The Republican War for Women: Partisan Politics through a Gendered Lens

by

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the 2012 presidential election political consultants Katie Packer Gage, Ashley O'Conner, and Christine Matthews came to the conclusion that the Republican Party had a problem with women. It was not a unique opinion at the time; the narrative that Republicans were waging a "war on women" was a major Democratic talking point throughout the election and Obama had defeated Romney by 12 points among women (Jones 2012; Sides and Vavreck 2013). A New York Times editorial in May 2012 argued that policies Republicans championed limited access to abortion and healthcare and would increase pay disparity and domestic violence (Editorial 2012).

But unlike the majority of those who criticized the GOP's troubled relationship with women, Gage, O'Conner, and Matthews were themselves Republicans. As Republicans and as women, they decided to take action to correct what they saw as their party's inadequate appeals to women. They formed Burning Glass Consulting with the explicit purpose of figuring out how to help Republicans woo female voters. In contrast to the writers New York Times editorial, the three do not, for the most part, see the problem with the policies the Republicans are pursuing. Though in an interview she expressed that some Republican positions may have been "too extreme," Gage felt the largest problem in 2012 was that "the Republican message was being co-opted" (Hess 2013). To reclaim that messaging Gage talked about reaching out to women—especially single, non-white women—on issues besides reproductive rights, for example school choice. But Gage made clear that the
firm was interested in something more holistic than just issue messaging, noting that:
"ours is a different kind of approach—it's more than just one issue, more than just one tactic. We're really suggesting a wholesale change in the way we communicate our messages to women, down to the tone and the imagery."

Gage, O'Conner and Matthews expressed the idea that the Republican (and by extension, Democratic) relationship with women is larger than any single issue, candidate or poorly worded phrase. Rather, things such as women's issues, candidates' genders, and rhetoric all interact in complex ways to form a deep link between party image and gender—something comprehensive and larger than its component parts.

The story of Burning Glass and their vision of a Republican Party that is accessible and appealing to women raises several broader questions. Why do Republicans want to appeal to women? What form do these outreach efforts take? Does the process of appealing to women substantively alter the policy efforts of the Republican Party? Why don't Republicans simply adopt policies that have been proven to be more popular with women? Do Democrats, who similarly face an electoral disadvantage among men, also engage in such outreach efforts to male voters?

In this thesis I seek to answer these questions by looking at the strategic behavior of the Democratic and Republican parties and considering the motivation of those behaviors. I advance the claim that Republicans and Democrats have coherent gender reputations and that those reputations play a fundamental role in the way both parties shape their image overall. I establish that parties are gendered on a number of fronts, from elite demographics to their treatment of women's issues—Republicans
are masculine, Democrats are feminine. I then argue that this gendering, in conjunction with the electoral gender gap—women tend to prefer Democrats and men tend to prefer Republicans—motivates a response from the parties. Looking specifically at Republicans, I argue that the party would like female voters' support, but are constrained by party activists from changing conservative policies that drive women away. Thus, Republicans strategically move to foster a more feminine party image without changing policies. I argue (and empirically validate) that they do this with a combination of woman-centric and family-centric rhetorical appeals, a redefinition of what constitutes a "woman's issue," and calculated use of female messengers. Ultimately, the Republican Party attempts to frame itself and its policies as consistent with women and women's interests.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This work takes place at the intersection of two broad areas of political science. First is the study of partisan strategy, including partisan trait and issue ownership. Second is the study of women and politics. My exploration of Republican's efforts to appeal to women should deepen the connection between these two overlapping literatures, but also offer a something substantively new to the field. Considering the role of gender images and appeals in partisan politics offers a lens into broader issues of how party's reconcile conflicting interests to make strategic policy and rhetorical choices. By considering gender as a facet of each party's reputation, as well as a challenge to be overcome (in the form of the gender gap), I
offer a novel lens through which to assess the role of rhetoric and strategy in partisan politics.

I also place gender as one of the defining features of modern American political parties, arguing that the Republicans perceived masculinity and the Democrats perceived femininity have consequences for how parties make policy and craft messaging. Parties respond strategically to their own gender reputations, gender reputations of the issues they deal with, and their relative position in the gender gap. I argue that party's these partisan gender images have existed as an enduring feature of the last few decades partisan politics and any assessment of how parties have handle issues must consider gender. When Republicans and Democrats address women or women's issues they do so in considerably different baseline positions. That is, if a Republican speak to or about women or women's issues he or she does so as a member of a stereotypically masculine party, and that fact will alter the way in which he or she discusses and handles the issue. And this dynamic extends beyond explicitly women's issues to "feminine" issues as well—issues seen as requiring a high degree of compassion (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). To fully understand the drivers of parties' strategic calculus in policymaking scholars of partisan politics must consider how parties are negotiating their gender images when they engage on gender (and gendered) issues.

WHY REPUBLICANS?

Though my empirical and theoretical work addresses both parties, I maintain an analytic focus on the Republican Party. This is for two reasons. First, the
relationship between Republican and women has been the subject of much debate and punditry in recent years; bringing a rigorous scholarly focus to that debate may add clarity. Second, a large part of this thesis depends on how party's treat women's issues such as pay equality, and no such corollary exists for men. This is not to say that Democrats do not pursue women in the same way that Republicans pursue women—in fact my theory is designed to be inclusive of both parties. Rather, this simply means that Republican strategies to appeal to women will be more visible as the party navigates a set of issues explicitly relevant to their target demographic.

**PLAN OF THE WORK**

In this thesis I develop a theory of gender reputations and strategy that draws from the literature on theories of parties as well as gender in politics. I then move to test this theory with a mix of quantitative and qualitative content analysis of party messaging between 2004 and 2012, including campaign advertisements, convention speeches, and platforms. At each stage of analysis I consider how the interaction and overlap between partisanship and gender forms the strategic choices party makes. My work proceeds as follows:

The purpose of my second chapter is developing a theoretical understanding of parties as gendered entities. I draw on the women in politics literature to substantiate my claim that party's possess gendered reputations, and then place those claims in a framework derived from theories of issue and trait ownership. To complete my understanding I draw on theories of partisan activists as policy demanders. I argue that the constraints placed on parties by these activists serve as a
catalyst for Republicans to use framing and other rhetorical strategies to appeal to women.

In Chapter 3 I empirically assesses these claims. I examine a sample of 2012 Senate campaign advertisements run by candidates, parties, and outside interest groups. I use the theoretical framework from Chapter 2 to study how Republicans and Democrats present themselves in gendered terms in these advertisements. Specifically I study presence of female messengers in these advertisements, the extent and nature to which women's issues are discussed, and how family is referenced. I find that ads run by or on behalf of Republicans rhetorically invoke women at rates similar to Democrats, despite devoting less attention to women's issues. I also consider the role of non-candidate actors in political advertisements, arguing that these messengers may offer Republicans a way to present themselves as more feminine. Finally I establish a link between discussion of family in political advertisements and appeals to women, and consider the partisan dimension of this link.

In Chapter 4 I empirically analyze these same topics at the epicenter of partisanship—the national convention. Drawing on a sample of speeches from 2004, 2008, and 2012 I examine how the rhetoric of family and women is invoked by male and female party elites. I contextualize this with a study of each party's platform for those years, with an eye to evaluating how the rhetorical appeals made in speeches relate to the party's written policy pledges. Echoing the rhetoric/issue disconnect found in advertisements I find that Republicans offer relatively more attention to women in their speeches than platforms, though Republican platforms do broaden the women's issue agenda by connecting a number of policy points to women's interests. I
find, too, that partisan and gender interact to motivate distinct identity claims between female convention speakers on the left and the right.

Finally in Chapter 5 I discuss my findings holistically. I consider the limitations of my research as well as avenues for scholars interested in furthering a study of partisan gender reputations. I conclude with a discussion of the normative implications of my findings.
CHAPTER TWO
DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF GENDERED PARTIES

Political scientists have long been interested in analyzing the relationship between gender and partisanship. They have debated and tested questions about why men and women have divergent preferences on issues like welfare reform or gun laws (Howell and Day 2000) or why the Democratic party has many more female elites than the Republican party (Thomsen N.d.). The questions involve partisan strategy as well—how Republicans and Democrats recruit female candidates (Sanbonmatsu 2002b) or how the gender gap influences candidates’ strategic decision making (Schaffner 2005). Others consider how gendered metaphors about liberalism and conservatism infuse and define our political thoughts (Lakoff 2002).

In this section I review this literature and consider the many ways in which these questions interact and overlap to form a broad picture of parties as gendered institutions. I study how links between several strains of the gender in politics literature (specifically the gender gap, women's issues, and gender reputations) come together to form a holistic picture of parties as gendered entities—Republicans are masculine and Democrats are feminine. But evaluating and deepening the linkages within the gender and politics literature is only half my goal. To fully understand how gender operates as an organizing principle of partisan politics I look outside of the gender and politics literature, studying how gender in partisan politics can be reconciled with theories of partisan strategy and political persuasion. This approach serves two purposes: first, it broadens the gender and politics literature to consider
new links. Second, it motivates my central theoretical model for the rest of the work: a theory of parties who possess, and strategically cope with, gendered reputations.

This chapter proceeds as follows: I begin by considering and connecting the gender in politics literature in two realms: the gender gap and the modern history of partisanship women's issues. I consider the gender gap as a problem Republicans seek to address by reaching out to women and I offer an overview of the Republican Party as a dynamic institution—particularly with respect to women and women's right's issues. Moving to a broadening of the gender and politics literature I then consider the relationship between Republicans and women in the context of issue and trait ownership. This framework me to establish an original theory of how parties maintain and battle over gender reputations. I discuss constraints that they face from party activists in seeking to appeal to voters across the gender gap. To do so, I draw an understanding of these constraints from the models of parties offered by Downs (1957) and his successors. Bringing in the literature on political communication, I posit framing as a strategy by which parties may seek to alter their gendered reputations; I offer an overview of the framing literature and consider how it might be applied to analyzing the role of gender in persuasive partisan speech.

Throughout the chapter I consider how the links within the gender and politics literature and between the gender and politics literature and other areas of political science motivate a new theoretical framework for understanding the role gender plays in partisan politics. I thus conclude with a consolidated overview of the theoretical implications that I draw from these connections. I consider how this novel theoretical
understanding motivates a set of expectations with respect to partisan political speech and policy making.

THE GENDER GAP

In political science, the "gender gap" typically refers to the divergent political opinions, partisan preferences or vote choices of men and women. Specifically, women are more likely than men to vote for Democrats. Further, women are more likely to support redistributive welfare policies, evaluate the economy pessimistically and less likely to support military intervention or punitive policies like capital punishment (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999).

Discussion of the gender gap began with the 1980 presidential election, but the divergence of men and women's vote choice actually began much earlier, with the 1964 election of Lyndon Baines Johnson (Kaufmann 2006). The gender gap reached a high point in 1996 where 11% more women voted for Bill Clinton than men (Center for American Women and Politics 2012). In the most recent presidential election the was measured by various sources as between 10 and 12 Percent (Center for American Women and Politics 2012; Jones 2012). In fact, women have preferred Democratic presidential candidates to Republicans in every election since 1992.

Though the gender gap is most often discussed in terms of women's distinct preferences for Democrats and liberal policies, Kaufmann and Petrocik (1999) find that the gap was caused by men moving rightward towards the Republican Party. They note that had this rightward shift not occurred, Democrats "today would command the same national lead in partisanship over the Republicans—about twenty points—that they enjoyed during the period of mature Democratic dominance in the
1950s" (867). The partisan identification gender gap is further complicated by the fact that men are more likely than women to identify as independents (Norrander 1999). Accounting for those self-identifying independents that consistently lean towards one party or the other, the gap actually widens.

The literature on the gender gap is rich with hypotheses on what drives men and women's divergent political preferences. Some suggest that demographic features, such as women's lower socioeconomic status lead women to prefer welfare programs, government services, and redistributive policies (Howell and Day 2000). Other theories focus on divergent values between men and women, with men prioritizing justice and order and women prioritizing compassion and equality.

Earlier explanations considered a feminist awakening driving the gender gap, with women preferring feminist policies and the party that promotes them. Cook and Wilcox (1991) dismiss this, finding that equal proportions of men and women express sympathy with feminist values. Still, the changing roles of women may drive the gender gap. The Women's Autonomy thesis (Carroll 1988) suggests that as women moved into the public world they formed policy and partisan preferences distinct from men. Yet, this does not explain why women would have innately different preferences than men to begin with.

The gender gap may not be solely attributable to attitude differences, however. Vote choice or partisan identification may be shaped as well by the relative weight that men and women give issues (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). For example, if men and women feel similarly about a party's ability to handle the economy but women rate economic issues as relatively more important, vote choice may differ.
Political events like an economic downturn affect women differently than men, widening or narrowing the gender gap (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boerf, and Lin 2004).

Each of these competing and complementing explanations can be structured into one multi-step framework. At its core, men and women are different. Women have different socialized or biological characteristics (i.e. women are conditioned to be more compassionate) from men, or different societal positions, for example lower socioeconomic status, or both.

