# When Women Run: Campaigns, Candidates, and Voters

Fall 2023

# Today's question:

- Do voters discriminate female candidates?

- What is the role of gender stereotypes in campaigns?

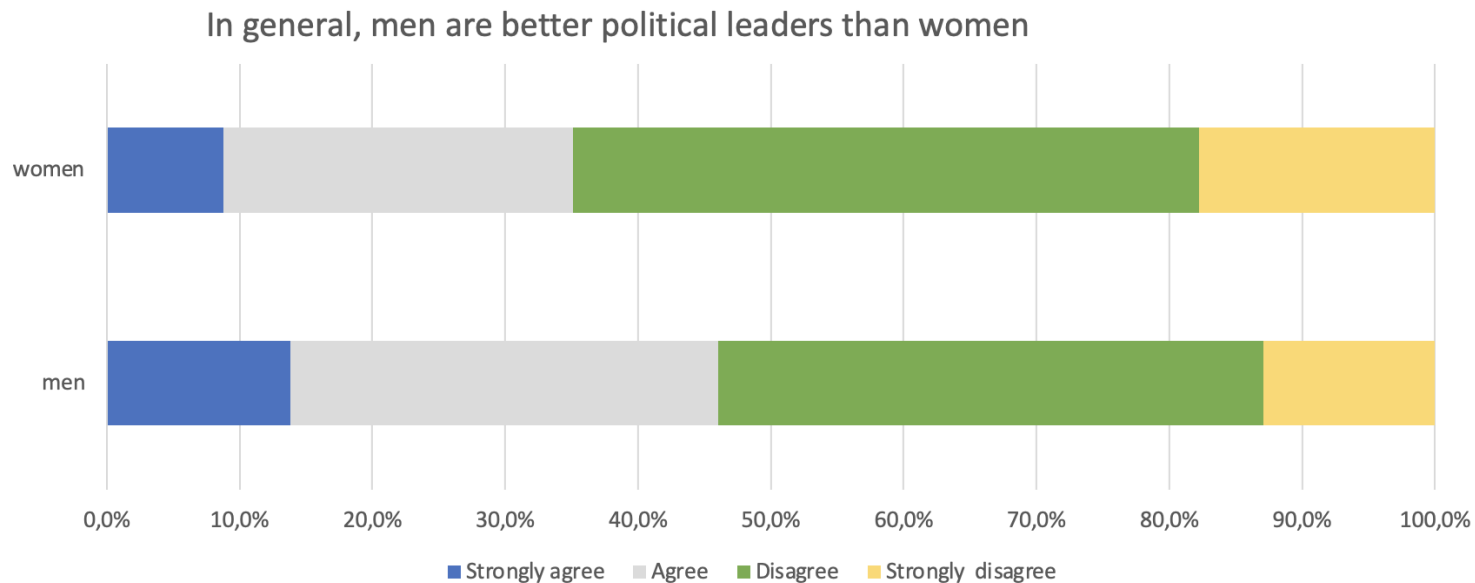- How do candidates communicate their campaigns?

# We spoke about

- Gendered patterns in political participation
- Barriers to women's candidacy

- But what happens when women decide to run?
- Do voters discriminate against women?????
- Do media discriminate against women?????

# Is there an anti-woman bias in elections?

- How would we measure this?
- Which systems are more open to such effects?

In general, men are better political leaders than women



■ Strongly agree  ■ Agree  ■ Disagree  ■ Strongly disagree

European Value Study,
Czech Republic 2017

# Direct hostility

- Public openly hostile against women in politics
- Might apply for some contexts (conservative ideology or sexism)
- Experimental research (CVs, applications etc.)
- Hostility in different fields (even academia)
- Several prominent authors suggests that this has been decreasing in politics
- Sarah Fulton 2012: no bias detectable because women candidate samples in the studies suffer from selection bias

# Direct hostility: sexism

- Different types
- Hostile sexims
- Benevolent sexism

# Hostile sexism scale

- Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality."
- Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.
- Women are too easily offended.
- Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power than men.*
- Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.
- Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
- Women exaggerate problems they have at work.
- Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on
- When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against them.
- There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.*
- Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men.*

# Benevolent sexism scale

- No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.
- In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men.*
- People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.*
- Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
- Women should be cherished and protected by me.
- Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
- Men are complete without women.*
- A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.
- Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.
- Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide.
- Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture

