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Deconstructing the Gender Card:

An Examination of Femininity Performance in US Elections

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement

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by

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Hillary Clinton has been pegged as the most strategic and calculating candidate in the 2008 race for the presidency[1]. Ironically, alongside criticism of her calculating strategies are accusations that she is "playing the gender card." The idea that being a woman can be used strategically as a political asset is a new one, a far cry from previous research showing that women face significant barriers in running for office simply because of their gender. In response to the accusations, journalist Susan Faludi commented, "Keep in mind: The gender card is always played. It's even played in presidential campaigns where all the candidates are men" (Faludi 2007). This recent debate suggests that perhaps the role of gender in politics is more complicated than previously thought. Gender is no longer seen as simply an obstacle for women running for office. It has taken on a new significance as a strategic asset, used and manipulated by both women and men for political gain. This thesis seeks to understand gender in politics not merely as a biological characteristic of a candidate but as a strategic tool. What does it mean when someone accuses a female candidate of "playing the gender card?" When do they choose to play this card and why? How do candidates play it differently, and how effective have these strategies been? These are just a few of the questions that arise when we begin to see gender not as a fixed category but as a political tool. My research will begin to fill in the answers.

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[1] For examples see: Richard N. Bond, "Solving the Hillary Problem," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 3, 2008. ; Jay Cost, "Don't Overestimate Hillary," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 2005. ; DePaulo, Lisa. 2008.; "Karl Rove Likes what He Sees." *GQ.* April 2, 2008.; Dione, E. J. Jr. 2008. "Clinton's Real Choice." *The Washington Post*. ; Hopkins, Elaine. 2008. *Unmasking Sexism in the Media Coverage of Hillary Cllinton.*

As increasing numbers of women run for office at all levels of government, interest in how gender impacts campaign performance and voters' perceptions of candidates has grown significantly. In particular, the study of this topic took off in 1992. The Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings and the record number of women elected to public office in that year, often referred to as "The Year of the Woman," sparked an interest in the study of sex differences in campaign style and political communication. Researchers in this field have made significant strides towards understanding how gender stereotypes lead to differences in men and women's campaign styles, how voters view candidates, and how the media portray candidates. While this research has helped us better understand gender in the political arena, there is still a large gap in the literature. Up to this point, most research has focused on comparing male and female candidates, homogenizing these groups and taking a somewhat essentialist stance towards their behavior. It seeks to explain how female candidates perform differently from male candidates and assumes that, by virtue of simply *being* female, they will all perform similarly. Alternatively, the research focuses on dominant gender stereotypes and the ways in which they impact voters' perceptions of male and female candidates, without acknowledging the ways in which a candidate's actual behavior, not just gender, can impact voters' perceptions.

Neither of these research directions explores the ways in which female candidates perform differently from one another by consciously attempting to capitalize on or defy gender stereotypes. My goal is to explore female candidates' gender performance as something not innate and fixed, but rather strategic and fluid. Simple observation tells us that not all female candidates perform the same way. Some candidates are more feminine

than others or act more feminine at certain times. I seek to explain what factors impact a candidate's gender performance and the extent to which they do so. I determine whether the gender performance of female candidates differs more within the same race depending on the issue being discussed and the audience at hand or between races depending on the region, opponent, candidate's history and occupation, and other categories.

Background

A significant amount of time and literature has been devoted to campaign strategy and candidates' media styles. Much of this research has been based on Goffman's theory of the Presentation of Self (1973), which compares individuals to actors in a performance in which the fundamental goal is to control the behavior of the audience. Ultimately, however, Goffman believes that the audience has the upper hand in this process. Lynda Lee Kaid and Dorothy Davidson build on this theory in the first systematic study of political commercials in 1986. Kaid and Davidson construct a theory of videostyle in which they contend that, contrary to Goffman's assertion, the actor can have the advantage over the audience. The theory of videostyle rests on the idea that political commercials can be rehearsed, reshot, and perfected. Additionally, many people other than the candidate have a hand in developing the commercial. This degree of control gives the actor an advantage over the audience that is not possible in other settings. The different videostyles of candidates and the reasons for this have been studied extensively since Kaid and Davidson's initial content analysis of three 1982 Senate races. The latest addition to this literature is the study of how male and female candidates' styles differ

and how gender stereotypes impact the choice of campaign style (Kahn 1996, Bystrom, Banwart, Kaid, and Robertson 2004).

While my work strives to look beyond the role of stereotypes and male/female comparisons, these concepts are important building blocks for my argument. A variety of scholars have examined how gender stereotypes impact campaigns and voters' perceptions of candidates. A substantial body of literature shows that stereotypes of women as compassionate influence which policy issues voters believe women are better equipped to handle, such as poverty, day care, and health care as opposed to foreign policy, crime, and the economy (Huddy and Terkildson 1993, Kahn 1996; Iyengar et al 1997, Hernson, Lay, and Stokes 2003). These stereotypes, in turn, impact the way in which female candidates run their campaigns. For example, women are more likely than men to appear in their own campaign advertisements in order to capitalize on voters' perceptions of women as more trustworthy (Kahn 1996). Conversely, female candidates attempt to combat negative stereotypes that they are not competent or effective leaders by emphasizing these qualities more often than their male counterparts (Kahn 1996). Some evidence suggests that candidates are most successful when they emphasize feminine *issues*, but highlight masculine *traits* such as toughness and strength (Bystrom et al. 2004). The vast majority of work in the area concludes decisively that voters' preconceived gender stereotypes have an impact on the campaign style of both men and women.

The work done on gender stereotypes has led to further study of exactly how the campaign styles of men and women differ as a result of gender stereotypes. Kahn and

Gordon found that women are more likely than men to focus their campaigns on issues rather than perceptions, presumably to combat the stereotype that they are less competent than men. Although women attempt to combat stereotypes in this way, Kahn and Gordon found that women oftentimes cling to or capitalize on stereotypes and are more likely than men to emphasize stereotypically feminine issues such as child care, education, and poverty (Kahn and Gordon 1997). This is an effective strategy to take, since women gain significant electoral success when focusing on female issues (Iyengar 1997; Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes 2002). Accordingly, male candidates achieve the most success when they focus on stereotypically male issues. Iyengar et al. explain that "in short, candidates are best advised to play on their 'own' turf" (Iyengar et. al. 1997, 78).

Studies of these stereotypes have shed a great deal of light onto the behavior of female candidates, but they do not go far enough. They explain how women perform differently from men, but not if and how women perform differently from one another. Not all female candidates employ these tactics at all times. My research begins to fill in this gap in the research by comparing female candidates to each other to find out when and why they employ certain stereotype combating tactics.

Gender and Political Campaigns

My research draws heavily from feminist theories about gender performance. The premise that candidates can "perform" their gender in a way that is electorally strategic rests on the idea that gender is not an innate and biological category, but rather a social construction that can be consciously altered and played with. Feminist theorists, most prominently Judith Butler, have made convincing arguments in support of this idea, and it

is from their work that I develop my theoretical framework. The study of political behavior of female candidates is far more fruitful if we do not view their campaign choices (including word choice, body language, issue focus, etc.) as having some sort of biological basis. Understanding that female (and male) candidates can and do manipulate their gender performance provides a new dimension to the study of candidate behavior. This is not to say that a candidate can actually change their gender from male to female. Rather, it suggests that women are not bound to consistently act in a traditionally "feminine" way simply because they are biologically female. I hold that female candidates are very aware of the stereotypes they confront, and through gender performance they make efforts to capitalize on these stereotypes when they might have a positive electoral effect and combat them when they do not.

While the work of Butler and other feminist theorists guides my research, it is admittedly abstract and does not lend itself well to measurement. For this reason, I also use theories about gender stereotypes and campaign strategy. Examinations of gender stereotypes, such as those offered by Dolan (2005) and Kahn (1994, 1996), show that voters expect male and female candidates to behave in certain ways and exhibit certain characteristics. For example, voters expect female candidates to be more honest and compassionate than male candidates, but less competent (Kahn 1994, 1996). These studies of stereotypes provide me with a "standard" of feminine and masculine performance that I use to measure candidates against.

Additionally, there is a great deal of theory available that suggests the most effective strategies for female candidates. One school of thought is based on Petrocik's

idea of issue ownership and argues that female candidates should emphasize issues and

qualities typically associated with women (Iyengar et al. 1997; Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes

2002). A competing theory, however, suggests that this strategy is likely to backfire, with

voters thinking female candidates are not able to handle the larger more "serious"

problems the country faces (Larson 2001; Witt, Paget, and Matthews 1994). I consider

these competing theories and try to determine when and why candidates employ these

differing strategies.

Research Design

My study includes female senate and gubernatorial candidates from 2000 to 2004.

This multi-year scope provides a wide geographic range, and the high profile of senate

and gubernatorial races ensures enough evidence for a comprehensive study.

Additionally, focusing on two types of races helps guarantee that the results are not

caused by the specifics of running for one type of office.

My dependent variable is the degree of femininity a candidate expresses or

performs. My independent variables are divided into two categories: characteristics that

are specific to one race and do not change during an election and those that change for

each ad, speech, or appearance. I l refer to them as 'race-specific' characteristics and 'ad-

specific' characteristics. Race-specific characteristics include region, opponent, party,

and office at stake. Ad-specific include the issue being discussed and the audience the

candidate is hoping to reach. I explore which set of variables has a greater impact on a

candidate's gender performance in an attempt to determine whether gender performance remains consistent throughout a race or changes depending on the context.

To do this, I use advertising data provided by the Wisconsin Advertising Project (WiscAds) (Goldstein and Rivlin 2007).[2] These data are coded for a variety of ad characteristics including adjectives used to describe the candidate, the issue being focused on, the tone of the ad, and whether or not the candidate appears in her own ad. With these data I am able to compare the ads of female candidates from the years 2000 to 2004 in order to determine which factors influence the femininity and masculinity of a candidate's advertisement. In order to measure this, I create a femininity and masculinity scale for each individual ad, using the characteristics already coded for by WiscAds. This scale serves as my dependent variable, and my goal is to determine which factors most influence an ad's position on this scale. This scale is described in further detail in Chapter 3, along with an expanded description of my data and methods.

Results in Brief

In short, I find that the race-specific variables in an election had a greater impact on a candidate's gender performance than ad-specific variables. The gender of the candidate's opponent proved to have the strongest impact on a candidate's choice of femininity level, while the audience of the ad had very little effect on the candidate's gender performance. This can be explained by the limited amount of time and money

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[2] Data: Goldstein, Kenneth, and Joel Rivlin. 2007. "Congressional and gubernatorial advertising, 2000-2004" Combined File [dataset]. Final release. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Advertising Project, The Department of Political Science at The University of Wisconsin-Madison.

candidates have at their disposal. They can only create a limited number of advertisements and thus are not able to create an ad for each issue in the campaign and every audience that might be watching. It is therefore more strategic to base one's gender performance on the factors in a race that do not change, as this requires less time, money, and energy, and increases the effectiveness of the advertisements regardless of the context. While this seems to be the case for political advertisements, the results do not necessarily apply to all methods of campaigning. It takes less time and money to alter a speech based on audience and issue than it does an ad. For this reason, the medium likely affects the results. Further studies need to be done on gender performance in other forums such as speeches, television appearances, and debates to see if the results have implications outside the world of political advertising.