These differences either motivate a different set of values or a rational self-interest that leads to preferences for different policies, (for example higher economic vulnerability drives more concern about the maintenance of government programs). These unique values and interests motivate either distinct policy preferences or differential levels of salience attached to various issues. Those differences lead to the gender gap in issue attitudes, vote choice and partisan preferences. Why the gender gap is not identical every election cycle can be explained by idiosyncratic factors about elections, candidates and issues. Though the question of the origin of the gender gap is certainly a compelling one, answering it is not my primary purpose.

Rather, I am interested in the problem that the gender gap poses for the parties and how they formulate a response. It has become a deep cleavage of modern politics; smaller than race or class but at times larger than many other socially important divisions like region or religiosity (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). It is generally assumed that, to quote Kaufmann, "...a sustained contraction of the gender gap could pose rather dire circumstances for the Democratic Party, or conversely, great fortune for the Republicans" (2006, 447). Of course, this presumes women would follow men
rightward, but the gap could be equally contracted by men returning to the Democratic Party. Such an assumption, that the gender gap is contingent on the choices of women, may reflect what writer Katha Pollitt termed "the Smurfette Principle" (1991), or accepting men as the norm and women as the variation—a trap that analysts of the gender gap often fall into (Sides and Vavreck 2013).

Yet I maintain a focus on the actions of Republicans and their attempt to appeal to women for two reasons. First, men may have created the gap, but "in the current political environment the gap is maintained by small movements toward the Democratic Party, in particular, by women" (Box-Steffenmeier, De Boef and Lin 2004). Finally in every presidential election since 1980 women have voted at higher rates and in greater magnitude than men (Center for American Woman and Politics 2014). So in fact it is the reverse of the Smurfette Principle—by looking at how parties reach out to women I am looking at how parties reach out to the majority of American voters.

PARTIES IN GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

In this section I consider the ways in which parties possess gender reputations outside of the gender gap. In other words why are Democrats considered feminine and Republicans considered masculine? The gender reputations arise from more than just who votes for the parties. I specifically look at how stances on women's rights issues, and elite demographics reinforce these stereotypes. I argue that each of these gender dimensions fits distinctly well into a consistent scheme of parties as gendered
and that this scheme is more than the sum of its component parts. To begin with, however, I look at the party's treatment of women's and feminist issues.

*The Shifting Republican Party*

Both parties experienced critical as well as more gradual—or secular—realignment over the past century; their positions on issues have changed dramatically (Brewer and Stonecash 2009). The post-war period represented a time of secular realignment between the parties and that "the diversity within parties—and the cross-party coalitions that occurred in the 1950s-1970s—diminished any sense of difference between the parties" (30). Indeed, this was a period parties decreased in relevance, seemingly to the vanishing point (Aldrich 2011). During this time, the Republican party experienced a renaissance of conservative ideas from thinkers like Friedrich Hayek, Ayn Rand and Milton Friedman (Brewer and Stonecash). Barry Goldwater was the first candidate to crystalize the ideas of these thinkers and frustrations about government intrusion into a presidential platform in 1964. He suffered a terrific defeat, however, and the conservative rebirth was delayed until Reagan's election in 1980.

During this time the Republican Party's demographic base shifted dramatically (Brewer and Stonecash 2009). Republican victories in the South had begun with Eisenhower and increased under Nixon as large numbers of white southern voters (especially men) defected from the Democratic Party, Nixon pursued a "Silent Majority" of voters whom he believed were frustrated with the social shifts of the time. Reagan harnessed the power of this majority with an optimism that argued for
conservative policies through the lens of economic prosperity. As president, Reagan sought to bring into the coalition southerners, suburbanites, white men, and conservatives of all stripes, and he was largely successful.

It was during the Reagan years that the gender gap emerged. The Republican Party shifted rightward towards a more cohesive conservative image, and white men followed; their female counterparts did not. Republican shifts on women's issues reflected this movement rightward (Wolbrecht 2000).

Women's Issues on the Partisan Spectrum

Though Cook and Wilcox (1991) disprove the notion that the emergence of women's rights as a Democratic issue caused the gender gap, the two phenomena did coincide in their timing. Wolbrecht argues that women's rights entered political debates in the early 1970s, with each party paying relatively little attention to the issue, but Republicans expressing slightly more support for women's rights. The parties crystalized women's rights issues onto the current left-right spectrum by the 1980s. Wolbrecht asserts that while "there can be little doubt that the rise of conservatism in the Republican Party played a major role in reversing that party's position on the ERA and women's rights in general," that explanation may be oversimplified (9). Rather, as the women's rights issue became salient, both parties evaluated the constituency possibilities of various stances and adopted women's rights into a framework largely determined by the politicization of the civil rights movement.
Other Facets of Party Gendering

Thus far I have established that generally, Republicans are more likely to be supported by men than women, and Democrats are more likely to be supported by women than men. Further, Democrats are more likely to take proactive, feminist stances on women's issues. I now turn to consider two additional dimensions of the parties' gender reputations: elite gender demographics and the subconscious feelings that people hold about the parties.

Female elites are at least three times as likely to be members of the Democratic Party than the Republican Party (Carroll and Fox 2010: Thomsen N.d.). Even within the Republican Party women tend to be less conservative than their male counterparts (Thomsen N.d.). Women are typically no more likely to vote for female candidates than male candidates (Center for American Women and Politics 2010), so the fact that more Democratic candidates are women is likely not a direct source of the gender gap. And yet, this elite imbalance may contribute to an image of parties that are divided on gender. It is hard to imagine that the visibility of women in each party differs when about one out of every three Democratic congress members is a woman, but less than one out of every ten Republican congress members is (Thomsen N.d). Further, the first female nominee for Vice President was a Democrat, as was the first woman to win a major party's presidential primaries. Democrats also can claim the first female Speaker of the House and first female Secretary of State. Recently Republicans have increased visibility of their female elites, for example by nominating Sarah Palin as Vice President in 2008 and electing Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers as Chair of the House Republican Conference.
("Biography"). The elite imbalance may be one reason that the public perceives Republicans as a more masculine party and Democrats as a more feminine (Winter 2010).

Winter (2010) finds that the association with Republicans and masculinity and Democrats with femininity extends to the subconscious level. Winter poses parties as being perceived as holding a set of traits that map onto a gendered spectrum. Winter argues that this perception arises from factors like those I have already covered—the gender gap, stances on women's issues and so on. Winter finds that gendered associations exist at both the conscious and subconscious level. He concludes that "we should not think of party and gender stereotypes as independent alternatives, but rather as two sets of stereotypes with important links" (609).

In summary, bringing together these distinct findings fosters a picture of the Republican and Democratic parties as gendered organizations. The Democratic Party not only does better electorally with women, but also has a larger number of congresswomen, and takes a stronger feminist stance on women's rights issues. This gendering of the parties extends to the subconscious level, with Winter finding that people associate the Democrats with more feminine traits, and the Republicans with more masculine traits.

I posit that these dimensions mutually reinforce one another, and thus party's gender reputation consists of something more than the sum difference of each gender metric. In other words, the fact that Democrats have more female elites, are implicitly assumed to be more feminine, are perceived as more compassionate, are seen as more competent on women's issues, and garner more electoral support from women are not
unique and separable facts. They are each expressions of, and formative components of, a comprehensive gender reputation that serves to perpetuate itself. This idea becomes clearer once gender is placed in a parallel framework to those that scholars have developed to understand parties' issue and trait reputations.

**ISSUE, TRAIT, AND GENDER OWNERSHIP**

Thus far I have established that parties are gendered on a number of dimensions and argued that the sum of this gendering is that parties have coherent gender reputations. To flesh out this understanding of how a party's characteristic (specifically their gender reputation) might motivate a strategic response, I draw on an issue and trait ownership literature. This literature establishes that parties are associated with certain issues and traits and those associations drive the parties’ respective strategies. This section broadens the gender and politics literature into questions of partisan strategy. Though such links have been made before by other scholars (Hayes 2011; Schaffner 2005) I offer something novel by developing a comprehensive theory of how gender serves as a decisive characteristic of modern parties. I overview the theories of the trait and issue ownership literature and then build a parallel framework for understanding how parties' gender reputations motivate how they navigate gender issues and relate to voters and party activists.

*Issue Ownership and Trait Ownership*

Petrocik (1996) developed a theory of "issue ownership" wherein candidates are electorally rewarded when issues they and their parties are seen at being
particularly competent in handling are high on the agenda. Therefore, parties will seek to emphasize issues that they "own." Parties and candidates come to own issues through incumbent records as well as through constituencies. That is, if a certain constituency is associated with a party and successfully pushes for policy preferences within that party, then the party will be seen as owning issues that are relevant to that constituency.

Building on Petrocik's (1996) theory of issue ownership, Hayes (2005) developed a theory of partisan trait ownership. Hayes argues that "not only do the Republican and Democratic parties own issues...but their candidates own traits associated with those issues" (908). Specifically, Republicans are seen as stronger leaders and more moral, while Democrats are perceived as more compassionate and empathetic. Hayes uses American National Election Survey data to confirm that Republicans are seen as more moral and stronger leaders, whereas Democrats are seen as more empathetic or compassionate.

Hayes argues that "candidates will seek to "trespass on his opponent's trait territory" (2005, 909). He draws this argument from "expectations gap" arguments in psychology (2005; Higgins 1987). Candidates hope to gain an electoral advantage by eroding their opponent's ownership of a certain trait. Hayes argues that "voters' choices may be influenced by the degree to which candidates deviate from trait expectations...A candidate who overcomes these expectations...might win over voters looking for information to distinguish between the two candidates" (912). In other words, candidates have more to gain by attempting to encroach on their opponents’ partisan trait reputations than defend their own, and "this raises the possibility that the
traits that matter the most for candidates are the ones they do not own" (912). He finds empirical validation for this argument as well, showing that when an individual rates a Republican as more empathetic/compassionate or a Democrat as stronger/more moral than their opponent it improves the likelihood that they will vote for that candidate.

A Theory of Gender "Ownership"

Hayes (2005) argues that trait ownership and issue ownership intersect with each other. I further this by contending that both trait and issue ownership may intersect with the gender associations of parties as well. Winter notes that the growing gendered associations of the parties "have been reinforced by the gendered association of the issues 'owned' by each of the political parties. There is considerable overlap between the political issues that citizens associate with each party, on the one hand, and that they associate with men and women on the other" (591). Further, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) demonstrate that male and female candidates are viewed as more or less competent in handling different issues, and these issue handling reputations are linked to stereotypes about which traits men and women possess. Specifically, the authors find that voters "expect greater expertise on military matters from male candidates and higher performance on compassion issues from female candidates," and these expectations "stem from voters' gender stereotypes about men and women's personality traits" (140). In short, there is significant overlap between the traits and issues a party owns and the gender with which it associated. This brings out my central theoretical argument: Parties do not just possess issue and
trait reputations—parties posses gendered reputations; they "own" gender territory. See Figure 2.1 for a sketch of this relationship.

Further, parallel to Hayes' theory that parties will attempt to erode one another's electoral advantage by "trespassing" onto each other's trait territory, I argue that parties will seek to trespass or encroach onto one another's gendered territory as well. In their attempt to diminish the gender gap in their favor, parties have more to gain by encroaching on each other's gender reputations. Democrats hope to gain male votes, so they seek to establish a more masculine image; Republicans hope to gain female votes, and so they attempt to appear more feminine. I term the strategic
attempt of candidates to erode their opponent's monopoly on a gender reputation
gender encroachment.

As Hayes theorizes with trait ownership, I suggest that gender reputations (or
gender territory) are the "baseline" for parties and gender reputation encroachment is
a strategic behavior parties partake in to gain electoral advantages (2005, 909). Parties
have gender reputations that they may seek to alter for electoral reasons. This
strategy is doubly effective because, owing to the linkages between gender, trait, and
issues, eroding an opponents’ gender territory may aid in the erosion of their trait or
issue territory. If an issue on which women are viewed as highly competent, such as
child care is salient to a given campaign, then gender encroachment may be a
powerful tool for a Republican attempting to appear more credible and competent on
that issue. This theory of gender reputations and encroachment will motivate the
empirical analysis of the next two chapters. I suggest that the parties' strategic
movements with respect to the gender gap can be best understood as battles over
gender territory. I attempt to see if Democrats and Republicans possess gendered
reputations, and if the Republicans attempt to encroach on Democrats’ gender
territory.

Before launching into an empirical analysis, it is necessary to establish the
means through which parties attempt to encroach on one another's gender reputations.
I begin by examining how parties do not encroach—by altering their policy positions.
I assess theories of parties' responses to activist and electoral pressures, and consider
how these theories can accommodate an understanding of gender territory and
encroachment. I then move to an analysis of how parties do encroach, by overviewing the literature on framing.

**A THEORY OF CONSTRAINED PARTIES**

If Republicans sought to narrow the gender gap in their favor, one obvious strategy would be to change their policies to be seen as a more woman-friendly party. They could, for example, adapt their positions on gender gap-driving issues like capital punishment. They could also attempt to encroach on Democrat's status as the party of women's rights by taking more aggressive stances on those issues. In fact, this is what Downs' (1957) Median Voter Theory suggests they might do. In his spatial conception of party ideologies, Downs argues that if voters are normally-distributed across a left-right ideological spectrum, then parties will rationally move to the center of the spectrum and converge at an ideological middle point (1957). Yet we do not see this—on women's issues as well as on many other issues (Aldrich 2001; Bawn et al. 2012; Wolbrecht 2000).

