the values that continue to guide him today as one of the most respected members of the U.S. Senate.
> Pete V. Domenici, R New Mexico, candidate for Senate

From his mother, Florence Akin, he learned the value of hard work, honesty, persistence, and compassion for people less fortunate.
Ron Akin, D Wyoming, candidate for House District

Responsibility, accountability, hard work, playing by the rules. Our parents taught us those and they are the values of hard work and opportunity that our parents passed on to us, and that we will pass them on to our children.
Rosa DeLauro, D Connecticut, candidate for House District 3

Some of the values that candidates highlighted about themselves they claim are sectarian in nature, particular to a political ideology or region of the country:

Further, Jo Bonner's upbringing in rural South Alabama instilled in him the conservative values that guided his efforts to save South Alabama taxpayers more than $1 million in the operation of Callahan's Congressional office.
Jo Bonner, R Alabama, candidate for House District 1

I was raised in a small rural community and I will take those small town values with me to Washington where I will not stop until your voices are heard.
Lincoln Davis, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 4

I was very fortunate to grow up in a family where small town Hoosier values were taught every day.
Brose A. McVey, R Indiana, candidate for House District 7

By indicating that their families of origin are a source of values, candidates appear to be trying to establish a rapport with their constituents, indicating that they not only have personal virtues like honesty, but that they work hard and are relatable to constituents in an everyday sense. The populist sectarian or regional values claimed at times are interesting in that they are incredibly vague, sort of like a horoscope. If a voter read the entire texts pertaining to their families of origin, hardly anyone would disagree that that describes them as well, as they are all characteristics considered desirable in the U.S.—a commitment to saving taxpayers money, hard work, honesty, determination, thrift and common sense are among the virtues attributed to these sectarian values, though they of

course do not differ at all from the non-regionally or non-ideologically specific values claimed by other candidates.

While some of these values may give voters a sense of the type of official a person is likely to make once in office, some candidates give a sense of the things which they value personally, which at first glance may seem to have a less direct connection to the type of elected official they would make. Specifically, some candidates used their family of origin information to emphasize their personal commitments to family or to their religious beliefs. The women in this study were just barely more likely to use information about their families of origin to indicate their commitment to their family in general than were men: 9% vs. 7%, respectively. This is not to say that few candidates emphasized the importance of family anywhere on their websites, but just in relation to the information they gave about their families of origin. Democrats used information about their families of origin to emphasize the importance of family to them, personally, 10% of the time while Republicans did so 6% of the time. Candidates included phrases like the following:

> Commitment. To Family. To Education. To Public Service. They're not simply words on a page to Jack Conway. They're the words a family has lived by for generations.
> Jack Conway, D Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

> He attributes his rock solid sense of family, community and service to the principles he learned while growing up in this community of hardworking families.
> Dick Gephardt, D Missouri, candidate for House District 3

> Now in his eighties, my dad is still a source of inspiration to me. He and his buddies in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team successfully rose to meet the challenges of their generation. Through service to my constituents, my community, my church, and my family, I hope to rise to the challenges of mine...

I have been urged by my family and friends here in Colorado to "go for broke" and take the positive, responsible, family-oriented agenda I first learned in the small towns of Colorado's eastern plains all the way to Congress.
Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

The tradition my parents taught me is commitment to making our communities better and keeping our families strong.
Cathy Rinehart, D Missouri, candidate for House District 6

As the eldest of nine children, she learned to be a leader, peacemaker and decision-maker, early in life. With a father and mother committed to public and community service she saw first hand the value of faith, family and hard work.
Mary Landrieu, D Louisiana, candidate for Senate

Some candidates also used the opportunity of discussing the influence of their families of

origin to convey their personal faith or commitment to religion:

While growing up... my parents, Raymond and Louise Barron, believed in "old school" parenting. The "old school" principles involved their firm belief of regular church attendance, respect for others, and let your word be your bond.
Timothy L. Barron, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 7

Her parents instilled in Anne and her siblings the importance of faith, family, education, hard work, and commitment to the community.
Anne Northup, R Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

Susan pledges to take the values her father taught her - faith in the goodness of God, determination, honesty, devotion, hard work, self-sacrifice, humility, and courage - and build consensus on tax cuts, healthcare, education, the environment, and Social Security reform.
Susan Parker, D Alabama, candidate for Senate

Taking an opportunity to convey a commitment to family and to faith in their campaign

materials may re-affirm for voters that a candidate is a trustworthy and wholesome.

While giving extensive religious information could be polarizing, simply suggesting a

religious upbringing helps candidates suggest that they are of good character and have

some amount of humility. Interestingly, while 2% of men made reference to religion or

faith when discussing their families of origin, 9% of women did so. By party, 8% of

Democrats used discussions of their families of origin to raise the issue of their personal

faith, while only 3% of Republicans did. When compared to the number of references

candidates made to their religious faith anywhere on their sites, whether or not related to

their family of origin information, men and women did not differ at all in the rates at

which they mentioned their personal faith—both did so at a rate of 23%. By party, 28%

of Republicans mentioned religious faith anywhere on their sites, while only 18% of

Democrats did.

Political Upbringing

In addition to references to "public service," candidates frequently used their

family of origin information to explain how they became interested not just in service but

in politics generally (including issues, not just officeholding) and/or to extend the idea

explicitly that they are part of a political family legacy. Male and female candidates did

not differ in this regard: 21% of each gender group who gave family of origin

information in their campaign websites used this information to convey an interest in

politics stirred by their parents:

> I have for many years been politically active, so influenced while growing up as I
> listened to my parents' impassioned discussions of world affairs.
> Mark P. Brown, D Pennsylvania, candidate for House District 15

> In her youth, Anne became interested in public policy and politics while
> following in her father's footsteps as he walked door-to-door as a Republican
> precinct captain in their Louisville, Kentucky neighborhood.
> Anne Northup, R Kentucky, candidate for House District 3

> Her father, Lars, served in the state legislature for 20 years and was the
> Democratic nominee for Governor in 1986...Although I was only four years old
> at the time, I vividly remember shaking hands with people who came out to the
> farm during my dad's first campaign for the state House of Representatives in
> 1974. Growing up in a family committed to public service instilled in me at an
> early age a desire to follow in the same path.
> Stephanie Herseth, D South Dakota, candidate for House AL

Using one's family of origin information to convey how a person became interested in politics is consistent with the notion of civic values being passed from parent to child, consistent with American notions of good citizenship and participation. By party, Democratic candidates were more likely than Republican candidates to use family of origin information to illustrate how the candidate became interested in politics—24% and 17%, respectively. Two candidates mentioned other members of their family growing up as politically influential, besides their parents, and both did so to convey not only their own political activation, but their affiliation with a particular party, something usually assumed to be transmitted through a parent:

> My Norwegian grandfather was my hero and in our many times together, he told me how important being a Democrat was - emphasizing the Democratic Party is the party for working people.
> Joyce Jansa Corcoran, D Wyoming, candidate for Senate

Peter DeFazio described this activation to Democratic politics more colorfully:

> DeFazio's first taste of politics came as a youth in Massachusetts at the knee of his great uncle, a classic Boston pol who made it seem to young Peter as if the word Republican was always followed by the Boston-accented epithet, "bastud," uttered so closely in conjunction with "Republican" that it was made to sound as one word. Populist leanings were imbued at an early age.
> Peter A. DeFazio, D Oregon, candidate for House District 4

Again it is important to keep in mind that the information candidates choose to give about their families of origin is, in fact, by choice. Ostensibly the pieces of information they share are factual, but I argue that it is not simply because they are factual that they are included in their campaign materials. For instance, here is all of the information that Kathleen Kennedy Townsend gave about her family of origin:

> The eldest child of Robert and Ethel Kennedy, Lt. Governor Townsend lives in Baltimore County with her husband, David, a professor at St. John's College in Annapolis.
> Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, D Maryland, candidate for Governor

Of course there are tomes that she could have written about her parents, but perhaps she decided that information spoke for itself, or that it was more important to feature her own successes and not dwarf them besides those of her famous political family. When candidates relate particular stories about their families of origin, it is because they choose to do so, not simply because they are factual. This is particularly true in the case of family of origin information, compared to present family information, because a candidate who does not have a present family (spouse and/or children) is in fact limited in what they could say about that aspect of their life.[47] But almost everyone has or had a family of origin of some sort, whether that family is/was genetic, adoptive, or foster. Admittedly a candidate raised by employees at an orphanage who had no other family situation to speak of is possible, but in that case a candidate could still speak of the influence of the person or people who were formative in their upbringing. When candidates give information about their families of origin, they are usually not simply conveying facts. They are telling stories that are imbued with narratives about the American dream and American ideology.

Issues

Candidates also sometimes use their family of origin information to raise political issues. In an interesting contrast to the ways in which candidates use their present family role information to raise issues, the men in this study outpaced the women when it came to using family of origin information to raise at least one political issue 30% to 19%. The issues that candidates raised when discussing their families of origin tended to

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[47] Though of course, there are ways to handle this as well. For instance, Janet Napolitano of Arizona features her nieces and nephews quite prominently in her campaign materials to convey a present family connection.

cluster around what are traditionally considered issue strengths of female candidates

(Alexander and Andersen 1993, Kahn 1996)—the environment, social security, education

and health care, though three candidates raised the issue of cutting taxes in relation to

their families of origin. About the environment, candidates used their family of origin

information to say things like:

> Growing up, I had the opportunity to enjoy our wonderful environment. From swimming in the ocean to enjoying family time at a neighborhood park, I want our children and grandchildren to share in these memories.
> James H. Maloney, D New York, candidate for House District 5

> ...growing up as child of foreign service officer, Chris fondly remembers vacations spent in cabins without running water, furnaces, electricity or indoor plumbing...Perhaps these experiences are partly responsible for his strong interest in legislation that not only protects the environment, but encourages individuals to develop patterns of long term behavior that protect and preserve our existing natural resources – smart growth, smart energy consumption, and smart resource development.
> Christopher Van Hollen, D Maryland, candidate for House District 8

> I was born in British Guiana. I remember my mother saying, "this jungle will last forever." Unfortunately, the Amazon Rain Forest is disappearing at a breathtaking rate. The Earth is fragile and cannot sustain the continuing plunder. The truth is we need to be better stewards of this lovely place we call home. Clean air and water are cornerstones of our Common Wealth.
> Heidi Behrens-Benedict, D Washington, candidate for House District 8

Male candidates were just slightly more likely than female candidates to use stories about

their families of origin to raise the issue of environmental protection, doing so 12% of the

time while women did so 7% of the time. All of the candidates who raised the specter of

the environment in relation to their families of origin were Democrats, none were

Republicans. 16% of the Democrats who gave family of origin information included

references to the environment.

Men and women who gave family of origin information raised the issue of

education in relation to their families of origin in their campaign websites at the same

rate—12% each. No party differences occurred here, with 12% of Democrats and 11% of

Republicans who gave family of origin information raising the issue of education at the

same time. Candidates wrote things like the following:

> From early on, his parents taught him the importance of education - both his
> mother and grandmother were teachers.
> C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, D Maryland, candidate for House District 2

> Thomas's mother was a rural school teacher in South Dakota, where teachers are
> paid less than in any other state. Her father, a rancher, died when she was 12 and
> the family received Social Security survivor benefits. She attended medical
> school with the help of a federal grant and understands firsthand how important it
> is to invest in education.
> Julie Ann Thomas, D Arizona, candidate for House District 2

A few candidates raised the issue of social security in relation to information about their

families of origin—2% of the men who gave family of origin information did so, as did

5% of the women who gave family of origin information on their websites. By party, 4%

of the Republicans who discussed their families of origin included a reference to social

security, as did 3% of the Democrats. Candidates who used their family of origin

information to address the issue of social security included passages like below:

> I know first hand how important Social Security was for my mother, who lived to
> be 87.
> Virgil H. Goode, R Virginia, candidate for House District 5

> Julie learned the value of Social Security benefits at age 12 when her father died.
> Her mother received benefits to supplement her teaching income... "I am proud
> of my work in public policy and have seen how important it is to be involved in
> public debates and discussions," said Thomas. "I learned that lesson early in life
> because of the impact public policy had on my family and in my life."
> Julie Ann Thomas, D Arizona, candidate for House District 2

Three candidates made reference to the issue of health care while discussing their

family of origin backgrounds, and all were Democrats:

> Skipper Bowles and Erskine's sister, Martha, both died after contracting ALS,
> also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. As he helped care for his father and, later, his

sister, he experienced firsthand the hardships that families in the Carolinas faced because of a lack of facilities and treatment centers for ALS patients.
Erskine Bowles, D North Carolina, candidate for Senate

When Gene was just 6 years old, he contracted tetanus lockjaw and was in a coma for several days. If hospital bills had been then like they are now, the family would certainly have had to sell the farm to pay the bills.
Gene Curtis, D Missouri, candidate for House District 8

It was the values I learned from my parents and my education that took me from the cotton fields of Alabama to the State Auditor's office...And I'll keep working hard and following the values I was taught as a young girl...Susan pledges to take the values her father taught her - faith in the goodness of God, determination, honesty, devotion, hard work, self-sacrifice, humility, and courage - and build consensus on tax cuts, healthcare, education, the environment, and Social Security reform.
Susan Parker, D Alabama, candidate for Senate

Susan Parker, who mentioned each of the issues raised by all the candidates in relation to their families of origin, was also the only female and the only Democrat to mention the issue of tax cuts. Not surprisingly, the other two candidates who mentioned keeping taxes low in relation to their family of origin backgrounds were Republicans.