Layout

In this chapter I have provided an overview of my project and a brief orientation to the topic. In Chapter 2, I provide an in-depth look at my particular theoretical perspective and a discussion of performative gender. In Chapter 3, I explain more fully the data and methods I use, and how I operationalize my variables. In the next two chapters, I present my statistical findings and explain their significance. Race-specific variables are discussed in Chapter 4, while ad-specific variables are presented in Chapter 5. I conclude with an overview of my findings and suggestions for further research in the area.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY

My work attempts to integrate existing political theories about gender stereotypes and campaign strategy with feminist theories about gender ideals and performance to explain variation in the gender performance of female candidates. While the existing literature is focused on the differences between female and male candidates rather than the differences among female candidates, it provides a useful theoretical base for examining why female candidates act the way they do.

Do Campaigns Matter?

First, it is important to show that campaigns actually have an impact on voter behavior. If not, as some political scientists have proposed, examining campaign behavior is a futile task. Starting with the publication of *The American Voter* in 1960, the dominant school of thought among academics was that campaigns mattered little, with factors such as candidate incumbency and voters' party identification playing a dominant role in voters' evaluations of individual candidates. However, with party identification becoming an increasingly unstable category in the U.S., many have begun to rethink the conclusions of *The American Voter*. Since the 1950s, the importance of the candidate has grown, and evidence suggests that candidates and their personality traits are more salient to voters than party identification. This means campaigns have becomes more important, since they can shape and control the way in which a candidate is portrayed (Kelley and Mirer 1974; Kagay and Caldeira 1975; Miller and Miller 1976; Marcus and Converse 1979; Miller, Miller, and Schneider 1980). Campaigns are especially important in presidential

elections, as well as statewide senate and gubernatorial races, which often receive more attention and media coverage than congressional races (Ezra and Nelson 1995).

Additionally, although many prior studies show that election outcomes are often predictable using factors such as voters' party identification, candidate incumbency, and the state of the economy (Lazarsfield et. al.1948, Campbell et. al 1960, Fiorina 1981, Markus 1988, 1992, Finkel 1993), this does not mean that campaigns are useless. On the contrary, Gelman and King (1993) argue that campaigns are necessary to enlightening voters about the candidates and allow voters to align their votes with their party preferences and economic concerns. Markus echoes this sentiment in his 1988 study. In 1998, Petrocik takes this point even further, stating "That the campaign may have led voters to the 'obvious' decisions (an assessment of campaigns suggested by Markus 1988), does not diminish the importance of the campaign. However difficult or easy it was for Reagan to make a poor job performance case against Carter, it was in making it that the campaign shaped the vote" (Petrocik 1988).

This more recent research seems to suggest that perhaps the campaign is more important than once thought. Thus, examining candidate's campaign behavior can be helpful in predicting elections and understanding the campaign and election processes. The importance of these types of studies has been growing steadily as more and more scholars examine candidate behavior and strategy. Even with an increase in these types of examinations, however, gender performance remains overlooked.

Gender Stereotypes

In understanding how female candidates manipulate or capitalize upon gender stereotypes, it is important to first examine what these stereotypes are and how they operate in the world of electoral politics. Psychologists have argued that to save time and effort, people categorize others into groups that are useful for assigning attributes (Fiske and Neuberg 1990). This process occurs when voters assign certain characteristics to candidates based on their sex (Dolan 2005). These attributes are known as gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes in elections fit into five general categories: personal characteristics, issue focus, competence and abilities, ideology, and behavior and tactics. Personal characteristics refer to qualities such as honesty, integrity, and compassion. Voters on a whole find female candidates to be more honest and compassionate than male candidates (Kahn 2004). In terms of competence and ability, voters believe women are less competent, less experienced, and poorer leaders than male politicians (Kahn 1996). That being said, those stereotypes change when dealing with specific issues. While voters believe women are less competent overall, evidence shows that they believe women are better able to deal with issues of poverty, health care, and child care than men. This is largely connected to widely held stereotypes of women as compassionate - a quality that is considered useful in dealing with these "feminine" issues - but a determent in dealing with foreign policy, crime, and economics (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Kahn 1994). Voters also hold stereotypes about candidates' ideologies based on gender. In general, people believe women are more likely than men to be liberal, while they believe men are more likely than women to be conservative (Alexander and Anderson 1993; Koch 2002). The final category of stereotypes involves

tactics and behavior. Voters believe that female candidates are less likely to campaign negatively, run attack ads, or use "dirty" tactics in an election (Wadsworth et al. 1987).

These stereotypes have a large impact on a candidate's electoral success. Many studies examining the effects of gender stereotypes on elections show that typical "male" qualities are a requirement to run for higher office. While women can gain some leverage from being perceived as compassionate or warm, it is negligible compared to the advantage male candidates receive from being perceived as competent and strong leaders. Similarly, male candidates' experience in the areas of foreign policy, defense, and the economy is significantly more important to voters in national elections than women's experience with issues of poverty, education, and health (Mueller 1986; Rosenwasser and Dean 1989; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). This means that the prominent issues of a particular campaign affect a female candidate's chances of winning. If domestic issues are at the forefront, women are not significantly advantaged, but they are also not disadvantaged. When foreign policy and defense issues take the forefront, however, female candidates face greater barriers to election (Dolan 1998; Lawless 2004). The bottom line when it comes to gender stereotypes in U.S. elections is that they are widespread, long-held, and have a significant impact on how citizens vote. It is logical, then, to conclude that the existence of these stereotypes affects a female candidate's performance and campaign strategy.

Campaign Strategy

Past research concerning gender stereotypes prompts questions about how candidates deal with these stereotypes in practice. A large body of research on effective

campaign strategies can help answer this question. One suggestion that has been offered and studied extensively is the use of videostyle. Goffman's theory of the Presentation of Self (1973) compares individuals to actors in a performance whose ultimate goal is to control the behavior of the audience. Goffman believes, however, that the audience has the upper hand in this process. Lynda lee Kaid and Dorothy Davidson build off of this theory in their 1986 study of political commercials, the first systematic study of its kind. In this study, Kaid and Davidson construct a theory known as videostyle which, contrary to Goffman's theory, holds that the actor can actually have the advantage over the audience. The theory of videostyle rests on the idea that political commercials can be rehearsed, reshot, and perfected. Additionally, many people other than the candidate have a hand in developing the commercial. This degree of control gives the actor an advantage over the audience that is not possible in other settings. This is helpful in dealing with gender stereotypes because the candidate can carefully control how she is presented and consciously defy or play into stereotypes. Once it has been established that candidates have the ability to impact or change how voters perceive them, it is necessary to examine the best way to go about doing this.

Much attention has been paid to the idea of gender issue ownership. Based on Petrocik's theory of party issue ownership, the concept of gender issue ownership suggests that female candidates can find political success by emphasizing the issues that are traditionally associated with women: child care, education, health care, etc. (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994; Petrocik 1996). Gender issue ownership is one example of a larger strategy that research has shown to be electorally advantageous for female candidates. Iyengar refers to this strategy as "playing your own turf." This theory

proposes that women gain the most political success by capitalizing on gender stereotypes, focusing on feminine issues, and targeting female voters or other political groups associated with female issues (Iyengar et al 1997; Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes 2002). This same theory applies to male candidates as well. Male candidates gain the most political success by focusing on issues traditionally considered their "domain." This strategy fits in with the resonance model of campaigns, which argues that effective campaign communication capitalizes on voters' predispositions. The resonance model would suggest that female candidates spend the most time and money focusing on the issue on which they enjoy the most presumed confidence (Iyengar et al. 1997).

There is some evidence, however, that this strategy can backfire, with voters viewing female candidates as only interested in "women's issues" and unable to handle larger, "more important" problems (Witt, Paget, and Matthews 1994; Larson 2001). In this case, some research suggests that women do the opposite of what Iyengar (1997) and Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes (2003) suggest - emphasize masculine traits. There is evidence that voters evaluate candidates based on incumbent prototypes. Since these prototypes are often masculine, voters consider strength, leadership ability, and other masculine traits to be important candidate characteristics. This may lead both male and female candidates to emphasize these traits (Kinder 1980, Kahn 1991). Recently, scholars have argued that the most successful way for female candidates to get elected is to combine these two strategies. For example, some evidence suggests that candidates are most successful when they emphasize feminine issues, but highlight masculine traits such as toughness and strength (Bystrom, Banwart, Kaid, and Robertson 2004).

What one takes away from this literature is that gender stereotypes are uniform across all female candidates, and women must choose to categorically capitalize on or defy them. There is no discussion of specific situations or contexts in which women might choose to do one over the other. The literature homogenizes gender groups and assumes that all women will perform the same way during a campaign. However, simple observation alone suggests that this is not the case. If all a female candidate had to do to win is capitalize on gender stereotypes, all female candidates would be wearing aprons, serving voters' cookies, and promoting subsidized child care. This obviously is not the case. Female candidates do not all employ the same gendered strategies, and some candidates alter their strategy during the course of the campaign. In this thesis, I attempt to integrate feminist theory into the theories and findings discussed above in order to develop a new theory explaining differences in gender performance and campaign strategies among women.

Feminist Theory

In her influential and groundbreaking work, *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir exclaims, "one is not born, but rather *becomes* a woman" (de Beauvoir 1974). Judith Butler illuminates this point in her extensive works on gender performance saying, "gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather it is an identity tenuously constituted in time - an identity instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*" (Butler 1986, 1). Theories of performative gender suggest that characteristics that society considers to be "masculine" and "feminine" are not biologically based, but rather socially constructed ideals that individuals strive to

emulate. According to Butler, masculinity and femininity are simulacrums, or copies without an original. Individuals are constantly performing these genders to fit in with social norms. If we accept Butler's theory, then it follows that individuals are not confined by their biology to acting completely masculine or completely feminine. If, as Butler claims, gender "is instituted through the stylization of the body," and "bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds," then gender can be manipulated. It can be performed (Butler 1986). Individuals can manipulate this performance when it proves useful, for example, in a political campaign. Butler's theory suggests that female candidates' behavior, even their representation of their femininity, is not biological, and could be conscious and strategic. Female candidates could express feminine traits when it proves to be electorally advantageous and suppress them when it does not.

This ability to manipulate gender for one's gain can be seen as a kind of self-serving "strategic essentialism." Essentialism assigns a kind of fixed identity to a particular subgroup, thus providing them with a kind of commonality and bond. Statements such as "Because I am a woman, I am naturally compassionate," or "As mothers, we all understand how to nurture," are examples of gender essentialism. While many feminist theorists believe in a social construction of gender and thus reject essentialism, Gayatari Spivak proposes that groups can practice a "strategic use of essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" (Spivak 1987). By affirming a common, fixed identity for a short period, Spivak believes groups can bring attention to their causes and problems and make useful political gains. Luce Irigaray believed that this strategy could apply to gender and serve useful for feminists (Irigaray 1992). This theory can apply to the behavior of female candidates in a much more self-serving and

long-lasting way than Spivak intended. By emphasizing feminine qualities when it proves useful in an election, female candidates can achieve a desired goal such as a bump in the polls or an election win. I propose that female candidates do not emphasize their role as mothers or use language of compromise and compassion because, as women, they cannot physically help themselves. Instead, they behave this way in hopes that they will be seen, for example, as well qualified to handle issues of child care and education. Although this differs from Spivak's intended use of essentialism in many ways, her theory can help us to understand and conceptualize this behavior.

