

Feminine Democrats, Masculine Republicans
Gender and Party Stereotyping in Candidate Trait Attribution

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Abstract: A growing body of research suggests that the effect of candidate gender on voters' evaluations of a candidate is influenced by other information, particularly party affiliation. In this paper, I propose a model of "stereotype accessibility" that contends in most cases, party stereotypes, because of their greater accessibility and salience, will override gender stereotypes in the process of candidate evaluation. Drawing on recent work on partisan "trait ownership," I test this argument by investigating the assessment of candidate personality traits. In two non-experimental studies from the 2006 elections, I find evidence of party stereotyping but no evidence of gender stereotyping. I also find neither that gender stereotypes "bolster" party stereotypes nor that a voter's level of political awareness increases reliance on gender stereotyping when the cues conflict, two suggestions from the existing literature. These perceptions are central to voter decision making, as they influence overall evaluations of candidates. The findings affirm the existence of partisan trait ownership in American elections, and suggest that party images may powerfully moderate the application of other stereotypes.

Does a candidate's gender matter in American elections? For decades, the scholarly chorus has sung a consonant yes. Candidate gender shapes voters' perceptions of ideology and issue-handling abilities (see Dolan 2004) and, ultimately, the outcomes of elections (*e.g.*, Sanbonmatsu 2002). Gender stereotypes in campaigns are not universally detrimental to female candidates' fortunes, but they can be "potent" and demand the attention of candidates of both sexes (McGraw 2003, 402).

As potentially potent as it may be, gender is not the sum total of the information voters possess about a candidate, and recent work has suggested the influence of gender stereotypes is more complicated than typically supposed. In particular, scholars have sought to explain the ways that candidate gender interacts with other stereotypes—especially party affiliation—to amplify, moderate, or override gender-based judgments (Dolan 2004; Huddy and Capelos 2002; Koch 2002). Despite this growing literature, it remains the case that "we know little about the impact of multiple stereotypes in a single context" (McGraw 2003, 404), partly because of a reliance on laboratory research that often fails to incorporate candidates' party affiliation into experimental designs (see King and Matland 2003). As a result, calls for non-experimental work to identify the circumstances under which stereotypes do and do not matter have become a familiar refrain in recent years.

In this paper, I propose a model of "stereotype accessibility" that suggests in most cases, party stereotypes will override gender stereotypes in the process of candidate evaluation. Faced with multiple cues, I argue that voters are more likely to rely on a candidate's party affiliation than gender in assessing his or her attributes. Because a party heuristic is likely to be more cognitively accessible and politically salient, candidate assessments will be driven by partisan stereotypes, rendering gender stereotypes less influential.

Drawing on recent work on partisan "trait ownership," I test this argument by investigating the assessment of candidate personality traits—a little-studied, yet fundamental, element of

candidate perception. In two non-experimental studies from the 2006 elections—an analysis of survey data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study and a study of the New York attorney general race—I find evidence of party stereotyping but no evidence of gender stereotyping. I also find neither that gender stereotypes “bolster” party stereotypes nor that a voter’s level of political awareness increases reliance on gender stereotyping when the cues conflict, two suggestions from the existing literature. These perceptions are central to voter decision making, as they influence overall candidate evaluation. The findings affirm the existence of partisan trait ownership in American elections, and suggest that party images may powerfully moderate the application of other stereotypes.

Gender Stereotyping and Its Effects

When it comes to politics, citizens are, if anything, efficient. Because most people are willing to devote only minimal time and energy to thinking about public affairs, political judgments are often the product of a few easily accessible cues, not an exhaustive survey of all the available information (*e.g.*, Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Lupia 1994). In many cases, those judgments stem from simple stereotypes that help voters “go beyond the data” at hand (Popkin 1994).

Stereotyping is the assignment of “identical characteristics to any person in a group regardless of the actual variation among members of that group” (Aronson 2004, 244). Among the most well-established stereotypes in person perception is an individual’s gender (*e.g.*, McKee and Sheriffs 1957), as women tend to be viewed as warmer and more empathetic than men, but less assertive and competent.

The assignment of attributes based on gender appears to extend to politics. Female candidates tend to be perceived as more liberal than their male counterparts (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; King and Matland 2003; McDermott 1997), and even more liberal than they actually are when compared to their congressional voting records (Koch 2000,

2002). As a result, women are advantaged among left-leaning voters, but at a disadvantage among conservatives, especially Republicans (King and Matland 2003; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009). Similarly, citizens attribute policy expertise by gender, viewing women as more capable at dealing with social welfare issues—health care, education, and the like—while seeing men as better suited to handle foreign policy, defense, and crime (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). These stereotype-based assessments can pose obstacles for women (Fox and Oxley 2003; Kahn 1994, 1996), though female candidates can also benefit when the electoral environment makes women’s issues salient (Paolino 1995) or when citizens are looking for an “outsider” candidate (Dolan 1998; Fridkin and Kenney 2008).

Gender, of course, is not the sum total of the information voters possess about a candidate, and recent scholarship has turned its attention to the circumstances under which gender stereotyping is most likely to occur. In particular, scholars have focused on whether party affiliation—itsself a powerful stereotype that shapes perceptions of candidates (Rahn 1993)—conditions the effects of gender stereotypes (Dolan 2004; Huddy and Capelos 2002; McDermott 1997; Koch 2002). It is not clear from the existing literature, however, how gender and party stereotypes interact to shape candidate evaluation (McGraw 2003; see Winter 2009 for a compelling discussion of the “intersectionality” of gender and party in American politics).

Studies have drawn different conclusions. One line of argument, elaborated by Huddy and Capelos (2002), emerges from Kunda’s “parallel processing” model (Kunda and Thagard 1996; Kunda, Sinclair, and Griffin 1997). In this theory, individuals integrate multiple pieces of stereotypical information about a person—for example, gender and party affiliation—in the process of forming an impression. The effect of each stereotype on evaluation can be bolstered or moderated by the content of the other. For instance, a voter could evaluate a male Republican candidate as especially conservative, since both the gender and party cue suggest the candidate will

lean to the right. On the other hand, when a candidate possesses cross-cutting cues—a female Republican, for example—the voter may assess the candidate as ideologically moderate (see Koch 2002).

Huddy and Capelos' (2002) survey experiment, however, finds little support for the model. Instead, in almost every case, a candidate's party label dominated gender as a predictor of voter attitudes, suggesting very little integration of the two stereotypes. King and Matland's (2003) experimental study of Republican candidates also finds little evidence of gender stereotyping: Voters did not see female GOP candidates as more empathetic or weaker leaders than male Republicans (King and Matland 2003, Table 2). The main source of variation in perceptions was instead the party affiliation of the voter.

On the other hand, Sanbonmatsu and Dolan (2009) conclude that even in the presence of party information, gender stereotypes remain powerful influences on voter attitudes. Using survey data in which respondents were asked questions about generic male and female candidates of each party, the authors find that voters use gender stereotypes to assess the issue competencies and positions of both Democratic and Republican candidates. For example, when asked when asked whether a male or female Democrat would better able handle education, voters gave substantial advantages to the woman. Male candidates were advantaged when the issue was crime (Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009, Table 1).¹ The pattern held when respondents were asked about a Republican man or woman. That, combined with evidence that voters believed female candidates of both parties would adopt more liberal abortion positions, lead Sanbonmatsu and Dolan (2009, 6) to conclude that “[a]lthough it is often argued that any gender effect will disappear in the presence of the party cue, we find that gender stereotypes transcend party.”

¹ Specifically, respondents are asked questions in the following format “Who would do a better job in the U.S. Congress handling [crime/education]—a Democrat who is a man, a Democrat who is a woman, or would they do an equally good or bad job?” The same question was about Republican politicians.

Sanbonmatsu and Dolan's design does not, however, actually test the hypothesis that gender remains salient in the presence of a party cue. By asking whether "a Democrat who is a man" or "a Democrat who is a woman" is more capable of handling a particular issue, the question encourages respondents to draw on a gender stereotype to make a judgment. Since the only piece of discriminating information between the two candidates is their gender, gender is by default a salient and accessible cue. In other words, gender is primed as a criterion for judgment, whereas political party is made irrelevant. Such studies may tell us much about how voters assess male and female candidates in partisan primaries or non-partisan elections. But they can tell us little about how voters evaluate candidates when multiple stereotypes about a candidate are potentially salient. What is needed is a theoretical framework to understand how party and gender may influence voters' perceptions when, as in general elections, both cues are available.