No Equal Opportunity

Given that the stories candidates tell about their families of origin add up to tales about the American dream and American ideology, it is interesting to note what is rarely made explicit—the idea of equal opportunity. Only two candidates explicitly mentioned the idea of opportunity when describing their family of origin:

My parents were immigrants who found freedom and opportunity in America. I was raised in a family that honored diversity and loved our country.
Carol Roberts, D Florida, candidate for House District 22

I learned from my parents that Americans take care of our elders.
They also taught me that opportunity in life begins with a good education...
Responsibility, accountability, hard work, playing by the rules. Our parents taught us those and they are the values of hard work and opportunity that our parents passed on to us, and that we will pass them on to our children.
Rosa DeLauro, D Connecticut, candidate for House District 3

There is a distinction, though, in the ways they describe opportunity. Carol Roberts

describes a land where opportunity already exists and can be found by immigrants.

DeLauro's description of opportunity in the U.S. suggests it is one that has to be created

by the individual, through education and hard work. A few candidates specifically

mentioned the notion of racial, ethnic and gender civil rights—those things which must

be in existence for equal opportunity to truly exist:

> Dad came back to Colorado in 1945, after having served in every battle that the 442nd Regimental Combat Team fought. The 442nd was recognized by President Truman as the most highly decorated unit for its size in World War II, with members earning thousands of group and individual honors, including the Congressional Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre. Not only had they helped to defeat the fascists, but, by their hard work, patriotism, and exemplary gallantry, they had also defeated the demon of racial bigotry directed against Japanese Americans as well.
> Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

> Both of my parents graduated from Howard University there. My late father, Dr. Nathaniel Boggs, Jr., was one of the first African Americans to ever receive a Ph.D. degree in Zoology.
> Lynette Boggs-McDonald, R Nevada, candidate for House District 1

> As a child, Shannon told her father that when she was old enough, she wanted to go to Yale University, just as he had done. She didn't realize that Yale didn't allow women at the time - and her father never told her either. He just encouraged her to study hard and do well in school. She did. And by the time she was ready to go to college, Yale had become co-ed and Shannon followed in her father's footsteps.
> Shannon O'Brien, D Massachusetts, candidate for Governor

Apart from these statements, only one other candidate came close to referencing ethnic

civil rights when discussing their family of origin, and that was William Janklow:

> His father was a prosecutor at the Nuremberg war criminal trials.
> William J. Janklow, R South Dakota, candidate for House AL

These statements do not add up to a description of the U.S. where equal opportunity

already existed. Matsunaka and Boggs-McDonald describe a world their parents had to

help integrate—in the case of Matsunaka's father, he literally had to fight to do it. O'Brien's description perhaps is different in that it gives the sense that though Yale may have discriminated against women in the past, the institution was at least ready for her by the time she was ready for it; she does not suggest that she was at the forefront of integrating the University. Apart from Carol Roberts's statement about opportunity and diversity above, these were the only explicit passages that came close to referencing the idea of equal opportunity.

It could be argued that idea of equal opportunity is not made explicit by candidates when they weave stories about their families of origin because it could be assumed, based on the results. Candidates had a tendency to tell stories of triumph, whereby their families struggled but worked hard and achieved things for themselves in the U.S. Perhaps the notion of equal opportunity is implicit in the outlines of that basic tale; if it were not, then how could they have achieved anything, given that they did not always start out with much? But I think that these stories, rather than suggesting an equal playing field without barriers to the individual, emphasize the triumph of the individual *despite* the barriers which may have been in front of them. The ideology conveyed via discussions of candidates' families of origin weighs more heavily on the side of the achievement of the individual and personal struggle than it does on the notion of fairness and equality.

Ideas Conveyed by Family of Origin Information in Print

Of the 127 candidates who submitted their print materials, 40 total candidates (31%) made reference to their families of origin in their materials. The numbers of candidates who used their family of origin information to convey any one particular idea

were, for the most part (the exception being ideas about work), too low to be able to speak of numerical differences with any confidence. However, it is possible to ascertain if candidates related altogether different types of information in their print materials than on their websites.

As on the websites, candidates did use their family of origin information to convey the importance of work. 15.7% of male candidates in this sample linked information about their families of origin to ideas about work, as did 12% of the female candidates. The fact that males did so slightly more frequently than females is consistent with their pattern on their websites. Additionally, 11.8% of males related the profession of one or both of their parents in their print materials, as did 10.5% of the women. This is not completely consistent with the pattern by gender on the websites; there, men outpaced the women in conveying such information 63% to 35%. I report these numbers because, as on the websites, these were the categories of information with the highest number of cases. Candidates made statements about work and the professions of their parents in their print materials like the following:

> My parents taught me the value of hard work. I am a farmer and businessman. I understand when something needs to be done, you roll up your sleeves... you get involved.
> Lincoln Davis, D Tennessee, candidate for House District 4

> My father worked as a truck driver for the Post Office and my mom was a domestic servant for well-to-do families. My parents' example is what led me to an 18 year career with the Madison Fire Department.
> Ron Greer, R Wisconsin, candidate for House District 2

> Senator Collins learned the value of hard work from her parents.
> Susan Collins, R Maine, candidate for Senate

> Growing up in a family of eleven kids meant we all had a job to do. It could get hectic, but it was also a great lesson in keeping your priorities straight and how hard work could pay off. We also ran a family business, so weekends and

summers were all spent together. Our business grew from a small auto parts business to a manufacturing company employing hundreds. And one reason for our success was that we kept things simple.
Janet Robert, D Minnesota, candidate for House District 6

Each time I cast a vote in the Senate, my focus is on how that vote will affect working families like the one in which I grew up.
Jean Carnahan, D Missouri, candidate for Senate

Among candidates who emphasized work, there were some overtures made to organized

labor, as on the websites:

If you want to know what kind of Governor I'll be, just look at how I was raised. My dad was a farmer, like his father before him. My mom worked, too, at the Keebler factory, where she was a member of the AFL-CIO. I was just like any kid in Michigan. I went to public school, played sports, hunted with my dad and worked the farm. And I even managed to make class valedictorian...I was one of the first in my family to go to college.
Dick Posthumus, R Michigan, candidate for Governor

Raised in a working class family. Oldest of six children. Father was a union steward in a meat packing company. Mother was a waitress.
Clyde Billington, R Minnesota, candidate for House District 4

Candidates also conveyed rural or immigrant roots when discussing their families of

origin in their print materials:

I was born and raised on my family's farm right here in Northern Indiana.
Jill Long Thompson, D Indiana, candidate for House District 2

Daughter of an immigrant logger, born and raised in Lewiston.
Betty Richardson, D Idaho, candidate for House District 1

Candidates referenced military service in print materials as well—indeed, each of the

candidates who mentioned the military service of a member of their families of origin in

the print materials did so on their websites, too:

Born and raised in a career military family.
Deborah Thomas, D Arizona, candidate for House District 6

As a decorated veteran of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most highly decorated American fighting unit of its size in American history, Stan's

father taught him the most important lessons a father can teach a son: maintain your personal integrity, stand up for what you think is right, and work hard for what you believe in.
Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

Public service was also invoked in relation to candidates' family of origin

information in print materials:

Serving South Dakota has been an important part of Stephanie's family for generations. She is the granddaughter of the late Gov. Ralph Herseth and Lorna B. Herseth, who was Secretary of State. Stephanie's father, Lars Herseth, served in the state legislature for 20 years.
Stephanie Herseth, D South Dakota, candidate for House AL

Gerrie's parents, Norm and Mary Schipske, instilled in her the importance of family, the need for a good education and a duty to serve her community and her faith. Throughout her life, Gerrie has lived by these values-- whether she was caring for foster children and raising her own three children, working to improve the quality of education at Long Beach City College, advocating on behalf of women and children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse, working to improve the quality of pre-natal care for low income women, or raising funds to provide health care for senior citizens.
Gerrie Schipske, D California, candidate for House District 46

The idea of taking care of one's self or self-reliance did not appear in any print materials,

though it did appear in a few candidate websites.

Personal integrity was also a theme in print material discussions of families of

origin, as it was online:

Being poor is not what I remember most about my childhood in Nitro. I remember the important things my parents taught me about caring for each other, working hard and being honest.
Jim F. Humphreys, D West Virginia, candidate for House District 2

They (her parents) taught me about keeping my word, and that's why I'll keep our promise to protect seniors by fighting against privatizing Social Security and opposing efforts to cut benefits and raise the retirement age.
Martha Fuller Clark, D New Hampshire, candidate for House District 1

Mentions of values and more specific sectarian values also appeared in print materials:

It was the values my parents taught me and my education that took me from the cotton fields of Alabama to the State Auditor's office. I remember struggling for trailer payments, truck payments, and money for groceries. It took a great deal of hard work to overcome those tough times. Sadly, many people in Alabama are still struggling today. Unemployment is on the rise, and our schools are in trouble. Can the federal government make everything better? No. But it can provide a safety net, and it can help support our public schools. If I'm honored with your vote, I'll put the needs of Alabama's people first. I'll always listen and shoot you straight. And I'll keep working hard and following the values I was taught as a young girl.
Susan Parker, D Alabama, candidate for Senate

Mary grew up with eight brothers and sisters. The lessons of faith, family and community she learned around the family dinner table are the Louisiana values her husband, Frank, and she share with their two children. There are the values that guide her as our Senator every day.
Mary Landrieu, D Louisiana, candidate for Senate

References to the importance of family and faith also appeared in print

discussions of families of origin, similar to ideas expressed on the websites:

Their example shaped my work in the New Hampshire legislature and will continue to guide me in Congress. I learned about priorities-- that family comes first, and that we need to protect our kids. In the legislature, I sponsored bills that took a tough stand against child abuse, and protected our day care centers and neighborhoods from sexual predators.
Martha Fuller Clark, D New Hampshire, candidate for House District 1

Gerrie's parents, Norm and Mary Schipske, instilled in her the importance of family, the need for a good education and a duty to serve her community and her faith. Throughout her life, Gerrie has lived by these values...
Gerrie Schipske, D California, candidate for House District 46

Several described the political participation of their parents or their political

instruction by their families of origin, as they had also done on the websites:

The most important things to my father were his family and God, but the Democratic Party wasn't too far behind. He took me to meeting and worked hard to elect John Kennedy president. He told me that working people have to stick together. And he told me that we need a strong government to give families like ours a fair chance.
Jim F. Humphreys, D West Virginia, candidate for House District 2

> The daughter of former governor Bert T. Combs, Lois has dedicated her life to public service and distinguished herself as a civic leader.
> Lois Combs Weinberg, D Kentucky, candidate for Senate

Candidates also used their print discussions of their families of origin to raise political issues, including the environment, education, healthcare, and social security, as had been done on the websites materials. No reference was made to the one stereotypical "masculine" issue of low taxes, as had occurred on the websites, but an additional "feminine" issue was added in print by one candidate—children's issues:

> I grew up on a small New England farm, and my parents led by example. Their example shaped my work in the New Hampshire legislature and will continue to guide me in Congress. I learned about priorities-- that family comes first, and that we need to protect our kids. In the legislature, I sponsored bills that took a tough stand against child abuse, and protected our day care centers and neighborhoods from sexual predators. They taught me about keeping my word, and that's why I'll keep our promise to protect seniors by fighting against privatizing Social Security and opposing efforts to cut benefits and raise the retirement age. They instilled a love of land and community. That's why in the New Hampshire legislature I led the fight to protect our natural and cultural environment. In New Hampshire, we know that protecting our environment means protecting jobs. They taught me thrift and the value of a dollar. That's why I'll work to restore fiscal responsibility to the federal government.
> Martha Fuller Clark, D New Hampshire, candidate for House District 1

Two candidates addressed the concept of equal opportunity in their print materials, though neither explicitly referenced racial, ethnic, or gender civil rights:

> Nobody had much money when I grew up in Nitro. Times were tough, and you had to take whatever work you could find. My dad worked on a garbage truck for several years, and there were some times when he had no job at all. Being poor is not what I remember most about my childhood in Nitro. I remember the important things my parents taught me about caring for each other, working hard and being honest. The most important things to my father were his family and God, but the Democratic Party wasn't too far behind. He took me to meeting and worked hard to elect John Kennedy president. He told me that working people have to stick together. And he told me that we need a strong government to give families like ours a fair chance.
> Jim F. Humphreys, D West Virginia, candidate for House District 2

> Her parents came to America out of the horror of World War II in Europe with little more than the clothes on their backs. In America they found a land with wide-open doors of opportunity. They were able to get an education and build a decent, good life for their two daughters.
> Katrina Swett, D New Hampshire, candidate for House District 2

While Swett's family of origin tale is a classic one of equal opportunity, it is the only one found in candidate references to their families of origin. Humphreys on the other hand, relates the lesson taught him that *in order* for families like the one he grew up in to have a "fair chance," a strong government is needed, emphasizing the Democratic Party's greater preference for governmental solutions to social issues compared to the Republican Party's. The suggestion is that without vigilance, solidarity, and a preference for the Democratic Party on the part of voters, equal opportunity would not exist; that it is constantly being threatened. The emphasis is not on the simple existence of equal opportunity, but on the conditions necessary for it to exist, if at all possible. Regardless of references to opportunity, no candidate used their family of origin information to address issues of racial, ethnic, or gender civil rights.