An integrated Approach

While the literature about gender stereotypes and performance thus far has been extensive and useful, it is limited. There is an extensive amount of research explaining differences between men and women and generalizing campaign strategies of female candidates, but scholars are beginning to realize that gender in politics is more complicated than a simple male/female divide, with men behaving one way and women behaving another. At the end of her recent work about candidate sex and issue priorities, Kathleen Dolan offers "very limited support" that "suggest that the influence of sex and gender considerations in politics can be more complex than first glance would indicate." Dolan shows this complexity in the often-unexplored similarities between male and female candidates. I hope to expand on Dolan's work concerning the complexity of gender by exploring the differences among female candidates.

My project seeks to expand on existing theories in hopes of explaining difference in behavior among female candidates rather than between male and female candidates.

While feminist theory generally talks about gender performance as an unconscious act that we are socialized into performing, theories of campaign strategy, particularly campaign advertising, stress ideas of conscious intention. Campaigns are calculated, well-planned, rehearsed, and thought-out performances. I hold that in this context, gender performance moves from being an unconscious, theoretical concept to a deliberate strategy that female candidates can use to gain leverage in a field where they are often disadvantaged.

CHAPTER 3: Data/Methods

In order to systematically and usefully explore and measure a concept as abstract and unexplored as a candidate's gender performance, I use campaign advertisements. Advertisements are a good medium for exploring this issue because of the degree of control and intentionality inherent in the creative process. Unlike debates, interviews, speeches, and appearances on news and talk shows, there is no spontaneity, room for error, or outside factors impacting the candidate's presentation of self. Ads can be shot and reshot until the desired message is achieved. If a candidate misspeaks, the take is simply done again. There is no audience, interviewer, questioner, or opposing candidate to influence the candidate's appearance. The ad can be thought out, scripted, and tweaked well in advance and then can be shown only in certain regions or during certain times in order to reach a specific audience. This degree of planning and control means that we can assume the words, images, and sentiments expressed in an ad were intentionally chosen and endorsed by the candidate and her campaign (Kaid and Davidson 1986). Advertisements are perhaps the most accurate way of determining how candidates want to present themselves.

This method has its downsides, the major one being that voters often view ads as the most inauthentic portrayal of a candidate's true policies and characteristics, precisely because of the degree of control and manipulation that can take place. One often-quoted example of this point is industry pioneer David Ogilvy's assertion that campaign advertisements are "The most deceptive, misleading, unfair, and untruthful of all advertising" (Zhao and Chaffee 1995; Freedman, Franz, and Goldstein 2004). Voters may put little stake in ads, and thus ads are not important in determining how voters make

their decision on Election Day. Additionally, there are mixed conclusions about the effectiveness of ads in helping candidates win elections. However, there are good reasons to believe that campaign advertisements still have an impact on election outcomes. One is the connection between increased campaign spending and positive election outcomes (Zeller 1992). This finding is particularly important because the largest percentage of campaign spending goes to television advertising, indicating there may be some connection between advertising and election outcomes (Goldstein and Ridout 2004). Additionally, even though studies have not found that campaign advertisements have massive effects on voters' decisions, several analyses have shown modest but statistically significant outcomes (Shaw 1999). Goldstein and Ridout suggest that this small effect does not merit discounting campaign advertising. "Early studies, looking for massive effects, may have set the bar too high. Elections are won and lost at the margin, and it is at the margin that one must look for advertising effects" (Goldstein and Ridout 2004). Given this, it seems logical that candidates would want to pour significant amounts of money into advertising in hopes of giving themselves even a marginal advantage. Since the effects of advertising are important at the margins, candidates spend a significant amount of time and money on them, and they provide an effective and controlled means for analyzing a candidate's presentation of self, advertisements are the most ideal medium available for systematically studying a candidate's gender performance.

In order to systematically analyze ads, I use a dataset from the Wisconsin Advertising Project (Goldstein and Rivlin, 2007). The original data include all presidential, senatorial, gubernatorial, and congressional campaign advertisements from 2000 to 2004 airing in the top 75 (2000) or 100 media markets (2002, 2004). Each individual airing of an ad was

coded by the WiscAds project for a variety of characteristics. Basic candidate identifiers

included name, party, office at stake, and state and district of the race. The ads were also

coded for such factors as the time the ad aired, the name of the ad, the media market it

was aired in, the television show it aired during, the length of spot, and the cost of ad.

Finally, the ads were coded in detail for content. Included are: whether the candidate

appears in the ad, ad tone, up to 3 issues focused on, adjectives used to describe the

candidate and their opponent, actors used, locations featured, and information about the

ad's narrator.[3]

For my analysis, I analyzed only the candidate-sponsored senatorial and gubernatorial

campaign ads from Labor Day through Election Day in each year. Ads sponsored by

outside groups are problematic because there is no way to determine that these ads

portray the candidate in the way she desires, so they were dropped from the analysis.

Senatorial and gubernatorial ads were chosen for several reasons. Congressional

candidates often deal with more localized issues, and districts differ greatly from one

another. It would be difficult to control the large number of factors that could influence a

congressional campaign. In contrast, senatorial and gubernatorial campaigns happen on a

larger scale and deal with more general issues. These campaigns are also better financed

and have a higher profile, so they air a greater number of ads and reach a wider audience.

Including only senatorial and gubernatorial races still allows me to explore the ways in

which candidates might campaign differently for different offices, but provides a

manageable group of ads. This type of case selection is not unusual when studying

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[3] For more information on the coding system and a complete list of characteristics coded for, please visit the web site of the Wisconsin Advertising Project at http://wiscadproject.wisc.edu/.

campaigns, as many political scientists view statewide campaigns as excellent "laboratories" for studying these types of effects (Westly 1991; Kahn and Kenney 1999). Finally, ads before Labor Day were dropped for two reasons. First, this eliminates any primary ads. Since primary campaigns target a different group of voters and often deal with very different issues, it does not make sense to analyze them alongside general-election ads. Also, it is widely accepted that Labor Day marks the unofficial start of the campaign season, when voters begin to pay closer attention to the race. These changes left me with a total of 104,689 individual ad airings from 40 different female candidates.

I also created some new variables that were helpful for my analysis. These included the region of the country the candidate is running in, the gender of the candidate's opponent, whether the program and time of day the ad aired during attracted a mostly female or male audience, and whether the issue the ad focused on was stereotypically male or female. In coding television shows, I relied on research showing the type of television programs that have predominately male or female audiences (Morley 1986; Comstock and Scharrer 2001; Roberts and Foehr 2004). I coded sporting events or sports news shows, outdoor shows such as hunting and fishing shows, and home improvement and carpentry shows as male. Shows coded for female audience include soap operas, daytime talk shows, beauty and fashion shows, and shows focusing on women's health. Using the assumption that more women than men are likely to watch TV during weekday hours, I coded weekday mornings and afternoons as female audience times, and late nights and weekends as male audience times. When coding issues for gender, I used previous research on stereotypes of male and female candidates, such as Kahn's 2004 study. Issues that voters stereotypically believe women are better able to handle were

coded as feminine issues, while issues men are considered better at handling were coded as male issues. Feminine issues include: honesty/integrity, poverty, abortion, education/schools, health care, child care, Medicare, women's health, and welfare. Masculine issues include: taxes, budget/government spending, faring, business, unions, international trade, crime, illegal drugs, defense, veterans, foreign policy, and terrorism.

To measure my rather abstract dependent variable, the candidate's gender performance, I created masculinity and femininity scales, with each creative ad assigned a value on each scale. Two scales are necessary because masculinity and femininity are performed in different ways; acting less feminine is not necessarily the same thing as acting more masculine. In addition, neutral ground exists in which ads might not emphasize either gender performance. Creating two scales allows for the analysis of both types of gender performance and does not assume that a low score on one scale automatically means a high score on the other. To create these scales, I gave each ad a point for a particular gendered characteristic. Some of these characteristics were rather straightforward, such as whether the candidate's name is mentioned and whether or not she physically appears in the ad. These aspects of an ad remind the viewer of the candidate's gender and make it a more prominent part of the advertisement, thus increasing the femininity of the ad. If a candidate wishes to downplay her gender, however, she could choose to use an actor or only have narration in the ad instead of appearing herself. Therefore, if the candidate does not physically appear in her advertisement, a point was added to the masculinity scale. Other characteristics included on the scale are based on voters' stereotypes of typical masculine and feminine candidates, as explained in more detail in the previous chapter. For example, if one of the

adjectives used to describe a candidate is "compassionate," a particularly feminine

adjective, the ad received one point on the femininity scale. The ad would receive an

additional point for each feminine adjective used. The characteristics I examined are

presented in more detail in the Table 1.

Table 1: Femininity and Masculinity Scale Characteristics:

Characteristic	Femininity Scale	Masculinity Scale
Candidate's Name	Mentioned	Not Mentioned
Candidate's Appearance	Appears	Does not Appear
Adjectives to describe candidate	Caring Compassionate Family Woman Honest Liberal Motherly	Bold Common Sense Leadership Competent Fatherly Leader Protector Experienced/proven/tested Tough/a fighter
Main Focus of Ad	Personal Characteristics	Policy Matters
Central Figure	Favored Candidate Female Non-candidate	Male non-candidate
Credibility of Central Figure	Candidate Teacher Parent/Family Woman	Law Enforcement Veteran/Military Personnel Farmer
Actors Appearing	Children Adolescents Teachers Women	Law Enforcement Veteran/Military Personnel Farmer
Locations Featured	School Home Neighborhood	Blue Collar Work Site Court/Justice System/Prison Domestic Uniform Protection Military Setting Farm/Ranch
Ad's Narrator	Female	Male

These scales provide a way to gauge the overall femininity or masculinity of each ad. Since WiscAds did not code the ads in the same way across years, I created three sets of gender scales: one using characteristics coded for in all three years, one using codes used in 2002 and 2004, and one using only 2004 codes. As a general rule, I use the scale that includes the most possible cases for the variable I am examining. The scale that overlaps over all three years covers the most cases, but captures the fewest dimensions, since a relatively small number of characteristics were coded for in all three years. The scale that overlaps 2002 and 2004 covers a larger number of cases while still covering a wide range of dimensions. Therefore, this is the scale that I will use to draw the majority of my conclusions.