The Importance of Stereotype Accessibility

The literature on attitude accessibility (*e.g.*, Fazio 1995; Huckfeldt *et al.* 1999) may provide a useful model for understanding the role played by party and gender stereotypes in candidate assessments. Research has shown that people often make political judgments based on the considerations that are most easily retrieved, those at the "top of the head" (Taylor and Fiske 1978; Zaller 1992; Zaller and Feldman 1992). Attitudes become more accessible the more frequently they are activated (Fazio and Williams 1986; Fazio, Powell and Herr 1983). For example, a person who regularly thinks about politics in ideological terms is more likely to draw on ideology as a cue in making political judgments (Huckfeldt *et al.* 2005). As a result, the more "chronically accessible" a consideration is, the more likely it is to become the foundation for political judgment (Huckfeldt *et al.* 1999).

Stereotypes are a subset of attitudes, and accessibility arguments in social psychology have been used to explain their application. The concept of "stereotype accessibility" suggests that when a

social stereotype is easily retrieved, it is more likely to be used to make an evaluation (Stangor 1988), a finding that has emerged in research on both gender and race (Dijksterhuis, Macrae, and Haddock 1999; Payne, Lambert, and Jacoby 2002). Similarly, Huckfeldt *et al.* (2005, 12) argue “a heuristic is more useful if it is more readily available as an organizing principle and hence more frequently deployed in formulating political opinions.” This raises the question whether party or gender is more likely to meet those terms.

There is no doubt that the most frequently deployed heuristic in American politics is the political party (Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Rahn 1993). Voters routinely rely on party stereotypes to make “theory-driven” judgments about candidates’ issue-handling abilities, issue positions, and other attributes (Conover and Feldman 1989; Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985; Hayes 2005; Petrocik 1996; Rahn 1993). More generally, citizens see the political world through a partisan lens, a view that is encouraged by political debate and news coverage that focuses intently on differences and conflict between Republicans and Democrats.

Moreover, the utility of a party heuristic is often validated and reinforced by policy differences between the parties. Consider a voter who casts a ballot for a Republican candidate with the expectation that the politician will promote conservative policies. When the voter’s newly elected representative then votes in Congress for a tax cut, the use of the partisan heuristic is rewarded. Party affiliation then is more likely to be used to guide subsequent political judgments. This may be particularly true in an era of increasing elite polarization (Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2006; Hetherington 2001).

By contrast, candidate gender is less frequently promoted as a basis for political judgment. While the gender of a candidate is obvious to citizens, its ubiquity and availability does not imply that a gender stereotype will be employed. Its application depends not only on its mental activation,

but on the appropriateness of the stereotype to the judgment task (Kunda and Spencer 2003).² To be sure, the rise of “women’s issues” can make a politician’s gender especially salient in a campaign, but such circumstances represent the exception to the rule in American politics (Dolan 1998; Paolino 1995). While ideas about masculinity and femininity pervade the structure and content of American politics (Carroll and Fox 2005; Winter 2009), most campaigns are not explicitly “gendered.” And even though the media do cover women differently than their male opponents (*e.g.*, Kahn 1996), voters are not frequently exposed to discourse that portrays an election as a clash of the sexes (Dolan 2005). Even high-profile female candidates often eschew a focus on their gender, discouraging voters from casting ballots on the basis of gender (*e.g.*, Scherer 2007). Lau and Redlawsk (2001) show that voters use an “appearance” heuristic—a shortcut based on a candidate’s sex, race, or other physical characteristic—less frequently than other cues, and *much* less often the party heuristic. Ultimately, gender stereotypes seem likely to be less accessible and applicable as criteria for judgment of candidates.

All of this suggests that “stereotype accessibility” is key, and that party cues are more likely to be salient in the evaluations of candidates than are gender cues. Rather than synthesizing cues, I argue based on the accessibility literature that voters will typically use the party stereotype to the exclusion of gender. This perspective, if correct, would help explain Huddy and Capelos’ (2002) finding that the only topic on which candidate gender influenced voters’ perceptions of a candidate’s issue-handling ability was “women’s issues,” a domain in which gender is explicitly invoked.

Candidate Traits and Political Judgment

I test this argument by examining the way voters assess the personal attributes, or traits, of candidates for political office in the United States. Considerable work has probed the effects of

² See Price and Tewksbury (1997) and Winter (2008, Ch. 7) for analogous discussions of the importance of cognitive accessibility and applicability in shaping how and when framing effects occur.

gender on views of a candidate's ideology and issue competencies, but there is a dearth of research on how candidate gender influences perceptions of his or her personality traits. I focus on candidate traits for three reasons.

First, traits represent a domain in which gender and party stereotypes overlap considerably. Research in social psychology has shown that men and women tend to be perceived as possessing traits associated with “warmth”—compassion and empathy, for example—while men are more likely to be seen as possessing traits associated with “competence”—leadership ability or assertiveness (Best and Williams 1990; Broverman *et al.* 1972; McKee and Sheriffs 1957). Recent work on presidential elections, however, has suggested that similar cleavages exist in evaluations of Republicans and Democrats.

In a study of the seven presidential campaigns since 1980, Hayes (2005) shows that voters have perceived GOP candidates as stronger leaders than Democratic candidates, a stereotypically “masculine” characteristic. At the same time, Democratic candidates were always rated as more representative of “feminine” traits—compassion and empathy—than Republicans. The data suggest the existence of partisan “trait ownership” in American elections (Hayes 2005), a pattern derived from the issues each party is typically seen to handle most adeptly (Petrocik 1996). In the same way voters apply party stereotypes to infer candidates' issue positions (Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985; Rahn 1993), they rely on party images in evaluating personal attributes. This overlap of gender and party stereotyping on personality traits presents an opportunity for a clear test of the stereotype accessibility argument.

Second, traits are important because they are theorized to be the source of the differences in the perceptions of male and female politicians' ideological positions and issue competencies. The argument, articulated most clearly by Huddy and Terkildsen (1993), contends that because women politicians are likely to be seen as possessing feminine traits, but not masculine ones, they are

stereotyped as adept at handling “compassion” issues, such as health care. Male politicians, likely to be seen as stronger leaders, are perceived as better able to handle foreign policy, defense, and crime. But though the argument seems plausible, Huddy and Terkildsen’s study, like others (Kahn 1992; Rosenwasser and Seale 1988), does not directly test the trait stereotyping hypothesis in the absence of an experimental manipulation. Rather, subjects are presented with information about hypothetical male and female candidates, and those experimental manipulations are used as predictors of subjects’ assignment of different attributes, ideological positions, or issue competencies. In one of the only studies that has attempted to address this question directly, King and Matland’s (2003, Table 2) experimental study of Republican candidates found no gender stereotypic advantages on traits for male or females. Still, as far as I can tell, the question of whether voters do indeed attribute masculine and feminine personality traits to male and female politicians has never been directly tested outside of an experimental context.³

Third, considerable work has shown that traits can have a direct and importance influence on voting behavior itself. Trait perceptions affect candidate evaluation and vote choice at the presidential level (*e.g.*, Bishin, Stevens, and Wilson 2006; Hayes 2009), and several recent papers have shown similar effects in sub-presidential contests (Druckman 2004; Fridkin and Kenney 2007; Grose and Globetti 2007; Hayes 2007). In other words, trait evaluations carry more importance than simply shaping perceptions of candidates’ ideological or issue profiles. For these reasons, it is important to clarify the role that gender and party play in influencing assessments of candidate traits.

Hypotheses

The stereotype accessibility perspective and the evidence of partisan trait ownership generate the hypothesis that party stereotypes will override gender stereotypes in the process of trait

³ To be sure, one of the difficulties of testing for gender stereotyping during actual campaigns is that female candidates often undertake strategies to pre-empt sex stereotyping. One way to address this is to account for variations in the information environment across campaigns, a possibility I discuss in the Discussion and Conclusion.

attribution. Democrats will be perceived as more compassionate and empathetic than Republicans, while Republicans will be seen as stronger leaders than Democrats. I do not expect to find evidence of gender stereotypes influencing trait evaluations of candidates of either party. And when faced with a situation when gender and party stereotypes conflict—when voters are faced with attributing traits to a Republican woman and a Democratic man—I expect voters to resolve this conflict by relying on the party cue.

