

Appealing to the 52%: Exploring Clinton's and Trump's Appeals to Women Voters During the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election

LINDSEY MEEKS
University of Oklahoma, USA

In elections, women are often discussed as a coveted voting bloc. The focus on women swelled during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, with many wondering whether a wave of women voters would usher in a woman president. Such questioning overlooks the role of partisanship and how gender and partisan identities collide for women voters in gender-salient elections. This study examines this intersection by content analyzing how Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump appealed to partisan women via their convention speeches and campaign tweets. Results revealed that Clinton and Trump emphasized appeals that would curry favor with their respective partisan bases, and Clinton outpaced Trump in her volume and variety of gender appeals.

Keywords: women voters, 2016 presidential election, gender appeals, partisan politics, priming

After the 2016 U.S. presidential election, former First Lady Michelle Obama said,

Any woman who voted against Hillary Clinton voted against their own voice. . . . What does it mean for us as women? That we look at those two candidates, as women, and many of us said, "That guy. He's better for me. His voice is more true to me." Well, to me that just says you don't like your voice. (Scott, 2017, para. 4)

Obama's quote aligns with gender-based identity politics and the perception that women may vote for a fellow woman based on the promise of better representation. The focus on securing the highly coveted "women's vote" reached a fevered pitch in 2016 when Democrat Hillary Clinton squared off against Republican Donald Trump for the U.S. presidency. The media made much ado about whether Clinton's presence as the first major party woman nominee would prompt record turnout among women, and whether Trump's disparaging comments about women and sexual assault accusations against Trump would push Republican women voters to abandon their party. But many Republican women did not jump ship, leading some to push back on Obama and argue that "Trump's voice actually IS the voice of many of his female supporters—the traditionalist voice that speaks out against a liberal culture that many conservative women

Lindsey Meeks: lmeeks@ou.edu
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feel has left them behind” (Scott, 2017, para. 10). This exchange demonstrates that when it comes to who is best at representing their voice, women voters may be torn between gender and partisan identities. Consequently, candidates need to strategically navigate these identities to attract women voters.

In this study, I explored how Clinton and Trump appealed to women’s gender and partisan identities by employing a quantitative content analysis of their national convention acceptance speeches and campaign tweets. This set of communications reached millions of people. Clinton’s acceptance speech brought in ~34 million viewers and Trump’s reached ~35 million (Battaglio, 2016). During the election, Clinton had more than 8 million Twitter followers and Trump had more than 10 million (Graham, 2016). These communications gained an even bigger audience via news coverage and retweets. Furthermore, by analyzing the convention speeches, we can assess how the candidates set the narrative tone for their respective general election campaigns, and with the tweets, we can track candidates’ communication across the entire general election. In addition, because candidates often tweet lines from campaign rallies, debates, and other activities, tracking tweets illuminates the broader contours of their campaign messaging. These communications were used to answer the following question: Across some of the biggest campaign platforms in 2016, how did Clinton and Trump talk about and appeal to partisan women? To address this question, this study’s conceptual framework explored identity and partisan politics, gender affinity voting, and campaign strategies for priming these identities.

Identity Politics and Gender

Citizens’ vote formation process can be based on several factors, including, for example, political issue homophily, character trait evaluations, perceptions of electability, and affect toward the candidate. Voting can also be based on the voter’s identity. Put simply, identity politics asserts that political allegiances can be formed based on some demographic similarity, for example, gender, race, or religion (Plutzer & Zipp, 1996). Plutzer and Zipp (1996) note that a classic example of identity politics occurred when John F. Kennedy became the first Catholic U.S. president in 1960 and won 80% of Catholic voters. After the 2016 elections, some argued that the Democrats’ downfall was due to a heavy emphasis on identity politics. Historian Mark Lilla (2016) argues that “the age of identity liberalism must be brought to an end” because “in recent years American liberalism has slipped into a kind of moral panic about racial, gender and sexual identity that has distorted liberalism’s message” (paras. 2–3). Democratic presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders also urged Democrats to go beyond identity politics, stating, “It is not good enough for somebody to say, ‘I’m a woman, vote for me’” (Shelbourne, 2016, para. 2). Although identity-based appeals often include more nuance than suggested in Sanders’ statement, Sanders and Lilla explicitly voice caution regarding the use of identity politics.

Given the concern over identity politics, it is important to discuss why campaigns would focus on the “women’s vote.” Women have been shown to use their gender identity in their vote formation process (Brians, 2005; Dolan, 1998; Paolino, 1995; Plutzer & Zipp, 1996). One way women’s identity can affect voting decisions is through the gender affinity effect (GAE). GAE suggests that voters will be more likely to vote for someone of a similar gender; for example, women will be more likely to vote for women candidates (King & Matland, 2003; Sanbonmatsu, 2002). Research by Fox (1997) and Dolan (1998, 2004) supports GAE: They examined congressional races and found that women voters offered greater support for women

candidates. Furthermore, Sanbonmatsu (2002) conducted a survey to assess baseline gender preferences and found support for GAE. Participants were asked, "If two equally qualified candidates were running for office, one a man and the other a woman, do you think you would be more inclined to vote for the man or the woman?" Sanbonmatsu found that women were more likely than men to have a baseline gender preference in voting, and women were more likely than men to prefer a woman candidate.