In order to provide a clearer picture of how these ads are coded and how the masculinity and femininity scales work, I include annotated examples of two ads. The first ad, from 2002 Louisiana senate candidate Mary Landrieu, is an example of a high score on the femininity scale, while the second ad, from 2004 Maryland senate candidate Barbara Mikulski, provides an illustration of an ad with a high score on the masculinity scale.
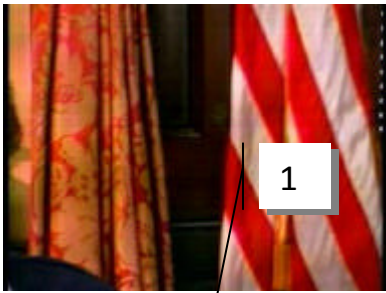
2002 Louisiana Senate Campaign Ad for Mary Landrieu (D)

1

[Landrieu]: "You know, I've said many times, besides faith and family, education really is the most important thing I think to us, as individuals.

3

And I helped to lead a group of

4 & 5

Democrats that worked with Republicans to fashion

2

6

a new education bill for our nation." [Announcer]: The Landrieu Amendment to this bill has made an increase

7

of $100 million to improve Louisana's schools

8

and support teachers. A champion of head start and early childhood education,

Senator Mary Landrieu, standing up for Louisiana families.

[PFB]: Friends of Mary Landrieu

Femininity Scale: One point each for a total of 8

1: Candidate's name appears

2: Adjective used- family woman

3: Candidate physically appears in ad

4: Central Figure of ad is Candidate

5: Credibility of Central Figure- candidate

6: Location featured- home

7: Actors features- children

8: Location featured- school

2004 Maryland Senate Campaign Ad for Barbara Mikulski (D)

[Announcer]: In these troubling times she's worked to keep America safe

and make America more secure. She went to bat for first responders,

fire fighters, police and emergency medical personnel on the front line,

getting them new equipment so they can respond quicker and more effectively

in times of crisis. She's fighting to upgrade security at

the Port of Baltimore, more patrol boats,enhanced cargo

screening and, as always, she's standing
up for our troops and

standing by our veterans. [Mikulski]: "I'm Barbara Mikulski and

I approved this message; there's nothing
more important for America." [PFB]: Mikulski for Senate

Masculinity Scale: One point each for a total of 6

1: Main focus of ad: Policy matters

2: Location: Court/justice system/prison

3: Location: Domestic/Uniformed Protection personnel

4: Adjective used: tough/a fighter

5: Actors featured: Law enforcement

6: Actors Featured: Veterans/military

Using this dataset of female candidates' ads, I examine which factors are most influential on a candidate's gender performance. I do this by exploring the relationships between my femininity and masculinity scales and two categories of independent variables: those that are specific to a single race and those that are specific to a single advertisement. The ad-specific characteristics are the issue focus of the ad and the audience the ad is targeting, with audience determined by the time of day and the television show during which the ad aired. My race-specific characteristics are region, gender of opponent, office at stake, and the candidate's party. By dividing the variables into these two categories I hope to determine whether a candidate is compelled to manipulate her gender performance throughout the campaign depending on the context or if she chooses a level of femininity that is more stable and based on race-specific characteristics.

CHAPTER 4: Race-specific Results

The discussion of my results is divided into two sections based on my two categories of independent variables: race-specific and ad-specific characteristics. This distinction is based on whether or not a variable changes over the course of the race depending on the context. I discuss race-specific characteristics first, followed by ad-specific characteristics, and then tie the two sections together. In both sections I employ difference of means and ANOVA tests to look at bivariate relationships and then use a multiple regression model to look at how the independent variables operate in conjunction with each other. While I touch on statistical significance, this is a much less useful part of my analysis. Because of the large number of cases (104,689 ad airings) used in my study, almost every relationship is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. This tells us very little about the actual relationships. As a result, I focus mainly on the substantive significance of my results. To help illustrate the significance of the results obtained using the multiple regression, I show how much a hypothetical ad's femininity and masculinity scale scores would change if all factors were held constant except for the variable I am discussing. For all of these examples, I use a hypothetical ad based on the modal categories. This means the ad is from a Midwestern Democratic Senate candidate, does not air during a specific feminine or masculine television show or time slot, and focuses on a neutral issue.

Presentation of Results: Difference of Means/ANOVA Tests

Opponent's Gender

The variable most strongly connected with a candidate's gender performance is the gender of her opponent. Candidates running against other women run ads that are significantly more feminine than candidates running against men. While this effect is not widespread, as the vast majority of candidates in my sample are running against male opponents, it is substantively very significant. The mean femininity score for ads from candidates running against male opponents is 3.6, while the mean femininity score for candidates running against female opponents is 4.5, which is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. Candidates with female opponents also run ads that are, on average, more masculine than other candidates. While this result is not as substantively significant as it is with the femininity scale, it does still have an effect on the masculinity of an ad and is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.

Party

The results for political party are similar to those for opponent's gender. Democratic Party affiliation is correlated with both more feminine *and* more masculine ads. The mean femininity score for Democrats is 3.75, while it is 3.60 for Republicans. The differences between Democrats and Republicans on the masculinity scale are remarkably similar to those on the femininity scale. The mean score on the masculinity scale for Democratic ads is 1.58, while it is 1.37 for Republican ads.

Region

Region is divided into 5 categories that are generally accepted as the 5 different regions of the United States: Northeast, South, Southwest, Midwest, and West.[4] To analyze the effect of region on the scales, I created a separate variable for each region and then omitted the West from my regression model. This gave me a baseline that I could then compare other regions against. An ANOVA test on region was statistically significant at $p<0.01$ for both scales, showing a relationship between region and an ad's degree of femininity and masculinity. The strength and direction of that relationship for each individual region is explored in more detail in the discussion of the multiple regression model.

Office at Stake

The last race-specific characteristic I examine is the office at stake. My analysis focuses on candidates for two different offices - senate seats and governorships, so this difference was included in my model. While the difference of means test was statistically significant at $p<0.01$, it was not substantively significant as the mean score for both offices is around 3.7. My regression model, however, did pick up a small relationship between office at stake and gender performance, as I discuss below.

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[4] The states that comprise a region are as follows; Northeast: Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine; South: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee; Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas; Midwest: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota; West: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Hawaii.

Presentation of Results: Multiple Regression Model

I estimated separate regression models for the masculine and feminine scales. The table below shows the regression coefficients for each of the independent variables included in my model.

Table 2: Regression Coefficients

	Femininity Scale		Masculinity Scale
Constant	3.59		1.881
Race-specific Variables			
Opponent's Gender	1.343*		.242*
Party	0.135*		.127*
Office at Stake	-.146*		-.367*
South	-.189*		-.348*
Southwest	-.283*		.295*
Northeast	-.921*		-.101*
Midwest	.052*		-.238*
Ad-specific Variables			
Feminine Issue	.614*		-.180*
Masculine Issue	-.350*		.139*
Feminine Show	-.062*		-.033*
Masculine Show	-.202*		.139*
Time of Day	.023		-.001

 * denotes statistical significance at $p<0.01$
 R square= .177 for femininity scale, .049 for masculinity scale

Table 2 shows how all of the variables work together to predict the femininity and masculinity scores of an ad. Here, I discuss these results for the race-specific variables. I discuss the coefficients of the ad-specific variables in the next chapter.

Opponent's Gender

In the regression model that included all of my independent variables, the coefficient for opponent's gender was statistically significant at $p<0.01$ and substantively

significant. The graph below shows the effect that changing this variable would have on the femininity of a hypothetical ad from a Democratic Midwestern Senate candidate.
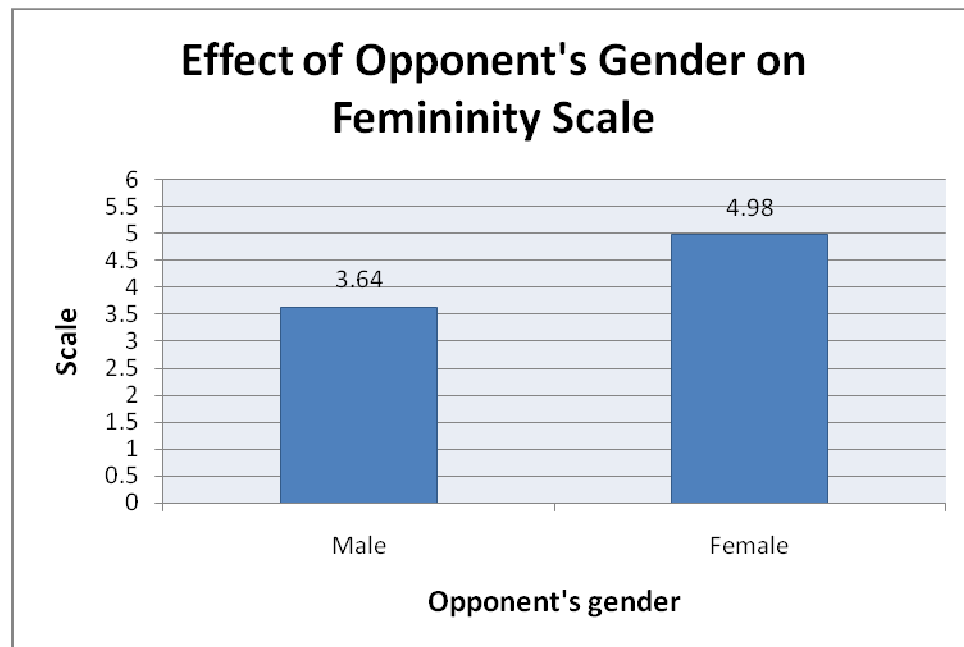
As you can see from the graph, the opponent's gender changes the femininity scale over a point, a fairly significant amount for a single factor on a scale that never exceeds 8.

As with the difference of means test, candidates with female opponents also run more *masculine* ads than candidates with male opponents. While this result is not as substantively significant as it was with the femininity scale, it does still have an effect on the masculinity of an ad and is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. The figure below shows the effect changing this variable would have on a hypothetical ad's score on the

masculinity scale. It uses the same hypothetical ad from a Midwestern Democratic senate candidate described at the beginning of the chapter.
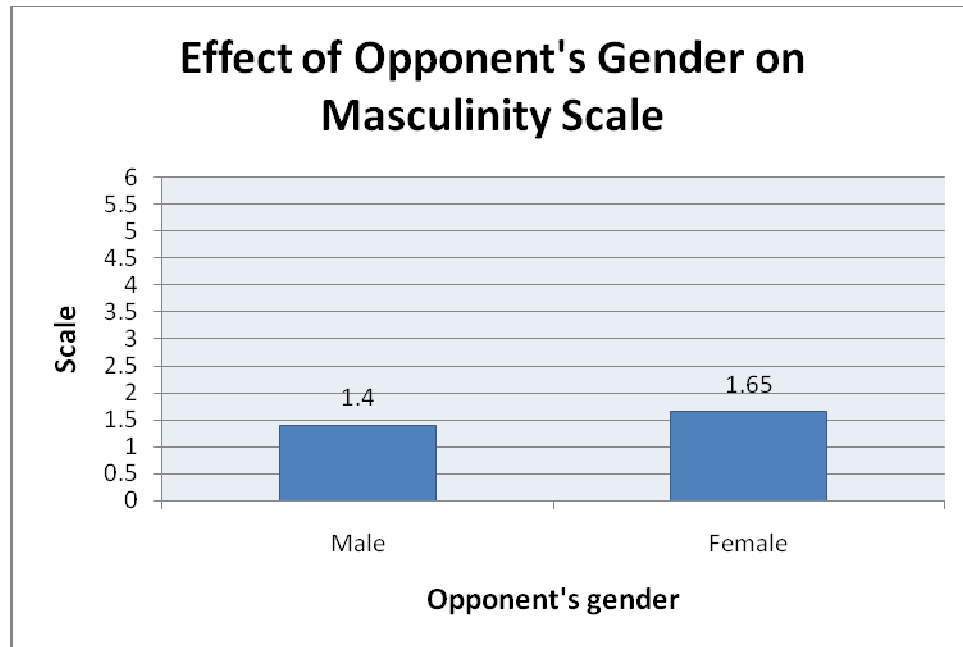