Finally, one theme appeared in print which did not appear online, and that was the concept of being part of the Nth generation to live in a particular region:

> Raised in the small community of Baxter Springs, Tim Shallenburger is a fourth generation Kansan who understands Kansas values.
> Tim Shallenburger, R Kansas, candidate for Governor

> As a fourth generation Coloradan, I was born and raised in the Fourth Congressional District, and it continues to be home to my family today. I was born in Akron and was raised with my four brothers in Ft. Morgan, where we attended public schools.
> Stanley T. Matsunaka, D Colorado, candidate for House District 4

> Katherine, a fourth generation Floridian, lives with her husband Anders, and 20-year old daughter Louise, in Sarasota. They are members of Calvary Chapel.
> Katherine Harris, R Florida, candidate for House District 13

> 4th generation of her family in the Central Coast.
> Beth Rogers, R California, candidate for House District 23

The references to candidates' families of origin in these passages are implicit; the understanding is that their families of origin obviously also lived in the state/district/region where the candidate resides. The meaning conveyed by such references is one of authentic identity—one is a true Kansan/Coloradan/Floridian/Central Coaster by virtue of the length of time their family lived there before them. The implication is that such a person in desirable in office because they are bound to recognize, understand, and share the perspectives of their constituents, so commonality is conveyed alongside the idea of authenticity. Another interesting possible interpretation in this regard is that a non-white candidate such as Stanley Matsunaka, who is Japanese American, may be trying to eradicate in the minds of voters any idea that his apparent ethnicity makes him foreign, an issue that is clearly salient for the Matsunaka family as viewers have been told at length about the heroics of his father in proving his loyalty to the U.S. by fighting in WWII on both the candidate's website and in his print materials. However, while this is a possibility, the scope of this study does not allow for conclusions about the effect of race on how candidates shape their family information for voters. Other candidates did not shy away from revealing immigrant roots, and the other candidates who stressed their longevity in a particular area were white, so this possibility remains speculation, unless probed in future studies.

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, the findings presented in this chapter indicate several things. First, gender differences, while they exist, are not as prevalent in candidate references to their families of origin as they are in references to their present families. The gender

differences that did emerge quantitatively appear to be affected by the medium in which candidate messages about their families were being conveyed. Overall, my expectations were partially supported by the texts of candidate websites, but not at all by the texts of candidate print materials. On the web there was evidence that Republican men and women were more likely to invoke the traditional roles of sons and daughters than Democrats, even despite the fact that Democrats were more likely to make basic references to their families of origin. Republican women were indeed more likely than Democratic women to reference their roles as daughters, specifically, though Republican men and Democratic men did not differ in their invocations of the role of "son." The differences found between Democratic and Republican women online in this regard support the idea that women are deploying such gender roles strategically to their expected audiences online. Republican women may be playing up their roles as daughters while Democratic women play them down because even though the role of daughter is historically a dependent role, they may be anticipating that their Republican voters may approve of a traditional family/gender roles such as daughter, while Democratic women may not expect the same traditional attitudes by the voters to whom they are trying to appeal. The statewide office/House district hypothesis was not supported online, though the status of the seat did appear to influence the rates at which women mentioned their families of origin and roles compared to men, as women running for open seats and as challengers were less likely than men running for open seats or as challengers to mention their families of origin.

None of my expectations held for the texts of the print materials, where very few differences emerged at all. Those that did were contrary to my hypotheses, with

Democratic women outpacing Republican women in referring to their families of origin

and their roles as daughters, and women running for Senate actually far outpacing the

men running for the Senate in making references to their families of origin. Women

running for the House, who I had predicted would be more likely to portray themselves in

relation to their families of origin compared to women running for statewide offices, were

actually the least likely group of women to do so. Also contrary to my predictions,

incumbent women were the least likely to mention their families of origin, not women

running for open seats. Interestingly, all the women in this study referred to their

families of origin in print, while very few of the men did.

The lack of predicted findings in print compared to candidate websites, then,

actually supports my final prediction, which is that the medium would have an apparent

effect on candidates' portrayals of themselves. The apparent shift in strategies between

mediums supports my overall notion that women (and men) deploy their gender

information strategically. While the motivations behind candidates' choices (and those of

their campaigns) cannot truly be ascertained within the design of this study, there is

evidence to suggest that the differences may be due to strategizing, most likely around

the anticipated audiences of their campaign materials. Audiences likely to be

encountered online are already likely to be supportive of the candidate. It may be the

case that candidates portray themselves in ways that are likely to be the most acceptable

to their bases—for Republican women, this might mean taking on traditional

gender/family identities, while for Democratic women this might mean eschewing them.

By contrast then, candidates may be anticipating a broader, less supportive audience for

their general print materials, and that may then be prompting them to try to strike a

broader appeal, such that they reverse their strategies to appeal to voters who are less likely to be already supportive. Alternatively, in the case of women running for the Senate, it is possible that when taken together with the fact that they were comparatively *less* likely to emphasize their *present* family roles in their campaign communications, they may be playing up their family of origin references because that may be a "safer" way for a woman to indicate family ties. Though being a daughter may be a dependent role, historically, compared to that of son, it may still be less troublesome for women in politics than the roles of wife or mother. This study cannot determine if this is what is in fact occurring, but the patterns found here do lend credence to the idea that candidates are behaving strategically in the deployment of their gender and family information.

Qualitatively, the candidates in this study used their family of origin information to give a sense of what it means to be American. By stressing the primacy and value of hard work, personal integrity, working class status, rural roots or immigrant background, military and public service, values, personal faith and political activation, candidates are conveying ideas of individual achievement, civic republicanism and populism, as well as desirable qualities for elected representatives. The reason for the relative absence of explicit references to equal opportunity can be debated; I argue it is left out because it negates the idea of individual achievement through *struggle*. Because much of the function of giving family of origin information appears to be credit-claiming on the part of candidates, emphasizing that they or their parents faced a level playing field would undermine their story of achievement through hard work. The lack of emphasis on the existence of equal opportunity lends support to the idea that candidates deploy information about their families of origin in a type of indirect credit-claiming, where

candidates can indicate successfulness, integrity, and values, but attribute them humbly to good parenting, rather than speak boastfully of themselves. As story predicated in the existence of equal opportunity would undermine a tale of personal or family achievement.

By giving voters stories about their families of origin, candidates often convey some measure of the American dream in relation to themselves or their families. In a country like the U.S., where the population believes it to be a meritocracy, it is assumed that those who achieve the American dream surely must possess personal virtue, which is particularly desirable among those entrusted with public office. By emphasizing traditional American ideology through stories about the experiences and achievements of one's family of origin, candidates are indicating that they have desirable qualities that make them particularly fit to hold public office.

Few qualitative gender differences emerged in reference to family of origin information on the websites, but those that did are interesting and important. The gender and party differences that appeared in the texts of candidate references to their families of origin are also suggestive (though not conclusive) that candidates are arraying such family information strategically, as if to deflect stereotypes, with more women and Democrats referencing a military background online, and more men referencing the idea of integrity in their online portrayals of their families of origin, again suggestive of a desire to use this information for credit-claiming purposes, as these are often seen as areas of deficiency for these candidates. More women and Democrats also referenced religion in relation to their families of origin (though there were not party or gender differences in references to religion *anywhere* on candidates' websites), suggesting that

women and Democrats may be trying to convey an idea that they take religion seriously (or at least that their parents did), but in a fairly indirect way, as if they want to convey the idea but not make too much of the issue. On the websites more men and Republicans listed the occupations of at least one parent, and this could be subject to several possible explanations. It could be that men and Republicans traditionally put more store in occupational identities than women and Democrats. For women, perhaps this is due to the fact that "ladies" were not supposed to be in the workforce, or it could be because they historically have tended to have worse positions and therefore may be less likely to define people in relation to labor force identities. By party, it could also be that Republicans, who generally are of higher socioeconomic status, are more willing to define people in relation to their jobs than are Democrats. Alternatively, since many of the jobs mentioned were suggestive of working class or blue collar work, Republicans could be trying to counter the impression that they are upper-class, and that men are similarly trying to downplay perceived labor market advantage.

In an interesting contrast to present family information, in print, men were found to be more likely than women to raise issues in relation to their families of origin, and the issues they did raise tended to be "feminine" issues—the environment, social security, education and health care. This may be indicative of men trying to counter the idea that women are better with these issues in an area of family life where they may also perceive themselves as more able to claim expertise. They may be ceding women's advantage on feminine issues as wives and moms, but may feel better matched in the role of "son" to women's "daughter."

Aside from their common goals of establishing communality with voters, demonstrating personal virtues, and conveying American ideology, these patterns reveal subtle gender differences, suggesting that candidates indeed are not simply and solely using their family of origin information to convey facts, but that they are choosing which facts to emphasize so as to appeal to voters. Surely they are limited by what is in fact true, but there are millions of pieces of true information one can convey about their family of origin. Candidates appear to be choosing those pieces of information that convey they are the best the U.S. has to offer, with values, virtues, understanding, and experiences instilled by their families of origin which voters can rely on. It appears, then, that candidates deploy their family of origin information strategically. The following chapter analyzes how such information is received by voters.

Chapter 5: Family of Origin Frame Experiment

Introduction

In chapter 4, there was evidence of candidates deploying information about their families of origin and their related family/gender roles to convey different ideas than they convey with references to their present families (chapter 2). While present family and family of origin information are both used to convey as sense of commonness about a candidate, gender differences are less apparent in references to candidates' families of origin than in references to their present families. When invoking their families of origin in their campaign materials, both male and female candidates emphasize the value of work, often indicate the profession of at least one parent, and when they do so, they often indicate a working class or blue collar background. Combined with the notion of values taught by their parents (which especially include the value of hard work), I argue that candidate references to their families of origin tend to emphasize aspects of the American dream—specifically humble beginnings and success of the individual through hard work.

I argued that using references to one's family of origin to convey these ideas—humble beginnings, hard work, and good personal character and values, candidates are engaging in a type of credit-claiming. They may do so for two reasons—the facts of their own class status at birth may or may not support a tale of inauspicious beginnings, and therefore being able to hearken back a generation or so helps to anchor their background in keeping with the narrative of the American dream. The second reason that candidates may be using their families of origin to convey these ideas is that it is a modest way of asserting that one has the desirable qualities of a solid work ethic, honesty, personal integrity, and a willingness to serve. By crediting these characteristics to the teachings of

one's parents, candidates are able to both claim that they have these things *and* avoid sounding like overt braggarts, by crediting mom and/or dad with the good sense to raise their children properly.

The male and female candidates did not differ drastically in their references to the basic outlines of the storyline, but the question remains: will voters receive a male and a female candidate framed in this way similarly? To find out, in this experiment, I created prototypical candidate texts discussing the importance of their experiences and lessons of their families of origin for the type of representative they would make in Congress. Because the ideas that the real-life candidates most frequently made allusions to when discussing their families of origins included references to the notion of hard work (on websites, men: 30% and women 23%; in print, men 16% and women 12%), a working-class background and struggles (on websites, men: 29% and women 19%; in print, men 33% and women 21%), and the professions of their parents (on websites, men: 63% and women 35%; in print, men 12% and women 11%), the campaign text I created for this experiment included references to all of these things. Respondents were given either a male or female candidate to read about; as in the previous experiment, the candidates, Jacob and Janet Brown, differed from each other only in their first names and gendered pronouns. Aside from that, the candidates' texts were identical (see Appendix D). Respondents were asked to read the prototypical texts referring to the candidate's family of origin, and then were asked to read a series of six statements about the candidate and to agree or disagree with the statements made. A seventh item asked respondents to rate the likelihood that they would vote for the candidate they read about, assuming that the candidate was a member of the political party the respondent tends to vote for most often.

In the previous chapter I demonstrated the emphasis candidates put on the idea of their families of origin representing the American dream of success through hard work. Irvin G. Wyllie (1954) notes that in American notions of success, the deeper the poverty out of which one crawls, the greater the public's attribution of personal strength to the individual. Children of the rich are actually the least likely to succeed, according to this logic, for their lives lack the adversity against which to develop their character (23-24). To achieve greatness from relative nothingness, historically, has been considered an indication of individual worthiness and value, not chance.

The idea of humble beginnings has long been a political virtue in the U.S. Notably, several American presidents have taken much political credit not for having the *good luck* to be able to rise from obscurity, but rather the *personal virtue* which Americans tend to ascribe to such ascents. Of Andrew Jackson, on the occasion of his death, it was said:

> "As we remember how the soil of poverty has sent up its harvest of great men, our Franklin, our Adams, our [Patrick] Henry, and our Jackson; let us rather say that, as in the *kingdom of geology* the everlasting granite, the underlying basis of all other formations is found in the deepest gulf, yet ever bursting upward from the abyss, towering aloft into the highest hills, and crowning the very pinnacles of the world" (an 1845 eulogy, as cited in Cullen 2003, 68) (emphasis in original).

American politicians have known the advantage to be obtained from highlighting a modest arrival in the world for a long time, and have capitalized on this to increase their political esteem. Jim Cullen (2003) traces the benefit of a poor background for the political career of Abraham Lincoln as well:

> The managers of his successful presidential campaign of 1860 relentlessly exploited his humble beginnings (though by the time he ran for president he was a wealthy lawyer) and gave Lincoln the nickname of "the Railsplitter," a moniker that emphasized his familiarity with manual labor. Lincoln's entire public persona—his homely looks and unkempt appearance, his celebrated sense of

> humor, the self-effacing modesty he repeatedly deployed while running for and holding office...was leveraged on his modest beginnings and what he had made of them. Even his oratory eloquence derived its power from Lincoln's reputed poverty; it was made, and heard, as a testament to how democracy could elevate the Everyman. (Cullen 2003, 76)

Humble beginnings are a virtue politically precisely when they anchor (only) the first chapter of a life story. Ostensibly, if they were not overcome at some point (as generally evidenced by the ability to even be considered for high political office) humble beginnings would not necessarily be treated as virtue. Indeed, Americans tend to have a rather contemptuous attitude for those who live in persistent poverty (Kingdon 1999).