For women voters, GAE may be prompted by multiple motivations. First, women may support women candidates out of a sense of group solidarity (Dolan, 2008). This first reason may trigger the second: Women may support women candidates because of a desire for descriptive representation (Dolan, 2008). Paolino (1995) found that women voters who viewed women's underrepresentation in Congress as a problem were more likely to vote for women senatorial candidates. Women have been, and continue to be, a minority in elected office. As of 2018, women make up 20% of the U.S. Congress, 25.4% of state legislatures, and 12% of gubernatorial offices (Center for American Women and Politics, 2018). These levels of representation may prompt women to elect candidates who, to some extent, demographically represent them.

Other research does not support a direct link between voter and candidate gender, but this research still shows that gender matters. For example, King and Matland (2003) and Paolino (1995) found no direct relationship between voter and candidate gender. However, Paolino examined whether gender-salient issues (e.g., abortion and sexual harassment) prompted women to vote for women, and he found support for this relationship. Paolino concluded that "women will support female candidates . . . because of a concern that the descriptive underrepresentation of women in Congress increases the possibility that gender-salient issues are overlooked" (p. 309). Similarly, Sanbonmatsu (2002) found that women voters' preference for women candidates was due in part to a belief that women politicians were better equipped to handle women's issues, and Dolan (1998) found that women were more likely to use gendered issue positions in their vote choice when there was a woman candidate. This line of work suggests that women will vote for women because of policy representation. Several political issues disproportionately affect women, such as equal/fair pay, paid leave, childcare, reproductive rights, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, and thus are typically more important to women voters than to men voters (e.g., Paolino, 1995; Plutzer & Zipp, 1996). Women voters may believe that as members of the same afflicted group, women politicians better understand these issues and may also prioritize them once in office. Research has shown that women politicians are more supportive than men of legislation concerning women's issues (Frederick, 2015). Women politicians exert more support for gender-salient issues, and women voters consider gendered policy representation when evaluating candidates.

This symbiotic connection between descriptive and policy representation taps into a key aspect of identity politics: Often, identity groups are formed and mobilized based on experiencing marginalization. Women, relative to men, have been and continue to be a marginalized population in the American political arena. Young (2011) argues that representation gives voice to oppressed groups, and thus shifts the public agenda from focusing exclusively on those with power and privilege. Furthermore, Young states, "because it assures a voice for the oppressed as well as the privileged, group representation better assures that all needs and interests in the public will be recognized in democratic deliberations" (p. 185), and marginalized groups are best suited for presenting and interpreting their group's specific needs. Collectively, women may vote for other women as a sign of group solidarity in the face of their shared marginalization, and because

they hope that descriptive representation will transform into better policy representation. This connection does not suggest that women do not care about issues beyond “women’s issues” (e.g., the economy); women care about a range of issues. Rather, through the lens of identity politics, the idea is that focusing on women’s issues is particularly effective in appealing to women voters.

To capitalize on these forms of affinity, candidates can trigger women’s gender identity in their campaign communications. According to Paolino (1995), candidates can prime a “shared characteristic [and that] should help the group become a frame of reference for members’ political attitudes and behaviors” (p. 297). This process takes shape via agenda setting and priming. Candidates can stress certain issues that are more important to women and thus set women’s agendas (Schaffner, 2005). Once the agenda is set, these issues can become primed in women’s minds, and women will “give those issues more weight when making their vote decisions” (Schaffner, 2005, p. 805). Holman, Schneider, and Pondel (2015) showed that this approach can be effective. Holman et al. used an experiment to test the effects of men and women candidates’ issue- versus identity-based targeting of women voters. With issue-based targeting, Holman et al. argue, “other than being identified by the campaign as potentially caring about a particular issue, the group does not exist in cohesive form and, therefore, has little preexisting affective identity associated with it” (p. 817). Conversely, identity-based targeting occurs when candidates “appeal to voters’ affective attachment to their politicized social gender,” and these appeals are “designed to promote a sense of shared group identity” (pp. 816–817). Holman and colleagues’ experiment exposed participants to one of two websites: (1) The identity-based site featured the candidate’s work on domestic violence programs and legislation, and (2) the issue-based site emphasized the candidate’s work on transportation issues. For men and women candidates, the identity-based website increased women’s willingness to vote for the candidate more so than the issue-based website. Thus, women and men can effectively campaign on the promise of better policy representation for women. That said, priming gender identity was more effective for women candidates: Women “who viewed the identity-targeted message from a female candidate were more likely to use their closeness with women as a group in their overall evaluation of the candidate as compared with those who viewed the transportation message” (Holman et al., 2015, p. 821), and this effect only occurred for women candidates. Candidates’ agenda-setting strategies can prime women’s gender identity and such strategies may be particularly effective for women candidates.

Candidates can also prime women’s group identity by other means. First, women candidates can highlight how their presence in office will lead to more descriptive representation. In 2008, when Clinton made her first bid for the presidency, she did not overly emphasize her gender. Senior adviser Ann Lewis called this decision the “biggest missed opportunity” of the primaries and said Clinton “ceded the mantle of barrier-breaker entirely to Barack Obama” (Chozick & Martin, 2015, para. 8). Examining Clinton’s 2016 campaign will illuminate whether she downplayed her gender or course-corrected the second time around. Second, men candidates can employ women surrogates to make explicit in-group connections (Holman et al., 2015). George W. Bush featured his wife and other women surrogates in his “W Stands for Women” campaign (Holman et al., 2015). In 2016, Trump often featured his daughter Ivanka as a surrogate, and her Republican National Convention speech stressed the need for affordable childcare and equal pay. Third, women and men candidates can also discuss more generalized topics such as the important role of women in history and contemporary society. Candidates can employ a variety of appeals to raise the salience of women voters’ gendered identities and hopefully attract the formable voting power of women.