# 2016 US presidential election

- Hostile sexism decreased turnout and campaign participation for Democrats
- Hostile sexism had negative effects on discussions with family (Banda and Cassesse 2021)
- Effects of the "gender card" attack on Clinton:
  - Hostile sexists exposed to attack on Clinton – decreased support for Clinton, Increased support for Trump
  - Benevolent sexists – increased support for Clinton (Cassesse and Holman 2019)

**Table 2.** Effect of the Woman-Card Attack on Candidate Evauations (Study 1)

| Exposed to "Woman Card" Attack? | Clinton thermometer | | Trump thermometer | | Clinton vote | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Hostile sexism | -0.08 | -0.13*** | 0.17* | 0.21*** | -0.22 | -0.45*** |
| | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.04) | (0.19) | (0.11) |
| Benevolent sexism | 0.04 | 0.07* | 0.01 | 0.08* | 0.13 | 0.23* |
| | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.19) | (0.10) |
| Female | 0.02 | 0.04 | -0.14* | -0.06* | 0.18 | 0.17+ |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.19) | (0.10) |
| Age | 0.00 | 0.07* | -0.02 | 0.06+ | 0.09 | 0.84 |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.20) | (1.07) |
| Independent | -0.35*** | -0.31*** | 0.17* | 0.23*** | -1.38*** | -0.79*** |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.07) | (0.04) | (0.23) | (0.10) |
| Republican | -0.49*** | -0.40*** | 0.49*** | 0.52*** | -1.45*** | -1.29*** |
| | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.04) | (0.28) | (0.13) |
| Income | -0.06 | 0.03 | -0.12* | -0.03 | 0.11 | 0.08 |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.19) | (0.11) |
| Education | 0.22*** | 0.07* | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.78*** | 0.29** |
| | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.21) | (0.11) |
| Black | 0.09 | 0.09** | 0.02 | 0.00 | -0.08 | 0.29* |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.07) | (0.02) | (0.21) | (0.12) |
| Hispanic | 0.15*** | 0.02 | -0.04 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | (0.05) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.02) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Other race | -0.02 | 0.13*** | 0.01 | 0.01 | -0.36+ | 0.23* |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.05) | (0.03) | (0.22) | (0.10) |
| News consumption | -0.04 | -0.07* | 0.02 | 0.00 | 0.04 | 0.10 |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.20) | (0.11) |
| Registered voter | -0.04 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.00 | 0.28 | 0.09 |
| | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.23) | (0.09) |
| Constant | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -0.78*** | 2.28 |
| | (0.05) | (0.03) | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.20) | (3.38) |
| Adj/Pseudo $R^2$ | .37 | .30 | .33 | .44 | .36 | .31 |
| N | 222 | 708 | 222 | 704 | 215 | 708 |

*Note.* Entries are for the thermometer models are OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Entries for the vote choice models are logit coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. All coefficients are standardized to facilitate effect size comparisons. Significance tests are two-tailed: $^+ p < .10$, $^* p < .05$, $^{**} p < .01$, $^{***} p < .001$.



**Fig. 3**
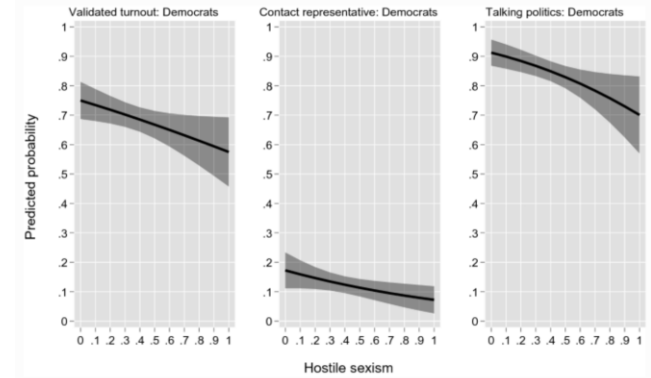
The predicted probability of validated turnout and talking politics across values of hostile sexism among Democrats. 90% confidence intervals shown. Generated using estimates from Fig. 2.