Party

Using the multiple regression model I introduced, it can be determined that an ad's score on the femininity scale would increase by .135 if the candidate was a Democrat rather than a Republican. This difference can be seen in the graph below which represents the change in the femininity score of the same hypothetical ad I have been utilizing if all variables but party are held constant.
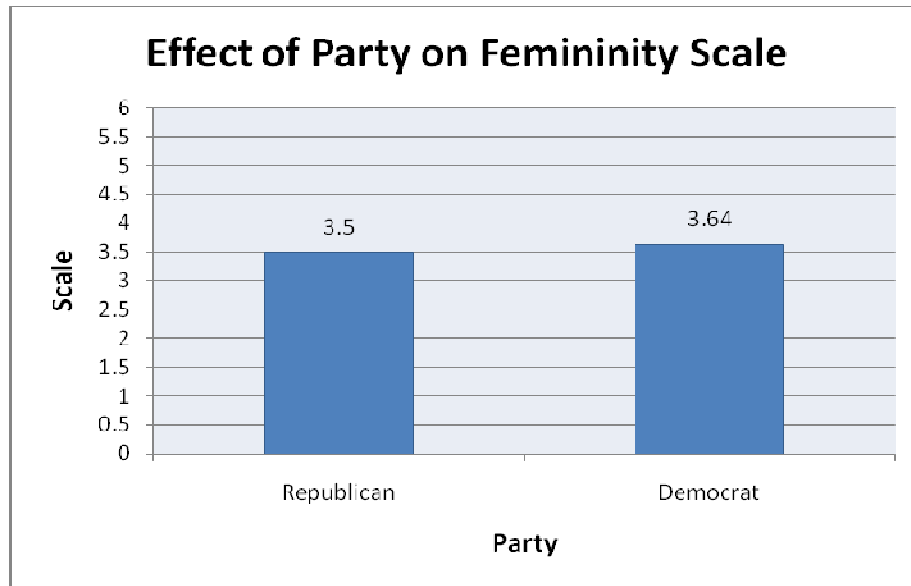
The multiple regression model predicts that the masculinity score of an ad would increase by .127 if the candidate was a Democrat instead of a Republican. This change is depicted in the graph below, using the same hypothetical ad as before.
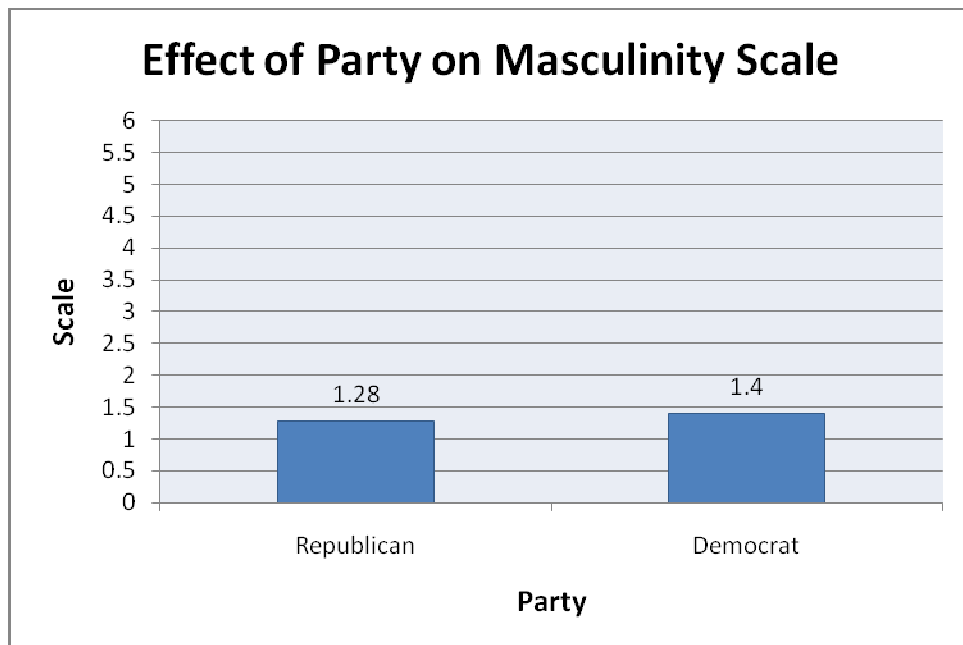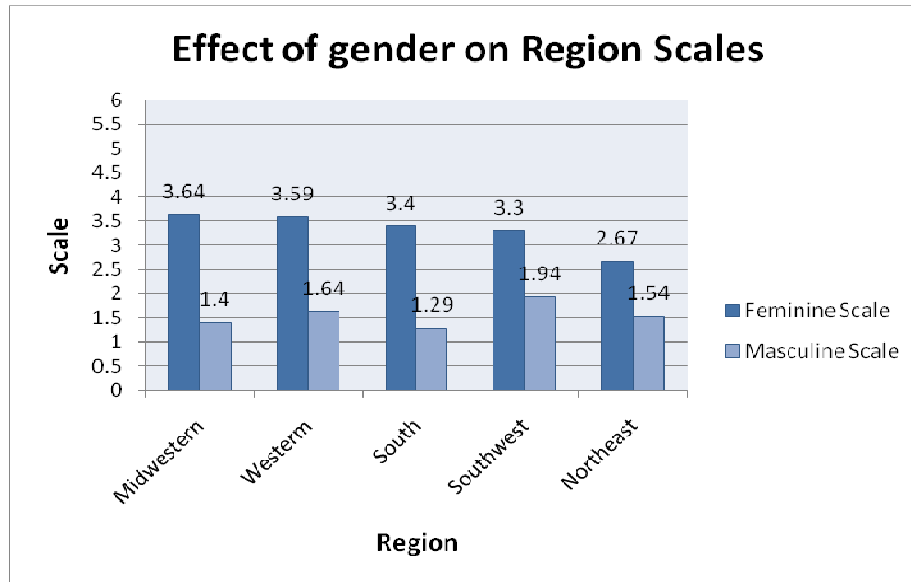
Region

By far the most substantively significant region for the femininity scale was the Northeast, with a regression coefficient of -.921. This result shows that candidates from the Northeast run the least feminine ads, and being from the Northeast would decrease an average ads score on the scale by nearly a point. The South and Southwest regions had less feminine scores than the West, but not to the extent the Northeast did (their coefficients were -.189 and

-.283 respectfully). Ads from the Midwest are likely to be the most feminine. The coefficient was just slightly positive, meaning the results are very similar to that of the West.
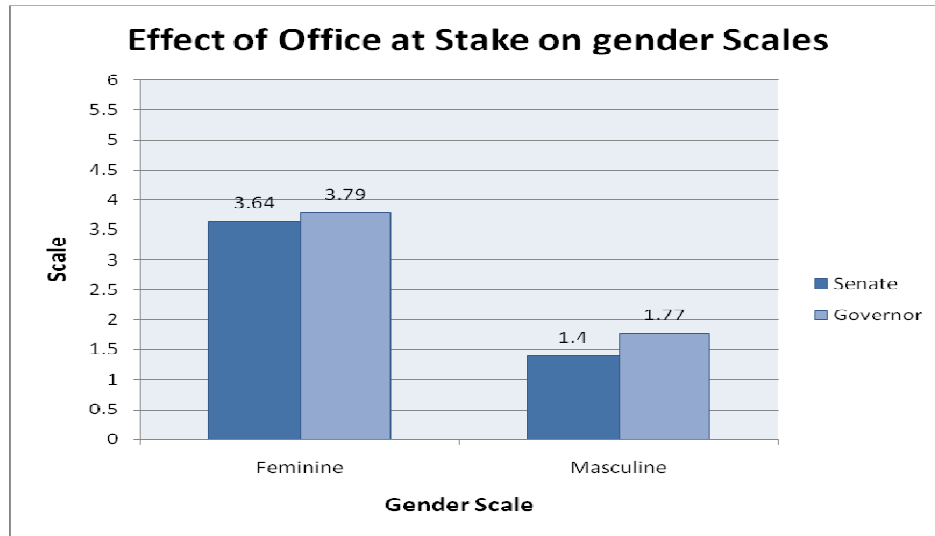
The results for the masculinity scale are not consistently similar or different in direction to that of the femininity scale. While ads in the Northeast were less feminine, they were also less masculine (although to a lesser degree with the coefficient only equaling -.101). The same is true of the South, which was both less feminine and less masculine than the West. In the South, region's impact on the masculinity scale is larger than its effect on the femininity scale. In the Southwest and Midwest, the effect on the masculinity scale was opposite of the effect on the femininity scale. Ads in the Southwest were more masculine (and less feminine) than the West, while Midwest ads were less masculine (and more feminine) than the Western ads.

The graph shows the different femininity and masculinity scores a hypothetical ad would receive if all variables except for region were held constant.

Effect of gender on Region Scales

Region	Feminine Scale	Masculine Scale
Midwestern	3.64	1.4
Western	3.59	1.64
South	3.4	1.29
Southwest	3.3	1.94
Northeast	2.67	1.54

Office at Stake

While it is not the strongest relationship in my model, the effects of the office at stake are still worth exploring briefly. The regression shows that candidates for governorships run more strongly feminine and more strongly masculine ads than senate candidates. The relationship was stronger for the masculinity scale, which can be seen in the graph below showing the differences in gender scale scores for the same hypothetical ad I have used throughout this chapter.

Effect of Office at Stake on gender Scales

Feminine: Senate 3.64, Governor 3.79

Masculine: Senate 1.4, Governor 1.77

Y-axis: Scale (0 to 6)

X-axis: Gender Scale

Legend: Senate, Governor

Explanation of Results:

By far the most striking result is the connection between opponent's gender and an ad's femininity and masculinity. The fact that female candidates run more feminine ads when running against other women might not be surprising to many readers. Considering the prominence of theories that suggest that candidates play to their strengths (Iyengar 1994; Herrnson, Lay, and Stokes 2002), it would not be unusual to see two female candidates trying to "out-feminize" one another. Without a male candidate in the race, there is less pressure to play down feminine qualities in order to portray yourself as just as qualified as your opponent. What is surprising, however, is that female candidates also run ads that are more *masculine* than other candidates. This result could be explained by a candidate's need to hold onto her base as well as sway swing voters in order to win. Female voters are more likely than male voters to vote for female candidates (Sigelman and Sigelman 1982). In a race with two women, however, neither candidate can count solely on this block of voters. They must act sufficiently feminine to win over a large percentage of women, as well as exhibiting qualities that will win over male voters. This

might mean portraying themselves as strong leaders, tough on crime, active in the fight against terrorism, etc.