Men and women both have incentive to make gendered appeals, but in this study, I predicted

H1: Clinton would discuss themes regarding women's representation more than Trump.

H2: Clinton would discuss her own gender more than Trump.

Unlike Trump, Clinton directly signifies group solidarity and embodies descriptive representation. It would behoove her to emphasize this gendered advantage to tap into women voters' GAE motivations. Clinton could also prime GAE via general references to women and girls. However, because Clinton has less exclusive hold over these references—as compared with referencing her own gender to prime GAE—it is possible that Trump could amp up his use of references to women as a sign of attention and inclusion. Given these possibilities, I asked,

RQ1: Who will be more likely to discuss women and girls, Clinton or Trump?

It is also important to consider whether candidates mention their opponent's gender. Clinton could highlight Trump's gender to signal to women that Trump cannot offer descriptive representation. Alternatively, Trump could downplay his focus on Clinton's gender to (a) not appear as though he is attacking her based on gender, which could be off-putting to women, and (b) avoid prompting Republican women's gender identities in association with his opponent. I predicted

H3: Clinton would reference her opponent's gender more than Trump.

Intersection of Partisan and Identity Politics

Another dominant factor in vote choice processes is political party. Partisan politics occurs when voters cast their votes based on party affiliation, and it is not considered a form of identity politics (Plutzer & Zipp, 1996). Scholars often view appealing to partisan politics as a superior campaign tactic because “few ethnic, religious, or racial groups have been able to work effectively outside of partisan coalitions” (Plutzer & Zipp, 1996, p. 31), and therefore running principally based on identity is typically not effective for major offices. Whether used as a campaign strategy or as an evaluative cue for voters, partisanship can be a rich source of information because parties serve “as proxies for a constellation of policy priorities and issue positions” (Hayes, 2009, p. 232). In America's predominantly two-party system, voters associate various issues and policy priorities with parties via the process of political ownership. Political ownership asserts that the public views different political parties and their candidates as better able to address problems based on a party's “history of attention, initiative, and innovation toward these problems” (Petrocik, 1996, p. 826). For example, Petrocik (1996) and Gallup (2017) found that the public perceives Democrats as better at issues such as education, health care, reproductive rights, discrimination, and social welfare, whereas Republicans are perceived as more successful at handling such issues as foreign affairs, national security, crime, and economic matters. Candidates reinforce voters' perceptions and emphasize party-owned issues in their communication (Benoit, 2007; Petrocik, 1996). Such emphasis can, much like with gender, set voters' agendas and prime their partisan identity. This agenda-setting and priming process can be electorally beneficial. Benoit (2007) analyzed presidential TV spots from 1952 to 2004, and found that Democrat and

Republican winners stressed party-owned issues more than Democrat and Republican losers. Partisan candidates net two key benefits when they emphasize owned issues: First, they can reaffirm the positive associations voters have between their party and owned issues. Second, they can prime voters' partisan identity, prompting them to vote for their same-party candidate in the interest of better policy representation.

Neither identity nor partisan politics live in isolation. Rather, the two intersect in important ways. Just as with parties, voters perceive issues as gendered and view women and men as more equipped to handle certain issues. Based on a history of gendered social roles, the public stereotypically views women as caretakers and thus owning issues such as health care, education, reproductive rights, and the environment, whereas men are stereotypically perceived as protectors and breadwinners, and are more likely to be seen as owning crime, economic issues, national security, and foreign policy (Banwart, 2010; Herrnson, Lay, & Stokes, 2003). This gender ownership has created feminized and masculinized issues.

Notably, there is alignment between Republican and masculine issues and between Democratic and feminine issues. This overlap dates to the 1970s when Democrats politically supported the Equal Rights Amendment and women's rights, creating an alignment between organized feminism, women, and Democrats, whereas Republicans stopped politically supporting the Equal Rights Amendment and started endorsing a more traditional view of women, femininity, and conservative family values (Sanbonmatsu, 2004; Taranto, 2017). Consequently, surveys show that women have been consistently more likely than men to identify as Democrat/lean Democrat, and self-identified feminists are more likely to affiliate with Democrats (Pew Research Center, 2016a; Swanson, 2013). This alignment and identification may help explain why Kaufmann and Petrocik (1999) found that the majority of the gender gap can be attributed to partisanship. In 2016, this partisan gender gap persisted: Fifty-one percent of men identified as Republican/lean Republican versus 41% as Democrat/lean Democrat, whereas 54% of women identified as Democrat/lean Democrat versus 38% as Republican/lean Republican (Pew Research Center, 2016b).

Given the overlap between Democrats and women, Democrat candidates can appeal to their base of women voters by emphasizing issues that simultaneously correspond with their party and gender identities. Although fewer women identify as Republican, Republican candidates still have multiple electoral incentives to appeal to women. First, since 1980, women have had a higher voter turnout rate than men in presidential elections (Center for American Women and Politics, 2017). Mobilizing likely voters is key to any campaign. Second, many women still vote Republican. CNN exit polls for 2016 show that 88% of Republican women voted for Trump, suggesting that for these women, voting based on party identity outweighed gender affinity ("Exit Polls," 2016). Appealing to these women via an emphasis on Republican-owned issues could be a favorable strategy. Furthermore, whereas the majority of Black and Latina women voted for Clinton, 52% of White women voted for Trump, and White women represented 53.1 million votes in 2016 (Center for American Women and Politics, 2017; "Exit Polls," 2016). Trump, and Republican candidates in general, have much to gain by targeting women.