Aldrich (2001) argues that parties are constrained by both benefit seekers and policy seekers. The presence of policy seekers allow for parties that have distinct and lasting cleavages. The existence of separate equilibriums for the parties exists because of partisan activists who constrain politicians in various ways, through funding, labor, and the convention and nomination systems. To quote Aldrich,

"...the result is that the politician seeking election faces two competing pressures. The centripetal pressure is the pressure to seek voters in the middle, among the most torn in their decision between the
two parties' candidates. The centrifugal pressure is that which emanates from the party activists, in generating policy goals for the many candidates who entered politics concerned about public policy; in being the core constituencies for nomination, whether in primary or caucus; and in being the source of the resources needed to compete effectively in the general election."

Bawn et al. (2012) carry Aldrich's theory a bit farther, crafting a model of parties that are driven by policy seeking interest groups. In the Bawn et al. theory of parties, voters are attuned only to largely distinct policy alternatives, creating an "electoral blind spot" where those groups (or "policy demanders") control the program (579). A subtle distinction from Aldrich's understanding is that, for Bawn et al., "party nominees are not so much 'constrained' by policy demanders' to deviate from what voters want, as genuinely committed to what the policy demanders want regardless of the wishes of the median voters.'

For my purposes both Bawn et al. and Aldrich offer plausible explanations for why the parties cannot simply alter their issue stances to encroach on one another's gender territory. For the rest of this thesis I will generally refer to Aldrich's language, but that should not be understood as a dismissal of the findings of Bawn et. al. To review, the challenge of Republican politicians and, in turn, the Republican Party, arises from the opposing "centripetal" and "centrifugal" forces of party activists and the electorate. Republicans are reliant on party activists as well as voters. Party activists tend to prefer policy that would widen the gender gap, alienating moderate female voters (Sanbonmatsu 2002a; Schreiber 2008). Be it constraint or commitment,
the parties are relatively inflexible in their stance on women's issues. As Wolbrecht (2000) argues, the parties have crystalized into clear positions about women's rights issues. Considering the constraints shown in Bawn et al.'s and Aldrich's theory of parties, parties have neither the incentives nor the freedom to alter their position on women's rights issues such that they could change their gendered reputation. Republicans, in an effort to win over those voters must seek alternative routes to persuading women or risk alienating their critical base.

**OVERCOMING CONSTRAINTS THROUGH FRAMING**

Due to the pressures that party activists exert, Republicans cannot alter their substantive policy stances. Instead they reframe those policy stances as pro-woman. In this section I overview the literature on framing effects and broaden the definition of framing to include those strategies that Republicans engage in order to appear more feminine.

Iyengar defines framing effects as "changes in judgment engendered by subtle alternations in judgment or choice problems"—that is, the way an issue is discussed leading to differences in opinions regarding said issue (815). In his overview of framing research, Druckman (2001) defines Iyengar's conception of framing as looking at "frames in communication," an idea lodged in the study of elite discourse (227). This contrasts to research on "frames of thought," which relates to how citizens mentally structure their understanding of the political world. Druckman labels the process by which frames in communication shape frames of thought "framing effects."
Scholars debate the manipulative power of frames, and I will give such normative questions some consideration in my final chapter (Druckman 2001). But for the most part my investigation does not focus on the consequence of framing effects on viewers. Rather I am interested in the construction and deployment of frames by parties. A recurring fact of the framing research is that, as Druckman argues, "much of politics involves battles over how a campaign, a problem, or an issue should be understood" (235). Frames are the weapon in that battle and I seek to explore how they are employed on gendered terrain. I am concerned specifically with how parties frame issues as gendered or not gendered and what gendered frame they apply to themselves.

Though Iyengar discusses framing in terms of media coverage of political events, the overdependence of framing research on the news media limits the concept. Unlike the news, we expect political advertisements and speeches to be manipulative, we expect them to aim to persuade. A campaign advertisement may frame an issue such as the national debt by showing a number of statistics about the growth of the debt, or a concerned mother looking on as her young children play. Framing effects can provide a certain narrative, engender a causal belief and persuade viewers and voters. Looking at framing in politically persuasive speech allows us to consider how who a messenger is, what they're talking about, and how the language they use to talk about it, all interact.
Sanbonmatsu makes the important assertion that "issues that are not usually considered gender issues may become gender issues, and gender issues may become less gendered depending on the framing" (2002a, 116). Scholars have considered how political actors use gendered rhetoric to frame issues, though primarily as a means of answering questions about descriptive representation, not about the persuasive purpose that gendered frames serve. For example, Shogan (2001) explores how parties frame issues in terms of women by looking at instances of "woman-invoked rhetoric" in Congress. She finds that female House members of both parties invoked women at similar rate (129). Though Democrats discussed women more in the aggregate this was a reflection of their greater numbers relative to their Republican counterparts. Shogan's assessment demonstrates that woman-invoked rhetoric can span an array of issues both directly and indirectly related to women's interests. Shogan categorized a remark as woman-invoked rhetoric when "the representative [professed] concern with women’s well-being, specific interests, or desires" (133). Such rhetoric appeared on a wide array of issues, from foreign policy to welfare reform.

Pearson and Dancey (2011) evaluate the role of female congress member's speeches in enhancing descriptive representation and find that congresswomen are significantly more likely than their male counterparts to mention women in speeches covering a variety of issues. The authors find that discussion of women occur outside of topics directly related to women and appear in debates or speeches surrounding issues such as the war in Afghanistan or the minimum wage. Such attempts at
bringing in gender to non-gendered topics could be interpreted as framing. If that framing is done strategically to influence perceptions of partisan gender reputations it would signify gender encroachment.

I extract two conclusions from these works. First, as Sanbonmatsu argues, the delineation between a woman's issue and a non-woman's issue is malleable. For example, American involvement in the Middle East is generally understood as a foreign policy issue, a budgetary issue, or moral issue. It was not conventionally understood as a woman's issue. And yet Republican congresswomen frequently invoked women when discussing Afghanistan (Pearson and Dancey 2011). This leads to several questions—does such rhetoric constitute a revision of the categorization of the issue? And what would lead a speaker (or party) to opt-in or out of a gendered frame? What, if any, persuasive purpose does this rhetorical frame serve? Second, these findings suggest that (as Pearson and Dancey [2011] argue), partisan and gender identity plays a role in shaping which rhetorical frames a speaker adopts. Both Shogan and Pearson and Dancey find that congresswomen uniquely invoke women and women's interests in their speeches. Given the literature on descriptive representation (Mansbridge 1999) this is not unexpected. More significant is the intersectionality between partisan and gender identity that the authors find: Republican congresswomen talk about women and women's issues distinctly from how Democratic congresswomen do. This is consistent with the notion that parties (and politicians in those parties) have different baseline gender reputations to navigate. Those reputations are separate from but interact with an individual
politician's gender identity, and that interaction produces distinct styles of gendered speech.

**Framing Gender with People: Messengers As Frames**

Though framing is traditional explored in terms of the phrasing with which a problem is presented, it includes more than just the way an issue is contextualized using words. I argue that just as rhetorical frames such as woman-invoked rhetoric negotiate the boundaries of "women's issues," framing effects may be established by other means, such as the messenger who is discussing the issue.

Petrocik explains how messengers may operate as frames in his discussion of issue ownership. He notes that "a personal characteristic can convey ownership of an issue [, for example] gender can determine who is the more credible candidate on matters of sex discrimination." Further, recall that men and women are viewed as being more credible and competent on various issue fronts due to stereotyped associations between political issues, traits, and gender (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). Female messengers may allow Republican candidates or the party as a whole to appear more credible and competent when discussing issues on which women are seen as being particularly competent.

As discussed earlier, Democrats have significantly more female elites than Republicans. To appear feminine despite this elite imbalance Republicans may try to reach out to voters with candidate or non-candidate female messengers that allow them to encroach on their opponent's gender territory. This could include prominent display of female elites endorsing a candidate, or even an average person in a
campaign ad. That is, a woman presenting an idea may naturally invoke a more female-oriented frame of thought than if the same idea was presented by a man. Messengers may frame issues with their gender, and messenger gender may interact with other rhetorical frames in a number of ways. I will explore both traditional rhetorical frames and messengers-as-frames as potential mechanisms for Republicans to engage in gender encroachment.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I argued that the battle over the gender gap is a battle for a reworking of a party's gendered reputation. By attempting to appear more woman-friendly on a number of dimensions Republicans seek to bridge the gender gap and appeal to more women voters. To develop this theory I drew on five areas of political science literature: research on the gender gap, partisanship and women's issues, issue and trait ownership, models of parties, and framing effects.

Each body of literature fit into a structure that motivates my empirical analysis. To review, the parties are gendered on several dimensions, including elite demographics, electoral support, their stance on women's issues, and the subconscious associations people hold for them. Drawing a parallel to the literature on trait and issue ownership, I argue that parties can therefore be understood to "own" gender territory just as they own trait and issue territory. Further building on this parallel I argue that parties have incentives to encroach on one another's gender territory—that is, Republicans will attempt to appear more feminine and Democrats will attempt to appear more masculine. Parties are constrained, however, by partisan
activists who have a powerful stake in preventing the adoption of policies that parties might use to alter their gendered reputation. Thus, they employ strategic framing and reframing to pursue a more favorable allotment of gender territory. In this way the parties may gain an electoral advantage and traverse to gender gap. I now move to test this theory empirically at two junctures: the national convention (including the party platform) and campaign advertisements. Though these two arenas vary greatly in visibility, scope, and the means that parties use to appeal to voters, I look for evidence of my gender territory theory in both. I suggest that in attempting to persuade voters, parties will display evidence of owning gender territory and pursuing gender encroachment.
CHAPTER THREE
GENDER IMAGING IN CAMPAIGN ADVERTISEMENTS

In the 2012 Senate election in New Mexico, the Republican-leaning American Future Fund ("American") ran an advertisement featuring a woman, sleepless, reflecting on her concerns about the future. "I'm worried, I guess. About tomorrow," she says in a voiceover, as she roams through her house and looks over her sleeping family. "My husband's job; things cost more; it's harder to get by." She talks about the Democratic candidate, Martin Heinrich, the stimulus, unemployment and the national debt. She strokes her daughters hair as she says "We're worse off than before. Now my kids are going to have to pay...for Heinrich's mistakes."

The advertisement places an average-seeming woman, a wife and mother, at its center. She considers political issues through the lens of her family, and the effect that her vote will have on herself, her husband, and her children. The woman suggests that economic choices, specifically the mounting national debt, have a moral component. Debt today is a debilitating burden to her children.

Ads using average-seeming women to bring home personalize debates about policy, or appealing to women through their role in the family are not unique to the Republican Party, but I argue they represent a mechanism of gender encroachment. In this chapter I will examine the way in which both parties appeal to women, discuss women's issues, and strategically deploy rhetoric related to women and family in political advertisements, relying on a sample of 2012 Senate ads. In particular, this chapter focuses on two elements of gender encroachment that parties may use in
campaign ads—rhetorically reframing issues or using messengers to provide favorable frames.

My analysis proceeds as follows: I begin with a background on the 2012 election, paying particular attention to the dynamics of women's issues and the gender gap. I then offer a set of hypotheses to test the assertion that advertising in the 2012 election indicated that parties have gendered reputations and seek to strategically encroach on one another's gender reputation. I test a sample of advertisements from the election and offer a brief discussion on these findings.

THE 2012 ELECTION

The 2012 election solidified "the rise of stronger, more homogeneous, and more policy-motivated parties in Congress, parties that are more divergent from one another regarding preferred policy outcomes" (Abramson et al. 2013, 292). It was not a "wave election," that is, one party did not gain or lose a large number of congressional seats; Democrats maintained the small majority they had been cultivating since 2002. The 2012 election did see some gradual realignment, as partisans better sorted themselves ideologically and the Republican Party grew more ideologically cohesive, but no large disruption of politics occurred.

I chose to focus on the Senate election because these elections allowed for a variety of candidates, rather than simply Romney and Obama. Further, in contrast to the House elections, Senate elections tend to be competitive and well-funded (Abramson et al. 2013; Swers 2013). Besides being the most recent presidential
election year, centering my analysis in 2012 allows for a comparison to gender dynamics at the national convention—the focus of my next chapter.

The five most competitive Senate races (that is, those races where campaigns, parties and outside groups spent the most) were all won by Democrats ("Spending" 2012). That includes Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

![Gender Gap by State](image)

**Fig. 3.1** The Gender Gap in the 2012 Election. The vertical axis indicates the difference between men and women’s support for the winning candidate. *Source: Center for Women and American Politics.*

Suggesting the continued relevance of the gender gap, in four of these five races exit polls indicate that a majority of women voted for the winning Democrat and a majority of men voted for the losing Republican (Center for American Women and
Gender gaps were found in every race where exit polls were conducted, excluding Maine, where independent candidate Angus King won. See Figure 2.1 for an overview of the size of gender gaps in every state where exit polls were taken. The largest gender gaps were in Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, Wisconsin and Minnesota, where women and men’s vote choice differentials were all in the double digits.