**Fig. 2**
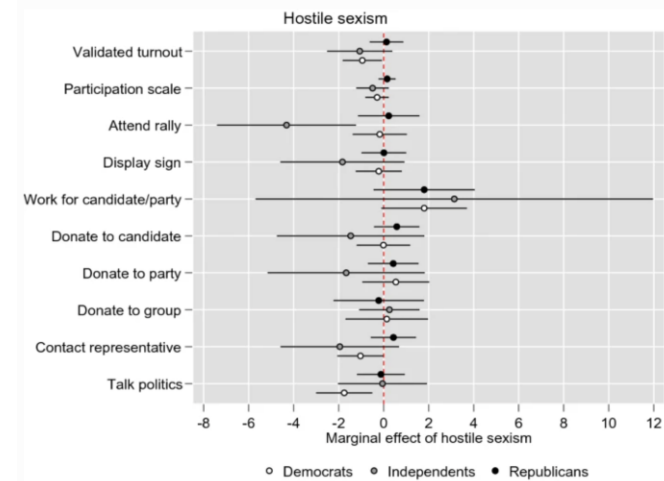
# Explicit discrimination disappearing?

- Studies around the world show women candidates are not discriminated against
- Sarah Fulton 2012: no bias detectable because women candidate samples in the studies suffer from selection bias

**Table 2.** Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model: Incumbent Party Vote-Share

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | Model 5 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Regression coefficient | SE | Regression coefficient | SE | Regression coefficient | SE | Regression coefficient | SE | Regression coefficient | SE |
| Female incumbent | −2.288 | 1.946 | −1.992 | 1.933 | −3.775** | 1.827 | −3.199** | 1.652 | −2.779** | 1.651 |
| Contested race | −24.346*** | 1.361 | −24.227*** | 1.350 | −23.219*** | 1.285 | −21.610*** | 1.220 | −21.250*** | 1.223 |
| Experienced challenger | −6.209*** | 1.322 | −6.561*** | 1.320 | −5.873*** | 1.228 | −3.578*** | 1.164 | −3.388*** | 1.158 |
| District partisanship favors incumbent | 0.370*** | 0.072 | 0.360*** | 0.071 | 0.459*** | 0.068 | 0.387*** | 0.065 | 0.349*** | 0.067 |
| Seniority of incumbent | 0.096 | 0.138 | 0.069 | 0.137 | −0.103 | 0.131 | −0.119 | 0.118 | −0.182* | 0.121 |
| Incumbent is Democrat | −0.768 | 1.181 | −0.914 | 1.172 | −1.116 | 1.089 | −0.936 | 0.983 | −0.823 | 0.976 |
| Incumbent prior office-holding experience | | | 2.196** | 1.046 | 2.161** | 0.979 | 1.326* | 0.893 | 1.364* | 0.886 |
| Incumbent quality | | | | | 5.183*** | 1.100 | 4.745*** | 0.995 | 4.435*** | 0.999 |
| *Congressional Quarterly* key race | | | | | | | −7.873*** | 1.817 | −7.764*** | 1.802 |
| Incumbent spending (log) | | | | | | | −3.051*** | 0.897 | −2.576*** | 0.921 |
| Incumbent previous vote-share | | | | | | | | | 0.083** | 0.041 |

# Double standards

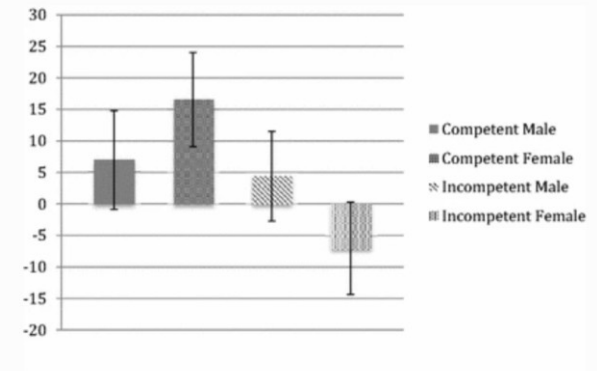- More subtle bias

- Evaluation of women candidate's traits stricter

- Voter put mor emphasis on women candidate's competence. (Ditono 2014)

- Women's competence evaluated more harshly than men's

**Fig. 1**
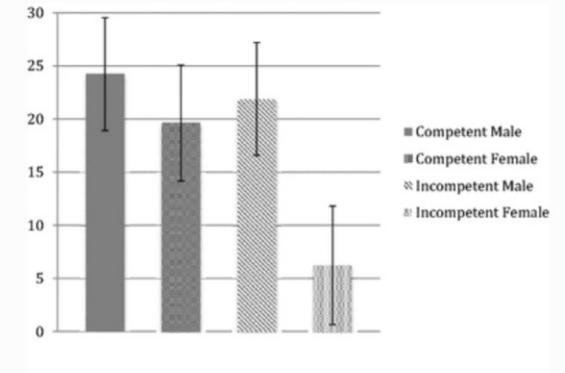
Feeling thermometer difference score means, Experiment 1. *Note* Statistical Test is ANOVA.