The effects of opponent's gender can be seen in the ads of Louisiana senate candidate Mary Landrieu. Landrieu, a Democrat, is one of the candidates in the sample running against another female. A glimpse at some her ads bolster the findings that candidates running against women run both highly feminine and highly masculine ads. In this first storyboard, Landrieu emphasizes her role as a mother, the importance of her family, and her focus on education and family issues. Notice as well how often Landrieu appears in the ad with her children.

[Announcer]: It's hard to define rock solid Louisiana values: faith, family,

and integrity, until you know Mary Landrieu.

[Landrieu]: "I was born in an Army hospital, the first of nine children.

My mother and father had us in eleven years. Now I have just

such a wonderful family and now I've married a wonderful man and raising two

children." [Announcer]: Mary carried these values to the Treasurer's Office where she shut

down backroom deals, slashed waste, and increased investment

earnings safely to improve our schools. Now as our Senator we can trust her to

protect our pensions from corporate greed and to stand up for Louisiana families

In this next ad from Landrieu, she emphasizes her family's military background and her commitment to those issues. Images of military personnel and locations, as well as the repeated use of words associated with strength and fighting, add to the masculine quality of the ad. Additionally, Landrieu appears in a dark suit as opposed to the lighter, more feminine clothes of the previous ad.

[Landrieu]: "I was born in an Army hospital, the first of nine children." [Announcer]: Mary Landrieu fought for

pay raises for our military and expanded health benefits for our veterans.

She has been a champion of a stronger America. Now she chairs the

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats. [Landrieu]: "New wars against America demand new

strategies and new weapons. Our fighting men and women

deserve the very best and I'm determined to see they get it."

[Announcer]: Mary Landrieu: standing up for Louisiana and America.

[PFB: Friends of Mary Landrieu]

In contrast, this ad from Maryland gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Townsend provides an example of an ad from a candidate running against a male opponent. Townsend never appears herself and there is a mix of male and female actors, but family

is still emphasized. As you can see, the ad is much less extreme in its presentation of femininity and masculinity. This is more typical for candidates running against male opponents.

[Various voices]: "Bob Ehrlich is no moderate." "His claim to be a moderate doesn't match his record in Congress."	"He votes against a woman's right to choose." "To abolish the Department of Education." "When I hear	Bob Ehrlich talk about repealing Maryland's gun laws it makes me
cringe." "It's really scary." "You may call yourself a moderate but	let's just look into your record." "Bob Ehrlich will say anything to get elected. He's not	a moderate." "He's not a moderate." "I trust Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
100% to fight for my family and myself."	[PFB: Friends of Kathleen Kennedy Townsend]	

These ads from Landrieu's campaign for US Senate and Kathleen Townsends gubernatorial race are vivid examples of the effect opponent's gender has on a candidate's gender performance.

The explanation for the relationship between opponent's gender and an ad's femininity and masculinity can also be applied to the results for candidate's party. In both of these cases, candidates are playing to extremes in order to hold onto a base and also win over new voters. Issues that are traditionally seen as more feminine are also associated with the Democratic Party (poverty, health care, abortion rights, etc), while issues generally thought of as more masculine, such as crime, defense, and foreign policy, are associated more strongly with Republicans (Petrocik 1996, Kahn 2004). Since September 11th, however, masculine and Republican-oriented issues such as terrorism and homeland security have risen in prominence and importance. Perhaps what we are observing here is female Democrats attempting to play to their base and practice the "stick to what you know" strategy emphasized by Iyengar and Hernson, Lay, and Stokes, while also attempting to establish credibility on the issues that were of growing importance to Americans between 2000 and 2004.

We can see how this effect plays out when looking at ads from 2002 Missouri Senate candidate Jean Carnahan. In these two ads, Carnahan, a Democrat, shows how one candidate can run a highly feminine ad when playing to her base and a highly masculine ad when focusing on stereotypically Republican issues. In the first ad Carnahan focuses on education. She emphasizes her personal background, appears with her husband, is pictured outside of her home, and appears with children inside a classroom.

[Announcer]: Her father was a plumber, her mother a hairdresser. She was the first in her family to graduate high school,

the first to graduate college, earning a degree in business

administration. So no wonder education is so important to

Jean Carnahan. As a United States Senator she's worked

to lower class size, improve discipline, and focus on reading.

Senator Jean Carnahan: she knows the importance of a good education

and she's making a difference for Missouri. [PFB: Jean Carnahan for Missouri Committee]

This next ad focuses on law enforcement, crime, and taxes, which are traditionally Republican issues. Here, Carnahan is pictured with police officers, is described as "fighting," and is featured in her office rather than in her home. Additionally, Carnahan does not appear in every frame as she did in the previous ad.

[Announcer]: Law enforcement and the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police endorse Jean Carnahan for

her help in the fight against illegal drugs. The Platte County paper backs

Carnahan for her work on tax cuts. One Ozark's paper says she's

working for regular Missourians. And the Independence Examiner

backs her for fighting for education, but the Examiner warns that

Jim Talent supports putting Social Security funds in the stock market. It's

Jean Carnahan who'll fight for us in the US Senate.

[PFB: Jean Carnahan for Missouri Committee]

These two contrasting ads from Senate candidate Jean Carnahan show the double role that Democratic female candidates appear to be playing in their ads and provide a good visual example of the statistical results.

This ad from NC Senator Elizabeth Dole's 2002 campaign shows the more moderate ads female Republicans tend to run. While the ad features female actors and mentions how Dole is going to help women, it focuses on business and regulation and also features male actors.

[Various voices]: "Did you know that 170,000 small businesses in North Carolina..." "are owned by women?" "Or that small business

creates 2/3 of all new jobs." "Elizabeth Dole will keep our taxes down..."

"and reduce unneeded regulation." "Let us pull together..." "to lower

health insurance costs," "to help expand our markets overseas,"

"so our companies can grow." [Dole]: That's how we'll create new jobs and

a stronger economy for North Carolina."

[PFB: Dole 2002 Committee, Inc.]

Unlike opponent's gender and party, the relationship between region and an ad's score on the gender scales does not have a readily apparent explanation. One might look to Elezar's concept of political culture (1972) for an explanation, but it does not seem to fit here. The Midwest has the highest femininity scores, which does not fit with its individualistic political culture. Individualistic political culture emphasizes practical, utilitarian government that is hands off and not as interested in public welfare (Elezar 1972). This is at odds with feminine ideals of compassion and nurturing and feminine issues such as poverty, child care, and health care. Given these feminine ideas one might expect regions with a moral political culture to be most feminine, but the results do not confirm this, as the Northeast, the epicenter of moral political culture, actually has the lowest scores. Clearly, theories of regional political culture do not help explain these results. It is possible that the issues most important to a region might impact the average femininity and masculinity of the area. Perhaps a study of the gender association of issues important to a region could explain these results. Additionally, a comparison with male candidates from those regions to see if a regional political style exists would be an interesting follow-up and could perhaps better explain how this variable works. In sum, further research is necessary to explain the effects of region on the gender performance of ads.

In contrast to the results for region, the relationship between office at stake and gender performance has a probable explanation, but it differs slightly from the explanation for opponent's gender and party. While the results for these previous categories suggest that candidates were attempting to reach two different audiences, the results for office at stake find candidates trying to fulfill two different roles. Although the

fact that gubernatorial candidates run both more feminine and more masculine ads than senate candidates seems counterintuitive, they make sense given what we know about the differences in the offices. There are two major factors that are likely to influence these results: the issues and traits associated with each office. Gubernatorial campaigns are often focused on domestic issues, especially education. Issues like these are more often associated with female candidates and feminine traits. Senate campaigns, by virtue of the office's duties, often have a larger focus on foreign policy and defense (Kahn 1995). These issues have more masculine connotations. Male candidates are seen as being more able to tackle these issues and the language used to describe them is often more masculinized (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Kahn 1994). At the same time, however, the governorship is an executive position, while senators belong to a legislative body. Because of common perceptions of the skills these different types of offices require, candidates vying for an executive office need to portray themselves as tough and decisive leaders, qualities generally perceived as masculine (Kahn 1995, 2004). On the contrary, members of legislative bodies must be able to compromise and work well with others, characteristics that have become increasingly important as voters express frustration with partisanship. These are not skills associated with masculinity (Kahn 2004). So while these results seem contrary, they actually fit in well with the qualities described. Gubernatorial candidates must portray themselves as strong executives, while still showing an expertise in and concern for the more feminine issues that are often at stake in these races. This dual role could explain why gubernatorial candidates tend to produce ads at the more extreme ends of both scales than senate candidates.

A look at two of the ads from Arizona Democratic gubernatorial candidate Janet

Napolitano shows how gubernatorial candidates often play to two extremes. The first ad,

which focuses on education, a major issue in gubernatorial races, is highly feminine.

Napolitano, appearing in a feminine suit and pearls, emphasizes her personal and family

background, and is featured in her home, as well as in a classroom with children.

[Napolitano]: "My father was the son of an immigrant. He became a scientist. His work contributed to the	first heart transplant. So education has always been important to our family.	And that's why as attorney general I took on the
legislature to make sure that our schools got the funds that people voted for.	I'm running for governor to get our schools back on track.	We've got to raise standards, reduce class size, get parents more involved, and restore
discipline. As governor, education will be my top priority."	[PFB]: Janet Napolitano for Governor	

In this next ad, however, there is very little femininity to be found. It depicts Napolitano as a tough crime fighter, prosecutor, and friend of law enforcement. The language is highly masculinized, and the ad features a sheriff narrating and pictured. Napolitano is only shown once and never speaks.

[Sheriff Arpaio]: "This is Sheriff Joe Arpaio with an urgent message. Janet Napolitano has been attacked.

The most vicious tv ad in Arizona history. The ad is outrageous

and untrue. As U.S. Attorney, she was the number one prosecutor

of child molesters in the nation, and as our Attorney General,

Janet Napolitano has stood with law enforcement to

protect our families. This is Joe Arpaio. Join me in rejecting the attacks against

Janet Napolitano." [PFB]: Janet Napolitano for Governor Committee

In these ads, Napolitano embodies the two roles of the gubernatorial candidate -
the feminine candidate concerned with domestic issues and child welfare, as well as the
masculinized, crime-fighting leader. They are vivid examples of the contrasting ads
female gubernatorial candidates as a whole tend to run. We do not see this strong of a
contrast in the ads of Senate candidates such as Susan Collins of Maine. In this ad, both
male and female actors are featured and the adjectives used are not heavily masculine or
feminine.

[Henry]: "I'm a Republican." [Hutchisson]: "And I'm a Democrat, but there's one thing Mert and I can agree on." [Henry]: "We're both supporting Susan Collins for reelection

to the United States Senate." [Hutchisson]: "Bipartisan politics in order to solve

our country's problems is essential today, and I think she's doing a fine job in that."

[Henry]: "She is in the mainstream of Maine politics. She's impressive because of her intelligence,

her independence and her integrity." [Hutchisson]: "She's gonna

continue to be an outstanding leader in our government." [Henry]: "And I think she's a [Audio Ends]."