That the American dream is a tale of emergence from an inauspicious youth is commonly accepted; that it has historically been gendered male is a fact not always explicitly acknowledged, yet it is clear in discussions of the concept:

> The legendary hero of America is the self-made man. He has been active in every field from politics to the arts, but nowhere has he been more active, or more acclaimed, than in business. To most Americans he is the office boy who has become the head of a great concern, making millions in the process. He represents our most cherished conceptions of success, and particularly our belief that any man can achieve fortune through the practice of industry, frugality, and sobriety. (Wyllie 1954, 6)

The idea that "any man" can achieve the American dream as described above is not necessarily true, for the necessary opportunities (such as being hired and promoted in the world of business or securing loans for investment) have not actually been available to every American. The author above is emphasizing the openness of such opportunity in the U.S.; later writers have drawn attention to the fact that this is a dream that has been foreclosed to many in America, including most women and also many men (Cullen 2003, Hochschild 1995, Sidel 1990). Jennifer L. Hochschild estimates that until very recently, only about one third of the American population could really expect to participate

"equally" in the opportunities necessary to achieve American dream (1995, 26). The alternative female version of the American dream of success, of course, was not to achieve in industry or politics but rather to marry well (Sidel 1990). A wife who made a good match would derive benefits of the American dream indirectly, in exchange for helping her husband to succeed, and would "be the means of saving him from loose women, gambling, drink, and other vices which damaged [a man's] reputation" (Wyllie 1954, 30). Though scholars acknowledge the weakened role that ascriptive characteristics such as gender and race have played in determining who can achieve the American dream in very recent history (Hochschild 1995, Sidel 1990), Ruth Sidel points out that despite the gains made by women in achieving the American dream of success for themselves, "men have been perceived by women and men alike as the primary players, the central characters in the struggle toward success and affluence" (1990, 1). The legacy of expectations has not changed as rapidly as economic facts.

I believe the male candidate will be extended more credit than the female candidate on the part of respondents for actually seeming successful when humble beginnings are part of the framing of the candidate. The references to a candidate's family of origin often indicate working class status on the part of the parent, in part because it may simply be true, but probably also because it helps to create the image of the American dream. And yet, voters and supporters want candidates who seem successful; they want to back winners and feel confident that the people they elect are not simply competent, but adept at their pursuits (see for example Damore 1997, Funk 1996, 1997, Mutz 1995). Mentioning one's more humble beginnings requires voters to conclude that financial struggles existed and have helped shape a candidate's character,

but are in the past and that candidate is successful because he/she has risen above those more humble beginnings. In attempting to convey a story of personal success, candidates often first mark themselves as average. But the notion of the American dream has largely been centered around the idea of the self-made man—Andrew Carnegie, John Jacob Astor, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Thomas Mellon, Henry Ford, Bill Gates, and Sam Walton to name but a few.[48] Historically, there are gendered assumptions (and history) about who is successful in the U.S.

Thus, I expect:

1. The female candidate described to respondents with such a frame emphasizing a working class family of origin will receive lower evaluations by respondents than will the male candidate.

I expect this to be the case for two reasons. The first is the legacies of coverture and patrilineage in the United States (see chapter 4), which have diminished the status of daughters relative to their parental lines, historically, in favor of their brothers and husbands. Such traditions gave rise to a perception of women as dependents in relation to these family lines, and I believe a female candidate described in relation to her parents may be considered less independent than a male described in this way.

The second reason I expect this to be the case is that the American dream, particularly the idea many candidates seem to be trying to convey of starting from humble beginnings and achieving success through hard work, is traditionally associated with men and not women.

Numerous previous studies have indicated that women voters, when given a choice, are more likely than men to prefer women candidates (See for example Barbara

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[48] Martha Stewart, Oprah Winfrey, and the Olsen twins are notable precisely because they are exceptions to a long history of male American business tycoons.

Lee Family Foundation 2001, K. Dolan 1998, 2004, Rosenthal 1995, Sanbonmatsu

2002). Therefore, I also expect:

2. When the gender of the respondent is taken into account, women respondents will give higher evaluations to a woman candidate than male respondents would.

3. I also expect that because of the ties to labor and the notion that the Democratic Party is the party of "the working man" (and woman?) that a candidate, either male or female, framed in this way would be more successful with Democratic respondents than with Republican respondents.

Finally, given the noted relationship between age and gender role attitudes (Ciabattari

2001, Mason and Lu 1988, Rice and Coates 1995, Rosenthal 1995, Wilkie 1993), I

expect:

4. The older the respondents, the less likely they will be to evaluate the female candidate as highly as or higher than they evaluate a male candidate.

Results

Overall, there is good news to be found for women candidates. Framing oneself

in relation to one's family of origin, and highlighting a working class background did not

generate any significant differences in the average evaluations of the male and female

candidate (Table 5.1, column A). This is contrary to what I hypothesized, yet it is

encouraging to find that a male and a female candidate framed in this way appear to

appeal at roughly the same levels to respondents overall. Though no statistically

significant differences appeared in a sample of respondents representative of the U.S.

population, looking within subgroups of the population, there is some evidence of

candidates being evaluated differently on the basis of their gender, though not always in

ways I expected.

Table 5.1: Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Family of Origin Frame; Gender of Respondents

Question:	Column A		Column B		Column C	
	All Respondents		**Male Respondents**		**Female Respondents**	
	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	5.15 >	5.12	5.06 >	5.02	5.29 >	5.18
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	5.18 <	5.28	5.11 >	5.03	5.29 <	5.43
would probably understand my concerns:	5.19 <	5.26	5.11 >	4.98	5.31 <	5.44
reminds me of people I know:	5.15 >	5.13	**5.13** >**	**4.78**	5.18 <	5.34
seems successful:	5.20 >	5.14	**5.16* >**	**4.95**	5.25 <	5.26
seems qualified for office:	5.05 <	5.07	4.92 >	4.74	5.25 <	5.27
likelihood to vote for candidate:	5.49 > N=438	5.37 N=363	**5.48[a] >** N=260	**5.29** N=140	5.50 > N= 178	5.42 N= 224

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \le .1$

** $p \le .05$

[a] significant at p = .114

Column B of Table 5.1 compares the rates at which male respondents evaluated the male vs. female candidate under the family of origin frame. On each measure, the male respondents in this study gave higher average evaluations to the male candidate when compared with the female candidate, but on only two of these measures were the differences statistically significant. Male respondents rated the male candidate higher on the measures "reminds me of people I know," and on "seems successful." The higher average evaluations given by male respondents in their evaluations of their likelihood to vote for the male candidate approached statistical significance. While the higher evaluations given to the male candidate by male respondents occurred consistently then, across the measures, the differences were not all so great as to be highly statistically probable given repeated sample testing, indicating that any deficit which a female candidate using this frame might encounter with male respondents may not be insurmountable.

The news for female candidates making this type of reference to their families of origin is even better looking at the responses of female respondents, as shown in column C of Table 5.1. Female respondents gave higher average evaluations to the female candidate on five out of the seven measures, though on none of the measures were any of the differences statistically significant. Female respondents, then, appear to be indifferent about the gender of a candidate under this type of family frame, in contrast to their higher evaluations of the male candidate under the present family frame. Among female respondents, a female candidate who describes her family of origin in this way is on equal ground with a similarly described male opponent.

The data in Table 5.2 compare the average evaluations of the female candidate given by male and female respondents. Male respondents rated the female candidate lower than did the female respondents on each question, and on five of the seven questions the sex difference was statistically significant. However, of particular note is the lack of statistical difference in their indicated willingness to *vote* for the female candidate. Male respondents and female respondents did not differ significantly in their stated willingness to vote for a female candidate framed by this type of description of her family of origin background, *despite* the fact than on five of the other six questions, men gave lower average evaluations of the female candidate than did the women. Though male respondents may rate her lower than female respondents on qualities relevant to representation, they were not less likely than women to vote for her.

By party of respondent, I predicted that because this type of family of origin frame emphasized the notion of working class status that Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents would rate both a male and a female candidate under this frame higher than would Republican respondents. As the party known as the party of the working man, I hypothesized that even if Democrats rated a man described in this way more highly than a woman described in this way, these evaluations would still be higher than those of a Republican candidate of either gender described in this way. My expectations, however, were only partially supported by the results.

Table 5.2: Mean Voter Evaluations of Female Candidate, Family of Origin Frame; Gender of Respondent

Question:	Male Respondents		Female Respondents
would make a good representative in Washington:	5.02	<	5.18
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	**5.03****	<	**5.43**
would probably understand my concerns:	**4.98*****	<	**5.44**
reminds me of people I know:	**4.78*****	<	**5.34**
seems successful:	**4.95****	<	**5.26**
seems qualified for office:	**4.74*****	<	**5.27**
likelihood to vote for candidate:	5.29	<	5.42
	N= 140		N= 224

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

*** $p \leq .001$

Table 5.3: Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Family of Origin Frame; Party of Respondents

Question:	Column A			Column B			Column C			Column D		
	Democratic and Democratic-Leaning Respondents			**Republican and Republican-Leaning Respondents**			**Male Candidate Evaluations by Party of Respondent**			**Female Candidate Evaluations by Party of Respondent**		
	Male Candidate		Female Candidate	Male Candidate		Female Candidate	Republican and Republican-Leaning Respondents		Democratic and Democratic-Leaning Respondents	Republican and Republican-Leaning Respondents		Democratic and Democratic-Leaning Respondents
would make a good representative in Washington:	**5.35***	>	**5.14**	5.15	<	5.21	5.15^a	<	5.35	5.21	>	5.14
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	**5.47****	>	**5.18**	**5.11***	<	**5.49**	**5.11****	<	**5.47**	**5.49****	>	**5.18**
would probably understand my concerns:	**5.58****	>	**5.20**	**4.95*****	<	**5.41**	**4.95*****	<	**5.58**	**5.41***	>	**5.20**
reminds me of people I know:	**5.41*****	>	**4.99**	**5.07****	<	**5.42**	**5.07****	<	**5.41**	**5.42*****	>	**4.99**
seems successful:	5.25	>	5.07	5.23	<	5.30	5.23	<	5.25	**5.30***	>	**5.07**
seems qualified for office:	5.14	>	5.05	5.01	<	5.09	5.01	<	5.14	5.09	>	5.05
likelihood to vote for candidate:	**5.78****	>	**5.50**	5.46	>	5.42	**5.46****	<	**5.78**	5.42	<	5.50
	N=160		N= 178	N=212		N= 152	N= 212		N= 160	N= 152		N= 178

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

*** $p \leq .001$

[a] significant at p = .106

Among Democratic respondents (column A of Table 5.3), traditional notions of gender indeed held sway, as they rated the male candidate under the working class family of origin frame higher on average than they did the female candidate on five out of the seven measures, including their likelihood to vote for the candidate. They rated the male candidate higher on the statements: "would make a good representative in Washington," "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "would probably understand my concerns," and "reminds me of people I know," suggesting both that the candidate seemed like a person who shared their experiences and perspective, as well as one who they would want representing them in office.[49]

Looking at the results for the Republican and Republican-leaning respondents depicted in column B of Table 5.3, gender appears to be acting in a different way. Contrary to what I hypothesized, Republican respondents actually rated a female candidate described with a working-class family of origin background higher than they did a male with the same stated background on three measures. On "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "would probably understand my concerns," and "reminds me of people I know," Republicans demonstrated statistically significant higher evaluations of the female candidate than the male candidate. The picture of female candidates describing themselves in this way to Republican respondents is mixed. The larger and more reliable differences were shown on the two categories which are important in the concept of descriptive representation—"would probably understand my concerns," and "reminds me of people I know." That is promising if voters vote primarily on the basis of descriptive representation, but other factors such as leadership, viability, and credentials

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[49] It is of course a conundrum of descriptive representation that a voter may not believe a person who is like them is a suitable elected representative, despite shared empathies and experiences.

may be much more important to voters. A candidate may remind me of my sister and therefore seem like she would understand my concerns, but it if came down to it, would I choose my sister over someone who might have more political experience and demonstrated leadership qualities? As one can see from the data, higher average evaluations of the female candidate on these scores in fact did not translate in to a greater likelihood to vote for her than for the male candidate. Overall, the good news for women candidates who frame themselves in this way is that when it comes to voting, they are at no disadvantage to men who adopt the same presentational strategy with Republican respondents.

Thus far, this study has demonstrated that Democrats rate a male candidate in this frame higher than they do a female, and that Republicans rate a female in this frame higher than they do a male, but I had also predicted that Democrats would demonstrate higher evaluations for both male and female candidates when compared to Republicans, due to the signaling of the working class background of the candidate. This was true for the male candidate, but not for the female candidate.

Column C of Table 5.3 shows that on the whole, Democratic respondents rated a male candidate portrayed with a working class family of origin background higher than did Republican respondents, suggesting that using such a frame is more successful with Democratic respondents, as predicted. A male candidate indicating the working class struggles of his family of origin was rated more highly by Democratic respondents on the statements: "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "would probably understand my concerns," "reminds me of people I know," and on "would make a good representative in Washington," the higher evaluation by Democratic respondents approached statistical

significance at p=.106. Finally, Democratic respondents also demonstrated a higher willingness to vote for such a male candidate than did Republican respondents. So far, that is as expected, but how did the rates at which Democrats and Republicans evaluating a female candidate under a working class family of origin frame compare?