$F = 4.019$, $p < .05$. $N = 448$. *Error bars* represent 95 % confidence intervals

**Fig. 2**

Feeling thermometer difference score means, Experiment 2. *Note* Statistical Test is ANOVA.

$F = 8.056$, $p < .05$. $N = 372$. *Error bars* represent 95 % confidence intervals

# Double standards

- Stereotypical evaluation also in Norway

- Experimental manipulation of politician s gender in a video recording of a parliamentary speech by a backbencher (speech held constant, politicians were actors)

- First-time voters evaluated the politicians performances as follows:



Male "Backbencher"



Female "Backbencher"

**Table 1.** *Candidate Gender in Relation to Political Speech Traits*

| Speech traits | Female Candidate | Male Candidate | T-test | Probability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Knowledgeable | 4.41 | 5.26** | -3.46 | 0.00 |
| Trustworthy | 4.55 | 5.08** | -2.30 | 0.02 |
| Convincing | 3.87 | 4.39** | -2.00 | 0.05 |
| Inspiring | 3.36 | 3.59 | -0.83 | 0.41 |
| Optimistic and hopeful | 3.50 | 3.82 | -1.27 | 0.20 |
| Alarming and worrying | 3.48 | 3.33 | 0.56 | 0.57 |
| Boring | 5.78 | 6.03 | -0.84 | 0.40 |
| Irrelevant | 3.34 | 3.16 | 0.72 | 0.48 |
| Smallest N | 152 | 257 | | |

**Significant at the 0.05 level, 2-tailed test

- Male candidate as significantly more knowledgeable, trustworthy and convincing compared to the woman

- Gender stereotypical evaluations still apply in Norway – a country with a high level of gender equality and ideology of state feminism

- Hard test of the gender stereotypes and their harmfulness for women!

# Double bind

- Evaluation standards = no win situation
- When people
  - Require you to comply with a set of stereotypes
  - But they evaluate different set of stereotypes better

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BEYOND THE DOUBLE BIND

WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP
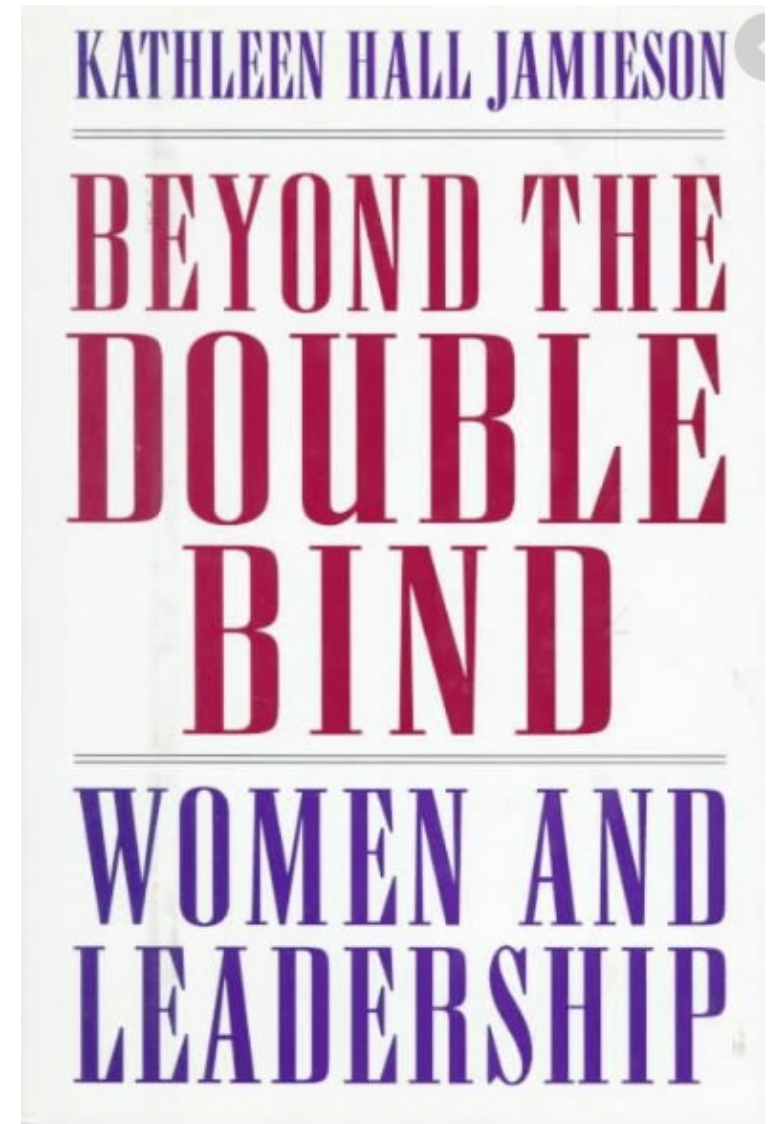
# Double blind