The existing literature suggests an individual’s level of engagement with politics may influence their use of gender stereotypes. Empirical research has produced two different findings. First, Lau and Redlawsk (2001) find people with low levels of sophistication to be more likely to use an “appearance” heuristic in political decision-making. Possessing lower levels of political information and lacking motivation to grapple with issues or ideology, the less politically aware fall back on assessments of a candidate’s physical attributes, such as gender.

By contrast, Koch (2002) finds that politically aware voters, faced with conflicting gender and party cues (*e.g.*, Republican woman) employ a gender stereotype, whereas unsophisticated citizens do not. In this case, the logic is reversed: Presented with incongruent information, less politically engaged individuals will simply rely on partisan expectations. Koch’s (2002, 460) explanation rests on sophisticates’ higher levels of cognitive engagement, maintaining that they will have the ability to “utilize these contradictory pieces of information to form an impression.” The analyses below probe the question of whether political awareness moderates the use of party or gender cues.

It is important to note that all of my expectations are specific to real-world elections, in which most voters are at least aware of a candidate’s political party, rather than an experimental setting where party identification is manipulated or absent. The findings should yield a sense of the

extent to which gender and party stereotypes interact to influence trait attribution, something not well understood in the existing literature (McGraw 2003).⁴

As noted, much of the work on voters' perceptions of candidate traits relies on laboratory experiments, which give researchers firm control over the exposure of subjects to candidates' characteristics. But such studies are limited in the light they shed on individual information processing amid the cacophony of real-world campaigns. Because I am interested in the perceptions of candidates when voters have multiple cues from which to draw inferences—specifically, gender and party—I choose to use survey data from two studies conducted during the 2006 elections.

Study 1: 2006 U.S. Senate Races

Study 1 was part of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), a collaborative enterprise of more than three dozen academic institutions that organized a survey of Americans during the 2006 midterm election campaigns. The nationally representative on-line survey was conducted by Polimetrix, Inc. Each university was given the opportunity to design a questionnaire administered to a representative sample of 1,000 Americans, who also filled out a longer survey of “common content” questions. The key measures in this paper were included in the [name of institution] module in the CCES.⁵ The survey included a host of measures typical in congressional election studies: demographic questions, positions on issues, ideological views, candidate evaluation, and vote choice.

⁴ My expectations are all of the *ceteris paribus* variety, in that candidate trait ratings will also be affected by an individual voter's predispositions, especially party identification (Bartels 2002b). As such, I control for partisanship and other relevant factors in the analyses below. But my primary aim in this paper is to determine whether there is a general tendency for candidates to be stereotyped on the basis of their sex, party, or both. Thus, my focus is primarily on the overall patterns, and only secondarily on the specific individual-level sources of variation.

⁵ More information about CCES and Polimetrix, Inc., the firm that conducted the Internet-based survey, is available at <http://web.mit.edu/polisci/portl/cces/index.html>. One post-survey analysis shows that the CCES sample was slightly better informed, slightly younger, and slightly more educated than respondents in the 2004 National Election Studies, but that these differences are not large (Hill *et al.* 2007).

The [name of institution] module also included questions about the personality traits of the Republican and Democratic Senate candidates in each respondent's state, measures rarely included on non-presidential survey instruments (Fridkin and Kenney 2007). Because of survey time constraints, roughly half of the 1,000-person sample was asked the trait battery. In all, the trait measures were asked of about 500 respondents from 30 states with Senate elections in 2006.⁶ Aggregating survey respondents from multiple states is a common technique in U.S. Senate election research (Kahn and Kenney 1999; Koch 1999; Lau and Pomper 2001).

In the course of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their Republican and Democratic Senate candidates on several personality traits. The questions included two "feminine" traits—"really cares about people like me," a proxy for empathy, and "compassionate"—and one "masculine" trait—"provides strong leadership."⁷ Following the standard wording of the National Election Studies presidential trait batteries, respondents were told they were going to be asked about several characteristics of the candidates. They were then asked a question in this way: "Think about Amy Klobuchar, the Democratic candidate for U.S. senator. In your opinion, does the phrase 'provides strong leadership' describe Amy Klobuchar extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all?" Responses were assigned a numerical value, with 1 representing "not well at all" and 4

⁶ This paper does not analyze data from three states with unusual circumstances in their Senate races. In Indiana, Republican Richard Lugar faced no Democratic opposition. In Connecticut, Democrat Joe Lieberman won reelection as an independent, beating out a Republican and Democratic opponent. And in Vermont, independent Bernie Sanders won election in a contest without an official Democratic candidate.

⁷ Respondents were also asked about whether the candidate was "moral." Those responses are not central to the research questions here, so they are not included in the analysis. To be sure, a large battery of traits would have allowed for a more robust test of the gender stereotyping argument. Traits like "tough," "assertive," or "kind" might reveal other assessments indicative of sex stereotyping. But the limitation of the study to the three traits was necessary to pit the party and gender stereotypes against one another. Hayes' (2005) "trait ownership" argument ties the Republican and Democratic advantages to issues on which the parties are perceived to have an issue-handling edge. Other traits, such as "trustworthy," do not map to issue advantages, and thus would not be expected to exhibit partisan patterns. And though it may be that gender stereotyping is more prevalent on traits not "owned" by one of the parties, the three traits used here are among the most central to candidate evaluation and vote choice. For example, recent studies of Senate candidate evaluation find empathy and leadership to be the traits most strongly related to vote choice (Kahn and Kenney 2007; Hayes 2007), which is also what Hayes' (2005) and other presidential election studies show.

representing “extremely well.” Respondents were asked to rate both Republican and Democratic candidates on each trait.⁸

The CCES sample does not constitute a random draw *within* each state, but the large number of contested Senate elections allow for an examination of trait assessment under various combinations of candidate party and gender. Table 1 displays the four different types of contests, the states that fall into each category, and the number of respondents in the data set. Not surprisingly, voters in a majority of states faced a choice between two male candidates. But 10 campaigns in 2006 included at least one female candidate, and the CCES includes a large number of voters from these states. By aggregating across these races, it is possible to determine whether systematic patterns exist in the way voters attribute traits to candidates of different gender and party.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Results

To determine whether candidate gender or party affiliation has an influence on candidate trait perceptions, I first present the average trait ratings for candidates of both parties. I do this in two ways. First, I examine comparisons between male and female candidates within each party. If gender stereotyping is evident, we should see differences between male and female Democrats, and male and female Republicans. I then turn to comparing perceptions of same-gender candidates of each party to determine whether party affiliation reveals differential trait ratings.

In the top panel of Figure 1, the average trait ratings for Republican female (lighter bar) and male (darker bar) candidates are presented. Following Bartels (2002a), I have transformed the ratings from the survey questions into a 0-100 scale to ease the interpretation of the data.⁹ If gender

⁸ The order in which the trait batteries were asked and the order of the candidates was randomized.

⁹ Specifically, a score of 1 (“not well at all”) was converted to 0, 2 (“not well”) was converted to 33.3, 3 (“quite well”) was converted to 66.7, and 4 (“extremely well”) was converted to 100. The conversion of the scale has no effect on the statistical relationships among the ratings; it simply makes the scores easier to interpret.

stereotyping is occurring, we would expect male Republicans to hold a significant advantage on leadership, and female GOP candidates to possess advantages on really cares and compassionate.

There is, however, is no evidence of gender stereotyping. Female Republicans are rated as more empathetic than their male counterparts, but the difference is negligible and statistically insignificant (39.0 to 38.5). On the other “feminine” trait, compassionate, and on leadership, male GOP candidates are perceived more favorably, though insignificantly so (46.0 to 44.3 on compassion, 49.6 to 48.1 on leadership).

[Insert Figure 1 here]

The bottom panel, which displays the comparisons for Democratic men and women, tells the same story. Once again, the data reveal no evidence of sex stereotyping. Female Democrats are perceived slightly more favorably on all three traits, but there are no statistically significant differences. In fact, the largest advantage for women emerges on leadership (53.6 to 49.5, $p=.14$), the ostensibly “masculine” trait. The differences on the “feminine” traits are small: 56.9 to 55.2 on compassionate, and 47.2 to 45.7 on really cares.