The evidence regarding the evaluations of the female candidate under the family of origin frame is mixed (column D of Table 5.3). She did not fare better with the Democratic respondents as I had predicted. Instead, Republican and Republican-leaning respondents evaluated her more highly on four of seven measures, including "has qualities I look for in elected officials," "would probably understand my concerns," "reminds me of people I know, and "seems successful." The higher evaluations given to her by Republican respondents did not translate into any higher willingness to vote for her than the Democratic and Democratic-leaning respondents though. Actually, what appears to have occurred is that the *lower* evaluations given to the female candidate under the working class family of origin frame did not translate into a lesser willingness on the part of Democratic respondents to vote for her, which is good news for female Democratic candidates who use this frame. Overall, however, it appears to be a frame more successful for a woman courting Republican respondents rather than Democratic ones.

It is difficult to explain why this particular frame is more successful for the male candidate with Democratic respondents, but more successful for the female candidate with Republican respondents. Clearly the combination of the Democratic Party and the male candidate's gender identity resonated with Democratic respondents as supporters of the party of the working man. But I did not expect a woman to do better than a man with

Republican respondents under the same frame. Granted, they were no more likely to vote for her than they were for the male candidate, but something about her resonated with them in a way that did not for the male candidate, given that they were more likely to agree that she would understand their concerns, and reminded them of people they knew, as well as having qualities they look for in elected officials. In these regards Republicans were not indifferent to the gender identity of a candidate given such a family background. One possible explanation could be that a woman with a working class background suggested to respondents someone who would be more likely to be socially conservative. Kristin Luker (1984) has argued that women who are pro-life are less likely than women who are pro-choice to have "human capital" resources, and their consequent lesser ability to compete in waged labor markets reinforces their worldview that supports traditional gender roles. The candidate described here is framed with a working class background and has a family history of financial struggles. It is theoretically possible that this may be signaling social conservatism on her part. To socially conservative Republican respondents then, she might seem a kindred spirit who would remind them of people they know and understand their concerns. If those were qualities they look for in a candidate they would have scored her accordingly. This explanation, while tentative, could also account for Democratic respondents lower evaluations of the female candidate if they feared she was more socially conservative than they were themselves.

Alternatively, the fact that Republican respondents found her to be particularly relatable could be because she appeared to them to be someone who was very common and familiar, and perhaps they thought she could be someone who could beat a Democratic candidate by claiming a working class background. That does not explain

why they would rate her more highly on these measures than they would an otherwise

identical male candidate, unless they supposed that both the working class family of

origin *and* her gender identity as female would appeal to weakly partisan Democrats who

are more accustomed to female candidates. Perhaps they thought a woman described this

way would have a broad bipartisan mainstream appeal and therefore looked like a winner.

Again, Republican respondents indicated that they were no more likely to actually *vote*

for this woman than they would for the man described the exact same way, but something

about her did appeal to them more.

A third possible explanation is that the description of the candidate's background

in this frame suggests two different gender stereotypes--compassion on the part of the

candidate, as well as sympathy to organized labor. Women candidates are already

assumed by voters to be compassionate, men are not. It could be that the woman under

this frame rated higher with Republican respondents because she conveyed a sense of

compassion that they expected of her because she is a woman. A man who is thus

portrayed as compassionate may not be appealing to Republican respondents as this is a

feminine stereotype, and may be a turnoff to voters who prefer men and women fulfill

traditional gender ideology. Similarly, the background of the candidate in this frame

suggested sympathy to the politics of blue collar and organized labor. Democratic

respondents may be more likely to associate union politics with male candidates than

with female candidates, and therefore prefer the man because he is living up to their

stereotyped expectation as well, while the female is not.[50] However, if this were in fact

what was occurring among respondents, it would contradict the findings of Kaid et al.

(1984) who found that a male and a female candidate did better with respondents in

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[50] I thank Susan J. Carroll for providing this alternate explanation of the data.

settings not traditionally associated with their gender in advertisements. Further studies are needed to probe this issue further.

Under the present family frame (chapter 3), older respondents (45 years old and up) gave the male candidate higher evaluations, including in their likelihood to vote for the candidate, than they did to the female candidate. Younger respondents aged 30-44 demonstrated strong and consistently higher evaluations of the female candidate described as a parent in relation to her present family than they did for the male candidate. This could not be explained by whether or not a respondent had children at home, but the results were basically consistent with the pattern of younger generations, particularly those who came of age during the height of the second wave of feminism, having more favorable opinions of women in politics than older generations (Ciabattari 2001). If there is a general preference for women in politics demonstrated by generation then, one should expect the same age groups to display the same patterns of evaluations of male and female candidates under the family of origin frame as well. Interestingly, this did not pan out and in fact, the patterns by age seen for the present family frame generally reversed themselves when candidates used the family of origin frame.

The respondents aged 18-44 (Table 5.4) rated the male candidate higher than the female candidate on two measures: "seems successful" and in their likelihood to vote for the candidate. Higher ratings for the male candidate on the measure "would make a good representative in Washington" also approached statistical significance. By contrast, the average responses of respondents 45 years of age and up were indifferent between the male and female candidate under the family of origin frame. These findings are contradictory to what the literature and the findings from the present family frame

Table 5.4: Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Family of Origin Frame; Age of Respondents in Two Categories

	Column A		Column B	
	18-44 Year Olds		**45 Years Old and Up**	
Question:	**Male Candidate**	**Female Candidate**	**Male Candidate**	**Female Candidate**
would make a good representative in Washington:	**4.95**[a] >	**4.77**	5.40 <	5.43
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	4.89 <	4.95	5.54 <	5.56
would probably understand my concerns:	5.04 >	4.96	5.38 <	5.52
reminds me of people I know:	4.95 >	4.82	5.39 <	5.40
seems successful:	**5.08*** >	**4.87**	5.34 <	5.37
seems qualified for office:	4.82 >	4.76	5.33 <	5.34
likelihood to vote for candidate:	**5.29*** >	**5.06**	5.73 >	5.64
	N= 239	N= 171	N= 199	N= 193

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \le .1$

** $p \le .05$

[a] significant at $p = .149$

experiment suggest should be the trend—that older respondents would rate the male candidate higher than the female candidate, and that younger respondents would rate the female candidate higher on most measures. The two age groups did not differ drastically from each other in their party affiliations/leanings. Of the respondents who indicated a party preference or inclination, 52.9% of the 18-44 year olds indicated the Republican Party as their party of choice (47.1% Democrats), while 50.7% of the 45+ respondents indicated the Republican Party as their party of choice (49.3% Democrats). The differences were not statistically significant (p=.564). There were distinctions among the younger respondents in the present family frame experiment, however, and Table 5.5 examines these same groups given candidates under the family of origin frame as well for comparison.

Interestingly, the patterns that emerged for these two groups of respondents by age (Table 5.5, columns A and B) within the present family frame exactly reversed under the new frame. The 18-29 year olds, who gave higher average evaluations to the male candidate on the measures "would make a good representative in Washington" and "has qualities I look for in elected officials" under the present family frame, actually gave higher average evaluations to the female candidate under the family of origin frame on these measures. The difference found in a third measure, "would probably understand my concerns" also approached statistical significance and here they rated the female candidate higher than the male candidate again. On the rest of the measures, 18-29 year olds appeared to be indifferent to the gender of the candidate under this frame as they had been to the candidate under the present family frame as well. The higher evaluations given to the female candidate under the family of origin frame on the initial measures did

Table 5.5: Mean Voter Evaluations of Male and Female Candidate, Family of Origin Frame; Age of Respondents in Four Categories

Question:	Column A		Column B		Column C		Column D	
	18-29 Year Olds		30-44 Year Olds		45-59 Year Olds		60 Years Old and Up	
	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Male Candidate	Female Candidate
would make a good representative in Washington:	4.6** <	4.93	5.34*** >	4.55	5.24 >	5.14	5.53 <	5.60
has qualities I look for in elected officials:	4.67** <	5.11	5.13** >	4.72	5.52** >	5.17	5.57* <	5.80
would probably understand my concerns:	4.89ᵃ <	5.11	5.2** >	4.75	5.27 >	5.15	5.47** <	5.75
reminds me of people I know:	4.76 <	4.88	5.17** >	4.72	5.29* >	4.94	5.47 <	5.67
seems successful:	4.84 <	4.94	5.35*** >	4.78	5.30** >	4.92	5.37** <	5.64
seems qualified for office:	4.76 <	4.90	4.90* >	4.55	5.08 >	4.87	5.52 <	5.62
likelihood to vote for candidate:	5.18 > N=126	5.06 N= 102	5.42* > N= 113	5.05 N= 70	5.52 > N= 88	5.35 N= 73	5.89 > N= 111	5.81 N= 120

Boldface type indicates pairs which differed significantly from each other.

* $p \leq .1$

** $p \leq .05$

*** $p \leq .001$

ᵃ significant at p = .137

not translate into a higher willingness to vote for the female candidate, but nor did respondents rate the male candidate higher in a statistically significant way, suggesting that when it comes to voting, at least, male and female candidates using a working class family of origin frame are facing a level playing field with voters between the ages of 18 and 29.

The results reported in column B of Table 5.5 are striking in that 30-44 year old respondents consistently and clearly gave higher evaluations, on average, to the male candidate who invoked a working class family of origin experience. This pattern by age is in direct contrast to the evaluations this same age group of respondents gave to the male and female candidates under the present family frame reported in Chapter 3. Under that family frame, the evaluations were consistently higher for the female candidate. Clearly, it is not simply the case that respondents of this age group simply prefer female candidates, as their evaluations of candidates by gender appears to depend on what kind of information is given about the candidate. Invoking the different levels of family information was enough to get respondents to demonstrate opposite patterns of evaluations by the gender of the candidate. The respondents in this age group were never indifferent to candidate gender under either frame—indeed, they are clearly ambivalent, being drawn more strongly toward the female candidate described in relation to her present family and role as parent, but being more strongly drawn to the male candidate when the candidate's family of origin is invoked.

The youngest age groups in this study did differ in their party affiliations. Respondents aged 18-29 who indicated a party preference chose Republican 45.3% of the time, and Democrat 54.7% of the time, while 30-44 year olds indicated Republican

61.8% of the time and Democratic 38.2% of the time. The difference in party preference between these two youngest group of respondents given this frame was significant (p=.003), while the same aged groups of respondents given the present family frame did not differ significantly from each other. However, Democrats in this experiment, overall, rated the *male* candidate higher than the female candidate, and the Republicans overall rated the *female* candidate higher than the male candidate (Table 5.3), so neither party nor age alone explain the patterns that are emerging for the young respondents in this study.

One possible explanation for what is occurring with these respondents is that the family of origin frame made an economic threat particularly salient. The candidate in this frame was described as having witnessed his/her parents and community struggle through a plant closing and job losses. The threat of such a job loss may be felt most acutely by respondents in this age group due to their stage in the life/work cycle. They are more likely than 18-29 year olds to be solidly entrenched in their careers, but are further from retirement than respondents older than them. Highlighting the possibility of job loss may have triggered a response which indicates trust in male candidates to handle economic issues better, a stereotype commonly ascribed to males when compared to females (Alexander and Andersen 1993, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b, Sapiro 1982).

In chapter 3 I demonstrated that respondents age 45 and up gave higher evaluations to the male candidate under the present family frame than they did to the female candidate. Yet respondents 45 and up appeared indifferent to the gender of the candidate under the family of origin frame (see Table 5.4). In fact, that is only the case when older respondents are aggregated this way into one group. When they are broken

down into groups 45-59 years old and 60 years plus, it is evident that the younger of these two groups, those aged 45-59 (column C of Table 5.5), gave higher evaluations to the male candidate on these measures, while those aged 60 and up gave higher evaluations to the female candidate (column D of Table 5.5).

While the greater favorable evaluations of the male candidate by the 45-59 year olds is not as consistent or strong as it is for the 30-44 year olds, it is consistent with the idea that respondents who still are more likely to be solidly entrenched in their careers find the male candidate more attractive, while those who are nearing or are in retirement age find the female candidate more attractive on some measures. Neither of these groups demonstrated differential likelihoods to vote for the male or female candidate, but when preferences did emerge, they were consistent with the idea that those who may be most concerned about losing their jobs find a male candidate more appealing when candidates frame themselves with the job struggles of their families of origin. Economic issues are generally stereotypically considered a strength of male candidates (Alexander and Andersent 1993, Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b, Sapiro 1982), and therefore a male candidate may have held more appeal to these respondents under the specter of threats to one's livelihood.

The fact that respondents 60 and over demonstrated higher evaluations of the female candidate on some measures may also have to do with their primary issue concerns. The candidate in the frame appears sympathetic to the concerns of people in her parents' generation—people who are likely to be at least 60 years of age (though the age of the candidate him/herself was never specified). It could be the case that referencing her parents reassured older respondents that she would be compassionate

about their likely issues of concern, such as healthcare and social security, and this would play to women's stereotypical political strengths more so than a man's. It could be argued that debates about Social Security funding would more readily fall under the realm of economic issues, and therefore be seen as an issue in which men are more likely to be considered to have expertise. But, given the age of the respondents here, the financial restructuring to prevent a looming crisis in social security a generation later may not be their primary concern, so much as the determination of legislators not to cut any assistance seniors have been promised under the current system, making social security primarily a compassion issue rather than a financial one. Indeed, a financial wiz may be precisely the one more likely to make cuts into guaranteed benefits for the sake of solvency.