- Traditional gender roles require women to be more feminine in their trait and character
- At the same time masculine traits are required from political leaders.


- Not maternal, too cold, too professional, not emotional.
- Various binds: Competence vs. Authenticity (Bhengazi hearings, Harp Loke, Bachmann 2016)

# Teele et al. 2018

- Are women held to dobuble standards?

- No according to their experimental study.

- Women candidates are more likely to be chosen

- BUT!

- The traits that make candidates more successful are much harder to obtain for women!

# Campaigns and communication

- Often no differences (mostly USA)

- Gendered communication and campaign styles not supported

- Campaign issues as well as communication styles

- E.g. Dolan 2005:

- Web campaigns of the Senate and House candidates in 2000 and 2002

- Very little differences in what issues men and women candidates used

FIGURE 1. Testing for Outright Hostility Against Female Candidates among Political Elites and the Mass Public.
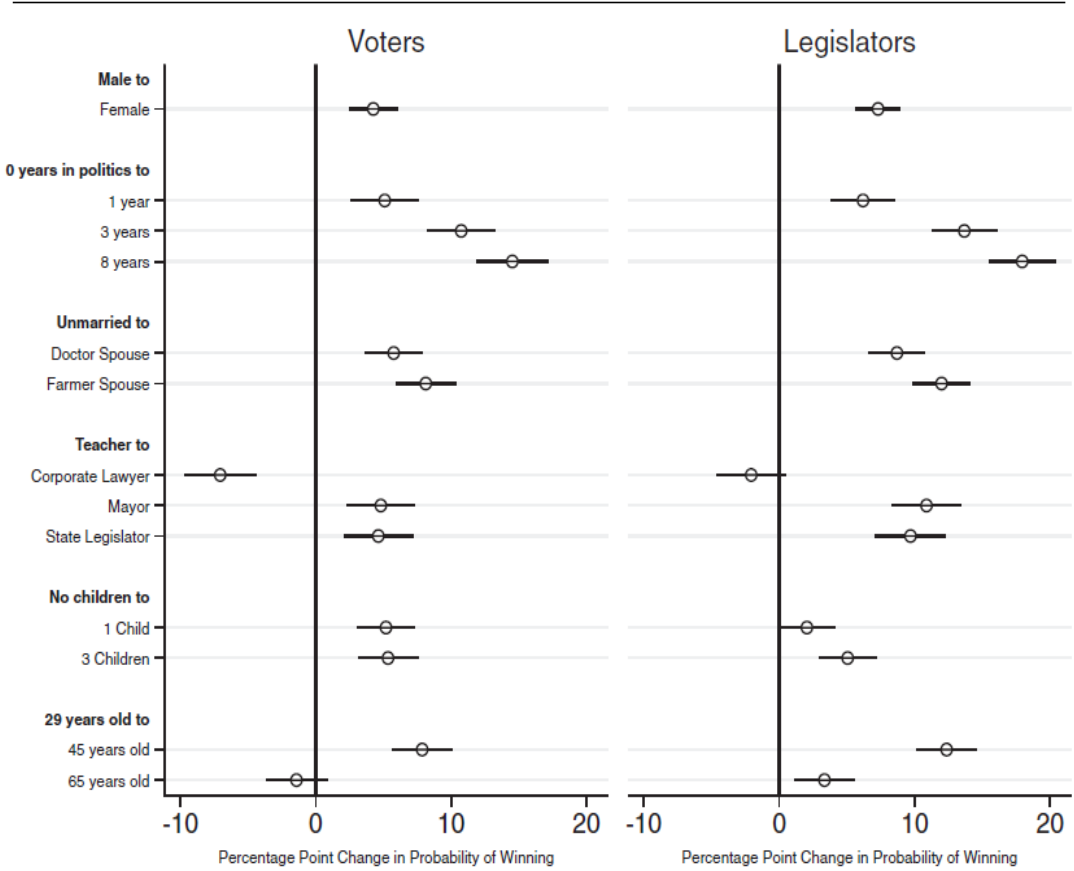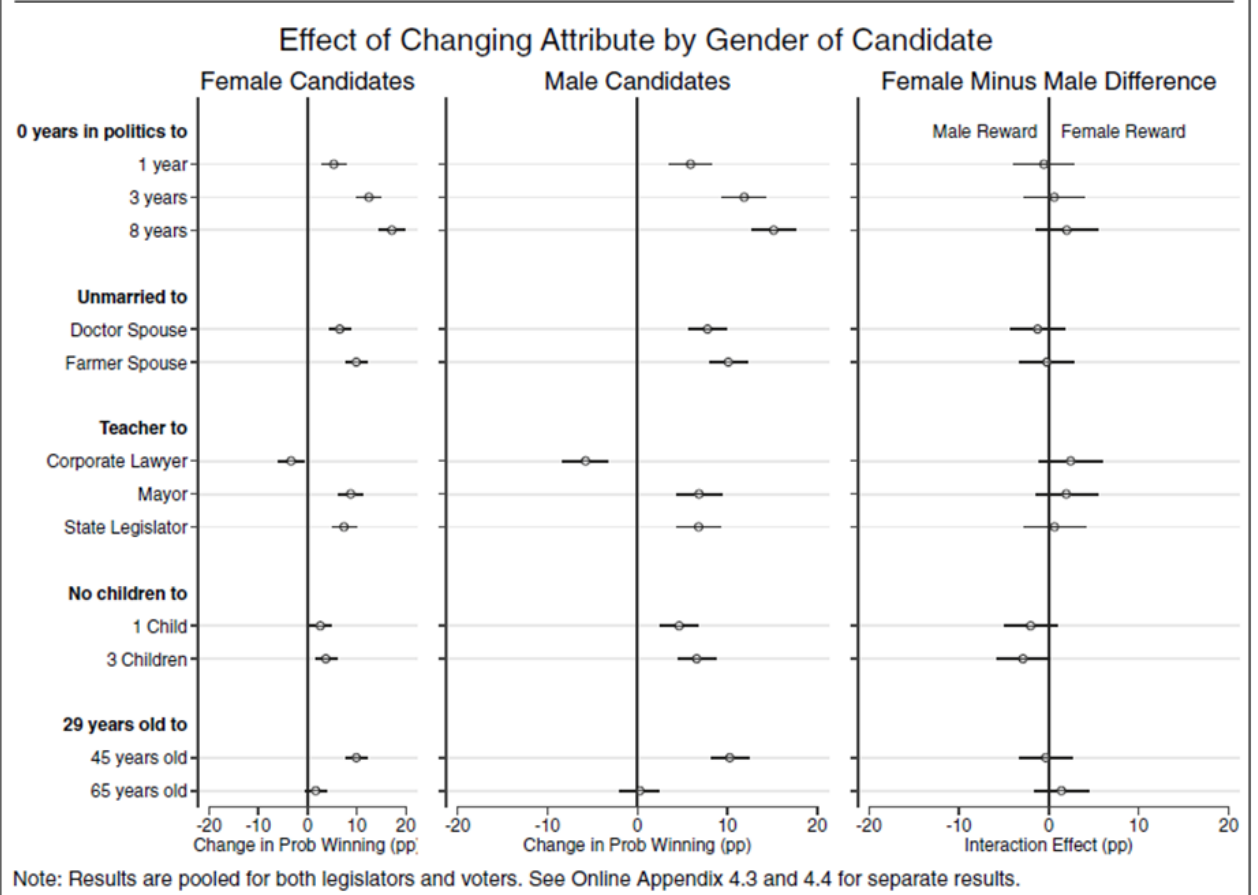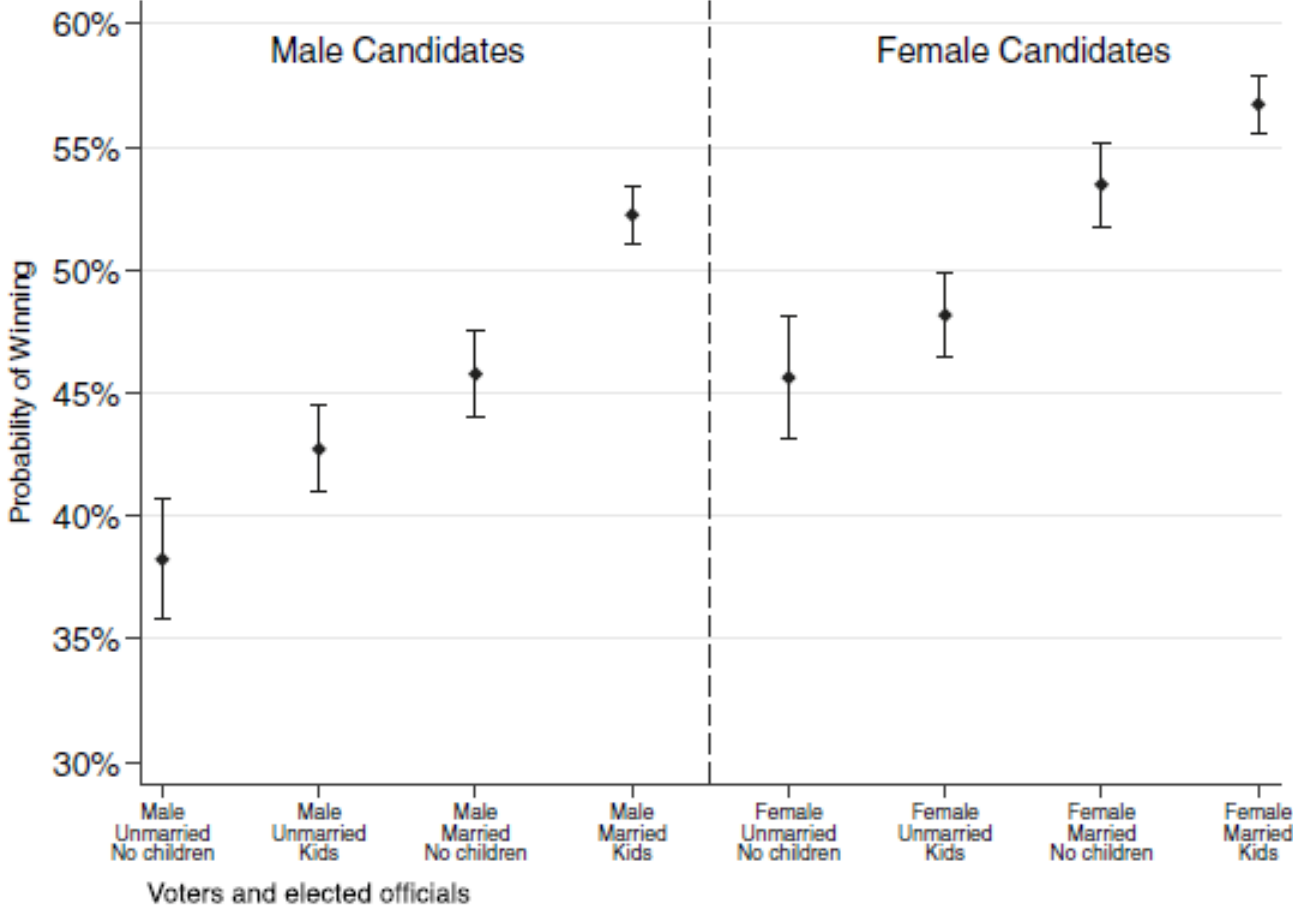