Figure 2 investigates whether trait perceptions are affected by Senate candidates’ party affiliation. Again, evidence of partisan “trait ownership” at the presidential level (Hayes 2005) suggests Democrats should be perceived as more compassionate and empathetic, while Republicans should hold an edge on leadership. The results reveal that party affiliation is significantly related to trait attribution. The top panel of the figure compares perceptions of male candidates in each party. Just as Figure 1 “controlled” for party, this analysis controls for gender. As predicted by the stereotype accessibility argument, Democratic men are perceived as significantly more compassionate (55.2 to 46.0, $p<.05$) and empathetic (45.7 to 38.5, $p<.05$) than their GOP counterparts. Republicans hold a miniscule and statistically insignificant advantage on leadership, 49.6 to 49.5.

[Insert Figure 2 here]

The bottom panel presents the same comparisons for female candidates. Once again, there are substantial and significant differences in the attribution of “feminine” traits. Democratic women are rated as far more compassionate (56.9 to 44.3, $p < .05$) and empathetic (47.2 to 39.0, $p < .05$) than Republican women. Female Democrats also hold an advantage on leadership, though the difference (53.6 to 48.1) is not significant and, notably, the smallest among the three traits. There is clearly a baseline advantage in 2006 for Democratic Senate candidates, regardless of gender, but the only traits on which those advantages are significant are the “feminine”/Democratic measures.

It is possible that other factors, such as incumbency and individual-level characteristics, could account for the absence of gender stereotyping and evidence of party stereotyping in the descriptive data. To examine a more rigorous test of the hypothesis, Tables 2 and 3 present the results of ordered logit models predicting a respondent’s trait score for each candidate on each trait. The dependent variable is a respondent’s rating of a candidate on each trait, ranging from “not well at all” (low) to “extremely well” (high).

I specify separate models for Republican and Democratic candidates. The first set of models includes a dummy variable coded 1 if the candidate is a woman. The effect of this variable indicates whether men and women are being evaluated in systematically different ways on each trait. A second dummy variable indicates whether the candidate is an incumbent, given the evidence that sitting senators are typically evaluated more favorably than challengers or open-seat candidates (Fridkin and Kenney 2007; Hayes 2007). I also include controls for a respondent’s party identification (dummies for Republican and Democratic identifiers, with independents as the reference category),¹⁰ level of

¹⁰ Independent “leaners” are included in the partisan dummies.

political awareness,¹¹ and gender, coded 1 for female. These account for individual-level factors that could influence trait evaluation.¹²

The results of these models are presented in the second, fourth, and sixth columns of Tables 2 (Republicans) and 3 (Democrats). In short, the results unequivocally confirm the absence of gender stereotyping: None of the coefficients for candidate gender are statistically significant, indicating that gender had no independent influence on a respondent's assessment of a candidate's personality traits. More specifically, the table provides no evidence for the argument that a candidate's gender and party affiliation interact to bolster a citizen's assessment on certain traits. Democratic women do not receive an additional "boost" on feminine traits as a result of their two converging stereotypes, and neither do Republican men receive significantly higher leadership scores. Candidate sex plays little or no role in shaping perceptions of personality traits when voters also have party affiliation as a cue for judgment.

[Insert Tables 2 and 3 here]

The third, fifth, and seventh columns of Tables 2 and 3 present the results of a model designed to rule out the possibility of a relationship between candidate gender and incumbency, as well as to explore arguments about political awareness as a mediator of the use of gender stereotypes. Added to the baseline model is an interaction term between candidate gender and incumbency status. If female incumbents are evaluated differently than male incumbents, then the interaction term's coefficient should be statistically significant. An interaction between political

¹¹ The awareness variable is created from respondents' ability to identify both the U.S. House candidates in their district and the identification of the Republican Party as more conservative than the Democratic Party. Though built on fewer questions than Koch's five-item variable, the measure taps the same concept—cognitive engagement with politics—that he argues mediates the relationship between an individual and the likelihood of applying a gender stereotype. I have also experimented with a scale that includes a measure of self-reported political interest. The use of that variable yields the same results as the 3-item measure, but because only about 300 respondents answered the interest question, it forces me to drop about 150 cases from the analysis. Since the two variables perform identically, I choose to use the measure based only on the knowledge questions to avoid losing a substantial number of observations.

¹² The models are estimated with Huber-White robust standard errors clustered by the respondent's state. This technique relaxes the assumption of the independence of observations, and accounts for the possibility of "intra-class" correlation in the trait assessments among individuals in the same Senate contest.

awareness and candidate gender tests Koch's (2002) argument that people with higher levels of political sophistication are more likely to apply gender stereotypes when the party and gender cues conflict. Operationally, Koch's findings predict the interaction to be positive and significant in the models for Republican candidates' compassion and really cares ratings, and negative and significant for Democratic candidates' leadership ratings. Those patterns would indicate that sophisticates are rating candidates in ways consistent with gender stereotypes to a greater degree than less politically aware citizens.

Neither possibility is even hinted at. None of the 12 interaction terms are statistically significant. From these results, there is neither a relationship between the evaluation of a candidate based on a combination of their gender and incumbency status, nor between candidate gender and an individual's level of political awareness. Candidate gender appears to play no role in shaping evaluations of candidate traits in actual elections, situations where citizens can instead draw on a candidate's party affiliation as a decision cue.

Though trait perceptions appear to be driven by a party stereotype, do they influence a voter's overall assessment of a candidate? In other words, do such trait perceptions "matter"? This is a critical question in determining the relevance of trait assessments to election outcomes. In addition, it may be that though trait assessments are not a product of gender stereotypes, the importance that voters ascribe to different traits may vary by the gender of a candidate. Do voters weigh their evaluations of traits differently for male and female candidates?

To explore these questions, I specify regression models predicting a respondent's overall candidate evaluation. The dependent variable is a respondent's favorability rating for a candidate on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 (very unfavorable) to 10 (very favorable). I specify separate models for Republican and Democratic candidates, and in the first, baseline, model, the key independent variables are the respondent's trait assessments for compassionate, really cares about people like me,

and strong leadership. If trait perceptions influence candidate preference, the coefficients for these variables should be positive and significant.

In addition, I control for characteristics of the candidates, the Senate race, and the respondent that may influence overall candidate evaluation. Dummy variables indicate whether the candidate is female, and whether the candidate is an incumbent. The model also includes a measure of the Republican candidate's advantage (or deficit) in campaign spending.¹³ *Ceteris paribus*, candidates with large spending advantages would be expected to be evaluated more favorably than their opponents. I include dummy variables for whether the respondent is a Republican or Democratic identifier, and a respondent's self-placement a 5-point ideology scale, with higher values indicating greater conservatism.

The results of these models are presented in the second (Republican) and fourth (Democratic) columns of Table 4. The most important result is that traits matter. In every case, the more favorably a respondent views a candidate's personality traits, the higher the overall candidate evaluation score. Since candidate evaluation is often seen as a proxy for vote choice (Kahn and Kenney 1999; Markus and Converse 1979), this is strong confirmation that trait perceptions have electoral relevance beyond their ability to shape attitudes about candidate ideology and issue-handling abilities.¹⁴

¹³ Spending data were obtained from the *New York Times* 2006 Election Guide. The variable, which is scaled to \$10,000s, takes negative values if the Democratic candidate outspent the Republican, positive values if the Republican held a spending advantage.

¹⁴ A prominent concern in the literature on candidate traits is that assessments of personal characteristics may stem from projection. When voters engage in projection, they "reason backwards," assigning positive attributes to the candidate they already prefer, instead of first evaluating the candidates' attributes and then using those evaluations to make a candidate preference (see Bartels 2002a, 2002b). If trait assessments represent mere projection, they can tell us little about stereotyping, candidate evaluation, or voting behavior. But though there is evidence that this sort of motivated reasoning does occur (Bartels 2002b; Taber and Lodge 2006), it is not clear empirically that trait assessments represent nothing more than projection. In the CCES sample, for example, 37% of respondents rated their Senate candidates equally on one of four traits, which should not occur if trait perceptions are simply reflections of a pre-existing candidate preference. Another 16% of voters rated the candidate they did *not* vote for more favorably on at least one trait dimensions. That number is not trivial, and it is even higher in presidential contests (Hayes 2005, 914, fn.9). Thus, while some amount of projection no doubt occurs, other elements of the campaign, or the candidates themselves, are contributing to voters' attitudes (see also Johnston, Hagen, and Jamieson 2004).

[Insert Table 4 here]

The second set of models explores the possibility that voters weight “feminine” or “masculine” traits more heavily in their assessments of candidates. It may be that masculine traits take on more importance for women candidates, since they may be stereotypically expected to be less strong leaders than men, and that men might be evaluated more carefully on the basis of their levels of caring or warmth. The alternative—that men and women are evaluated on the basis of traits they are expected to possess—is also possible.