[PFB]: Collins for Senator

Unlike the extreme degrees of femininity and masculinity seen in Janet Napolitano's ad, this ad is much more moderate in terms of gender performance, demonstrating the effect office at stake has on candidates' ads.

Summary of Race-specific Results

What can be taken away from these results is the fact that every race-specific characteristic explored had at least a small substantively significant effect on the candidate's gender performance in the ads. This is not the case with the ad-specific characteristics, as I discuss in the next chapter. Additionally, the strongest relationship among all of the variables, opponent's gender, is a race-specific characteristic. This adds weight to the idea that the constant circumstances of a race impact a candidate's gender performance most strongly.

The race-specific characteristics seem to work in an interesting way. Many of the relationships worked in the same direction for both scales, meaning that many of the variables were correlated with both more feminine and more masculine ads. The best explanation for this phenomenon is that candidates are trying to hold onto their "base," be it women, Democrats, etc. while still appealing to enough other voters to swing the election in their favor. I discuss how this phenomenon differs from the ones observed in relation to ad-specific characteristics and its significance in more detail below.

Chapter 5: Ad-specific Characteristic Results

Presentation of Results: Difference of Means/ANOVA Tests

Issue

Issue is a variable that I hypothesized would have a very strong impact on gender performance. Given the great deal of literature that exists regarding gender and political issues, this relationship seemed promising. As I discussed in greater length in my theory chapter, voters have preconceived notions about which issues men and women are better suited to handle. Within the literature there is a great deal of controversy over whether or not it is effective for female candidates to practice a strategy of Issue "ownership" and emphasize issues they are stereotypically associated with. Considering this emphasis placed on issues when discussing gender in American politics, it would be reasonable to think that perhaps female candidates would perform gender differently depending on the issue at hand. On the surface, this seems to be the case.

A difference of means test shows that a focus on feminine issues leads to a higher score on the femininity scale, while a focus on masculine issues leads to a lower score on the femininity scale. The masculinity scale is not affected in any substantive way, as is shown in the graphs below.

Effect of Feminine Issue on Difference of Means

Effect of Masculine Issue on Difference of Means
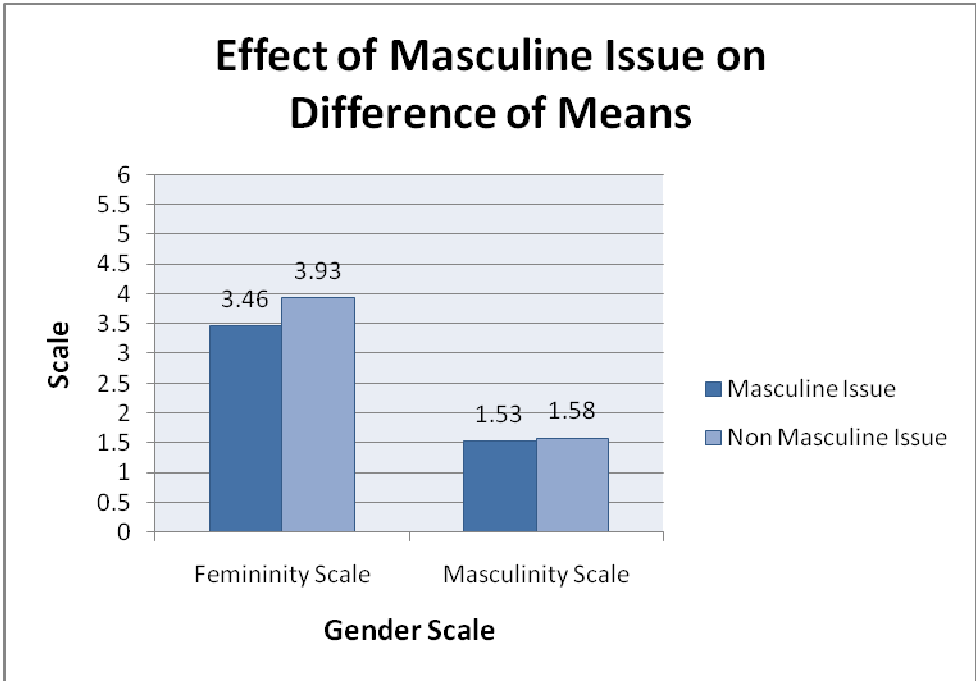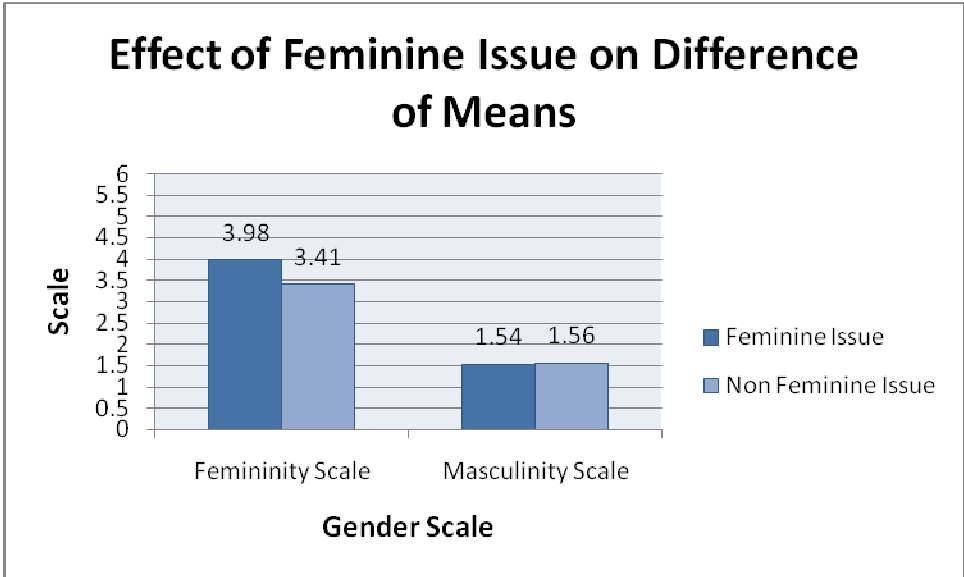
Additionally, an ANOVA test, which measures the difference between masculine and feminine issues as well as neutral issues, shows the difference in gender performance among these three categories to be statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ for both the

masculine and feminine scales. These results suggest a strong relationship between issue and gender performance, but as I explain below, these results may be misleading.

Audience

In order to analyze an ad's audience, I used the show an ad aired during as well as the time of day during which it aired. The reasoning behind this is that different demographics watch different types of programs and at different times of day. For example, the viewership for daytime television, such as talk shows and soap operas, is more likely to be heavily female while the viewership for weekend sporting events is probably male. Shows and times of day were therefore coded as masculine and feminine, and their impact on an ads femininity and masculinity was analyzed.

First, I discuss the relationship between television show and gender performance. There seems to be little relationship between shows coded as feminine and the types of ads that air. Although ANOVA shows the relationship to be statistically significant, the mean femininity and masculinity scores differ very little for feminine and masculine shows. The large number of cases is likely responsible for the statistical significance, but the results are not substantively significant.

My other measure of audience is the time of day the ad aired. This variable is by far the weakest of all variables I examine. A one-way ANOVA test shows that the relationship is statistically significant at $p<0.01$ for the masculinity scale, but not the femininity scale. This is the only variable that is not significant at $p<0.01$. Since the statistical significance of most of the independent variables can be explained by the large number of cases, the fact that this variable is not significant shows how weak the relationship is. There was also no substantive difference in the mean masculinity and

femininity scores for the different times of day. The time of day the ad aired during has no substantive impact on an ad's femininity or masculinity score.

Presentation of Results: Regression Model

Now I discuss the regression results for the ad-specific characteristics. These characteristics were included in the same regression model as the race-specific characteristics. Table 2 displays the regression coefficients, which were introduced in the previous chapter. I have included it here as well so that the coefficients for the ad-specific characteristics can be put in the context of the full model.

Table 2: Regression Coefficients

	Femininity Scale		Masculinity Scale
Constant	3.59		1.881
Race-specific Variables			
Opponent's Gender	1.343*		.242*
Party	0.135*		.127*
Office at Stake	-.146*		-.367*
South	-.189*		-.348*
Southwest	-.283*		.295*
Northeast	-.921*		-.101*
Midwest	.052*		-.238*
Ad-specific Variables			
Feminine Issue	.614*		-.180*
Masculine Issue	-.350*		.139*
Feminine Show	-.062*		-.033*
Masculine Show	-.202*		.139*
Time of Day	.023		-.001

 * denotes statistical significance at $p < 0.01$
 R square= .177 for femininity scale, .049 for masculinity scale

Issue

The relationship between issue and gender performance is even stronger and works in the expected direction using the regression model than it is using the difference

of means tests. This suggests a substantively significant relationship between gendered

issue and the femininity or masculinity of an ad. Ads about female issues have higher

scores on the femininity scale and lower scores on the masculinity scale, while ads about

masculine issues have lower scores on the femininity scale and higher scores on the

masculinity scale. It should be noted that this effect is stronger for the femininity scale

than the masculinity scale, as well as stronger for feminine issues than masculine issues.

As is apparent can see from Table 2, the regression coefficient for feminine issue

is especially high for the femininity scale. Next to opponent's gender, this was the

strongest variable in the model and seems to have a large effect on the femininity of an

ad. The graph below uses the same hypothetical ad from the last chapter to show how

much the score on the femininity scale would change if the issue changed.
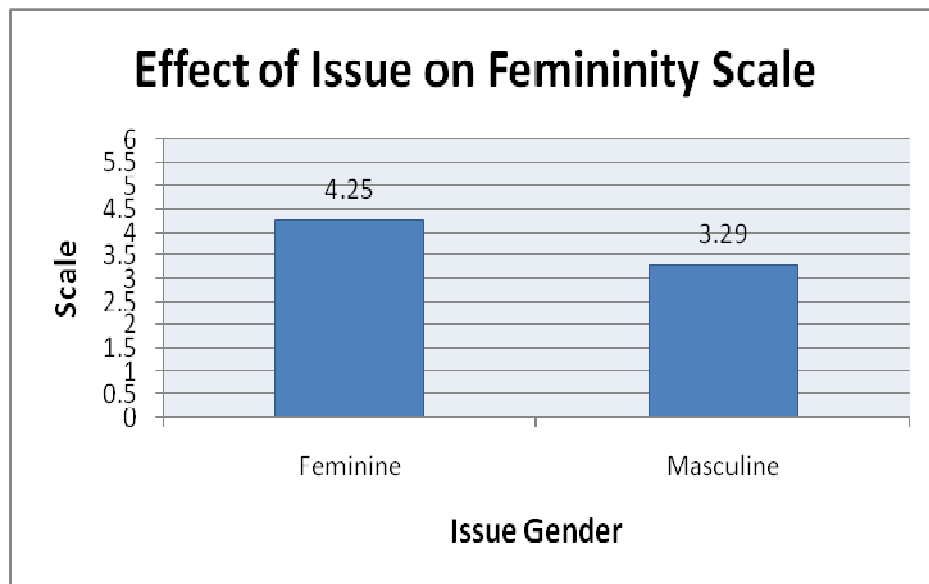
While these results suggest a rather strong relationship, factors exist that may be inflating this relationship. These are explored in depth in the next section of this chapter.