Conclusion

The fact that not all of my hypotheses were confirmed by this experiment is evidence of the complexity of the relationship between gender, family, and political expectations. The good news for women candidates is that taken overall, they do not fare systematically worse than a male candidate when making reference to a working class family of origin background. However, their evaluations depend on what segments of the population are evaluating them, as differences did emerge by gender, party, and age of respondent. As predicted, the female candidate under this frame did indeed fare better with women respondents than with male respondents. While men gave higher evaluations to the male candidate on two measures, and came close to demonstrating favoritism for the male candidate in their likelihood to vote for the candidate, female respondents appeared to be indifferent to the gender of the candidate. While they did not

favor the female candidate with systematically higher evaluations on any measure, they did not penalize her for her gender either, suggesting a lack of gender bias. Female respondents, as expected, rated the female candidate higher than did male respondents on five of seven measures, though there was no difference in the likelihood of these two groups voting for a female candidate.

My predictions based on the frame and the party of the respondent were not completely borne out, suggesting that respondents of the two parties indeed have different reactions to male and female candidates who use a working-class, family of origin frame to describe themselves. As predicted, Democratic respondents rated a male candidate under this frame higher than did Republican respondents, but it was not simply the party/frame combination that produced the effects, because the same did not hold true when the respondents considered a female candidate under this frame. The woman candidate who invoked this sort of family of origin frame fared better with Republican respondents compared to how they evaluated her male counterpart, and compared to how Democratic respondents evaluated a female candidate. I speculate that the combination of class and gender information about the candidate may be signaling likely conservative ideology, or alternatively Republicans may think that such a woman would appeal to weakly partisan Democrats, and therefore be a winner due to mainstream appeal. Yet another alternative is that the working class family of origin frame suggested a "compassionate" candidate, which is a strength of women candidates, but may be considered by more traditional Republicans to be too stereotypically feminine when applied to a male candidate. This study design cannot ascertain precisely what is

occurring, but is suggestive that further studies evaluating the effect of such a frame should be undertaken.

Finally, a surprising finding is that the pattern by age that emerged for the candidates under the present family frame basically reversed themselves in this experiment. Rather than old/young distinctions emerging in their patterns of evaluations of a male and a female candidate, respondents who are roughly middle-aged (30-59) differed from both younger and older respondents in their evaluations. Middle-aged respondents rated the male candidate higher than the female, while any distinctions made by the youngest (18-29 years old) and oldest (60 years old and up) respondents favored the female candidate. Differences in their party leanings complicate the interpretation of these results, as the youngest respondents were more heavily Democrat, yet Democrats overall did not favor the female candidate. The respondents aged 30-44 were more likely to be Republicans, and yet Republicans overall favored the female candidate, not the male candidate as expected. I speculate that the differences found here may have to do with the specter of job loss invoked in the frame, and one's likely stage in their career. The fact that the patterns, particularly by age, alternated between the two family frames suggests that the level of family invoked by candidates is important and should be treated distinctly. As candidates strategize about how to portray themselves in relation to their families, they should pay close attention to the fact that not all segments of family trigger the same responses from potential voters.

Chapter 6: The Strategic Deployment of Gender and Family Information by Candidates, and the Persistent Effect of Gender Roles on Potential Voter Evaluations

The Strategic Deployment of Gender and Family Information

In 2005 in Tucson, Arizona, five people were arrested for trespassing when they tried to enlist in the U.S. Army. The people arrested were a group of female senior citizens known as the "Tucson Raging Grannies." Members of a larger movement of peace and liberal activists that started in Victoria, British Columbia in 1987, when a similar group rowed a kayak out to a nuclear submarine to protest its presence in port ("A History" 2006), the Raging Grannies are women of an age that makes them eligible to be grandmothers, and they capitalize on the role. "Put on your granny garb, flowery hats, an apron, a shawl—whatever it takes to look like the sweet little old lady you are. Then, with other like-minded patriots, go out on the streets and sing!" ("Press" 2006) The group dresses in their decidedly campy way, stages protests and conducts street theater. They use humor to make their points. One Raging Granny describes their purpose and activities:

> Let us be clear about the Grannies. We are totally non-violent, believe in only peaceful protest (with lots of laughter), work for the "many not the few" (motto of the old Mechanics' Institute) and see our work as the spreading green branches of a great tree, rising up to provide shelter and nourishment for those who will come after us...The delights of grannying include: dressing like innocent little old ladies so we can get close to our "target," writing songs from old favourites that skewer modern wrongs, satirizing evil-doing in public and getting everyone singing about it, watching a wrong back down and turn tail and run, sharing a history with other women who know who they are and what they're about. Grannying is the least understood yet most powerful weapon we have. Sometimes, looking back, we can see grannying was the only thing that could have met the need. (DeShaw 2005)

The Raging Grannies have taken a traditional gender/family role and deployed it toward non-traditional ends. Precisely because few expect them to be conducting political protests, they are able to draw a crowd of listeners. They maintain and even heighten a sense of being non-threatening through their silly, tacky clothing and musical tactics.

> "We believe passionately in issues," says Ruth Liatos, 69. "But when you use humor, when you make fun of yourself, people's eyes don't glaze over. You see them spark up, smile, and they start listening." Ruth, class clown for the strident choir, grows uncharacteristically quiet, her malleable face momentarily fallen. *"It's very rare as you get older to have people listen to you,"* she adds. (Lyke 2000) (my emphasis).

The Raging Grannies have seized on a technique of invoking their gender/family role that actually heightens the attention that they get, when if they were "simply" grandmothers without the self-conscious lampooning, they may actually have received very little attention to their political views by virtue of their age and gender status.

While the candidates in this study are not lampooning their gender/family roles to gain attention, they do appear to be deploying them consciously and strategically. Political life, like work and family life, is not a gender-neutral arena. The political world is "masculinized" due to the historically mandated exclusion of women, and though prima facie legal barriers to women's full participation and representation may have been removed, the de facto world of political reality has not entirely caught up with the world of formal equality. Habits of thought and expectations based on experience of previous incarnations of the sex divisions of labor remain. However, people are not always aware of the legacies of previous patterns of organization by gender, particularly in an era where many of the legal barriers have been overcome. In using the language of equality, where previous pronouncements rendered women second-class citizens and restricted their public participation, at times people may overlook the footprint of traditional gender

roles in daily habits and expectations, particularly regarding those whom we select to serve as political representatives in our stead. Nor have we even fully removed all the barriers to women's full and equal participation in work and public life in the U.S. But that does not mean that we are highly cognizant of the ways in which we still distinguish by gender.[51] We may speak in terms of equality, but we still distinguish on the basis of identity.

The mark of gender, though, is not borne equally by the two sexes. Men occupy spaces of political life and their presence seems normal and natural, as if they have always occupied those spaces—for indeed, in American society, they have. Women, on the other hand, enter these domains with the mark of the outsider, due to the historical legacies of policies of coverture, the public/private distinction, and the stubbornly persistent primary responsibility for childcare and the reproduction of family life.

This study gives evidence of the persistent effect of gender roles on political candidacies. It delves more deeply into the types of families mentioned by candidates and linguistic strategies used to describe those family relations. By examining the website and print campaign literature from the 2002 elections for House, Senate, and governor where at least one major party candidate was a woman, we have seen the complexities of the ways in which candidates approach issues of their gender roles and family relations to voters.

Chapter 2 of this study revealed that women candidates employ linguistic strategies, such as using gender-neutral language and listing familial identities alongside business and professional identities as ways to temper the association between them and

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[51] See for instance the work emerging out of the Harvard Implicit Association Tests, https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research/.

traditional family/gender roles as wife and mother. In their online campaign materials, married women in 2002 were less likely than their male opponents to mention their spouse or their role as spouse, although they were just as likely to mention having children and their parental role.

These strategies appear to be affected by party ideology, with Republican women more likely than Democratic women to portray themselves in their traditional roles of wife and mother on their websites, and married Democratic women the most reticent to mention their spouses or call themselves by the gender specific role term "wife" (or "husband," for men) when compared to Democratic men and Republican women. Democratic men in this study were much more likely than Democratic women to mention being a spouse, suggestive that they may expect an audience of likely young and heavily Democratic supporters who would approve of a man portraying himself in a partnership with a woman, while Democratic women's very low rate of doing this online suggests that perhaps these women do not feel compelled to portray themselves in a partnership with a man in front of such an audience. Alternatively, Democratic men may be trying to portray themselves as having "family values"—something voters likely assume about their Republican and female counterparts. Republican women were more likely than Republican men to mention their roles as parents on their websites, though Republican women were *also* more likely than Republican men and Democratic women to use the gender-neutral term "parent," rather than "mother" (or "father") to describe this gender/family role. These differences by gender and party on candidate websites are suggestive of the fact that Republican women, in particular, were trying to invoke the traditional family/gender roles for which they are likely to be applauded as women, but

were trying to balance them, so as not to seem too inconsistent with the identity of being a holder of public office. Democratic men and women also appear to be approaching or avoiding their traditional family/gender roles as "husband" and "wife" in ways they may expect their online audience to approve.

Women running for Congress in 2002 appeared to employ two different strategies for invoking their family/gender roles, according to which house they sought. I show that women in House races are more likely than women in more prestigious statewide races to portray themselves in the traditional gender/family roles as wives and mothers on their websites, and they outpaced men running for the House when invoking their roles as parents online. Of the men and women running for the Senate who were married, all mentioned their spouse, but none of the women mentioned being a "wife," though half of the men mentioned being a "husband." Women running for the Senate were also less likely than men running for the Senate to use gender-specific terminology to describe themselves as "mother" (or "father") on their websites. The women who ran for the statewide seats of Senator and governor were found to be less likely than women running for House seats to mention their gender/family roles as wives and mothers, though they were *more* likely than women running for the House to use the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe themselves. These trends support the hypothesis that since statewide seats are fewer, are considered more prestigious, and attract more professional candidates, they may appear more incompatible with women's traditional gender roles. Concurrently, though, since the men in this study running for the Senate were running against women, they may have felt a different pressure to soften their images a bit, and therefore may have put more emphasis on their gender/family roles, which are not

historically considered incompatible with officeholding. Women in 2002 who ran as challengers were less likely than men running as challenger to mention their spouse and spousal roles, while incumbent women were just as likely as men to mention their spouse and their spousal roles. Women incumbents were even more likely than men incumbents to indicate their roles as parents, which suggest that women who run from safer positions are not more reluctant than men in the same safe positions to indicate that they are married or are parents. Women running as challengers were found to be more likely than men running as challengers to invoke their parental role online, though they were also more likely to use gender-neutral language to do so. Women in open seat races—those that ostensibly are the most competitive—also demonstrated a greater reluctance than women in other race types to portray themselves as wives or mothers on their websites. This is suggestive that the more competitive the race, the less likely women are to emphasize traditional gender and family roles on their websites.

When it comes to giving information about one's present family in print, Democratic women gave less family information to print audiences than to online viewers across the board, indicating that they may have anticipated a different audience reception to the two different forms of media. Republican women were less likely to mention their roles as mothers in print and also dropped the gender-neutral language strategy that they had used online to describe themselves as mothers in print, suggesting that they, too, may have anticipated a different audience, which may have prompted some who might have tried the middle-of-the-road gender-neutral language strategy to forego it, and choose between simply referring to themselves as mothers or not making any reference to this identity at all. As for being a spouse, married Republican women

invoked this role more frequently than Republican men or Democratic women did in print, suggesting that they are trying to cultivate a more traditional gender/family image. Married Democratic women were less likely than Democratic men and Republican women to even mention *having* a spouse in their print campaign literature. Female gubernatorial candidates (who had families) were reluctant to even mention having families at all to print audiences, consistent with professional literature that has cautioned women running for governor about the pitfalls of seeming split between family and state responsibilities (Barbara Lee Family Foundation 2001), particularly in front of what is likely to be a more traditional audience. All of this suggests that candidates may be deploying their gender identities and information strategically, and may be speculating about their audience's likely reactions to the idea of traditional family/gender roles, and then describing themselves accordingly.

In addition to differences in the rates at which men and women mentioned their families and roles, men and women differed in the ideas they *affiliated* with their roles as parents and spouses. While both women and men used their identities as parents online to convey relatability, knowledge, and a source of values and priorities, women sometimes used this identity to raise the notion of security, and to introduce issues such as education and women's issues. Men online were more likely to deploy their identities as fathers quite simply, without linking it to an issue or set of values. When listing their identities as mothers and fathers, women always included reference to a public business or professional identity or background, while men were more likely to only mention other family roles.

When invoking their roles as spouses, both male and female candidates did so to convey experience or firsthand knowledge, an understanding of the needs of others, and a sense of commonness to voters. Both men and women listed their roles as husband or wife amongst other identities; no woman ever mentioned being a wife in a passage where she did not also mention being a mother. Nor did any women mention being a wife in a sentence that did not also list a business/professional identity, though this was the case for men only 30% of the time. The male candidates in this study were more likely than the female candidates to refer to their families very bluntly and simply. When women mentioned their family/gender roles online, they either did so in combination with a business/professional identity, or they did it in combination with an issue they wanted to raise—predominantly feminine issues such as safety, education, and women's issues. This suggests that while women appear to want to give voters the family information they may be curious to know about them, they are trying to do so in a way which does not paint them solely in the light of traditional family roles. Men differed from the women online as they sometimes used the idea of "devotion" in conjunction with their invocation of the role of spouse, while no woman ever did.