The third and fifth columns of Table 4 present models in which the gender of the candidate, coded 1 for female, is interacted with each of the trait variables. If men and women are evaluated on the basis of different traits, the coefficients on the interaction terms will be statistically significant. But none of the interactions reaches conventional levels of statistical significance, and thus there appears to be no difference in the way male and female candidates’ traits shape candidate evaluation. Traits matter, but their influence does not depend on whether a candidate is man or woman.¹⁵

Study 2: 2006 New York Attorney General Race

The findings from the CCES data, based on a representative sample of Americans in 30 U.S. Senate contests, carry the considerable advantage of generalizability. But one drawback of these data is the inability to closely analyze a contest in which a Republican woman runs against a Democratic man, creating a scenario of stereotype incongruence for citizens.¹⁶ This would be the best forum in which to examine the interplay of gender and party stereotypes in a “difficult” information-processing environment for voters. To do so, I turn to a case study of the 2006 New York attorney general race, which pitted Republican Jeanine Pirro against Democrat Andrew Cuomo. To the

¹⁵ I have also specified models with interactions between candidate gender and incumbency, candidate gender and respondent gender, and candidate gender and political awareness. None of these models reveal statistically significant relationships.

¹⁶ Maine and Florida had such races in 2006, but the 45 respondents in those two states do not constitute a large enough pool from which to draw meaningful inferences.

extent that patterns similar to those in the Senate data emerge, we can have more confidence in concluding that party stereotyping is more important than gender stereotyping when it comes to candidates' personal characteristics.

The presence of a Republican female and a Democratic male in the race allows for a direct examination of how voters make trait inferences when presented with conflicting gender and party cues. Also, the race represents a low-salience, open-seat contest, in which most voters had relatively little information about the candidates, particularly compared to the U.S. Senate candidates in Study 1. Thus, it presents an opportunity to test the Senate findings in a very different electoral environment.

The survey respondents in Study 2 were a convenience sample of 242 undergraduates in political science courses at [institution] in New York. Fifty-two percent were female, 87% were white, and the average age was 20. Fifty-two percent identified as Democrats, 20% identified as Republicans, and 25% identified with neither party.

On the day of the survey, conducted a few weeks before the election, the subjects were told by the researcher that they were participating in a study of public opinion toward political candidates. They were given a single sheet of information about the two candidates. One half of the sheet contained information about Pirro, the other half about Cuomo. A brief biographical and political sketch of each candidate also was included, similar to the kind of information that might appear on a piece of direct mail from a candidate. A small photograph of each candidate was included on the sheet, and their party identification was clearly labeled.¹⁷ The photo and party information were included to make obvious each candidate's gender and party affiliation. The information sheet appears in the Appendix.

¹⁷ The photos and background information were drawn from the candidates' campaign Web sites.

The subjects were asked to review the candidate information, and then answer a series of questions on an attached page. The second page read as follows: “Thinking about the candidates, Democrat Andrew Cuomo and Republican Jeanine Pirro, how well does each of the following phrases describe them?” The three character traits in Study 1—compassionate, really cares about people like me, and provides strong leadership—were included in a longer list of 10 traits. Just as in the CCES, subjects were instructed to assess each candidate as representing the trait “not well at all,” “not well,” “quite well,” or “extremely well.”¹⁸

If people are more likely to use party stereotypes than gender stereotypes in making trait attributions, the trait ratings should show that Cuomo, the Democrat, held an advantage on the traits of compassion and really cares about people like me. At the same time, Pirro, the Republican, should be perceived as a stronger leader. If gender stereotypes drive trait attribution, I should find the opposite pattern.

Results

Figure 3 presents the average ratings for Cuomo (lighter bar) and Pirro (darker bar) on the two “feminine”/Democratic traits and one “masculine”/Republican trait. As in Study 1, the scores were transformed into a 0-100 scale to ease interpretation. In general, confirming the findings in Study 1, the figure shows evidence of party stereotyping, but not gender stereotyping.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

The first two sets of bars show the ratings for the “feminine” traits of really cares about people like me and compassionate. Consistent with the stereotype accessibility argument, Cuomo is rated as significantly more compassionate and empathetic than Pirro (both $p < .05$). Cuomo’s empathy rating is 58.8 compared to Pirro’s 52.9; his average compassion rating is 64.9, while Pirro’s

¹⁸ To avoid question-ordering effects, the order of the trait questions was randomized across subjects. There were also two versions of the candidate information sheet—one that presented Cuomo on the left and Pirro on the right, and one that reversed their placement. A randomly selected half of the sample received the first version, and half received the second. There were no significant differences in candidate assessments in the two halves.

is 59.6. In fact, the differences on those traits are the largest among any of the 10 that appeared on the survey, including those not shown here. There is no evidence that Pirro’s gender made her seem more compassionate or empathetic—more “feminine”—than her male opponent.

Neither does there exist evidence of gender stereotyping on the masculine trait. Cuomo’s leadership rating of 69.4 is slightly higher than Pirro’s 68.1, but the difference is neither statistically nor substantively significant. Moreover, comparisons of the two candidates on several other traits (not shown here) considered to be “masculine”—though not connected to a party stereotype—yielded no evidence of sex stereotyping. Pirro actually holds slight advantages on “competent” (76.4 to 75.6) and “intelligent” (78.9 to 78.5), while Cuomo has an edge on “knowledgeable” (76.7 to 76.1). In sum, people seem to be resolving the incongruence between the presence of a Republican woman and Democratic man by relying on the party stereotype for evaluations of the Democratic traits, though not on the Republican trait of leadership. In no case is there any evidence of gender stereotyping.

Does an individual’s level of political awareness matter? Table 5 probes the possibility that party or gender stereotyping is more prevalent among citizens with differing levels of political awareness, particularly as they face conflicting stereotypes. Just as in Study 1, the table presents the results of ordered logit models predicting the respondent’s assessment of the candidates attributes. For each model, the dependent variable ranges from “not well at all” (low) to “extremely well” (high).

Again, according to Koch (2002), we would expect the highly aware to evaluate Pirro and Cuomo’s traits in more gendered ways than their less aware counterparts. In the case of the models, we would expect the coefficient for awareness¹⁹ to be positive and significant in predicting scores for

¹⁹ The awareness scale is created from measures of both political knowledge and political interest, and ranges from 0 to 4. The knowledge measures were four factual questions about politics—identifying the vice president, identifying the Supreme Court as possessing the power of judicial review, knowing a two-thirds congressional majority is required to

Pirro on compassionate and empathetic, and negative on leadership. For Cuomo, the pattern should be reversed: a negative coefficient for compassionate and empathetic, and a positive effect on leadership. If that is the case, it would show that relative to their less aware counterparts, the politically aware are most likely to evaluate candidates' traits in ways consistent with sex stereotyping. If Lau and Redlawsk's (2001) findings are applicable, lower levels of awareness should produce trait attribution in stereotypically gendered ways. If the variable has no significant effect, it would confirm the findings from Study 1.

[Insert Table 5 here]

The models, which control for the respondent's gender and party identification, show no evidence of differences in stereotyping based on political awareness. The signs on the coefficients are inconsistent, and in no case are the effects statistically significant. An individual's level of political awareness appears, just as in Senate contests, to have no influence on the likelihood of party or gender trait stereotyping.²⁰

The findings are certainly limited in their generalizability by the case study and the use of a student sample, but they match perfectly with those from Study 1. Moreover, the dynamics of the attorney general race make for an especially difficult test of the hypothesis. Pirro was beset by a scandal involving her marriage weeks before the election, and Cuomo won in a landslide, an outcome that would be expected to coincide with a lopsided trait advantage. Indeed, that is evident on the compassion and empathy measures. But the fact that Pirro essentially held her ground on the

override a presidential veto, and knowing that the Republicans controlled the U.S. House—and the identification of the GOP as more conservative than the Democrats. The interest measure was a 4-point scale in which respondents reported their interest in politics. The knowledge and interest measures were added together to initially create a 9-point scale. Because less than 5% of respondents were on the bottom third of the scale, I folded those three categories into the lowest category of knowledge, creating the five-point measure. This was necessary because of the unsurprisingly high levels of knowledge and interest among the group of college students. I also experimented with a measure including only the political knowledge questions, as Koch (2002) uses, but the variable has so little variance—almost all of the respondents were in the highest knowledge category—it has little discriminatory power.