Based on the intersection of gender and partisan identities, as well as women's motivation to vote based on policy representation, I predicted

H4: Clinton would discuss Democrat/feminized issues more than Trump.

H5: Clinton would discuss feminist values more than Trump.

H6: Trump would emphasize Republican/masculinized issues more than Clinton.

Gender and party also collide regarding references to children and families. These references are not about the candidates' children and families; rather, they are more general references to children and families. According to the separation of spheres perspective, women traditionally have been associated with the private sphere and domestic matters relating to children and family (Sanbonmatsu, 2004); therefore, discussion of children and families can prompt women to consider their gender identity. Clinton could emphasize these references to prompt GAE. Alternatively, Republicans have often championed themselves as the party of family values, and Trump could focus on children and families to prime Republican women's dual identities (Taranto, 2017). Consequently, I asked,

RQ2: Who will be more likely to discuss children and families, Clinton or Trump?

Method

To investigate these hypotheses and research questions, I used a quantitative content analysis. This methodological approach enabled systematic analysis of a large amount of communication, making it possible to track patterns and relationships across and between variables (Krippendorff, 2004). The time frame focused on the 2016 general election, which extended from the parties' national conventions through the day after Election Day. Specifically, the time frame started on July 18, 2016, the first day of the Republican National Convention (RNC), which preceded the Democratic National Convention (DNC), and ended on November 9, 2016. Election Day was November 8; however, Trump did not secure the requisite 270 electoral votes until the early morning of November 9, and Clinton conceded the election on November 9. The content analysis included candidates' acceptance speeches at their respective national conventions and general election tweets. The speeches mark the candidates' official acceptance of the nomination, and the content of the speeches is traditionally used to set the agenda for the campaigns as they move throughout the general election. By analyzing these speeches, I assessed how candidates appealed to women at this campaign-defining moment. Speech transcripts were acquired from the American Presidency Project.

To collect the tweets, I downloaded each candidate's campaign Twitter feed during the general election and then again once the 2016 election was completed via the official Twitter application program interface using a computer script.¹ The interface limits access to 3,200 historical tweets per account; thus, two data draws were completed to ensure capture of all tweets. In total, there were 3,254 tweets from Clinton and 1,418 tweets from Trump during this time frame, for an overall total of 4,672 tweets. A systematic random sampling method was used to select a third of the tweets. This sampling approach ensured that tweets were collected throughout the time frame. This process yielded 1,084 tweets for Clinton

¹ Code for data collection: https://github.com/rainersigwald/twitter_archiver

and 472 tweets for Trump, for an overall sample of 1,556 tweets.

For the speeches, the unit of analysis was each individual paragraph in the transcript. The use of paragraphs reflects how the candidates structured and delivered their speeches. When viewed in conjunction with the videos of the speeches, the candidate paused between paragraphs, often allowing for applause. The transcripts of the speeches, not the videos, were used for coding. Clinton's speech had 154 paragraphs and Trump's had 126. The unit of analysis for Twitter communication was the individual tweet. Only the textual information in the tweet was coded; graphics and links were not coded.

The content analysis focused on eight variables and each was coded as present (1) or absent (0). The variables were not mutually exclusive, and individual units of analysis could include multiple variables. The variables included the following: *Women's representation* included any discussion of women's (a) underrepresentation or representation in political office or other public sectors—therefore, it could include discussion of the lack of or significance of women in these domains; (b) "firstness," when a woman was/is the first to achieve something in politics or other public sectors; or (c) that the candidate is/will be a champion for women/girls. *Candidate gender* included any discussion of a candidate's gender, either directly or indirectly. For example, they may directly refer to themselves as a "woman/man" or "mother/father." An example of an indirect reference includes the following tweet: "'She was doing everything I was, but just like Ginger Rogers, it was backwards in heels.' —@POTUS on the 2008 election." Barack Obama is indirectly referencing that Clinton is a woman via his analogy of Ginger Rogers and heels. *Women and girls* included any reference to women or girls and applicable variants (e.g., daughters or Latinas). *Opponent gender* included any discussion of a candidate's opponent's gender, either directly or indirectly. *Feminist values* included any discussion of female empowerment, equal rights or opportunities between women and men, and antisexist or antimisogynistic discourse. *Democrat/feminized issues* included any discussion of issues such as health care, education, social welfare, the environment, reproductive issues, childcare, family leave, equal pay, civil rights/discrimination, or violence against women. *Republican/masculinized issues* included any discussion of issues such as the economy, jobs, international relations, law and order/crime, national security/defense, border security, immigration, or trade. *Children and families* included any reference to children or families and applicable variants (e.g., kids). This variable did not include discussion of the candidates' children or families.

The coding process for the variables was manual, starting with the creation of a codebook, followed by the application of the codebook in a pilot test; then two individual coders applied the codebook in a practice round of coding. Finally, two coders independently coded a random sample of campaign communication for a formal test of intercoder reliability. Calculated using Krippendorff's alpha, coefficients met appropriate acceptance levels (Krippendorff, 2004): women's representation ($\alpha = 1.0$), candidate gender ($\alpha = .93$), women and girls ($\alpha = .95$), opponent gender ($\alpha = 1.0$), feminist values ($\alpha = .93$), Democrat/feminized issues ($\alpha = .78$), Republican/masculinized issues ($\alpha = .87$), and children and families ($\alpha = 1.0$).