The War on Women

The so-called "War on Women" emerged as a major theme in the 2012 election. The slogan arose after conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh called Georgetown Law Student Sandra Fluke a "slut" and "prostitute" for her vocal support of the contraception mandate in Obamacare (Ceasar, Busch, and Pitney Jr. 2013). The idea gained traction as two Republican Senate candidates—Richard Mourdock in Indiana and Todd Akin in Missouri—made controversial remarks about rape and abortion. Democrats argued that Republican policies on contraception and abortion were oppressive and hurt women. Democrats eagerly sought to keep women's issues on the agenda (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney jr. 2013). In fact, Obama's Press Secretary Jen Psaki said "the more we're talking about women's issues, women's healthcare, the difference between the candidates, the better it is for us" (Sides and Vavreck 193).

Naturally, Republicans attempted to refute the Democratic claims. At the Republican convention, female party leaders such as Condolezza Rice, Senator Kelly Ayotte, and Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin all delivered highly visible speeches.

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1 The exception was Connecticut, where women preferred the victorious Democrat Chris Murphy but men were evenly split between Murphy and Republican challenger Linda McMahon.
Ann Romney made an explicit appeal to women, saying "It's the moms who have always had to work a little harder to make everything right. It's the mom's of this nation, single, married, widowed, who really hold the country together. We're the mothers. We're the wives. We're the grandmothers. We're the big sisters. We're the little sisters and we are the daughters...I love you, women!" (Ceaser, Bush and Pitney jr. 2013; "Transcript").

The net electoral effect of the "War on Women" controversy is unclear, especially in the Presidential election. During the campaign, Sides and Vavreck (2013) asked women about controversies relating to contraception. Surprisingly, women were actually less likely than their male counterparts to be aware of the controversies. The authors argue that "this does not suggest that women were particularly attentive to news about contraception." Further, Sides and Vavreck found that there was "no consistent relationship" between spikes in coverage and attitudes or vote intentions among women. They found this lack of relationship endured even in battleground states, where women were more likely to have seen ads discussing the issues. They did find a small bump for Obama in July, when Democrats were advertising on abortion, but that bump disappeared shortly after.

Ultimately Sides and Vavreck conclude that the "war on women" was "muted at best" in the Presidential election, but "none of this means that the controversies...were mistakes that the Republican Party can afford to repeat" (2013, 197). Referring specifically to Mourdock in Indiana and Akin in Missouri, they note: "these controversies may have cost the Republicans two Senate seats, after all." In
analyzing advertisements I will keep an eye to discussion of the war on women, and the unique role it may have played in the Indiana and Missouri races especially.

**METHODOLOGY**

I examined a random sample of 400 advertisements that aired during the 2012 primary and general Senate elections, from July 20, 2011 through November 5, 2012. I draw all of my advertisement data from the Wesleyan Media Project. The Wesleyan Media Project tracks the frequency, content and effectiveness of political advertising in federal and state elections (e.g. Fowler and Ridout 2010; Fowler and Ridout 2013). The Wesleyan Media Project receives ads from Kantar Media/Campaign Media Analysis Group including specific information on when and where the ads aired. Ads are then reviewed by coders who answer a variety of questions about the ads, ranging from the tone of the ad (promotional, attack, or contrasting two candidates) to recording every issue topic that was discussed in the ad.

I supplemented the Wesleyan Media Project data with my own coding. I recorded whether or not the advertisement featured someone speaking into the camera —hereon a "messenger"— for the explicit purpose of the advertisement.\(^2\) If an advertisement featured a messenger, I then coded their gender and the role in which they were acting. Drawing on the work of Fowler et al. (2014), messengers could be sorted exclusively into the following roles: candidates; family members of candidates; other politicians; non-politician experts, non-politician and non-expert celebrities;

\(^2\) That is, an ad with just a recording of a candidate giving a speech at an earlier date or a reporter from a news segment would not be coded as containing a messenger.
average-seeming people (whether hired actors or non-actors)—referred to hereon as "Average Joes"; and other messengers that fell into none of the former categories. 3

I next coded the ad for mentions of specific words or issues, and made a note if those issues or words were mentioned by a specific messenger or the voiceover or on-screen text. I noted if a messenger or voiceover/text mentioned a female-associated word, for example "woman," "girl", or "sister." I also coded for any mention of a family-associated word, for example "family, "child", or "parents." Because certain words like "mother," "daughter," or "wife," fall into both the female-associated and family-associated groupings, these categories are non-exclusive.

I did not consider voiceovers or on screen text as messengers, but the literature has offered some insight of the role that voice overs might play. Strach et al. (2015) show that "campaigns strategically choose the sex of the voiceover announcer in their ads and such decisions depend on candidate characteristics, the tone of the ad, and to a lesser extent, the gender stereotypes associated with the issue" (2). Though I do not study voice overs, my expectations regarding the role of messengers are consistent with this finding.

Because the Wesleyan Media Project issue codes do not include specific options for a variety of women's issues, I supplemented the coding for these issues as well. I recorded if an ad mentioned the economic status of women, domestic violence, pay equality, women's employment, parental leave, rape, child care, women's health, or contraception.

3 There were just four such messengers in the data.
EXPECTATIONS

I develop a set of hypotheses to test my theory of gender reputations and encroachment strategies. I begin by asking whether or not parties own gender territory. I then move to consider if Republicans are encroaching on Democrats’ feminine reputation by using female messengers as frames. Finally I consider how rhetoric about family might convey an appeal targeted at women. Taken together these hypotheses test whether parties strategically use campaign advertisements in a manner consistent with their gender reputations and a logic of gender encroachment.

Gender Territory

My first two hypotheses test whether or not the parties indeed "own" gender territory. In the previous chapter I argued that parties were gendered on numerous dimensions, including their treatment of women's issues (which follows too, from the findings of Sanbonmatsu 2002a and Wolbrecht 2000). Theories of issue ownership claim that parties will strategically emphasize the issues they own, and I form a parallel for parties and gender. If parties are indeed gendered institutions, then that should manifest in the way that they advertise. Specifically, I expect:

H3.1 — Democrats will discuss women's issues more than Republicans.

H3.2 — Democrats will make more frequent use of terms related to women than Republicans.

My first hypothesis (H3.1) is derivative of traditional theories of issue ownership, and is consistent with the notion that Democrats "own" women's issues. My second hypothesis (H3.2) concerns the words that advertisements use. Drawing
on Shogan's concept of "woman-invoked rhetoric" (2001, 129), I examine how and how advertisements use feminine words. As noted above, this includes words such as "girl" or "mother."

**Gender Encroachment**

My next set of hypotheses deals with how Republicans attempt to appear more feminine. In the previous chapter I argued that following Hayes’ framework for trait ownership, and drawing on psychology findings about the expectation gap, parties have more to gain by encroaching on one another's gender reputation than defending their own (2005). Further, this encroachment may be understood as a style of framing—parties framing issues, campaigns, or even themselves as gendered in a favorable manner.

In the following two hypotheses I test a specific kind of framing for evidence of gender encroachment: the use of messengers. Female messengers provide Republicans an opportunity to reach out to women and establish more credibility among women and hopefully, encroach upon Democrats status as the party of women. Petrocik pointed out that the characteristics of a messenger, including gender, may convey more or less ownership (1996). Strach et al (2015) find that Republicans were more likely to use female voiceovers in their ads, perhaps in part to "tone down the party's masculine image so as to appeal to a wider number of voters." (21). Without sacrificing their appeal to women through conservative stances on issues that drive the gender gap such as gun control or the role of government in the market, framing issues with a female messenger may allow Republican to cut into the strong
preference women have for the Democratic Party. Further, use of female non-
candidate messengers may help mask the gender elite imbalance in the Republican
party. In short, Republicans will use non-candidate female messengers to frame
themselves as a more feminine party. In this vein, my third hypothesis tests whether
or not Republicans are attempting to erode Democrat's feminine reputation through
strategic non-candidate messenger usage.

**H3.3—Republicans will make more frequent use of female non-candidate
messengers than male non-candidate messengers.**

This hypothesis tests specifically for non-candidate messengers because elite
gender imbalance between the parties means female candidate messengers will
naturally be more present in Democratic ads, biasing the results. Non-candidate
messengers, for example average-seeming women or a candidate's wife, offer
Republicans an attempt to appear as a more feminine party.

Due to the linkages between trait, gender, and issue reputation laid out in the
previous chapter (and discussed by Winter 2010, Hayes 2005, Starch et al. 2015, for
example), I expect that the degree of gender encroachment will be dependent on the
issue discussed in an ad. Parties seek to increase their appearance of competency and
credibility on those issues they do not own (Hayes 2005). One way they may achieve
this is by altering their gender reputation to reflect the gender that is perceived as
competent on that issue. If Democrats want to appear credible on defense issues, they
should attempt to appear more masculine. If Republicans want to appear more
credible on compassion issues like eldercare, they should attempt to appear more
feminine. Simply put, the degree to which parties engage in gender encroachment will be contingent on the gender of the issue they are dealing with. Specifically—

**H1.4—Republicans will use significantly more non-candidate female messengers on ads dealing with social welfare issues than Democrats.**

This hypothesis requires a delineation of issues that are feminine or masculine. There is substantial disagreement in the literature on how to define masculine or feminine issues (Strach et al. 2015). I refer to issues that are perceived as being better handled by men as "masculine" issues, and issues that are perceived as being better handled by women as "feminine" issues. Such a definition is consistent with a theory of issue ownership wherein issue reputations are dependent by which party is seen as being more competent at handling an issue (Petrocik 1996) I draw on Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) who find that women are seen as more competent on social welfare issues. This association arises from the fact that "typical female traits such as warmth, sensitivity, and compassion [are] thought to qualify female candidates for dealing better with compassion issues such as education, health care, and problems of the poor and aged" (140). The categorization of social welfare issues done by WMP is remarkably consistent with such a definition, including education issues, healthcare, medicare, social security, and welfare[^4].

[^4]: The categorization initially also included "Women's Health," as a social welfare issue, but I removed this issue, so as to remain independence from my supplemental women's issues category.
Family Rhetoric

I argue that Republicans may capitalize on their ownership of family values to encroach on women, whom are still associated with family in the political realm (Freeman 1993; Greenlee 2014). Further, there is evidence that motherhood, independent of other characteristics such as marital status, leads women to be more conservative on some issues (Greenlee 2014). Another family tie—marriage—is also strongly associated with more conservative political views (Plutzer and McBurnett 1991). Republicans may see advertising that frames policy issues in terms of the family as a way to remind women of these ties and compel a more conservative response. Establishing the link between Republicans, women and family rhetoric brings me to my final two hypotheses. First:

**H3.5**—Family-invoked rhetoric will be more frequent in ads run by Republicans than by Democrats.

Recall that family-invoked rhetoric is when an ad features a word such as "parent," or "children." Freeman found "family values" to be a prevalent theme for Republicans, and a way of signaling their divergence from the feminist values of the Democratic Party (1993). This hypothesis serves to confirm and update the assertion that Republicans disproportionately emphasize families.

Following Greenlee's (2014) claim that invoking the interests and concerns of mothers offers parties a viable strategies to reach out to female voters, I form my second hypothesis:

**H3.6**—Family-invoked rhetoric will be more common in ads that feature non-candidate female messengers.
If both of these hypotheses are confirmed, it suggests that framing political issues through the lens of the family may be a mechanism of gender encroachment for the Republican Party. These hypotheses argue that family is neither a party-neutral or gender-neutral concept in political advertisements. Rather familial rhetoric is invoked by Republicans and associated with women.

Taken together, my two sets of hypotheses (H3.1-H3.4 and H3.5/H3.6). convey a portrait of parties as gendered organizations that strategically maneuver to advertise across the gender gap. My first two hypotheses set out the assertion that parties have gender reputations. The last four hypotheses serve to deepen that assertion and develop a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms through which Republicans engage in encroachment. I look at encroachment through use of messenger-deployment in H3.3 and H3.4, and I consider encroachment through the use of the family-rhetoric in H3.5 and 31.6

DATA

Notes on the Sample

Of the initially randomly selected 400 ads, two were reported as having a technical problem in the WMP coding and had to be dropped, leaving 398 ads. I also dropped ads that were in Spanish and randomly selected replacements. Of those 398 ads, 39.20% (n=156) were run by Democrats, 59.55% (n=237) were run by Republicans and a remaining 1.26% (n=5) were run by other parties or groups/candidates affiliated with other parties.
Of those 398 ads, 56.53% were run by candidates themselves (n=225), 3.27% (n=13) were run by candidates and parties in conjunction, 30.9% (n=123) were run by outside groups, and 9.3% were run by the party (n=37). Breaking this down by party, the only notable difference is that Republican ads were more likely to be run by an outside group (35.86% relative to the Democrats 23.72%). Democrats accordingly ran slightly higher percentages of every other type of ad (candidate, party, or party and candidate sponsored).

The comprehensive Wesleyan Media Project data from the 2012 election offers a test of the representativeness of the sample. Of the 1,626 televised political ads run in U.S. Senate races in 2012, Republicans did in fact run slightly more unique ads (56.95% vs. Democrat's 41.57%). Throughout the 2012 election, Republican ads aired a cumulative 530,436, topping out Democrat's 411,131. With respect to the sponsors of the ads, 55.72% of ads were run by candidates, 2.71% were run by candidates and parties together, 8.49% were run by parties, and 33.09% were run by outside groups. Overall this suggests that the sample was fairly representative.