²⁰ Given the anemic goodness-of-fit measures of the models, these results should be interpreted cautiously. Still, since the analyses in Study 1, using a very different sample and producing better-fitting models, replicate these findings, they appear to have some analytical value.

“masculine” traits, despite her campaign troubles, suggests that party affiliation strongly affected the way she was assessed.²¹

More broadly, it is likely that the anti-Republican sentiment in the country at the time of the 2006 midterms affected voters’ ratings of the GOP candidates’ traits, both in Study 1 and Study 2. Displeasure with the Republican Congress, George W. Bush, and the war in Iraq probably permeated citizens’ judgments about all aspects of the party’s candidates (Jacobson 2007), including their personality traits. This may have led to unusually low ratings on the leadership measure. Given the very low baseline of Republican support, the fact that the GOP did not “lose” these trait comparisons to the Democrats, even in the face of such public discontent, suggests the power of partisan stereotypes. Whether this is evidence for “ownership” of GOP traits is debatable, but it points to the power of partisan stereotyping in the process of trait attribution.

Discussion and Conclusion

Stereotypes are important in politics, because they often influence, for good or for ill, voters’ assessments of parties, candidates, and policies. For scholars interested in political behavior, understanding and analyzing the content and influence of voters’ stereotypes is critical, for it provides insight into how citizens will respond to political candidates and political developments, and the potential consequences for electoral outcomes and public opinion.

²¹ An alternative explanation is that the patterns in Figures 3 and 4 are evidence not of party stereotyping, but instead reflect Cuomo’s popularity among the respondents combined with the effect of the information presented on the candidate sheet (see Appendix). In this formulation, Cuomo’s compassion and empathy advantages resulted not from party stereotyping, but from the fact that he was more popular than Pirro in the heavily Democratic sample. (Fifty-six percent reported they would vote for Cuomo, while 44% supported Pirro.) Pirro may have been able to overcome that advantage on the leadership question, however, because the political experience and record summary presented in the information sheet “leveled the playing field” by making both candidates appear qualified and competent (but not necessarily warm and compassionate). While I cannot rule this out, there are two reasons to believe the trait assessments are indeed the result of party stereotyping, not information effects. First, the patterns are identical to those that emerged in the 2006 CCES data—Democrats holding advantages on compassion and empathy, and Republicans breaking even on leadership. Second, the patterns for both candidates—higher ratings on leadership and competence questions than on compassion and empathy measures—are very similar to presidential trait data (see Hayes 2005, Table 1). Thus, while the alternative explanation is plausible, the data are also consistent with trait assessment patterns that have appeared repeatedly in studies of other elections.

This paper has suggested that conceiving of stereotypes as having variable accessibility and applicability sheds significant light on the circumstances under which stereotypes about candidates are likely to be employed. Specifically, the analyses of trait attribution in the 2006 Senate midterms and the New York attorney general contest show that voters are quite likely to use party stereotypes in making inferences about candidate traits, but that gender stereotypes are not very influential. The results appear to confirm the stereotype accessibility argument: Voters employ party, not gender, stereotypes in evaluating candidates' personality trait. Despite the social psychology literature that shows people perceive women as more compassionate and empathetic than men, and men as stronger leaders than women, I did not find this to be true in assessments of political candidates. When it comes to politics, party heuristics appear more salient, and more accessible, when voters judge politicians' personal attributes.

But it is possible that that I have underestimated the importance of the extent to which different campaigns are differentially “gendered.” For example, campaigns characterized by discourse that is heavily focused on women's issues, or in which women are portrayed in stereotypical ways, may make gender stereotypes more accessible, and thus produce candidate evaluations that reflect gender stereotypes. Campaigns that are less gendered would not produce the same patterns. As a result, the null results I report here may reflect the absence of measures of contextual variation in the information environment. This could be problematic, since female candidates often focus their campaigns on the same issues as their male opponents (Dabelko and Herrnson 1997; Dolan 2005; Larson 2001; Williams 1998) and try to emphasize their “masculine” side (Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes 2003; Kahn 1996; Williams 1994).

To address that concern, I conducted a content analysis of news coverage in the 30 U.S. Senate campaigns. With the help of a research assistant, I analyzed every news story about the campaign in each state's largest newspaper in the month before election day—a total of 1,345 in all,

for an average of 45 per state. The coding project is described in more detail in [citation omitted], but I was primarily interested in determining whether male and female candidates' personality traits were portrayed in stereotypically gendered ways. In brief, I found little evidence of such coverage: Female candidates were rarely portrayed differently than their male counterparts. More importantly, variation in the “stereotypic-ness” of coverage had no effect on voters' attributions of traits. Voters in states with more “gendered” coverage were not more likely to ascribe traits to candidates in ways consistent with gender stereotyping. Thus, in 2006 at least, it does not appear that variation in the information environment affected the likelihood of voters' attributing traits according to gender stereotypes.²² Party stereotypes remained paramount.

None of this is to say that candidate gender is irrelevant. To be sure, this study has several limitations, the most obvious being its focus on aggregate differences in the perceptions of male and female, and Republican and Democratic, candidates. More research to determine the circumstances under which gender can be made more accessible and applicable as a judgment criterion, in the presence of party cues, would be a fruitful area of inquiry. In addition, neither the CCES data nor my limited survey in the attorney general race includes direct measures of stereotype accessibility, typically tapped with recall tests or response latency (*e.g.*, Huckfeldt *et al.* 1999; Fazio 1995). To do so would be quite difficult outside of the laboratory, and an experimental design would undermine my reasoning for a survey-based approach. But there is surely considerable individual-level variation in the accessibility of partisan and gender stereotypes, something that is probably affected both by “experiential” considerations (Dijksterhuis, Macrae, and Haddock 1999), as well as the level of partisan and gender-focused campaign communications. Discerning a way to examine the variation

²² These findings emerged from a series of ordered logit models in which measures of news coverage were included in models similar to those in Tables 2 and 3, along with the appropriate interaction terms with candidate gender. I found virtually no evidence that media coverage played a role in shaping trait attributions.

in individual stereotype accessibility in a “real world” election would likely produce greater theoretical clarity about the process of candidate assessment.

Nonetheless, the findings presented here have significant empirical and theoretical implications. Empirically, the results underscore the point made by other scholars that the process of candidate evaluation is complicated, and that candidate gender and party affiliation can raise a fairly complex set of considerations for voters (Dolan 2004; Winter 2009). If we want to understand how long-standing gender and party stereotypes influence political judgment, we need to study both simultaneously. Only then, can we determine which stereotypes are influential, and under what circumstances. Theoretically, the stereotype accessibility model may have implications beyond the study of gender and politics. It may also be useful in helping understand the circumstances under which candidate race or ethnicity is likely to serve as the basis for voter judgments. When campaigns are framed in terms of racial issues, race may be a salient and accessible stereotype by which voters come to judge candidates. If, on the other hand, the campaign environment makes the political party the salient cleavage, then a candidate’s physical and demographic characteristics may be deemphasized in favor of party stereotypes.

Given the contemporary American political landscape, one broad implication is that the growing polarization of the Republican and Democratic parties may encourage voters to think about candidates in partisan terms. Thus, gender or racial stereotypes may be deemphasized in voters’ minds in favor of party stereotypes. This would seem to be a favorable development—most observers would regard stereotyping based on party history and performance as preferable to stereotyping based on often inaccurate images of men and women, whites and blacks. To the extent that polarization continues, party stereotypes should become increasingly powerful in shaping voter attitudes. And that may be a good thing.

Andrew Cuomo

Democrat for
New York Attorney General



Background

- Former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Former Manhattan Assistant District Attorney

Record

- Launched gun buyback and violence reduction initiative as HUD secretary
- Created internet-based electronic mapping system to provide communities with information about environmental hazards
- Barred unscrupulous landlords from doing new business with the federal government and exposed fraudulent practices

Jeanine Pirro

Republican for
New York Attorney General



Background

- Former Westchester County District Attorney
- Past president, New York State District Attorney's Association

Record

- Led investigation of \$12-million medical insurance fraud case as Westchester DA
- Required corporate polluters to fund environmental projects in their communities for the benefit of future generations
- Through numerous prosecutions, investigated and brought to justice more than 200 corrupt public officials

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**Table 1. Distribution of Candidate Gender and Party Combinations in U.S. Senate Campaigns, 2006
Cooperative Congressional Election Study**

	States	N of respondents
Republican man vs. Democratic man	AZ, DE, MD, MA, MS, MT, NE, NV, NJ, NM, ND, OH, PA, RI, TN, UT, VA, WV, WI, WY	190
Republican man vs. Democratic woman	CA, MI, MN, MO, NY, WA	172
Republican woman vs. Democratic man	FL, HI	45
Republican woman vs. Democratic woman	ME, TX	64
Total		471

Note: N reflects the number of respondents who rated both candidates on at least one trait. Respondents who did not rate either candidate on any trait are excluded.