FIGURE 4. Testing for the Double Standard: Are Women Differentially Penalized or Rewarded for Possessing Different Attributes?

Note: Results are pooled for both legislators and voters. See Online Appendix 4.3 and 4.4 for separate results.

**FIGURE 5.** Testing for the Double Bind: Do Respondents Prefer Politicians with Greater Family Responsibilities?

Clayton et al. 2020: (How) Do Voters Discriminate Against Women Candidates? Experimental and Qualitative Evidence From Malawi

- No bias against women in experiment (on the contrary)
- Ceretis paribus voters prefer women candidates
- BUT!
- Voters prefer candidates with young children
- Negative campaigns does affect evaluations of real candidates

# Communication styles

- Often no find differences (mostly US)
- Gendered communication and campaign styles not supported
- Campaign issues as well as communication styles
- E.g. Dolan 2005
  - analysed web campaigns of the Senate and House candidates in 2000 and 2002
  - Compared which issues women and men used in campaigns

TABLE 2

DIFFERENCES IN ISSUE REPRESENTATION ON CAMPAIGN WEB SITES—ISSUE MENTIONED AS ONE OF TOP FIVE CONCERNS
WOMEN CANDIDATES AND THEIR MALE OPPONENTS

| | 2002 | | | | 2000 | | | |
| | Women % | Men % | t | Difference† % | Women % | Men % | t | Difference† % |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Female Issues* | | | | | | | | |
| Education | 64.4 | 67.6 | .399 | −3.2 | 77.1 | 66.6 | −1.373 | 10.5 |
| Health Care | 52.6 | 48.5 | −.397 | 4.1 | 61.4 | 44.9 | −1.962* | 16.5 |
| Social Security/Medicare | 43.4 | 42.6 | −.075 | 0.8 | 82.8 | 63.7 | −1.346 | 19.1 |
| Environment | 26.3 | 23.5 | −.384 | 2.8 | 18.5 | 31.8 | 1.814 | −13.3 |
| Family Issues | 17.1 | 10.2 | −1.191 | 6.9 | 21.4 | 26.0 | .596 | −4.6 |
| Abortion | 15.7 | 4.4 | −2.321* | 11.3 | 17.1 | 8.7 | −1.487 | 8.4 |
| Ethics/Government Reform | 11.8 | 4.4 | −1.653 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 11.5 | .896 | −4.4 |
| Women's Issues | 5.2 | 0 | −2.041* | 5.2 | 5.7 | 1.4 | −1.355 | 4.3 |
| *Male Issues* | | | | | | | | |
| Economy/Jobs | 51.3 | 39.7 | −1.397 | 11.6 | 27.1 | 26.0 | −.140 | 1.1 |
| Taxes | 26.3 | 27.9 | .217 | −1.6 | 37.1 | 33.3 | −.467 | 3.8 |
| Defense | 17.1 | 39.7 | 2.838* | −22.6 | 15.7 | 24.6 | 1.309 | − 8.9 |
| Agriculture | 10.5 | 22.0 | 1.865* | −11.5 | 4.2 | 8.7 | 1.051 | −4.5 |
| Crime | 11.8 | 10.2 | −.294 | 1.6 | 15.7 | 24.6 | 1.309 | −8.9 |
| Gun Issues | 7.8 | 8.8 | .199 | −1.0 | 24.2 | 17.3 | −.997 | 6.9 |
| Budget/Deficit | 5.2 | 8.8 | .824 | −3.6 | 14.2 | 20.2 | .887 | −6.0 |
| Smaller Government | 5.2 | 4.4 | −.237 | 0.8 | 5.7 | 13.0 | 1.481 | −7.3 |
| Homeland Security (2002 only | 22.3 | 20.5 | −.258 | 1.8 | | | | |
| *Neutral Issue* | | | | | | | | |
| District Issues | 17.1 | 16.1 | −.135 | 10.0 | 11.4 | 13.0 | .271 | 1.6 |
| N = | 68 | 68 | | | 69 | 69 | | |

*p .05
†Indicates the value for women candidates on an issue minus the value for men candidates.

# Communication styles

- Gendered language (zero results)
- Usual operationalization:
  - Personalization (sharing private lives)
  - Interactivity (interaction with other users/the public)
- E.g. Sweden: Sanberg and Ohberg 2017
  - candidate survey and content analysis of Twitter accounts during campaigns and after campaigns
  - Women more emphasis on Twitter as a professional tool
  - No difference in communication during campaign
  - After campaign – women more interactive
  - Assumption – campaign periods are special, candidates use it strategically

# Czech Republic: Hrbková and Macková 2020