In their print materials, men and women did not differ as much from each other as they did online. All candidates who listed their role as spouse in their print materials did so alongside their identity as mother or father, and when they invoked their roles as mother or father, they did so to indicate that they had a background relevant to the office for which they were running that gave them issue priorities or values. Similar to what was found on the websites, both male and female candidates invoked their roles as mother or father in print to convey their similarity to voters or an understanding of their

lives. Men and women both used their present family roles to raise particular issues, though women were more likely to do this than men. Different from the findings from the websites, however, both men and women related their status as parents to introduce the issue of education. Candidates, both male and female, listed their identities as mothers and fathers alongside other identities, though men were more likely to list it among only other family-related identities than were the women. In a finding that differed drastically from what was found on websites, the women were actually *more* likely than the men to include their roles as mothers in very simple ways, in statements that conveyed only very basic family information and alluded to nothing else. This change in the patterns between website and print campaign materials suggests that the deployment of gender and family information and roles may be a function of what type of audience candidates expect. Though print materials may be targeted to particular audiences through direct mail, the print materials included for study in this project were solely introductory biographical pieces. If the pieces contributed by the campaigns were clearly targeting a particular demographic group such as seniors or sportsmen, it was not included in this study. Further, as targeted as a print audience can be, an online audience is much more specific, as it is self-selected. Only people who have a reason to want to view a website for a candidate do so. Studies have shown that a major reason people view websites is for solidary reasons. Viewers of websites are likely to be younger than an audience that can be reached by mail or distributed leaflets, and are likely to already support the candidate whose site they are viewing. It makes sense, then, that the ideas conveyed in men and women's mentions of their present families in print are more similar to each other than they are online; the audience they are likely to reach is less

skewed than their likely audiences online. It also makes sense that men and women use their present family to give limited information in print; their recipients are unlikely to devote much time to reading their materials, so space constraints may limit the number of ideas candidates might otherwise (such as on the internet) try to convey when discussing their present families.

Theoretically the family of origin gendered identities as "daughter" or "son" may be less prominent (and deterministic) than the gender/family roles as "mother" or "wife," "husband" or "father" may be in relation to present families, but no previous study of which I am aware has actually examined the content of what references candidates do make to their families of origin, and how they may operate in voters' evaluations of candidates. In chapter 4, I reported differences in the ways candidates make mention of these portions of their families and the ways in which they invoke these roles, though the differences were not as great as they were for the ways they discuss their present families. On websites candidates did not differ by gender in the rates at which they mentioned their families of origin, nor in the rates at which they referenced their roles as sons or daughters. An interesting bifurcation occurred along party lines on the candidates' websites, with Democrats more likely than Republicans to make references to their families of origin, and yet Republicans were more likely than Democrats to make reference to the traditional gender/family roles. It was the women driving this split when it came to invoking the role of "daughter," with Republican women being much more likely than Democratic women to invoke this traditional family/gender role. Again this is suggestive of Republican women being more willing than Democratic women to cultivate a traditional family/gender role image with the viewers of their websites. Women

running as challengers and for open seats were less likely than similarly situated men to mention their families of origin. Interestingly, no woman running for an open seat referred to herself in the role of "daughter." This suggests that when women run in races without the advantages of incumbency, they are likely to de-emphasize their families of origin and their role within that family, which I have argued is likely due to the historical conception of daughters as dependents within families. Men, not confronted with such traditions, have less reason to de-emphasize this information.

In print, men's and women's rates of mentioning their families of origin and their roles within them did not differ from each other. However, Democrats in this medium were both more likely than Republicans to mention their families of origin, *and* invoke their roles as sons/daughters, though they had been less likely to do this on their websites. The shift in strategy suggests that they may believe they are courting different potential groups of voters online and in print, and have adopted a more traditional image as son/daughters for what for them is likely to be a more conservative audience in print than those viewing their websites. Women running for the Senate, despite being much more likely than men to mention their families of origin in their print materials, did not go so far as to show a greater likelihood than men to mention their roles as sons or daughters. Women who ran for House seats turned out to be the group of women least likely to reference their families of origin, though I had expected that they would be more likely to do so than women running in statewide races. Similarly unexpected, incumbent women, and not women running for open seats, were the least likely to mention their families of origin. Notably, all the women in this study made reference to their families of origin in print, while very few of the men did.

The dearth of expected findings for the print materials actually supports the overall expectation that candidates shape their family/gender messages according to who they expect to receive them. In the case of women running for the Senate, it is of note that while they seemed to play up their families of origin in print, they de-emphasized their present family roles in their campaign communications. This may be done because they believe references to their families of origin are "safer," as they do not usually entail the same sorts of daily commitments that present family roles do. Strategically, this would make sense for women who want to give family information to curious voters but who do not want to be considered too family-oriented to hold office.

Qualitatively, men and women appear to be trying to convey similar ideas with their families of origin information. Both seem to use their families of origin to give a sense of American ideology and suggest elements of the American dream story. They discuss their families of origin as giving foundational experiences and values that shape them as adults, with particular emphasis on hard work, ethics, and the importance of democratic participation and service. The outlines of the American dream story given by candidates in reference to their families of origin include the idea of humble beginnings based in working class and/or blue collar work, sometimes overcoming hardship or some sort of financial struggle, and sometimes an immigrant background. The comparative emphasis on the individual struggle and success story is reinforced by the absence of the idea of equality of opportunity in the U.S. The elements of American ideology contained in candidate discussions of their families of origin, along with the notable absence of the notion of equal opportunity, lends credence to the idea that candidates use their families of origins in their campaign materials as a way of claiming credit—for personal virtue,

for success, for generally being a good citizen. Omitting the concept of equality of opportunity allows the success implied by the stories (which inevitably end in a run for high political office as a major party candidate) to fall to the individual or individual family, not a system of laws. It also allows candidates to do this with a modicum of modesty; by making reference to these things when discussing their families of origin, candidates can assign the glory to their parents but still be understood to have these desirable qualities, themselves.

The areas where gender differences did emerge in the ideas conveyed by candidates' uses of their families of origin on websites suggest that the mentions are strategic, with candidates making references to counter stereotyped expectations of male and female candidates' weaknesses. Women (and Democrats) appeared more likely than men and Republicans to use their families of origin to imply a military background, and more men than women used their families of origin to suggest that they were raised with personal integrity. Coming short on the heels of Sept. 11, 2001, it is not surprising that female candidates in 2002 may be taking more opportunities to counter the idea that they are less competent and knowledgeable when it comes to military issues, though this is a perennial stereotype of women, and may be evident in other election years as well. Women candidates have been given the advantage when it comes to the public assessing a politician's integrity and honesty, so the fact that men more frequently cited the integrity they gained from the teachings of their families of origin suggests that men may be deploying this information strategically to counter stereotypical expectations of weakness of them as well. Men were more likely than women to raises issues on their websites when discussing their families of origin, and they were also likely to raise issues

that are traditionally considered "feminine." This is in contrast to the ways in which candidates raised issues in conjunctions with their references to their present families, and suggests that perhaps men have conceded women's upper hand when it comes to raising issues in conjunction with motherhood, but perceive a greater opportunity for themselves to cut into women's advantage on certain issues when it comes to their family of origin and roles as offspring. Women and Democrats were more likely than men and Republicans to refer to religion in relation to their families of origin, though on candidates' *entire* sites, there were no differences in the rates at which candidates referred to religion by either party or gender. This suggests that women and Democrats may be trying to suggest they take religion seriously, but want to do so in an indirect fashion, by suggesting it is in their family background. Men were more likely than women to mention the occupation of at least one parent on their websites, which seems curious but may be due to the traditional ties between men and paid labor identities, an area where women have historically been disadvantaged and perhaps are therefore less likely to define others in these terms. In contrast to what candidates were doing in relation to their present families, men in this study were more likely than women in this study to raise issues in relation to their families of origin, and the issues they raised were "feminine" issues, such as the environment, social security, education and healthcare. This suggests that men may be conceding women's advantage on feminine issues when juxtaposed with the identities of wife and mother, but perhaps they see the identities of son and daughter more evenly matched, and therefore see a better opportunity to counter stereotyped issue advantages of women.

The evidence given in this study indicate that candidates appear to be aware of audience expectations surrounding their gender roles and family information, and are not simply conveying information because it is true, but appear to be finding strategies for giving information that can alternatively maximize or minimize its impact on voters, depending on if they think voters will approve or not. They may be bounded by the truth in what they can say about their families (or risk having the real truth ferreted out by the press or their opponent) but they appear to have developed a set of strategies for using different terminology or raising different ideas in relation to their family information and gender roles to counter stereotypes of male and female politicians. Of course, candidates can strategize around how they present themselves all they want; it does not mean that voters will receive them as they may wish to be received. The other half of the equation is voter evaluations.

Reception by Potential Voters

It is a difficult and embarrassing thing to admit one's habits of thought to which one's education, personal beliefs, political inclinations, and even identity are all in direct opposition, and yet there may be value in the lessons as we stand in horrified wonder of our own thought processes. One day while I was an undergraduate student walking to my early morning class I saw a fellow student, another young woman, walking to her class in the opposite direction. She was walking briskly, perhaps running late, and was carrying a very large coffee and smoking a cigarette. Something about her reminded me of a prostitute.

I had no idea why I would come to such a baseless and misogynistic conclusion about my peer. I can only say that her behaviors triggered such a thought on my part, and

were I able to control it I can assure you I would never have thought such a thing. But

thought it I did, if briefly (though I remember it to this very day.) I never knew what

made me think such a thing, until years later I was reading an etiquette book (always

interesting sources for people interested in gender) and I came across a prohibition

against women walking and smoking at the same time:

> Smoking on the street is one of the traditional key signs by which one forfeits the claim to gentility meant by the term "lady." Never mind the fact that purity of heart is more important than trivial externals. Miss Manners never argues that point. She only maintains that it is possible, under some circumstances, for a lady to murder her husband; that a woman who wears ankle-strap shoes and smokes on the street corner, though she may be a joy to all who know her and have devoted her life to charity, could never qualify as a lady. (Martin 1989, 153)

Though I would take issue with the characterization, it is possible that one might

criticize the source for this ridiculousness: Judith Martin is better known to the public as

"Miss Manners," and probably those who have not read much of her work might presume

she is a source of anachronistic advice which is predicated in sexist and classist notions,

and that her advice about good public behavior extends such sexism, whether wittingly or

not. Be that as it may, her opinion on this subject is held fairly widely, with even

PlanetOut.com repeating such advice to readers on the subject of LGBT Pride Day

decorum:

> (K)eep in mind that smoking while walking makes a person look, well, trashy. And even if "trashy" is exactly the look you're going for, it's best to remain stationary while smoking. (Purdy 2006)

I have no recollection of ever being explicitly told of such connections between

"trashiness," walking, and smoking prior to my thinking it. As a lifetime non-smoker,

who primarily socialized among other non-smokers, though related to a number of

smokers (all people I love and admire) I do not imagine there was ever much reason for

me to be told that smoking while walking was a sign of disrepute, particularly for women. I can report I have never looked at any man, and for whatever reason, thought to myself, "prostitute." This is true even for the few men I have known who have in fact, worked as prostitutes.

But clearly, a habit of thought was shaped at some point, though I never even knew it. The reasons we have certain implicit reactions to very scant pieces of information about people may be anachronistic, unsupported by evidence, and otherwise ridiculous, but that does not mean we do not make them, even though we may abhor such reactions in ourselves once brought to our attention.

The experiments in this study were designed to test some of the strategies and typical references made by candidates to their families in their campaign materials to see if male and female candidates would be evaluated in the same way by respondents representative of the U.S. population. By testing two different frames typical of those found in the real-life candidate campaign materials, and varying the candidate gender under each frame, this study provides a glimpse of how Americans evaluate male and female candidates who reference their gender/family roles and information.

In chapter 3, the evidence suggested that among the group of respondents taken as a whole, there was some bias toward the male candidate, even though the frame was designed to minimize the effect of gender roles by using only the gender-neutral term "parent" to describe the candidate in relation to/her his children, and not the more conceptually loaded gender-specific terms of "mother" or "father." Republican respondents also gave higher evaluations to the male candidate as predicted, while Democrats were egalitarian in their evaluations of the candidates by their gender, lending

further credence to the idea that Republicans hold more traditional gender stereotypes of candidates than Democrats. Generally speaking, older respondents (age 45 and up) demonstrated a bias toward the male candidate, giving him higher evaluations on some measures than the female candidate, while younger respondents, counter to expectations, were split in their evaluations of the candidates. The youngest respondents in the study, those aged 18-29, gave higher average evaluations to the male candidate, not the female candidate as others studies suggest should have been the case, while respondents aged 30-44 demonstrated consistently higher evaluations of the female candidate than the male candidate. Having children at home did not account for this bias toward the female candidate among this age group, though previous studies suggest that the era in which they came of age may predispose them to rate female candidates more highly than respondents of other generations, being raised or coming of age as they did at the height of the second wave of feminism. Most interestingly, when considering the gender of respondent, the findings were exactly counter to what previous studies suggested I should have found, as men were evaluating the candidates in a largely egalitarian way with a slight bias in favor of the female candidate on a few measures, while female respondents gave higher average evaluations to the male candidate, not the female as predicted. Taken as a whole, the findings for the experiment using the gender-neutral language strategy when referencing one's present family showed that potential voters do make distinctions based on gender despite candidate attempts to minimize the references to gender-specific family roles.