Table 2. Models of Republican Senate Candidate Trait Attribution, 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

	<u>Compassionate</u>		<u>Really cares...</u>		<u>Strong leader</u>	
Female candidate	-0.05 (0.34)	-0.37 (0.76)	0.25 (0.30)	0.71 (0.78)	-0.15 (0.22)	-0.66 (0.74)
Incumbent	0.24 (0.22)	0.32 (0.24)	0.06 (0.19)	0.15 (0.21)	0.46* (0.22)	0.39 (0.27)
Republican respondent	1.55*** (0.41)	1.53*** (0.42)	1.79*** (0.33)	1.77*** (0.33)	0.88* (0.36)	0.91** (0.35)
Democratic respondent	-0.95* (0.44)	-0.97* (0.46)	-1.02** (0.39)	-1.05** (0.40)	-1.06** (0.41)	-1.02* (0.42)
Political awareness	0.12 (0.13)	0.06 (0.15)	-0.21 (0.12)	-0.22 (0.13)	0.07 (0.12)	0.06 (0.14)
Female respondent	0.19 (0.21)	0.17 (0.21)	0.31 (0.19)	0.30 (0.19)	0.18 (0.18)	0.18 (0.18)
Female cand. x Incumbent	--	-0.36 (0.48)	--	-0.58 (0.33)	--	0.45 (0.42)
Female cand. x Awareness	--	0.24 (0.31)	--	-0.06 (0.31)	--	0.10 (0.30)
Cut Point (1)	-0.74 (0.54)	-0.88 (0.55)	-0.86 (0.48)	-0.88 (0.50)	-1.47** (0.47)	-1.49** (0.45)
Cut Point (2)	0.70 (0.50)	0.57 (0.51)	0.69 (0.40)	0.67 (0.41)	0.13 (0.40)	0.11 (0.38)
Cut Point (3)	3.09*** (0.60)	2.96*** (0.61)	2.72*** (0.50)	2.71*** (0.51)	2.30*** (0.43)	2.29*** (0.42)
N	444	444	444	444	447	447
Chi ² / <i>p</i>	186.23/.00	259.29/.00	166.59/.00	207.10/.00	64.13/.00	216.10/.00
Log pseudolikelihood	-514.26	-513.61	-497.44	-496.82	-539.59	-539.19
Pseudo R ²	0.13	0.13	0.15	0.15	0.09	0.09

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Dependent variable is the respondent's assessment of whether the trait described the Republican candidate "not well at all," "not well," "quite well," or "extremely well."

Cell entries are ordered logit coefficients. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 3. Models of Democratic Senate Candidate Trait Attribution, 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

	<u>Compassionate</u>		<u>Really cares...</u>		<u>Strong leader</u>	
Female candidate	0.17 (0.23)	1.07 (1.02)	0.18 (0.25)	1.69 (0.98)	0.16 (0.26)	0.72 (1.06)
Incumbent	0.22 (0.24)	0.36 (0.31)	0.13 (0.26)	0.30 (0.30)	0.59* (0.26)	0.98* (0.43)
Republican respondent	-0.34 (0.30)	-0.38 (0.29)	-0.68* (0.31)	-0.76* (0.31)	-0.68* (0.29)	-0.66* (0.30)
Democratic respondent	1.65*** (0.22)	1.61*** (0.22)	1.82*** (0.24)	1.76*** (0.25)	1.60*** (0.26)	1.62*** (0.26)
Political awareness	0.22 (0.20)	0.40 (0.26)	0.06 (0.18)	0.39 (0.25)	-0.03 (0.21)	0.01 (0.29)
Female respondent	0.07 (0.22)	0.06 (0.21)	0.39* (0.19)	0.39* (0.19)	0.59*** (0.17)	0.57** (0.18)
Female cand. x Incumbent	--	-0.29 (0.45)	--	-0.37 (0.51)	--	-0.76 (0.54)
Female cand. x Awareness	--	-0.34 (0.43)	--	-0.60 (0.40)	--	-0.09 (0.43)
Cut Point (1)	-0.55 (0.59)	-0.12 (0.70)	-0.44 (0.58)	0.30 (0.65)	-0.65 (0.68)	-0.43 (0.83)
Cut Point (2)	0.76 (0.60)	1.20 (0.71)	0.95 (0.49)	1.71** (0.63)	0.70 (0.63)	0.94 (0.80)
Cut Point (3)	2.96*** (0.55)	3.40*** (0.74)	3.35*** (0.45)	4.14*** (0.62)	3.29*** (0.53)	3.54*** (0.77)
N	453	453	454	454	453	453
Chi ² / <i>p</i>	108.93/.00	116.61/.00	147.89/.00	139.97/.00	126.85/.00	192.59/.00
Log pseudolikelihood	-543.01	-541.64	-523.13	-519.64	-515.64	-513.40
Pseudo R ²	0.09	0.10	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Dependent variable is the respondent's assessment of whether the trait described the Democratic candidate "not well at all," "not well," "quite well," or "extremely well."

Cell entries are ordered logit coefficients. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 4. The Effect of Trait Perceptions on Candidate Evaluation, 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

	<u>Republican Candidates</u>		<u>Democratic Candidates</u>	
Compassionate	1.05** (0.31)	0.85* (0.39)	0.28* (0.12)	0.23 (0.14)
Really cares	1.06*** (0.22)	1.22*** (0.29)	1.16*** (0.16)	1.33*** (0.22)
Strong leader	0.41* (0.17)	0.34 (0.22)	1.04*** (0.09)	0.91*** (0.15)
Female candidate	-0.09 (0.14)	-1.15* (0.44)	0.13 (0.20)	0.02 (0.41)
Incumbent	0.21 (0.23)	0.20 (0.25)	0.17 (0.24)	0.21 (0.25)
Republican spending advantage	0.03* (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Republican respondent	-0.24 (0.44)	-0.22 (0.45)	-0.93*** (0.25)	-0.96*** (0.24)
Democratic respondent	-1.28** (0.45)	-1.23** (0.44)	0.51 (0.28)	0.51 (0.29)
Respondent ideology	0.26 (0.14)	0.24 (0.15)	-0.42*** (0.11)	-0.42*** (0.11)
Female respondent	-0.02 (0.25)	-0.02 (0.26)	-0.08 (0.20)	-0.08 (0.20)
Female candidate x Compassionate	--	0.66 (0.41)	--	0.08 (0.26)
Female candidate x Really cares	--	-0.48 (0.28)	--	-0.34 (0.22)
Female candidate x Strong leader	--	0.22 (0.32)	--	0.28 (0.20)
Constant	-1.21 (0.67)	-0.87 (0.72)	0.09 (0.45)	0.16 (0.47)
N	394	394	450	450
Adjusted R ²	0.69	0.69	0.78	0.78

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Dependent variable is candidate favorability rating (0-10).

Cell entries are OLS regression coefficients. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 5. Model of Candidate Trait Attribution, 2006 New York Attorney General Race

	Pirro			Cuomo		
	Compassionate	Really cares...	Strong leader	Compassionate	Really cares...	Strong leader
Republican respondent	0.79 (0.61)	0.47 (0.63)	0.62 (0.62)	0.15 (0.60)	-0.30 (0.62)	-0.07 (0.66)
Democratic respondent	0.06 (0.57)	-0.16 (0.60)	0.50 (0.58)	0.55 (0.56)	0.24 (0.59)	0.55 (0.62)
Political awareness	0.05 (0.13)	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.00 (0.13)	0.12 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.13)
Female respondent	-0.07 (0.26)	0.24 (0.26)	0.10 (0.27)	-0.05 (0.27)	0.34 (0.26)	-0.24 (0.27)
Cut Point (1)	-2.68*** (0.73)	-2.93*** (0.74)	-3.09*** (0.74)	-3.08*** (0.75)	-2.07** (0.71)	-3.64*** (0.85)
Cut Point (2)	-0.44 (0.67)	-0.61 (0.71)	-1.53* (0.69)	-0.91 (0.66)	-0.01 (0.67)	-1.67* (0.74)
Cut Point (3)	2.07** (0.69)	1.72* (0.72)	1.31 (0.69)	1.84** (0.67)	2.15** (0.69)	1.43 (0.74)
N	225	223	231	226	224	231
Chi ² / <i>p</i>	6.47/.17	7.16/.12	2.44/.66	2.30/.68	6.82/.15	4.55/.33
Log pseudolikelihood	-250.87	-257.49	-236.61	-235.24	-266.73	-219.15
Pseudo R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Dependent variable is the respondent's assessment of whether the trait described the candidate "not well at all," "not well," "quite well," or "extremely well."