**Descriptive Characteristics of Advertisements**

All in all, 43.72% (n=174) ads had someone speaking into the camera—a messenger. Because some ads featured more than one messenger, however, the total number of messengers was 229. I found that 16% of ads (n=65) contained at least one Average Joe—this translated to a total of 98 average Joes. For comparison, 23.4% of ads featured a candidate speaking into the camera, and 2.76% featured family members of the candidate speaking in the ad.
In total, 9.55% of ads featured some discussion of a women's issue (n=38), and the vast majority of these featured discussion of women's health issues, for example breast cancer research (n=14), rape (n=11), and contraception (n=8). This represents a substantial portion of the issue discussion, topping out other issue categories such as social issues (like abortion and gun control), which were only discussed in 4.52% of ads; law and order issues which were only discussed in 2.01% of ads; defense issues (like veterans and Afghanistan) which were discussed in 8.29% of ads; and energy issues (including references to the environment or oil policy) which were discussed in 8.79% of ads. This confirms that women's issues were, in fact, an important point of discussion in the 2012 senate elections.

Perhaps not unsurprisingly, the majority of ads discussed economic issues in some way, 63.57%. This is consistent with Fowler and Ridout's (2013) findings that economic issues—in the Senate race specifically issues of taxation—were the most discussed issue in the 2012 election. Social welfare issues, such as education and social security and Medicare represented the next largest segment of ads. These issues were discussed in 44.22% of ads.

The instances of issue discussion were not distributed randomly between Republicans and Democrats. The most striking contrast arose in the economic issues category: 70.04% of Republican ads featured some discussion of economic issues, but only 46.79% of Democratic ads discussed economic issues.
Descriptive Characteristics of Messengers

Of these ads 17 featured five or more messengers (in each case all of whom were Average Joes). Ads with five or more messengers tend to devote very little screen time to each messenger, and they tend to act more as one unit, so following the precedent of Fowler et al. (2014), I grouped ads with five or more Average Joes together and coded simply as if it were one messenger.

Averages Joes were very slightly more likely to be women (51.85% vs. 48.15% men). Interestingly, ads with five or more Average Joes were split between those Joes being both men and women (70.59%) and being all women (29.41%). Not surprisingly since only 16 women ran in the 33 Senate races, the majority of candidate messengers were men. There were about three male candidates speaking into the camera for every one female candidate. Family members represented a relatively small portion of the messengers, but that segment skewed dramatically towards women. Finally other politicians that spoke in ads tended to be male. By party, Democrats were slightly more likely to use Average Joes, and candidates as messengers. Republicans on the other hand were more likely to use family members. The parties deployed other politicians as messengers at roughly similar rates.

FINDINGS

My first hypothesis deals with the assertion that parties have consistent gender reputations that shape their discourse in campaign ads. Specifically, I seek to test whether or not Democrats offered more frequent discussion of women's issues and more frequent use of woman-invoked rhetoric. Consistent with this hypothesis, a test
of proportions showed that Democratic ads are significantly more likely than Republican ads to feature discussion of women's issues (p=0.04). 13.46% of Democrat ads featured some discussion of a women's issue, almost twice as many as the 7.17% of Republican ads. Indeed, the majority of ads discussing women's issues in the race were run by Democrats.

Table 3.1 presents the results of a logistic regression model that tests H3.1 while controlling for the sponsor of the ad (with candidate-sponsored ads serving as the baseline), and the candidate gender. Column 1 of Table 1 gives the results of this model. The significance of Democratic-sponsorship disappears once candidate gender is accounted for. This is not inconsistent with the broad hypothesis that Democrats "own" women's territory, it simply suggests that the bulk of this effect comes from the fact that the Democratic Party have more female candidates and those candidates are more likely to discuss women's issues—as demonstrated by the high level of

| TABLE 3.1: Predictors of Discussion of a Woman's Issue in Advertisements |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
|                                 | (1) Coefficient | (2) Coefficient |
|                                 | p-value | p-value |                   |
| Democrat                        | 0.36    | 0.26    |                   |
|                                 | (p=0.34) | (p=0.58) |                   |
| Party ad                        | 0.14    | 0.33    |                   |
|                                 | (p=0.81) | (p=0.64) |                   |
| Coordinate ad                   | -0.14   | -0.42   |                   |
|                                 | (p=0.90) | (p=0.64) |                   |
| Outside group ad                | 0.38    | 0.25    |                   |
|                                 | (p=0.36) | (p=0.59) |                   |
| Female Candidate                | 0.79    | 0.81    |                   |
|                                 | (p=0.04) | (p=0.08) |                   |
| War on Women race               | 1.34    |        |                   |
|                                 | (p<0.01) |         |                   |
significance associated by an ad being run by a female candidate. Column 2 of Table 3.1 shows the effect of including a "War on Women" dummy variable in the model. This variable was positive in those races where the "War on Women" theme was especially prevalent—Indiana and Missouri. In this second model the effect of party sponsor was further diminished. This suggests that some of the initial effect found in the first test was due to the unique role of women's issues in Missouri and Indiana races.

![Women's Issues and Women Rhetoric in Ads](image)

**Fig. 3.2** Women's Issue and Women's Rhetoric in advertisements. The vertical axis indicates the percent of ads that mention either woman-invoked rhetoric or women's issues, respectively. *Source: Wesleyan Media Project.*
As to **H1.2** I found that Democrats do use woman-invoked rhetoric at a slightly higher rate than Republicans, but that difference was not significant in a test of proportions. Some form of woman-invoked rhetoric was present in 5.4% of Republican ads and 8.3% of Democrat ads. The coincidence of woman-invoked rhetoric and women's issues occurred at different rates between the two parties, as shown in Figure 3.2. Republicans were more likely to use woman-invoked rhetoric on ads that did not discuss women's issues—61.54% of all woman-invoked rhetoric in Republican ads was on such non-women's issues ads. On the other hand Democrats were more likely to use woman-invoked rhetoric on ads that did feature discussion of women's issues—69.23% of woman-invoked rhetoric run by Democrats was on ads that also featured some discussion of women's issues.

My third hypothesis (**H1.3**) tested gender encroachment through the deployment of female messengers. I expected that, in an attempt to appear more woman-friendly to compensate for their lack of female elites, Republicans would use more female non-candidate messengers than male non-candidate messengers. In a test of proportions I found that Republicans ads were more likely to feature female non-candidate messengers (13.1% of ads) than male non-candidate messengers (10.54% of ads), but the difference was not significantly different. When the test was restricted to Average Joe messengers, however, a significant difference was found—Republicans featured female average-seeming messengers in 9.7% of ads and male average-seeming messengers in just 3.8% of ads (p=0.01). No significant difference between the rates of non-candidate or average-seeming male and female messengers was found in Democrat-run ads. In fact, Democrats were slightly more likely to
run ads featuring male non-candidate messengers than female non-candidate messengers.

The next gender encroachment hypothesis (H3.4) also dealt with the deployment of messengers as potential framing tools. I expected that Republicans deploy more female non-candidate messengers on social welfare issues than Democrats. A test of proportions showed that Republicans used non-candidate female messengers on 8.9% of ads featuring a
discussion of social welfare issues. This was more than twice as many 4.2% of Democrat-run ads that featured both a female non-candidate messengers and a
discussion of social welfare issues (p=0.07).

I next tested this hypothesis in a logistic regression, controlling for the
presence of non-candidate messengers, party sponsorship, candidate gender, issue
type, as well as interactions between each issue type and party sponsorship (Table
3.2). The main variable of interest, the interaction between democratic sponsorship
and social welfare issue is correctly signed as negative but just misses conventional
values of statistical significance (p=0.104 two-tailed, though 0.05 one-tailed). I
generated predicted probabilities for the model, finding that social welfare ads run by
democrats have a 4.9% chance of featuring a non-candidate female messenger while
social welfare ads run by Republicans have a 14.6% chance of featuring a non-
candidate female messenger, controlling for all the variables previously listed.

The final two hypotheses consider how family rhetoric interacted with
partisan and gender variables. H3.5 suggested that Republicans would use more
family-invoked rhetoric than Democrats. A test of proportions showed that ads run by
Republicans did invoke family words at a significantly higher rate than Democrats
(p= 0.053). Still, family-invoked rhetoric was common in ads run by both parties.
Republicans used family words in 29.96% of ads while Democrats used them in just
21.15% of all ads.

The final hypothesis (H3.6) was that ads featuring female non-candidate
messengers would be more likely to feature family invoked-rhetoric than their male
counterparts. I found that 59.18% of those ads featuring non-candidate female
messengers used family invoked rhetoric vs. just 17.14% of those ads with only non-candidate male messengers. This difference was significant (p < 0.001).

I tested both hypotheses H3.5 and H3.6 in a logistic regression framework, controlling for sponsor type, issue content, and presence of a male non-candidate messenger as well (Table 3.3). Party sponsorship was no longer significant, but non-candidate female messenger remained highly significant. I then generated predicted probabilities, controlling for all of the variables listed above. Ads not featuring a non-candidate female messenger had a 21.3% chance of featuring family-invoked rhetoric, while ads featuring a non-candidate female messenger had a 67.3% chance of featuring family-invoked rhetoric.

**Table 3.3: Predictors of Family-invoked rhetoric in Advertisements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coefficient (p-value)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-0.47 (p=0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ad</td>
<td>-0.90 (p=0.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate ad</td>
<td>-1.67 (p=0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside group ad</td>
<td>-0.13 (p=0.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Gender</td>
<td>0.48 (p=0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-candidate female messenger</td>
<td>2.18 (p&lt;0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-candidate male messenger</td>
<td>-0.57 (p=0.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's issue</td>
<td>-1.01 (p=0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Issue</td>
<td>0.36 (p=0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare Issue</td>
<td>-0.09 (p=0.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense Issue</td>
<td>-0.13 (p=0.77)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

I found support for my primary gender territory hypothesis: Democrats discuss women's issues more. Interestingly, my second gender territory hypothesis was not supported: I failed to reject the null hypothesis that Republicans and Democrats used woman-invoked rhetoric at the same rate. In this chapter I focused on messengers-as-frames and family rhetoric as an appeal to women, but this initial finding suggests woman-invoked rhetoric may be a prevalent framing tool in advertisements as well. The imbalance between the finding that Democrats do own women's issues but do not own woman-invoked rhetoric suggests encroachment may be occurring as Republicans rhetorically framed a broader array of issues in terms of women. The finding that Republicans are more likely to use woman-invoked rhetoric in an ad not dealing with a women's issue supports this. Republicans are rhetorically engaging with women in advertisements, they are just doing so less in ads dealing with convention women's issues and more in ads dealing with other issues.

Hypotheses three and four, which dealt with messengers as framing tools came back with more mixed results. Republicans did not use significantly more non-candidate female messengers than non-candidate males, but they did use significantly more Average Joe female messengers than Average Joe males. Average-seeming messengers may play a distinct role in political advertisements, and have been found to be effective in persuading viewers (Fowler et al. 2014). Republicans’ disproportionate deployment of female Average Joes may signal a strategic calculus that reflects the persuasive power of these messengers.
**H3.4** was concerned with a cross-party comparison on gendered messenger usage. Though Republicans used more female non-candidate messengers on social welfare ads than Democrats did, the results were inconclusive once other controls were included. A significant finding here would suggest that parties are attuned to their gender reputations, the gender stereotypes associated with various issues, and seek to align these two factors; Republicans seek to appear more feminine on "feminine" issues, Democrats seek to appear more masculine on "masculine" issues. The weakness of these results suggests that while such gender-driven calculus does play a role in ad maker's choice of messengers, it may at times be overpowered by other factors. Further research on gender representations in campaign advertisements could explore this by examining a larger set of ads (for example every ad that aired in 2012), or by looking at ads across races and years. This initial finding suggests that a larger pattern may emerge.

One final way Republicans may attempt to appeal to women was through the family. Greenlee (2014) argues that both parties frame political issues in terms of motherhood as a means to gain women's support, but I found that this association did exhibit a partisan dimension. In a test of proportions Republicans were shown to use more family-invoked rhetoric than Democrats. Once other characteristics about the ad were controlled for, however, the effect disappeared. Women's issue ads were less likely to feature family-invoked rhetoric, suggesting Democrats' lower level of family-invoked rhetoric may be attributable to their higher levels of women's issue ads. This raises the question of why women's issue ads tend to have less family-invoked rhetoric.
The finding that family-invoked rhetoric was significantly more common in ads with female messengers confirms Greenlee's argument; the finding that family-invoked rhetoric was significantly more common in ads run by Republicans and their allies suggests a partisan nature of family appeals to women. These two hypotheses support the notion that appealing to women through their role in the family may be a mechanism for Republicans to traverse the gender gap. Considering the fact that married women prefer Republicans to Democrats generally—a trend that held up in 2012—this strategy may amount to Republicans bolstering their persuasion among those women already most likely to support them (Plutzer and McBurnett 1991; Zengerle 2012).

**Potential Concerns**

The fact that women's issues (specifically rape and contraception) loomed large in the 2012 Senate race can be viewed as both a benefit and a drawback for this analysis. On the one hand it likely increased the discussion of women's issues and women in these advertisements, increasing my ability to test and making clear how candidates discuss women's issues when they may be especially decisive factors in race. Because women's issues were elevated in their importance for this election politicians may have felt higher levels of pressure to deliver the most credible, and most persuasive messages with respect to these issues.