Chapter 5 reported the results of the experiment where a male and a female candidate were described with a typical family of origin frame to respondents. I had

predicted that a female candidate under this frame would fare worse with potential voters due to the history of coverture and patrilineage in the U.S., which have led to a view of daughters as dependents in families, but not sons. In the aggregate population, no systematic bias was found against a woman candidate described in this way. When the gender of the respondent was taken into account, however, male respondents gave some higher average evaluations to the male candidate, while female respondents were ambivalent to the gender of the candidate, as predicted. The female candidate under the family of origin frame fared better with female respondents than with male respondents on five of the seven measures, but not on the likelihood that a respondent would vote for the candidate, suggesting that the differences in the ways in which male and female respondents evaluate female candidates described this way does not significantly affect their likelihood to vote for a female candidate. However, the fact that male respondents came close to registering a higher likelihood to vote for a male candidate than a female one suggests that in a race where a woman is pitted against a man, ceteris paribus, such as in a primary race, the man may still fare better than the woman with the male respondents if they used a typical family of origin frame.

Because the family of origin references made by candidates emphasize working class and blue collar work, and historically this sort of labor has had ties to the Democratic party, I expected that the evaluations of the candidates would show a man being rated highest by Democratic respondents, then a woman rated by Democratic respondents, then a male candidate rated by Republican respondents, and the lowest evaluations would go to the woman evaluated by the Republican respondents. The male candidate did indeed fare better with Democratic respondents than the female candidate,

but the female candidate outperformed the male candidate with Republican respondents. Democratic respondents did evaluate the male candidate under this frame higher than Republican respondents rated the male candidate under this frame, but Republican respondents actually rated the female candidate higher than Democratic respondents did on four of the measures. This study cannot ascertain why this is the case, but I offer a speculative explanation that perhaps the combination of class information and the female gender of the candidate under the family of origin frame may be signaling likely conservative ideology which is desirable amongst Republicans. Alternatively, Republicans may think that a woman described in this way would be attractive to weakly partisan Democrats, and therefore be a winner due to mainstream appeal, and find her more compelling for this reason.

When considering the age of respondents, the findings under this family of origin frame were almost exactly reversed from the patterns established under the present family frame, and were counter to expectations which suggested that older respondents would evaluate a male candidate higher than a female candidate, while younger respondents should be more egalitarian or even show favor to the female candidate. What emerged instead was a block of middle-age respondents (30-59 years old) who gave higher evaluations to the male candidate than to the female candidate, while respondents at both age extremes (18-29 year-olds and 60 years old and up) rated the female candidate higher than the male on three measures. I argue that this may have to do with the description of how a job loss affected the candidate's family of origin, and how this sort of description might be driving respondents who are both entrenched in their careers and yet not so close to retirement to feel more comfortable with a male candidate, given that economic

issues are a stereotyped strength of male candidates. The oldest respondents, on the other hand, who previous studies have suggested would be the least likely to rate a female candidate higher than a male candidate due to the link between older age and belief in traditional gender roles, may be taking notice of the fact that the candidate's own parents are mentioned in this frame, and that may be triggering a response premised in the idea that women are more likely to care for older generations in a family than men. This could be coupled with the fact that their likely issue concerns such as social security may be for them more of a compassion issue than an economic one, as they are more likely to fear cuts to current expenditures than they are to be concerned with the long-term financial solvency of the system, and that could play into women's stereotypical strengths as candidates.

The larger points to take away from this study are that gender and family information may be grounded in facts, but candidates appear to be acting strategically in the deployment of those facts. Most candidates who have present families make mention of them to their potential voters; it is not something that most try to hide. Candidates are also likely to make references to their families of origin. To see the effects of gender/family role expectations and presumptions on candidate behavior it is important to look closely at their linguistic strategies. Doing so reveals differences which may be subtle, but when looked at in the aggregate all seem to add up to candidates appearing aware of expectations regarding their gender/family roles and potential conflicts with their roles as elected governmental officials. At the same time, some candidates appear to promote their gender/family roles and information, particularly if it appears to meet the gender role attitudes likely to be held by members of their audience. Candidates describe

their gender/family roles and information in ways that convey ideas about what kind of official that person is likely to make in office, and appear to emphasize or de-emphasize aspects of their family information that would play into or counteract stereotypes held by voters considering candidates by gender, depending on if the stereotype makes them look promising or not as a potential officeholder. The fact that candidates deploy their gender/family information differently across different media also suggests strategic behavior, as different media is likely to be viewed by very different audiences.

This study has also demonstrated that potential voters pick up and react to male and female candidates' family/gender information. Some candidate strategies are effective at promoting egalitarian evaluations by respondents, but there are subgroups of the population who persist in evaluating otherwise identical male and female candidates differently. This study has also demonstrated that candidate references to "family" should not be treated as an undifferentiated category. The two levels of family considered here, family of origin and present family, are used by candidates to convey some similar ideas and some very different ones, and potential voters respond differently to men and women portrayed in relation to different levels of family. Far from gender being irrelevant to politics, it is right there below the surface, affecting both the behavior of candidates and potential voters alike.

Considerations for Future Research

There are limitations on the interpretations that can be conclusively derived from the experiments in this study alone. In part, this is due to the impossibility of establishing a baseline evaluation of candidates apart from their gender identities and family information. In many ways it is nonsensical to try to assess the effect of candidate gender

apart from the specter of gender/family roles, to establish whether a candidate's average evaluations are going up or down based on an additive notion of giving pieces of family information.

Additional experiments are planned to test the priming of gender role attitudes toward male and female candidates under frames where they use gender-specific terminology to describe their family roles as mothers or fathers, and also a frame that omits all reference to a candidate's present family, for comparison to the gender-neutral language strategy tested in this study. Further experiments will help to ascertain which presentational strategy for presenting one's gender and related family roles may be most successful for women candidates, by testing a gender-specific language strategy using the term "mother" (or "father"), and the alternative strategy of silence on the issue—omitting all reference to a present family, but there will still be limitations on what we can decisively conclude about gender and politics as a result. If I found that simply not mentioning a candidate's present family and related roles altogether garners the highest average evaluations of female candidates, what advice should be derived for real-world women candidates? Would I suggest they not mention their kids (and hope that the press or their opponent does not point them out either), or that they not have them in the first place? If indeed a woman candidate who makes no references to having children and being a mother is found to be the most favored by voters, will that be enough to conclude that women's gender identity is not a problem for women in politics so long as they are not both women *and* mothers? Do we really have a notion of femininity which is so clearly distinct from motherhood? And to what extent does the reality of a woman having kids or not having kids really temper expectations of her based on her gender?

Does anyone expect women without children to perform their gender identities in ways drastically different from women with children? Whether women in politics have children or not, I would argue that they are largely expected to demonstrate the same traits—compassion, understanding, care, non-violence, and probably weakness or lack of resolve when it comes to making very difficult decisions. I raise the issue to suggest we remain cautious about what should concluded with comparison studies. As a person interested in seeing women succeed in politics, I ask would we be content with a future finding if it suggests omitting all reference to one's children and status as a parent can garner women the same evaluations as men? Moreover, should we be content with such a finding? Presentational strategies may be able to alter voters' evaluations of candidates, but they do not directly *change* attitudes toward women, especially those with families, in politics. Any future studies building on the findings presented here must bear in mind the larger picture facing women in politics in the U.S., even as we mince presentational strategies to find receptivity among potential voters.

Apart from studies that relate very directly to the data presented here, there are other parallel avenues to consider to expand our collective knowledge about how gender and identity in general shape candidate strategies and voters' perceptions. A study drawn from the campaign materials of openly gay and lesbian candidates in American politics would be a tremendous contribution to our understanding of how candidates shape their self-presentations to navigate a whole host of issues regarding gender and sexuality. Such a systematic study would help to ascertain not only successful presentational strategies for candidates, but would also help to complicate and refine our understanding of gender in American politics more generally, and the relationships between the

intertwined but distinct concepts of womanhood, manhood, motherhood, fatherhood, femininity, masculinity, sexuality, and ideologies of power in politics.

This study was not designed to allow for systematic comparisons on the basis of sexual orientation or ethnicity. A study focused on the interplay between racial/ethnic and gender identities for candidates and how they present themselves would allow scholars to get a truer picture of more of the "roles" candidates emphasize and are expected to play, often simultaneously. The field of political psychology is rapidly expanding our understanding of how ethnicity and gender affect the perceptions of everyday citizens in political situations; additional studies of how candidates behave regarding these topics would contribute even further to our understanding of the interplay between identities, expectations of roles based on those identities, and candidate and voter perceptions of desirable representation.

Appendix A: Text of Male Candidate Solicitation Letter

Dear _____ :

Since 1956, the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University has been exploring state and national politics through research, education, and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. This year we are hoping to gather campaign materials from candidates running for governor, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. We would like to include some of your printed material in our collection.

For your convenience, please use the enclosed business reply envelope to send us a copy of your campaign brochure. We are looking for the basic introductory materials that candidates send out to prospective voters, in order to introduce themselves to the electorate. We are collecting information from several hundred congressional and gubernatorial candidates of both major parties across the country, and want your candidacy to be represented in our group. Should you have any questions, you can contact me directly at (732) 932-9384, ext. 304. A reply by October 17th is greatly appreciated!

Thank you in advance for your time, and best of luck to you in your upcoming election!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Schenk
Research Associate

Appendix B: Text of Female Candidate Solicitation Letter

Dear _____:

For the past thirty years, the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, has been tracking the progress of women's political participation. This year we are hoping to gather campaign materials from all the women running for governor, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. We would like to include some of your printed material in our collection.

For your convenience, please use the enclosed business reply envelope to send us a copy of your campaign brochure. We are looking for the basic introductory materials that candidates send out to prospective voters, in order to introduce themselves to the electorate. We are collecting information from several hundred congressional and gubernatorial candidates of both major parties across the country, and want your candidacy to be represented in our group. Should you have any questions, you can contact me directly at (732) 932-9384, ext. 304. A reply by October 17th is greatly appreciated!

Thank you in advance for your time, and best of luck to you in your upcoming election!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Schenk
Research Associate

Appendix C: Present Family Experiment Instrument

Please assume the following is a statement from a candidate who wants to represent your district in Congress:

Jacob (Janet) is one of us. He (She) understands the needs of our community. You can count on him (her) to be a strong advocate for working families like yours.

As a parent of three children who attended local public schools, Jacob (Janet) knows the importance of providing our local community with the resources we need to properly educate our children and prepare them for the work force.

As a local businessperson, Jacob (Janet) understands the need for economic policies that will expand job opportunities in the district.

Jacob (Janet) Brown is running for Congress in this district because he (she) wants to be your voice in Washington. Jacob (Janet) knows the importance of honesty, hard work, and accountability, and wants to bring those values to Congress.

"Our representative in Congress should think like we do. With your help, I will bring our views to Washington."

Thinking about the passage about Candidate Brown, please evaluate whether or not you agree with the following statements to the best of your ability:

Candidate Brown:
   1.   ...would make a good representative in Washington

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   2.   ... has qualities that I look for in an elected official.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   3.   ... would probably understand my concerns.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   4.   ... reminds me of people I know.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. ... seems successful.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. ... seems qualified for office.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Assuming that Candidate Brown is a member of the political party you tend to vote for most often, please evaluate how likely you would be to vote for him (her):

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D: Family of Origin Experiment Instrument

Please assume the following is a statement from a candidate who wants to represent your district in Congress:

Jacob (Janet) Brown is running for Congress in this district because he (she) wants to be your voice in Washington. Jacob (Janet) knows the importance of honesty, hard work, and accountability, and wants to bring those values to Congress.

Jacob's (Janet's) working class roots help him (her) set priorities. His (her) father was a factory worker. His (her) mother was a hairdresser. "In this year's debate about tax cuts, for example, my concern was to help working class families like the one I grew up in," says Brown. "I have seen first-hand the effects of plant closings and watched as families are devastated by these tragic occurrences. As your voice in Congress, I will work hard to strengthen our local economy by promoting new industry in the 3rd district. I also know the importance of a good education to get ahead. I will work to ensure educational opportunities exist for all residents of our district."

Thinking about the passage about Candidate Brown, please evaluate whether or not you agree with the following statements to the best of your ability:

Candidate Brown:
1. ...would make a good representative in Washington

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. ... has qualities that I look for in an elected official.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. ... would probably understand my concerns.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. ... reminds me of people I know.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

5. ... seems successful.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. ... seems qualified for office.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Assuming that Candidate Brown is a member of the political party you tend to vote for most often, please evaluate how likely you would be to vote for him (her):

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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2002	Quantitative Methods of Social Research Program, ICPSR, certificate

Positions Held

2001	"Women and Public Policy," Instructor, Rutgers University
2001	"Citizenship and Service Education," Instructor, Rutgers University
2001	"Introduction to American Government," Instructor, Rutgers University
2002	"Introduction to American Government," Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University
2002, 2003	"Expository Writing," Instructor, Writing Program, Rutgers University
2003	"Introduction to Political Science Methods," Instructor, Rutgers University

Publications

2001   *Evaluation of the Workforce Development Partnership Program: A Profile of the Individual Training Grant Program, 1997-2000*. John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, prepared for the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, September, 2001. With L. Hebbar, A. Fichtner, C. Van Horn and D. Turker.

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