Cell entries are ordered logit coefficients. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Figure 1. Average Trait Ratings for Male and Female U.S. Senate Candidates, by Party, 2006
 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

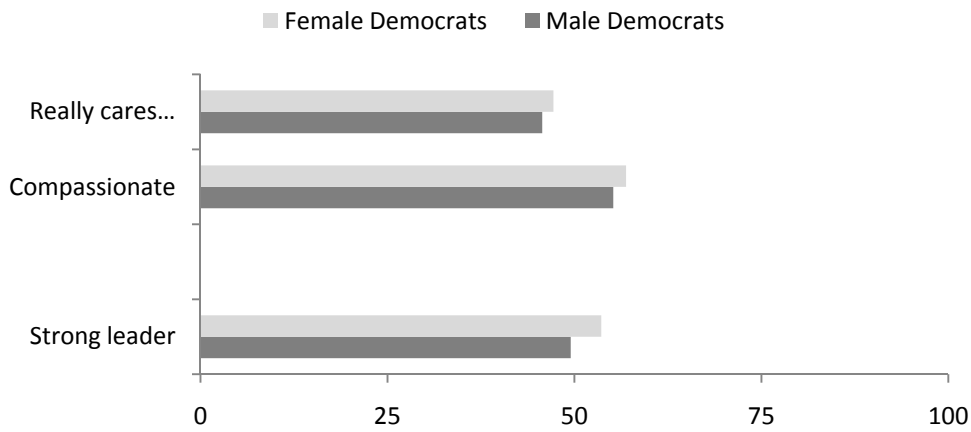
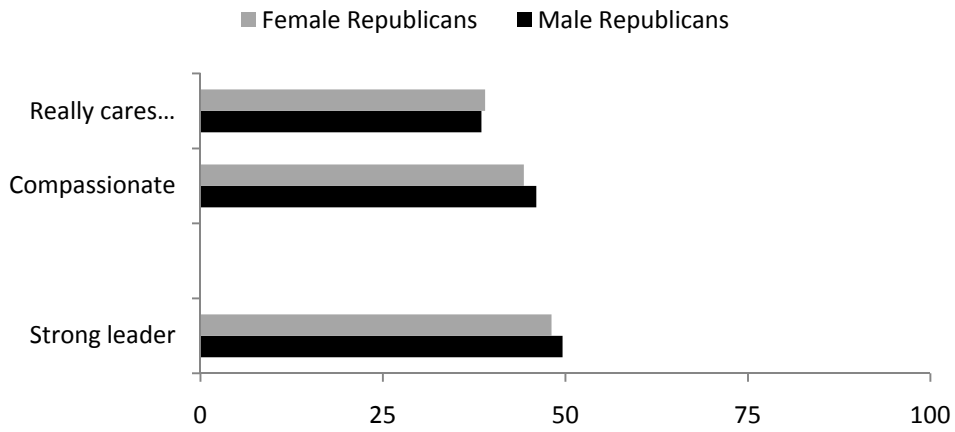
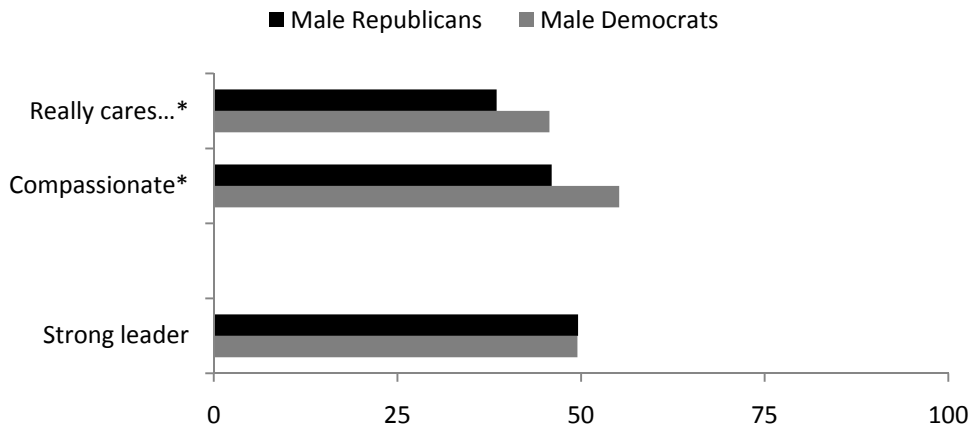
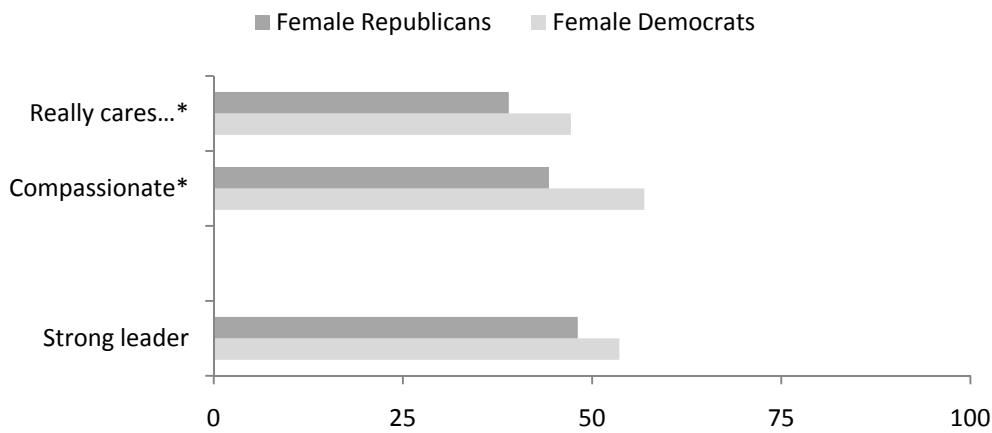


Figure 2. Average Trait Ratings for Republican and Democratic U.S. Senate Candidates, by Gender, 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

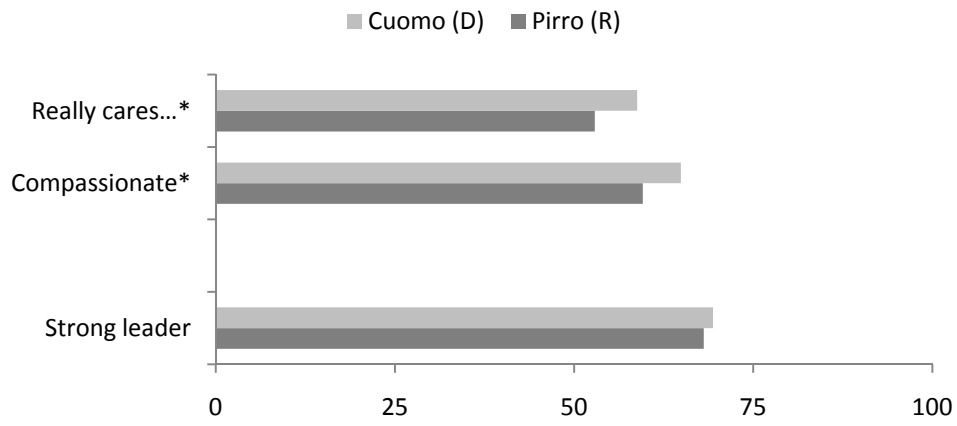


**Difference between candidate ratings is statistically significant, p<.05.*



**Difference between candidate ratings is statistically significant, p<.05.*

Figure 3. Average Trait Ratings for Andrew Cuomo and Jeanine Pirro, 2006 New York State Attorney General Race



**Difference between candidate ratings is statistically significant, $p < .05$.*