But the fact that 2012 Senate election was unique with respect to women's issues means that the external validity of these results may lowered. Whether or not these findings are generalizable to other elections depends on whether or not the unique importance of women's issues in 2012 changed just the quantity of
advertisements run regarding women or the ways in which those advertisements functioned. Further, it's worth asking if 2012 advertisements did feature different dynamics with respect to the use of female messengers or coverage of women's issues, did that represent a one time departure from advertising about and to and with women, or a permanent shift? Either way, this study would be improved by comparing advertisements from other years. In my next chapter I will seek to contextualize the election of the 2012 election by looking at 2004 and 2008 as well, however shifting focus from campaign advertisements to convention speeches and platforms.

**CONCLUSION**

The findings about use of messengers and rhetoric in advertisements suggest that the parties are attempting to act strategically with respect to their gendered reputations. The Republican Party and Democratic Party are both constrained by "policy demanders" (Bawn et al. 2012) from pursuing policies that might infringe on their respective masculine or feminine images. Thus they seek to strategically alter their party images through framing. Specifically, Republicans attempt to broaden the "women's issue" agenda by focusing woman-invoked rhetoric on ads that do not fall in the traditional domain of "women's issues"; they strategically deploy non-candidate and average-seeming messengers to cultivate a more feminine image and compensate for their low number of female elites; and they use family-invoked rhetoric to appeal to women through their role in the family. This analysis looked at brief but "ubiquitous" persuasive political speech in the form of campaign advertisement
(Fowler and Ridout 2013). I now move to consider how parties treat gender in elite rhetoric and policy stances in a completely different environment: the party convention.
CHAPTER FOUR
GENDERED RHETORIC AND POLICY AT THE CONVENTION

In 1897 J. Ellen Foster became the first woman to address a national party convention. She appeared at the Republican National Convention on behalf of William McKinley. Writing later, a Republican Newspaper, the Rock Springs Miner, commented on the speech, stating that McKinley was "the embodiment of Americanism, and wears the white flower of a blameless life. Is it any wonder women support such a party and such a man?" (Edwards 2000). The role of women at party conventions, as in political life more broadly, has grown and changed dramatically since that time, but some of the ramifications of Foster's speech have endured. The Rock Springs Miner, in drawing a connection between Foster's gender and the Republicans allotted the Republican Party some feminine gender territory.

In this chapter I consider how parties establish, encroach, and defend their gender territory in a highly partisan arena—the national convention. I begin by explaining how convention speeches and platforms allow for an examination of gender policy and rhetoric, and how this differs from the previous chapter's exploration of advertisements. I hypothesize that the platforms and convention speeches will show evidence of Democratic ownership of feminine gender territory, Republican attempts at encroachment, and party-specific styles of identity politics. To test my hypotheses I conduct a detailed content analysis from three conventions: 2004, 2008, 2012. For each year I look at both parties' platforms and a sample of speeches assessing the types of women's issues they cover and the framing of those issues as well as other references to womanhood and motherhood. I conclude by
returning to a discussion of my hypotheses and some broader implications from my findings.

**CONVENTIONS AND PARTISAN PRESSURE**

The previous chapter examined how parties strategically use campaign advertising to encroach on one another's gender territory. I found evidence of such tactics, for example Republicans using woman-invoked rhetoric on ads dealing with issues not traditionally conceived of as especially relevant to women. In this chapter I will seek to understand if similar mechanisms of gender ownership and encroachment are in play at party conventions and in party platforms.

Studying convention speeches and platforms offer a complementary but distinct focus from examining advertisements. Advertisements must condense a discussion of an issue into 30-second or 1-minute clips to be broadcast to a large and diverse audience. On the other hand, platforms, which are voted on at the convention, are lengthier and tend to be directed at party activists, interests groups, and elites within the party (Dwoskin 2012; Wolbrecht 2000). Like platforms, convention speeches are directed towards a more intraparty audience, but higher profile speeches may be widely broadcast and therefore reach a broader audience.

Conventions, including their associated platforms, are highly events relevant for party activists that "have remained important as the centers of debate over the parties' policy positions and as the focus of demands by party constituencies" (Wolbrecht 2000, 24). To use Aldrich's (2001) phrasing, conventions are nuclei of centrifugal forces—those polarizing pressures created by party activists and policy
demanders who push the party away from a median voter and towards a bimodal
distribution of policies. Conventions offer an opportunity to understand issue stances,
frame deployment, and the navigation of gender territory on a party's home turf.

Platforms

Platforms reflect the policy preferences of parties, and what candidates tend to
support when in office (Wolbrecht 2000). They offer a space to tout the
accomplishments of the party or candidate, and indicate the priorities and policies
they will pursue if elected. Further, platforms tend to "reflect and affect the pace,
direction, winner, and meaning of the race" (Pomper and Lederman 1980, 153). That
is, they do not just indicate the policy positions of each party, but also the "meaning"
of those positions—in short, how the race and the issues at question in the race are
framed. In looking over the platforms from 2004, 2008, and 2012, I will seek to
understand how party's have framed their stance on issues (both conventional
women's issues and other issues) in terms of gender, and in doing so, how they have
established and altered their own gendered reputation.

Speeches

The purpose of the convention speech falls somewhere in the middle of the
platform and advertisements. It is more visible than the platform, but less so than
advertisements. It represents more of an outreach effort to undecided and
independent voters than the platform, but unlike advertisements, speeches are given
to an audience of partisan supporters. Convention speeches vary a great deal from
one another. The presidential nomination acceptance speeches tend to be longer and
deal with many more issues and personal anecdotes than some lower level speeches.
My sample of speeches ranged from under 500 words (Michelle Bachmann in 2008)
to over 5000 (several of the presidential nominee's speeches). Though the
presidential nominee may be the most visible, all speakers at convention have some
opportunity to "frame debate....and represent the parties issue positions to the public"
(Wolbrecht 2000, 23).

METHODOLOGY

I analyzed both Democrats and Republican platforms for 2004, 2008, and
2012. There was some repeated text between each year, usually on very specific
policy issues, but the majority of the platform for a given year was original.

When analyzing the platform I looked specifically at issue positioning,
salience, and framing5. Issue positioning includes whether a party discussed their
stance on a gender issue and what that stance was. A gender issue included things
like pay equality or abortion. I also examined broader issues that were explicitly
related to women, such as the promotion of women-owned businesses. In examining
salience I noted how much attention was devoted to that issue, for example if an
issue have its own section of the platform or was it mentioned only in passing. To
develop a quantitative understanding of gender issue salience, I followed the method
of Sanbonmatsu (2000a) and evaluated each platform for the percent of paragraphs
discussing women's issues or connecting women explicitly to a certain issue. Finally,

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5 I adapt this method of content analysis from Sanbonmatsu (2002a), who examines speeches for their
attention, direction, framing, and importance conveyed on gender issues.
for framing I noted whether an issue was discussed in a gendered manner. For example, abortion might be discussed in terms of women's rights or the protection of unborn children. On the other hand issues not traditionally depicted as women's issues may be framed in terms of women's interests.

In addition to each party's platform, I coded five speeches for each convention in 2004, 2008, and 2012—30 speeches in total. I sought to get a degree of gender diversity in my speeches, so my sample was not randomly representative of the convention as a whole. Those five speakers included the presidential nominee, the vice presidential nominee, the wife of the presidential nominee, the keynote speaker and one female elite who was not related to either the president or vice presidential nominee. The first four categories of speeches were pre-determined, but for the female elite I had to use some discretion in picking a speaker.

To chose the female elite I turned towards major media viewer guides for each convention that highlighted key speakers. No media source consistently ran a viewer guide identifying key speeches in each year, so I used the Washington Post in 2004, CNN in 2008 and the New York Times in 2012.

In 2004 the Washington Post ran a guide to key speeches for both conventions ("2004 Democratic" 2004; "2004 Republican" 2004). Among those speeches that the Washington Post featured on their website for the RNC, just two were from women: one by North Carolina Senator Elizabeth Dole, and one by Labor Secretary Elaine Chao. Because she was serving in an elected position, I chose to evaluate Elizabeth Dole's speech. For Democrats the Washington Post featured then-Senator Hilary Clinton and Washington D.C. Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton.
Because Norton's speech was added to appease the D.C. delegation who "threatened to nominate Norton as vice president in an effort to draw attention to the District's lack of a vote in Congress" and her speech entirely focused on that issue, I chose Clinton's speech as a more representative example.

In 2008 CNN's viewer guide identified Hilary Clinton as the lone female headline speaker for Democrats ("2008" 2008). For Republicans they identified just two female speakers: Representative Michele Bachmann and former CEO of Hewlett-Packard Co. Carly Fiorina. Again, to keep the focus on elected officials, I chose to evaluate Bachmann's speech.

Finally, in 2012 the New York Times website ran a list of 9 (for Democrats) or 11 (for Republicans) key speakers to watch ("Key" 2014). On each list there was only one woman who was not a nominee's wife—Senator Elizabeth Warren for Democrats and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for Republicans.

As with my analysis of platforms I analyzed the issue positioning, salience, and frames used by speakers of both parties. Compared to the technical language of platforms, speeches were more likely to feature personal stories—both the speaker's own and those of people they had encountered. With an eye to my analysis of identity claims, I noted how speakers invoked their own past and experiences to see if they were making an identity-based claim of credibility, and if so, contingent on what identity and in what language.

**EXPECTATIONS**

In her 2005 analysis of partisan attention to women's issues, Sambonmatsu specifically analyzed "gender related pledges" in party platforms (102). She found
that the Democratic platform tended to pay twice as much attention to gender issues, controlling for platform length (99). Still, for both parties gender issues have remained largely "peripheral" (127). This is consistent with Winter's (2010) understanding of the Democratic party as being more associated with women, or in the language I have used earlier, "owning" a female territory. From these findings and my theory of gender ownership I develop my first hypothesis:

**H4.1: I expect that Democrats will discuss women's issues more in their platforms and speeches than Republicans.**

The evidence for this hypothesis comes mostly from platforms because this is where parties spell out the majority of their policy pledges. Still speeches, which are more constrained by time, offer an insight into what parties view as particularly salient policy points, so I will pay attention to what issues are noted in both.

My first hypothesis dealt with issues of gender ownership. My next looks at how parties may attempt to encroach on one another's gender territory. Though I expect that Democrats will talk more about women's issues, I expect that Republicans will seek to broaden the "women's issue agenda" in a way that connects a wider range of Republican policy proposals to women's interests. Republicans and Democrats will not accept the same issues as "women's issues," but rather each party will seek to frame their own accomplishments in terms of the positive impact they have had on women. Specifically,

**H2: I expect that Republicans will discuss women in speeches more often than in platforms, and connect women to a broader range of policies.**
I form this expectations for two reasons. As discussed in the second chapter, Hayes (2005) suggested that parties stand to gain more from eroding one another's trait ownership than simply maintaining their own, and I argue that the same logic applies to gender ownership. For that reason, the Republicans stand to gain more by framing their own policy actions as consistent with women's interests than defending their monopoly on male territory.

Second, because these speeches and platforms are presented largely to an audience of party activists, interest groups and elites, the parties are especially constrained on the policy stances they can take. Whereas in a Senate or House race a moderate Republican candidate might say that they have broken with their party on issues such as abortion\(^6\), there is no such flexibility at the national level. Instead, partisan centrifugal forces outweigh Downsian centripetal ones. For Republicans those partisan stances tend to be less popular with women, as evidenced by the gender gap. Thus, Republicans will seek to reframe their issue stances as being consistent with women's interests. Reframing might also feature the use of personal stories or anecdotes to appeal to women.

This gender encroachment hypothesis expects that Republicans will attempt to establish a more feminine party image through rhetoric. To see how rhetoric, as opposed to policy pledges, may be used as a mechanism for encroachment, this hypothesis considers the degree to which woman-invoked rhetoric is present in the party platform or convention speeches. Concrete policy proposals are typically stated in the platform, whereas speeches tend to remain more abstract. If a party offers

\(^6\) And indeed this was a common tactic in 2012 races featuring Republicans running in Democrat-leaning states, such as the Senate races in Connecticut and Massachusetts.
relatively less discussion of women in their platform than in their speeches, I take that to be a sign of gender encroachment, as the party seeks to rhetorically appeal to women without taking strong stances on women's issues. Note that this hypothesis is consistent with my finding in the previous chapter (the results of H3.2) that found that Republicans invoked women at similar rates to Democrats despite running significantly fewer ads dealing with women's issues.

My third and final hypothesis deals specifically with convention speakers. I am interested in how identity claims, and the language of descriptive representation come into play in speeches delivered by women. Following Mansbridge (1999), Pearson and Dancey (2011) and Shogan (2001), I predict that female speakers from both parties will engage in some form of identity claims, such as describing their unique perspective on policies as women.

Schreiber (2008) details the fraught relationship that Republican women groups have with identity politics. On the one hand, groups like Conservative Women for America are organized on the premise of gender, so they necessarily claim to speak as women and for women. On the other hand, Republicans tend to reject identity politics. In eschewing identity politics on the basis of womanhood, they have historically opted into politics on the basis of motherhood.