Results

The hypotheses and research questions were investigated using descriptive statistics. Cross-tabulations were run comparing Clinton's and Trump's discussion of each variable, with either chi squares or Fisher's exact tests used to determine the significance of percentage differences based on expected observations. Table 1 focuses on tweets, and Table 2 focuses on speeches.

The first data columns of Tables 1 and 2 combine Clinton's and Trump's communications for an overall total. Across these aggregate data, we see two trends: First, candidates focused most of their appeals on political issues. Second, candidates emphasized masculinized issues more than feminized issues: In tweets, the discrepancy between issues was 5.2% and in speeches the difference was 34.3%.

Table 1. Percentage of Tweets With Appeals to Partisan Women.

Variable	Total (<i>N</i> = 1,556)	Clinton (<i>n</i> = 1,084)	Trump (<i>n</i> = 472)
Women's representation*	1.4	2.0	0.0
Candidate gender*	2.8	3.5	1.1
Women and girls**	5.6	7.3	1.7
Opponent's gender†	1.1	1.4	0.4
Democrat/feminized issues**	12.7	16.4	4.0
Feminist values**	2.9	3.9	0.6
Republican/masculinized issues†	17.9	16.7	20.6
Children and families**	4.4	5.9	0.8

Note. Significance tests based on chi-square results comparing Clinton with Trump.

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$. † $p < .10$.

The first set of hypotheses predicted that Clinton would discuss women's representation (H1) and her own gender (H2) more than Trump. Clinton discussed these variables more than Trump in speeches, but neither difference was significant (see Table 2). Regarding tweets, both hypotheses were supported (see Table 1). Clinton discussed women's representation in 2% of her tweets, whereas Trump never discussed women's representation, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 9.717, p = .002$. Several of Clinton's tweets mentioned her firstness in this election, although most of them came in the form of retweets or quotes offered by supporters or surrogates. For example, she retweeted the following: "@kendallybrown: I've been crying for the last 3 hours live tweeting #OHVotesEarly. We're really doing this, guys. We're electing the first female president," and "@emilyslist: 'Hillary Clinton may be our 1st woman president. But she will not be our last. Once that barrier falls, it will never . . . be put back up.'" Clinton also championed other women's firstness in politics and other public sectors. In particular, the general election overlapped with the Summer Olympics, and Clinton tweeted multiple tweets celebrating women's firstness in the Olympics. For example, Clinton tweeted, "Laurie Hernandez is the first U.S.-born Latina on the Olympic gymnastics team since '84. Good luck! #ImWithHernandez."

Table 2. Percentage of Speech Paragraphs With Appeals to Partisan Women.

Variable	Total (<i>N</i> = 280)	Clinton (<i>n</i> = 154)	Trump (<i>n</i> = 126)
Women's representation	0.4	0.6	0.0
Candidate gender	2.1	3.2	0.8
Women and girls	5.4	7.1	3.2
Opponent's gender	1.4	1.3	1.6
Democrat/feminized issues	14.6	16.9	11.9
Feminist values†	1.4	2.6	0.0
Republican/masculinized issues**	48.9	39.0	61.1
Children and families	12.1	13.0	11.1

Note. Significance tests based on chi square or Fisher's exact test comparing Clinton with Trump.

***p* < .001. †*p* < .10.

In terms of referencing their own gender, Clinton discussed her gender in 3.5% of tweets compared with 1.1% for Trump, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 7.323, p = .007$. Throughout the campaign, Clinton often used the slogan "I'm with her," but Clinton also mentioned her gender via familial connections, such as "No matter where life takes me I always remember I am the granddaughter of a factory worker and the daughter of a small business owner," and "'Chelsea, thank you. I am so proud to be your mother and so proud of the woman you've become.' —Hillary." Another example of Clinton employing her gender, and pushing back on one of Trump's critiques, includes the following tweet: "'If fighting for affordable childcare and paid family leave is playing the woman card, then deal me in!' —Hillary" (Clinton also included this line in her speech). An example of Trump referencing his gender includes the following quoted tweet: "'@zulu_out: You are a man for the people because you know what it is like to be among the people #MakeAmericaGreatAgain #USA Loves U' Thanks.'" Overall, Clinton discussed women's representation and her gender more than Trump.

The first research question focused on the candidates' discussion of women and girls, and these variables could include any reference to women or girls. The analysis revealed that Clinton discussed women and girls more than Trump in tweets: 7.3% versus 1.7%, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 19.486, p = .000$; and in speeches: 7.1% versus 3.2%, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = 2.152, n.s.$ Clinton's references to women and girls often varied between inspirational and attack. For the former, Clinton sent encouraging messages to women/girls, such as on the night of the roll call vote at the DNC when Clinton tweeted, "This moment is for every little girl who dreams big. #WeMadeHistory." Similarly, she tweeted, "Hillary's advice to girls everywhere: 'There's nothing wrong with knowing what you want and going after it.'" In her speech, she said, "Let's keep going until every one of the 161 million women and girls across America has the opportunity she deserves to have!" For the latter, Clinton often critiqued Trump and his treatment of women, including "'He demeans and humiliates women as if we're objects . . . rather than human beings worthy of love and respect.' —@FLOTUS on Trump," "Donald Trump looks at women and decides how their looks rate on a scale of one to 10," and "'I will be a president for all of the people.' —Donald Trump* *Except women, people of color, LGBT people, Muslims . . . #Debate." Trump's tweets only referenced women, not girls, and some of them countered Clinton's message that he was not inclusive of women. For example, he tweeted, "'@Patrici: Crowd at Trump Rally in Akron, Ohio is a Sea of Women, Minorities, Independents, Dems https://t.co/wm7HV8WPGk via @gatewaypundit.'"