Audience

While the difference of means test did not show a substantive relationship between television show and gender performance, the regression results show a very small relationship. Ads aired during masculine shows differed from those aired during neutral and feminine shows on both scales. The regression model shows that ads aired during masculine shows are slightly less feminine and slightly more masculine. This difference is represented in the graph below, again showing the effect of changing this one variable on the hypothetical ad.
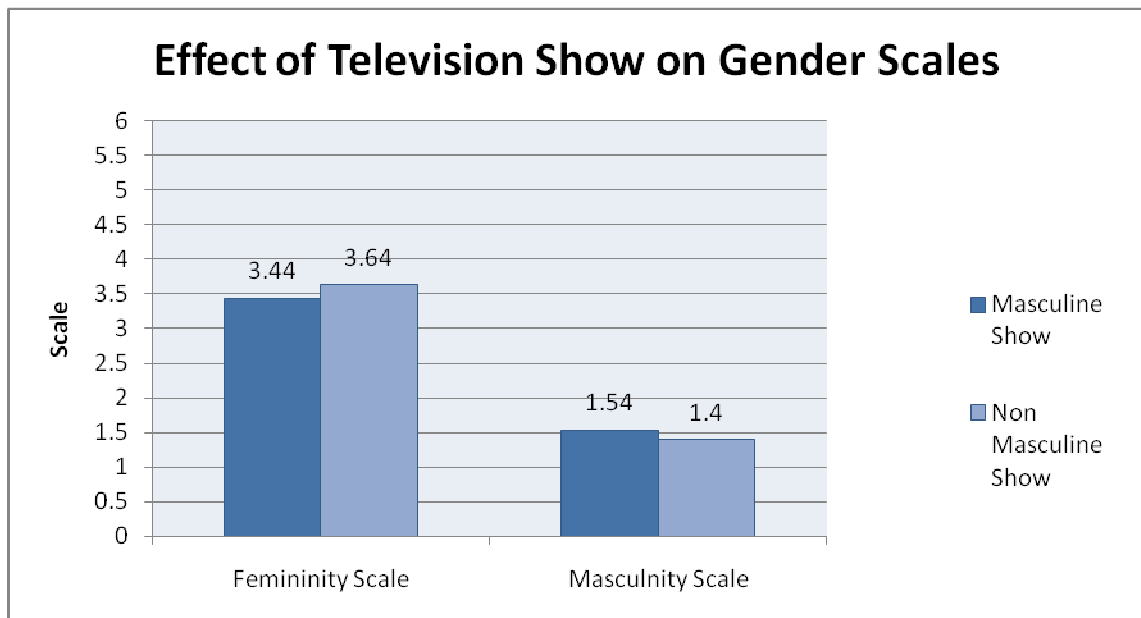
This is a small effect, but the fact that feminine shows had no effect on gender performance suggests there might be something worth exploring. Perhaps masculine

shows, such as popular sporting events, draw larger audiences and have higher costs for ad spots, making them higher-stakes ads than those that would air during a soap opera or talk show.

For my other measure of audience, the time of day the ad aired, the regression results simply confirm what the difference of means test showed. This variable is the weakest in the model and had no substantive impact on an ads femininity or masculinity score. The regression coefficients measured .023 for the femininity scale and -.001 for the masculinity scale. Additionally, this is the only variable included in the model that is not statistically significant. It is clearly not an important variable in determining the femininity or masculinity of an ad.

Explanation of Results:

While issue has a large impact on the gender scales, there is evidence that this might be due in part to the way the scale is constructed. Aspects of an ad such as actors and location were included in the gender scales. The reasoning behind this is that candidates could make general ads more feminine or masculine by adding shots of themselves with teachers or mothers verses policemen and veterans. These kinds of factors impact an ads femininity or masculinity and are useful when analyzing other variables. The problem with the issue variable, however, is that issue is often correlated with the actors and location of an ad. For example, an ad about education will likely feature teachers and a school building, regardless of the candidate's gender. This correlation is likely inflating the regression coefficients. When the relationship between other aspects of the scale, such as adjectives used, is examined, the correlation is still

present, but less strong. For example, the correlation between feminine adjectives and the gender scales is statistically significant, but only about .20. This suggests that this relationship exists, but is not as substantively significant as it first seems.

The following ad from Massachusetts gubernatorial candidate Shannon O'Brien, a Democrat running in 2002, shows how this effect can be difficult to determine and piece out. This ad has a high femininity score and is focused on feminine issues such as education, families, and health care.

[Announcer]: Newspapers condemn the attacks against Shannon O'Brien. The Globe calls the attacks, "unfair." And the Herald says, "it's a cheap shot." The Globe says	that under O'Brien our pension fund has earned 1.8 billion dollars and	ranks in the top third nationwide. It's O'Brien who will fix the budget
mess so we can focus on our priorities: affordable prescription drugs,	better schools for our kids, and creating jobs.	Shannon O'Brien: she'll put our families first.
[PFB: Shannon O'Brien Committee]		

The choice to feature children in the ad seems to make sense given the ad's mention of education. The children appear in three frames, however, including the final frame, which does not mention education. Additionally, O'Brien appears in her home and community. Without talking to O'Brien or her campaign staff it is impossible to

determine how and why these choices were made. This ad demonstrates well the complications that arise in trying to determine the effect of issue on gender performance.

While the effect of issue is unclear, it is very clear that audience has little impact on an ad's gender score. There are several possible reasons for this finding. One is that the cost of airtime might constrain when candidates are able to air their ads. Candidates might simply be airing ads during times that are the most financially sensible without much concern for audience makeup. Additionally, these measures of audience are decidedly rough. Knowing the exact gender makeup of the audience of every television show could help make the coding more accurate and might change the relationship. Unfortunately, such data are not publicly available. Finally, this variable might simply matter less to candidates than other variables. With a finite amount of money and time, candidates can only create so many ads. In other words, it is impossible to create a different ad for every show. These constraints might mean that candidates give little weight to this variable and focus on factors that require less time and effort to be effective.

Given that the reasons why this variable might not have much of an effect have a great deal to do with the medium being studied - television advertisements - it should not be assumed that audience never has an effect on a candidate's gender performance. If candidates' speeches were analyzed, for example, it is possible that the people in attendance might impact a candidate's performance. Perhaps a female candidate would perform differently at a teachers' union function than she would at a Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting. This could be a very promising topic for further study.

Summary of Ad-specific Characteristic Results

These results suggest that the ad-specific characteristics are far less important in determining the femininity or masculinity of an ad than race-specific characteristics. Audience has virtually no impact, while the strong connection to the issue being addressed appears to be inflated by the way in which the masculine and feminine scales were constructed. While it can be reasonably concluded that these issues have little impact on advertising strategy, the results might not translate to other mediums. The lack of impact of these variables seems to be a result of measurement issues and the specific medium of television advertising. As stated above, candidates have a limited amount of time and money and can only create a limited number of advertisements. Therefore it is impractical to have a different type of ad for every issue and every audience. Altering a speech depending on issue and audience, however, would be much easier. Examining this medium of candidate performance seems like an important next step in analyzing gender performance among political candidates.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this study, I attempt to integrate feminist theories of gender performance with theories of campaign strategy and candidate presentation to determine when and how female candidates might strategically alter their gender performance. Using a dataset of political advertisements from female candidates, I was able to determine under which circumstances candidates created feminine and masculine ads.

What I found is that the fixed characteristics of a specific race have a much stronger impact on a candidate's gender performance than ad-specific factors. The gender of a candidate's opponent is the strongest variable by far. Overall, candidates alter their gender performance because of the office they are seeking, the political party they belong to, and the person they are running against, rather than the audience that will see the ad or, to a lesser extent, the issue the ad is about. This pattern may exist because focusing on these race-based characteristics has a better payoff for less time, money, and energy. These factors do not change over time and are the same for every issue and audience. It is much easier for a candidate to create a few ads that will be most effective given their opponent's gender or political party than it is to create a different ad for every time of day and each television program.

Specific results aside, perhaps the most important finding of this study is that there was a connection between race characteristics and gender performance at all. The fact that any of these variables had a measurable and visible impact on an ad's femininity or masculinity shows that female candidates are not constrained to a certain degree of femininity by their biology. Female candidates were able to act more or less feminine depending on circumstances, adding weight to the concept that gender is a malleable

category that candidates are attempting to manipulate in their favor. This also calls into question the accuracy of gender stereotypes. If female candidates are able to move between feminine and masculine with such ease, this means gender is an incredibly unstable category in politics. If this is the case, how accurate can voters' stereotypes based on gender really be? Perhaps this study adds weight to what scores of feminists, activists, and female politicians have been claiming for years. Female candidates are not constrained by their biology or nature, but by the social value and meanings that is assigned to that biology. This finding alone means this study has several implications.

The first implication is both theoretical and methodological. Feminist scholars have long known that gender is an important analytic category when discussing any topic. Political scientists have been slow to come around, only recently beginning to treat gender in a way that acknowledges its complexities and social construction. Hopefully this work will begin to break down the barrier between feminist scholarship and political science, proving that feminist theory has a useful place in the study of politics. For political science, integrating feminist theory can provider a richer and more complex understanding of how gender and identity categories operate in electoral politics. For feminist theory, the study of politics provides a concrete space where the impact of gender norms and constructions on real-life events can be studied.

Additionally, this research adds to a growing body of literature on campaign strategy. Many scholars have proposed what they believe female candidates should do, but few have examined what they actually are doing. My work begins to explore this territory. It shows that there is not one unified way in which female candidates behave by virtue of their gender. While gender is obviously an important factor that candidates must

consider, how they use their gender depends on a variety of other factors including party, region, office at stake, and opponent. These findings contradict the idea that there is a one-size-fits-all model for how female candidates handle the issue of their gender. Gender is a strategic tool that is manipulated differently in different circumstances. This finding will be important to take into account when discussing female candidates' campaign strategies.

This research lays the groundwork for some interesting avenues of further research. Many of the variables I have examined could be fleshed out further to illuminate their effects. Region and issue are two factors that appear ambiguous in my study, but might prove to have more clear effects if analyzed further. As I have already suggested, a similar study that looks at other campaign media is also an important next step. Analyzing candidates' gender performances in speeches, debates, news appearances, and town hall meetings would help determine if the results I have found are consistent in all types of candidate performance or are unique to the medium of campaign advertising. No doubt, this is a topic with many possibilities for further research.

With Hillary Clinton's historic presidential campaign, the role of gender and politics is becoming an increasingly popular topic of conversation. With her White House bid still unresolved, it remains to be seen how her campaign will impact future research on the topic and how women campaign for higher office. One thing that is certain, however, is that this is not the end of the discussion. My research is a stepping-stone to a richer understanding of how gender operates in American politics. As women continue to break glass ceilings and change the way politics is done in this country, future research on this topic will be increasingly possible and necessary.

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