Republicans have a long history combatting feminism with an emphasis on "family values" (Freeman 1993). Both parties frequently refer to family and its role in American political life, but Republicans resort to family rhetoric especially often. For example in the previous chapter I found that they were more significantly more likely to use family-invoked rhetoric in campaign advertisements than Democrats.
Eschewing woman-based identity claims in favor of motherhood-based ones is consistent with this attention to family-invoked rhetoric.

**H3: Democratic female speakers will be more likely to make identity claims on their role as women, whereas Republican female speakers will be more likely to make identity claims on their roles as mothers.**

**FINDINGS**

*Analysis of Platforms*

In the 2004 election national security was highly salient in both parties platforms. For the Democrats this meant women's issues remained quite peripheral, with the first mention of any women's issue not appearing until two-thirds into the platform. Though Democrats discussed childcare, women's healthcare, pay equality, and other women's issue, none of these topics were was discussed at great length. Abortion was framed as an issue of the "privacy and equality of women." See Table 4.1 for a list of Democratic comments on women and women's issues in the 2004 platform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.1: Democratic Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare and Eldercare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prenatal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Care  | prenatal care
---|---
**Women's Health**  | "We will also work to ensure that women have access to the best medicines and state-of-the-art prevention and detection techniques to stop diseases early."
| Yes | No
**Title IX**  | "We will restore vigorous federal enforcement of our civil rights laws…Title IX"
| Yes | Yes
**Pay Equality**  | "...we need stronger equal pay laws and stronger enforcement of them."
| Yes | Yes
**Abortion**  | "Because we believe in the privacy and equality of women, we stand proudly for a woman's right to choose, consistent with Roe v. Wade, and regardless of her ability to pay."
| Yes | Yes

<p>| TABLE 4.2: Republican Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2004 |
|---|---|---|---|
| <strong>Issue</strong> | <strong>Quote</strong> | <strong>Framed in terms of gender?</strong> | <strong>Specific Policy Pledge?</strong> |
| Women in the Middle East | &quot;Schooling was denied to girls. Women were whipped and executed in public.&quot; | Yes | No |
| | &quot;...champions opportunity for all people of the region, especially women and youth.&quot; | Yes | Yes |
| Women in the Military | &quot;We support the advancement of women in the military, support their exemption from ground combat units...&quot; | Yes | Yes |
| Abortion | &quot;For that reason, we support protecting the rights of families in international programs and oppose funding organizations involved in abortion.&quot; | No | Yes |
| | &quot;We do not end some lives for the medical benefit of others.&quot; | No | Yes |
| | Partial Birth Abortion is a &quot;brutal and violent practice&quot; | No | Yes |
| Human Trafficking | &quot;...it is believed that more than 80 percent are women and girls, and that 70 percent of them were forced into sexual servitude.&quot; | Yes | Yes |
| Women in Africa | &quot;This important initiative will provide teacher training, textbooks, and scholarships for girls to improve primary education on the continent.&quot; | Yes | Yes |
| Small Businesses | &quot;Small businesses have been the primary vehicles of economic advance for American women.&quot; | Yes | No |
| Lawsuit Reform | &quot;The most dangerous result of this is | Yes | No |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women's Health</td>
<td>Women are &quot;underrepresented in medical research&quot;; We will aid in &quot;aggressively developing healthcare initiatives, disease management, prevention, screening initiatives.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Health</td>
<td>&quot;The elderly, the majority of whom are women&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>&quot;...measures they have taken to protect pregnant women from violent crime by passing Laci and Conner's law&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>&quot;The Republican Party favors aggressive, proactive measures to ensure that no individual is discriminated against on the basis of...gender...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX</td>
<td>&quot;We support a reasonable approach to Title IX that seeks to expand opportunities for women without adversely affecting men's athletics.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>&quot;We recognize the unique and special vulnerability of women and girls to HIV infection from abusive and coercive behavior beyond their control...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>&quot;This is especially important for single women and mothers, who continue to rely on welfare and fear that they cannot find a job or enter a training program because they need to care for their children.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Support</td>
<td>&quot;Responsible Fatherhood&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraception/Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;We oppose school-based clinics that provide referrals, counseling, and related services for contraception and abortion.&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Flexibility</td>
<td>&quot;More flexibility in the workplace will help Americans to better manage the demands of work and family.&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In contradiction to my first hypothesis, relative to the Democratic platform the Republican platform offered a lengthy discussion of a variety of women's issues. Figure 4.1 offers an overview of how much parties focused on women's issue in each year's platform by the percent of paragraph with a mention of a women's issue. The improved status of women in the Middle East was a highly salient point. This issue was discussed both in general terms and in reference to specific policies, for example the Middle East Partnership Initiative. A test of my second hypothesis—that Republicans would bring "new" women's issues into their platform—relies on a diversity of issues. This platform certainly suggests a very diverse array of issues, as Table 4.2 shows.

Fig. 4.1 Percent of Paragraphs in Platform Discussing women's issues, 2004-2012
The Democratic platform in 2008 paid significantly more attention to women's issues than in 2004. Further, in line with H2.1, these points tended to be accorded a high degree of salience: the 2008 platform included an entire subsection devoted to "Opportunities for Women," which featured a discussion on a laundry list of feminist policy points such as contraception availability and Title IX. In accordance with my first hypothesis about Democrats owning women's gender territory, Democrats explicitly identify themselves as the party of female elites, noting that they have "produced more women Governors, Senators and Members of Congress" than any other party. Further, the Democratic platform extends beyond just traditional feminist points and does address a broader range of issues. For example, Democrats frame poverty, the minimum wage, small businesses, and the status of women in the Middle East as women's issues.

<p>| <strong>TABLE 4.3: Democratic Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2008</strong> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <strong>Issue</strong>                   | <strong>Quote</strong>                   | <strong>Framed in terms of gender?</strong> | <strong>Specific Policy Pledge?</strong> |
| Work/Family Balance         | &quot;They are working longer hours than ever, while at the same time having to meet a new and growing set of caregiving responsibilities.&quot; | No                          | No                          |
| Women's Health              | &quot;We must end health care disparities among...women.&quot; | Yes                         | Yes                         |
| Contraception               | &quot;We oppose the current Administration's consistent attempts to undermine a woman's ability to make her own life choices and obtain reproductive health care, including birth control&quot; | Yes                         | No                          |
| Rape                        | &quot;provide compassionate care to rape victims&quot; | No                          | No                          |
| Family Leave                | &quot;We will expand the Family and Medical Leave Act...and we will encourage employers to provide flexible work arrangements.&quot; | No                          | Yes                         |
| Childcare/Early Childhood   | &quot;We will expand the childcare tax credit&quot; | No                          | Yes                         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of gender?</th>
<th>Specific Policy Pledge?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>&quot;...provide every child access to quality, affordable early childhood education&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We will double funding for afterschool and summer learning opportunities for children&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>&quot;The majority of adults in poverty are women&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay Equality</td>
<td>&quot;...to combat poverty we must work for fair pay...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatherhood</td>
<td>&quot;Too many fathers are missing...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite Representation</td>
<td>&quot;We, the Democratic Party, are the party that has produced more women Governors, Senators, and Members of Congress than any other. &quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Businesses</td>
<td>&quot;We will invest in women-owned small businesses and remove the capital gains tax on startup&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>&quot;Demeaning portrayals of women cheapen our debates...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage</td>
<td>&quot;we recognize that women are the majority of adults who make the minimum wage&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the Middle East</td>
<td>&quot;we will help Afghans educate their children, including their girls...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Rights Amendment</td>
<td>&quot;We reaffirm our support for the Equal Rights Amendment&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX</td>
<td>&quot;recommit to enforcing Title IX&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United Nations</td>
<td>&quot;will urge passage of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in STEM</td>
<td>&quot;We will support women in math and sciences&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4.4: Republican Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2008**
"We must protect girls from exploitation and statutory rape through a parental notification requirement."

| Women in Developing Countries | "Maternal and child health...must be priorities." | Yes | No |
| Women in the Middle East | "From Morocco to the Gulf States, the overall trend has been toward cooperation and social and economic development, especially with regard to the rights of women." | Yes | No |
| Childcare | "69 separate programs, administered by 10 different agencies provide education or care to children under the age of 5." | No | No |
| Workforce Flexibility | "For increasing numbers of workers, especially those with children, the choice of working from home will be good for families, profitable for business, and energy efficient." | Yes | Yes |
| Contraception | "We fully support parental rights to consent" | Yes | Yes |
| Rape | "mandatory sentencing provisions" | No | Yes |

The 2008 Republican platform reiterates the major theme of 2004: Republican policies were responsible for the liberation of women in the Middle East (Table 4.4). Again, this reframing of middle east politics as a women's issue represents an attempt at gender encroachment, offering evidence for H2.2. Still, the Republican platform offers considerably less discussion of most women's issues than in 2004. The notable exception is abortion, which Republicans frame alternately as an issue of unborn life, and women's health, stating "we must protect girls from exploitation and statutory rape through a parental notification requirement."

In 2012 the Democratic platform featured a lengthy discussion of many women's issues. Further it framed many of the administration's major accomplishments, such as Obamacare, in terms of the impact they had on women. The Democratic platform devoted three distinct sub-sections to women. The first
began by saying "Barack Obama—the son of a single mother and the father of two daughters—understands that women aren't a special interest group. They are more than half of this country...". Consistent with H4.1, Democrats spoke assuredly about their pro-feminist stance on issues such as Title IX, the Equal Rights Amendment, violence against women, and many other issues relating to women. As in 2008, a comparison of the Republican and Democratic platforms in 2012 confirms H4.1: Democrats possess ownership of women's policy issues and are therefore more interested in discussing them.

| TABLE 4.5: Democratic Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2012 |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Issue           | Quote                                      | Framed in terms of gender? | Specific Policy Pledge? |
| Healthcare      | "Insurance companies will no longer be able to...charge women more simply because of their gender" | Yes | Yes |
|                 | "That’s why the Affordable Care Act especially helps women by guaranteeing they and their families won’t become uninsured when they lose their jobs." | Yes | Yes |
|                 | "...strengthened Medicare and Medicaid for millions of women and families." | Yes | Yes |
| Contraception   | "FDA-approved contraception with no out of pocket costs" | Yes | Yes |
| Pay Equality    | "Lilly Ledbetter", "Paycheck Fairness Act" | Yes | Yes |
| Child Tax Credit| "expanded the child tax credit" | No | Yes |
| Workplace Flexibility | "We believe that all parents and caregivers – regardless of gender – need more flexibility and support in the workplace." | Yes | Yes |
| Fatherhood      | "...worked to help deployed dads connect with their children..." | Yes | No |
| Equal Rights Amendment | "...we reaffirm our support for the Equal Rights Amendment..." | No | Yes |
| Title IX        | "...recommit to enforcing Title IX..." | No | Yes |
| United Nations  | "...urge ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women." | Yes | Yes |
| Discrimination  | "Equal Opportunity Commission" | Yes | Yes |
|                 | "pregnancy discrimination" | Yes | Yes |
| Violence Against Women | "...we are committed to ending violence against women." | Yes | Yes |
The 2012 Republican platform spoke comparatively less about women's issues, though it did offer a lengthy discussion of abortion. On average in 2004, 2008, and 2012 Democratic platforms did give more consideration to women's issues.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of gender?</th>
<th>Specific Policy Pledge?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planned Parenthood</td>
<td>&quot;...stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers...&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>&quot;...have reached a 40 year low&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Abroad</td>
<td>&quot;... the critical importance of expanding protections and opportunities for women and girls around the world.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>&quot;The administration is also committed to taking action at home to fight trafficking, including the sex trafficking of young girls.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TABLE 4.6: Republican Platform Women's Issue Discussion, 2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Framed in terms of gender?</td>
<td>Specific Policy Pledge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;unborn child&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Sex selective abortion is &quot;gender discrimination in its most lethal form&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;protect young girls from exploitation through parental consent requirements&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Numerous studies have shown that abortion endangers the health and wellbeing of women, and we stand firmly against it.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Should not be a component of foreign aid&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraception</td>
<td>&quot;Faith-based organizations should not have to pay for these&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Abortion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>&quot;every participant receives the amount of care they need at the time they need it, whether for an expectant mother and her baby...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Structure</td>
<td>&quot;We recognize and honor the courageous efforts of those who bear the many burdens of parenting alone, even as we believe that marriage, the union of one man and one woman must be upheld as the national standard, a goal to stand for, encourage, and promote through laws governing marriage&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>&quot;Mandatory sentencing provisions&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the Military</td>
<td>&quot;We support the advancement of women in the military&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>&quot;shall reject agreements whose long-range impact on the American family is ominous or unclear. These include the U.N. Convention on Women's Rights...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2012 Republican platform spoke comparatively less about women's issues, though it did offer a lengthy discussion of abortion. On average in 2004, 2008, and 2012 Democratic platforms did give more consideration to women's issues.
than Republican platforms did. In total across the three years 6.12% of paragraphs in Democratic platforms featured discussion of women's issues, whereas 5.24% of paragraphs in Republican platforms featured such discussion. This difference seems small, but the range of percentages was quite small to begin with—the maximum amount of discussion of women's issues in any platform in the sample was just 8.06% of paragraphs.