The next hypothesis predicted that Clinton would reference her opponent's gender more than Trump (H3). This hypothesis was supported in tweets: Clinton was marginally more likely than Trump to discuss her opponent's gender: 1.4% versus 0.4%, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 2.805, p = .094$. In speeches, Clinton and Trump both included two references to their opponent's gender. Trump mentioned Clinton's gender in only two tweets, and both instances were indirect references because they mentioned Clinton's husband. For example, Trump tweeted, "Funny that the Democrats would have their convention in Pennsylvania where her husband and her killed so many jobs. I will bring jobs back!" Clinton's references to Trump's gender were more direct and referred to him as a "man." Most of these references questioned what kind of man, in terms of character, is Trump. For example, she tweeted, "What kind of man stays up all night to smear a woman with lies and conspiracy theories?"; "A man who bullies and shames a woman for her weight should never become president"; and "Donald Trump is still the same man who insults Gold Star families, demeans women, and mocks people with disabilities." In each instance, Clinton could have said "person," but instead chose to repeatedly say "man," thus implicitly tying character evaluations to his gender.

The next three hypotheses focused on appeals that would more directly play toward women's partisanship, and they predicted that Clinton would emphasize feminized issues (H4) and feminist values (H5) more than Trump, and Trump would stress masculinized issues more than Clinton (H6). All three hypotheses were supported. Clinton discussed feminized issues four times as much as Trump in tweets: 16.4% versus 4.0%, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 45.688, p = .000$. Clinton also discussed feminized issues more in her speech: 16.9% versus 11.9%, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = 1.374, n.s.$ In her communications, Clinton emphasized a variety of feminized issues, and she often combined multiple feminized issues in one tweet. For example, she tweeted, "Education is at stake. The environment is at stake. LGBT equality are at stake. Equal pay is at stake," and "Supporting families with paid family leave, earned sick days, and affordable childcare isn't a luxury—it's a necessity." She would also discuss feminized issues in attack tweets, such as "Trump on equal pay: 'Do as good a job' as men. Abortion? Should be 'punished.' Pregnancy? An 'inconvenience.' Wives working? 'Dangerous,'" and "'The good news is that my pneumonia finally got some Republicans interested in women's health.' —Hillary." Of Trump's feminized issue discussion on Twitter, 73.7% of it was about the Affordable Care Act/Obamacare and the need to repeal the act. For example, he tweeted, "REPEAL AND REPLACE OBAMACARE!" and "Obamacare is a disaster—as I've been saying from the beginning. Time to repeal & replace! #ObamacareFail." Notably, Trump mentioned health care only once in his RNC speech, stating, "We will repeal and replace disastrous Obamacare. You will be able to choose your own doctor again."

For feminist values, Clinton discussed such values in 3.9% of her tweets, as compared with 0.6% for Trump, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 12.281, p = .000$. In her speech, Clinton discussed feminism in 2.6% of paragraphs, whereas Trump never discussed this topic, $p = .090$. Many of Clinton's tweets focused on women's rights and included discussion of women's right to vote: "Countless women fought to win the right to vote. On the anniversary of the 19th Amendment's adoption, let's recommit to protecting it. —H," and "Even as we celebrate the 19th Amendment, remember the struggle for voting rights continued for women of color. That fight continues today." Clinton also often repeated her iconic line from her 1995 speech at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, tweeting variations on the line "Human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights." For example, she tweeted, "'This November, I'm voting for a woman . . . who knows women's rights are human rights . . . here at home and around the

world.'—@ChelseaClinton."

For masculinized issues, Trump emphasized such issues marginally more than Clinton on Twitter: 20.6% versus 16.7%, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 3.327, p = .068$. In speeches, Trump was significantly more likely to discuss masculinized issues than Clinton: 61.1% versus 39.0%, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = 13.606, p = .000$. Trump varied his discussion across several issues, and at times, Trump would combine several issues in attack tweets. For example, against Clinton he tweeted, "A vote for Clinton-Kaine is a vote for TPP, NAFTA, high taxes, radical regulation, and massive influx of refugees," and "Hillary's vision is a borderless world where working people have no power, no jobs, no safety." He also attacked the media: "'Stay on message' is the chant. I always do—trade, jobs, military, vets, 2nd A, repeal Ocare, borders, etc—but media misrepresents!" Furthermore, despite his emphasis on building a wall at rallies, only two of the tweets in his sample referenced building a wall.² In his speech, he mentioned building "a great border wall" only once, but he mentioned immigration policy in various paragraphs.

Clinton also varied her masculinized issue discussion, and within this discussion, there were two notable trends. First, Clinton often referenced masculinized and feminized issues within the same tweet: "Trump, translated: ✓Build the wall ✓Add \$34 trillion to the national debt ✓Revoke 20 million Americans' insurance"; "Trump wants to give trillions in tax breaks to people like himself. Instead, let's invest in our veterans, kids, schools and police"; and, from her speech, "I believe climate change is real and that we can save our planet while creating millions of good-paying, clean-energy jobs." Second, in nine of Clinton's tweets, she discussed nuclear war or weapons, often repeating variations on the line "A man who can be provoked by a tweet should not have his hands anywhere near the nuclear codes." She also included this line in her speech. Overall, Clinton discussed feminized issues and feminist values more than Trump, and Trump emphasized masculinized issues more.

The second research question examined the candidates' discussion of children and families. Clinton was more likely to discuss children and families than Trump in tweets, 5.9% versus 0.8%, $\chi^2(1, N = 1,556) = 20.118, p = .000$, and speeches, 13.0% versus 11.1%, $\chi^2(1, N = 280) = 0.229, n.s.$ Many of Clinton's tweets emphasized that she would fight for/has fought for children and families. For example, she tweeted, "Hillary's been fighting for kids and families her entire career—and that's the experience she'll take to the White House," and "'Hope is what drives Hillary . . . it is why she has spent her life fighting for kids who need a champion.' —@FLOTUS." Clinton also mentioned children or families in conjunction with policy. This included general references, such as "It's true: I sweat the details of policy . . . because it's not just a detail if it's your kid, if it's your family. It's a big deal" (a line she delivered in her speech and tweeted). She also included specific issues, such as "Our kids deserve good schools with good teachers, no matter what ZIP code they live in" (included in her speech and tweets), and "Families across America are feeling the strain from prescription drug price-gouging. Here's how we'll take this on: <https://t.co/FOTswQ6lXT>." Trump also connected families to policy in the following retweet: "@TeamTrump: When @realDonaldTrump is POTUS, families are going to be safe and secure. Law and order will be RESTORED! #MAGA #Debates #Debates2016." Across the two research questions, Clinton surpassed Trump on general discussion of women, girls, children, and families.

² Clinton mentioned Trump's plan for a border wall in four tweets versus Trump's two.

Before concluding, it is important to note how the candidates handled the sexual assault allegations against Trump because this discourse directly discussed women and prompted some Republicans to abandon Trump. As noted in some of the previous categories, Clinton often emphasized that Trump disrespects or demeans women. In response to the allegations within this sample, Clinton often focused on discussing his mistreatment of women broadly and avoided directly referencing "sexual assault." Within this sample, the only time we see "sexual assault" appear is by Michelle Obama. The Clinton campaign tweeted lines from a speech by Obama, which included "'I can't believe I'm saying a candidate for president of the United States has bragged about sexually assaulting women.' —@FLOTUS," and "'If we have a president who . . . brags about sexually assaulting women, then how can we maintain our moral authority in the world?' —@FLOTUS." Trump said the charges were made up, such as when he tweeted, "Nothing ever happened with any of these women. Totally made up nonsense to steal the election. Nobody has more respect for women than me!" and "The phony story in the failing @nytimes is a TOTAL FABRICATION. Written by same people as last discredited story on women. WATCH!" He also tried to redirect the attention back to the Clinton campaign by tweeting, "There's never been anyone more abusive to women in politics than Bill Clinton. My words were unfortunate—the Clintons' actions were far worse." Trump used his tweets to distance himself from the allegations, whereas Clinton tied these incidents to Trump's character, creating a broader narrative of Trump's mistreatment of women.

Discussion

The 2016 presidential election was arguably the most gender-salient election in U.S. history, prompting an intense focus on women voters and whether they would help Clinton become the first woman president. Overall, Clinton made more gender appeals than Trump and offered a greater variety of appeals. Within this analysis, there were three notable patterns. First, compared with Trump, Clinton was more apt to set her campaign agenda in a way that would prime women voters' gender identity, perhaps in the hope that women would use their gender as a frame of reference when voting. This approach corresponds with previous research and women's motivations to vote for women (Dolan, 2008; Paolino, 1995). As predicted, Clinton was more likely to invoke the motivations of group solidarity and descriptive representation by emphasizing women's representation, her own gender, and references to women and girls. Clinton's emphases align with previous work, which showed that women candidates for Senate emphasized their gender more than men, and women in the U.S. House of Representatives discussed women and girls, as well as enhancing women's representation, more than men in floor speeches (Meeks, 2016; Pearson & Dancey, 2011). Furthermore, by including more references to children and families, often in conjunction with policy discussion, Clinton also fulfilled the motivation of policy representation. Because of the separation of spheres, women are typically associated with domestic issues regarding children and family (Sanbonmatsu, 2004). Clinton's focus on these groups could have primed women's gendered attachment to these policy areas. Furthermore, because Republicans are often associated with family values, it is possible that Clinton could have been appealing to Republican women by stressing her continued focus on fighting for children and families (Taranto, 2017). Overall, Clinton outpaced Trump on these variables and tapped into several motivations associated with GAE.

Second, Clinton and Trump discussed their respective party's issue ownership and partisan values in making appeals to partisan women. As predicted, Clinton discussed Democrat/feminized issues and

feminist values more than Trump, and Trump emphasized Republican/masculinized issues more than Clinton. Both candidates appealed to partisan women's respective needs for policy representation. These results align with research on Senate candidates, with Democrat women being the most likely to tweet about Democrat-owned issues and Republican men tweeting the most about Republican-owned issues (Meeks, 2017). Clinton's focus on Democrat/feminized issues was on target for women voters in 2016. The Pew Research Center (2016a) asked registered voters what issues were very important to their vote in 2016. Five issues had a double-digit gap between women and men, with women stating treatment of racial/ethnic minorities, treatment of LGBT people, abortion, and the environment as more important than did men, and men expressing a greater focus on trade. Women were motivated by Democrat/feminized issues in 2016. Trump also struck a note with his base. Trump spent almost three quarters of his feminized issue tweets on repealing Obamacare, which may have played well with Republican women voters. CNN exit poll information did not break down issue stances by gender, but 82% of respondents who thought Obamacare "went too far" voted for Trump ("Exit Polls," 2016). By emphasizing a Republican stance on a feminized issue, Trump may have primed Republican women's dual identities.

Finally, Clinton mentioned her opponent's gender more than Trump, which may have been an attempt to get at a different angle of GAE. This study was not focused on appeals to men, but it is important to note that Clinton typically discussed Trump's gender in a negative tone, often questioning what kind of man would do or say certain things. By negatively invoking his manhood and challenging the character attached to his gender, Clinton could have been trying to disrupt men's baseline preference for men candidates (Sanbonmatsu, 2002). By critically questioning what kind of man Trump is, she also could have been implicitly questioning what kind of man would vote for Trump. For example, in multiple tweets, Clinton featured a link to a letter from a lifelong-Republican dad to his daughter about why he could not support Trump, citing Trump's message of hate and fear. Clinton's strategy suggests an attempt to break the gender-based voting preference for men.

It is difficult to compare Clinton's gender appeals in 2008 and 2016 because Clinton did not tweet or have a DNC acceptance speech in 2008. That said, some general comparisons are possible. In 2008, Clinton's advertisements favored masculine over feminine issues by a margin of 11% (Banwart, Winfrey, & Schnobelen, 2009). Across her 2016 tweets and speech, Clinton brought that margin down to only 3%. There are differences in communication type and variable measurement across these studies, but this may indicate that Clinton was more equitable in her issue discussion in 2016. Furthermore, analysis of Clinton's campaign in 2008 concluded that she downplayed her empathy for children and families (McGinley, 2009). In 2016, she dedicated 13% of her speech paragraphs and 6% of her tweets to children and families, suggesting considerable communicative attention to these groups in 2016. Finally, in 2008, her chief strategist, Mark Penn, urged her to "emphasize toughness because voters did 'not want someone who would be the first mama'" (Chozick & Martin, 2015, para. 5). In 2016, Clinton embraced the titles of mom and grandmother, even going so far as to tweet, "Isn't it time to have a mom in the Oval Office?" These comparisons signal shifts in Clinton's gender strategy in 2016.

Clinton's loss, despite a large gender gap, prompted some to question whether she had "done enough" to attract women voters.³ Overall, Clinton offered greater volume and variety of appeals, enabling her to simultaneously appeal to women generally and Democrat women specifically. These results suggest she did enough. However, her appeals to policy representation may have been thwarted by news coverage. At the DNC, 46.8% of Clinton's speech referenced a feminized or masculinized issue. Patterson (2016b) examined news coverage from a week before the RNC to a week after the DNC, and he found that 4.0% of Clinton's news coverage was focused on issues. Conversely, 13.0% of Trump's news coverage during the conventions focused on issues (Patterson, 2016b). Despite a heavy focus on issues in her speech, Clinton received very little policy coverage and Trump received three times more coverage. Furthermore, 30.7% of Clinton's tweets from across the general election discussed a feminized or masculinized issue, but only 9.0% of her news coverage during that time frame featured issues (Patterson, 2016a). Trump featured issues in 23.3% of his tweets, and 12.0% of his news coverage discussed issues (Patterson, 2016a).⁴ Trump tweeted about policy less than Clinton, but he received more policy news coverage than Clinton. If women were consuming news about Clinton instead of consuming her campaign communication, they received a candidate portrayal relatively light on policy.

News and campaign communication may have aligned better for Trump, at least in terms of volume. The news included more policy coverage of Trump, and Trump predominately focused on Republican issues in his communication. Trump's focus on Republican issues, coupled with a heavy focus on a Republican stance on health care and a low focus on the other gendered variables, may have enabled him to prime Republican women's partisan identities while downplaying their gender identities. Trump may have created a scenario in which Republican women's partisan identity became superordinate and their main frame of reference when voting. In relation to Obama's quote from the introduction, Republican women who voted for Trump may not have been voting against their own voice. Rather, they may have been privileging their partisan policy voice when they cast their vote.

This study has some limitations. First, this study can comment only on the appeals found in the candidates' convention speeches and tweets, which does not cover all of Clinton and Trump's campaign communications. However, tweets often featured quotes from the candidates' and surrogates' stump speeches, provided some content and context before linking to campaign advertisements, and highlighted quotes from debates. By examining these selected communications, this study provides some purview into other campaign communications. Second, as a content analysis, this study cannot directly assess the effectiveness of the candidates' gender appeals. Future research employing other methodologies, including focus groups or experiments, is necessary to better understand what types of appeals are most effective for partisan women.

Future work could examine men's and women's use of identity and partisan politics, and whether appeals to these identities vary based on the candidates' gender and party. For example, do Republican women candidates employ a strategy like Trump's in terms of downplaying gender while promoting party, or do they incorporate appeals that prime gender and partisan identities? Does their strategy vary based on

³ Clinton had a 13% advantage with women over men ("Exit Polls," 2016).

⁴ The majority of policy news coverage in both studies for candidates was negative in tone.

their opponent's gender and party? With women continuing to turnout in greater proportions than men, and with women's increased presence on the ballot, this line of work could provide a more nuanced understanding of how candidates grapple with their own identities when trying to appeal to voters' identities.

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