Analysis of Speeches

A major rhetorical theme for the 2004 Democratic campaign was connecting "family values" to policies that "value families." Such language was present in both Kerry and Edward's speeches, as well as the party platform—apparently a reaction to Republican's long held claim on family values territory (Freeman 1993). The most explicit appeal to women came in Theresa Heinz Kerry's speech, in which she offered a brief discussion on the state of women's rights in the United States, arguing that women were still criticized for speaking their minds. Besides being a general call for greater gender equality, this point did not connect to any more specific policy proposals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of women?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Kerry</td>
<td>Women's Equality</td>
<td>&quot;We can and must complete the march toward full equality for all women...&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
<td>&quot;As a young prosecutor, I...made prosecuting violence against women a priority.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After School Programs</td>
<td>&quot;You don't value families by kicking kids out of after-school programs&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Childcare Tax</td>
<td>&quot;We're going to help you cover&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Framed in terms of women?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards</td>
<td>the rising costs of child care with a tax credit up to $1,000&quot;</td>
<td>...one day soon, women...instead of being labeled opinionated, will be called smart or well-informed, just as men are.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Heinz Kerry</td>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>&quot;John Kerry believes we must, and we should, recognize the immense value of the caregivers in our country&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barack Obama</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4.8: Republican Discussion of Women's Issues in Convention Speeches, 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of women?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George W. Bush</td>
<td>Workplace Flexibility</td>
<td>&quot;...two-thirds of all moms also work outside the home.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Our laws should never stand in the way of a more family-friendly workplace</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Tax Credit</td>
<td>Kerry &quot;opposed doubling the child credit&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;Because a caring society will value its weakest members, we must make a place for the unborn child&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the Middle East</td>
<td>&quot;Because of you, women in Afghanistan are no longer shot in a sports stadium&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Young women across the Middle East will hear the message that their day of equality and justice is coming&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Cheney</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Bush</td>
<td>Small Business Relief</td>
<td>&quot;...women like Carmella Chaifos, the only woman to own a tow truck company in all of Iowa. &quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the Middle East</td>
<td>&quot;After years of being treated as virtual prisoners in their own homes by the Taliban, the women of Afghanistan are going back to</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consistent with my second hypothesis Republicans framed a relatively more diverse array of issues in terms of women's interests, especially in the convention speeches. George W. Bush, Laura Bush, and then-Senator Elizabeth Dole all talked about the improved status of women in the Middle East, specifically Afghanistan. This is consistent with Pearson and Dancey (2011) who found that Republican congresswomen were especially likely to bring up the status of women in Afghanistan and Iraq during one-minute speeches on the floor of the House of Representatives.

As H2.3 predicted, Laura Bush spoke about how, as a mother, she believed her husband should be re-elected. She said that "the issue that I believe is most important for my own daughters, for all our families, and for our future [is] George's work to protect our country and defeat terror so that all children can grow up in a more peaceful world." Such family-invoked rhetoric was used by male speakers too. The Keynote speaker Zell Miller, in explaining his defection from the Democrats asked "which leader is it today that has the vision, the willpower and, yes, the backbone to best protect my family? The clear answer to that question has placed me in this hall with you tonight. For my family is more important than my party."
Departing from the experience of 2004, in 2008 Democrat convention speakers paid considerably more attention to women and women's issues than Republican speakers did. When Obama spoke, he framed these issues in terms of women roughly half the time. Proving that identity politics may extend beyond descriptive characteristics specifically, when discussing pay equality Obama specifically stated how, as a father, he cared about the issue "because I want my daughters to have the exact same opportunities as yours sons."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of women?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barack Obama</td>
<td>Elite Representation</td>
<td>&quot;Hillary is 'an inspiration to my daughters and to yours'&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Leave</td>
<td>&quot;or whether the waitress who lives on tips can take a day off and look after a sick kid without losing her job.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay Equality</td>
<td>&quot;...I want my daughters to have the exact same opportunities as your sons.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;We may not agree on abortion, but surely we can agree on reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies in this country.&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Obama</td>
<td>Women's history</td>
<td>&quot;88th anniversary of women winning the right to vote&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elite Representation</td>
<td>&quot;People like Hillary Clinton, who put those 18 million cracks in the glass ceiling, that our daughters — and sons—can dream a little bigger and aim a little higher.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay equality</td>
<td>&quot;Making sure women get equal pay for equal work&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Biden</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Warner</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton</td>
<td>Women’s History</td>
<td>&quot;And to all of those women in their 80s and 90s…born before women could vote, who cast their vote for&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4.9: Democratic Discussion of Women's Issues in Convention Speeches, 2008
In part the 2008 focus on women by Democrats can be attributed to the historic primary race run by Hillary Clinton. Barack Obama and Michelle Obama both discussed the inspiring nature of Clinton's race and Clinton devoted the a large
portion of her speech thanking those who supported her run. Clinton's speech mostly focused on broad themes like women's history, and the quest for equality, though she did mention a specific policy in her discussion of pay equality. In fact, 2008 marked a large jump in the salience of pay equality for Democrats. It was a major recurring theme in speeches as well as the platform.

Where Democrats focused on the historic nature of Clinton's primary run, Republicans discussed their historic nomination of Sarah Palin for vice president. Cindy McCain lauded how her husband "picked a reform-minded ... hockey-mommin', basketball shootin', moose huntin', fly-fishin', pistol-packing, mother of five for vice president. And as a fellow hockey mom myself and a Western conservative mother, I couldn't be prouder that John has shaken things up as he usually does!"

Echoing Cindy McCain, Palin framed her qualifications in terms of her role as a mom, noting that "as a mother of one of those troops [McCain] is exactly the kind of man I want as commander in chief." She touted her political qualifications in such terms as well: "I was just your average hockey mom and signed up for the PTA because I wanted to make my kids' public education better." Even John McCain lauded his running mate's qualifications in how she had experienced the trials of running a household, saying "she knows what it's like to worry about mortgage payments, and health care, and the cost of gasoline and groceries."

Cindy McCain engaged in such family-based identity politics too, saying that "nothing has made me happier or more fulfilled in my life than being a mother." The emphasis on Palin's qualifications, credibility, and relationship to voters as not just a
woman, but a mother, is consistent with my third hypothesis that Republican women will tend to eschew traditional woman-based identity politics in favor of family-based identity politics. This is in contrast to the 2008 Democratic speeches in which Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton both focused almost entirely on their roles as women, not mothers.

The Democratic discussion of women's issues was condensed in 2012. Pay equality remained the most discussed issue, as Biden, Michelle Obama, and Elizabeth Warren all discussed Democratic passing of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and/or condemned Republican opposition to more pay equality legislation. Barack Obama briefly touched on early childhood education, but as has been typical with the move from childcare policy to early childhood education policy, it was not framed in terms of women (Karch 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Framed in terms of women?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barack Obama</strong></td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>&quot;...improve early childhood education&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joe Biden</strong></td>
<td>Pay equality</td>
<td>&quot;making sure our daughters get the same pay for the same jobs as our son is every father's bottom line.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Michelle Obama</strong></td>
<td>Pay Equality Workplace Equality</td>
<td>&quot;...like so many women, she hit a glass ceiling.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abortion, Contraception</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;And he believes that women are more than capable of making our own choices about our bodies and our health care&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Julian Castro</strong></td>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>&quot;When it comes to respecting women's rights, Mitt Romney says, 'No.'&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elizabeth Warren</strong></td>
<td>Pay Equality</td>
<td>&quot;I can't believe I have to say this in 2012--a country where women get equal pay for equal work.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Framed in terms of women?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitt Romney</td>
<td>Motherhood as Work</td>
<td>&quot;I knew her job as a mom was harder than mine&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Businesses</td>
<td>&quot;Today, women are more likely than men to start a business. They need a president who respects and understands what they do.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;...as president, I will protect the sanctity of life...&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elite Representation</td>
<td>&quot;I can still hear her saying in her beautiful voice, 'Why should women have any less say than men, to say about the great decisions facing our nation?'&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Ryan</td>
<td>Small Businesses</td>
<td>&quot;...My mom started a small business&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>&quot;The truest measure of any society is how it treats those who cannot defend or care for themselves.&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Romney</td>
<td>Work/Life Balance</td>
<td>&quot;And the working moms who love their jobs but would like to work just a little less to spend more time with the kids, but that's just out of the question with this economy&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workplace Equality</td>
<td>&quot;You know what it’s like to work a little harder during the day to earn the respect you deserve at work&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>&quot;It’s all the little things — that price at the pump [mother's] just can’t believe, the grocery bills that just get bigger; all those things that used to be free, like school sports, are now one more bill to pay.&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Christie</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoleezza Rice</td>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>&quot;...the young woman who has been trafficked into the sex trade in Southeast Asia&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Republican convention was marked by many appeals to women, some more subtle than others. In response to allegations that they were waging a "war on women," Republicans put female elites front and center (Ceasar, Busch and Pitney Jr.). Mitt Romney went as far to list them out in his speech, saying: "I wish [my mother] could have been here at the convention and heard leaders like Governor Mary Fallin, Governor Nikki Haley, Governor Susana Martinez, Senator Kelly Ayotte and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice."

Additionally, Mitt Romney discussed his mother's senate run, Paul Ryan discussed his mother opening a small business, and Chris Christie discussed the appreciation for being respected and strong that his mother instilled in him. What's notable about these speeches was not the preeminence of mothers—such discussion of mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, was quite common across years and parties. Rather these speeches are notable because they frame the speaker's mother in terms of women's opportunity, advancement, and equality. I argue that the use of family-invoked rhetoric (here, the calling up of a story about the speaker's mother) to appeal to women is an example of the encroachment discussed in H2.2. Unable to alter policies that might alienate women, these Republicans discussed personal stories that showed an appreciation for the rights and advancement of women.

As discussed earlier, the most talked about appeal to women, however, came in Ann Romney's speech, in which she yelled "I love you women!" Her speech highlighted the tribulations of (seemingly working class) mothers, those who "love their jobs but would like to work just a little less to spend more time with their kids."
Ann Romney framed the Republican's central focus of the 2012 election—the anemic economy—in terms of how it hurt mothers, through things like prices increases and workplace inflexibility.

Ann Romney's speech addressed women's issues like gender inequality, but for the most party it was not just about women, it was about mothers. Almost immediately she stated that she wanted "to talk to you about the love so deep only a mother can fathom it—the love we have for our children and our children's children."

And the privileging of motherhood is not present just in Ann Romney's speech; Mitt Romney recounts how Ann raised their five boys, stating that "she was heroic...I knew that her job as a mom was harder than mine. And I knew without question that her job as a mom was a lot more important than mine."

In my third hypothesis I argued that Republicans would tend towards invoking motherhood-based identity claims. Though Democrats and Republicans rhetorically value motherhood, for Democrats such rhetoric tended to be one component of speeches, while for Republicans they were organizing principles. 2012 also marked the only year when the Democratic presidential nominee's wife made significant reference to her position as a mother. Michele Obama concluded her speech with a discussion of motherhood, telling the audience: "And I say all of this tonight not just as First Lady...and not just as a wife. You see, at the end of the day, my most important title is still 'mom-in-chief.'"

Republican speeches offered many references to women and mothers, their interests and virtues. This was in the year when the platform offered scant discussion of women's issues. The fact that Republicans seemed particularly heavy on family-
and woman-invoked rhetoric in their speeches, but eschewed traditional gender issues in their platform offers evidence for H4.2. Constrained by centrifugal partisan forces, Republicans turn to the rhetorical realm of convention speeches to vie for women. By framing Republicans and their policies as appealing and sympathetic to women, Republicans attempt to encroach on Democrats gender territory without altering their stances on women's issues. This is evidenced by the fact that unlike in platforms, Republicans used a slightly higher rate of woman-invoked rhetoric in convention speeches than Democrats. Between all three years, Republicans made 27 comments on women (either women's issues or using woman-invoked rhetoric for other issues, such as public education), where Democrats made just 26.

DISCUSSION

In my content analysis of a sample of convention speeches and platforms from 2004-2012, I made three expectations. First I expected Democrats would speak more about women's issues, confirming that they "own" women's gender territory. Next, I suggested that Republicans would attempt to encroach on that gender territory. For evidence I looked at how Republicans connected their policy initiatives to women's interests, and how policies expressed in the platforms differed from rhetoric delivered in convention speeches. Finally in my third hypothesis argued that in speeches, Republican and Democratic uses of identity claims would differ. I expected that Democratic women would be more likely to make claims as women, whereas Republican women would be more likely to make claims as mothers.
Hypothesis One: Gender Ownership

In accordance with my first hypothesis, I did find that generally Democrats discussed women's issues more in their platforms, and with a higher degree of salience in 2008 and 2012. Notably, however, the difference in platforms that I measured (5.24% for Republicans, 6.12% for Democrats), is significantly smaller than what Sanbonmatsu measures between 1968 and 2000 (2002a). This hypothesis did not entirely hold up across years.

Further, the trend did not entirely hold up across years. In 2004 the Republican platform and speeches covered a wider swath of gender issues. Republican's unique attention to women in the Middle East could have been an attempt to salvage public opinion on what was then a deeply unpopular war ("Iraq" N.d.). If this is the case, it implies that discussion of women's issues may be strategically deployed for reasons beyond appealing to women. Framing the commitments in the middle east as, at least in part, women's issues, may have been an attempt to move away from less flattering frames, such as the fiscal cost or human toll of the wars. Though I look at female frames as a strategy for gender encroachment and appealing to women, it is important to remember that rhetoric can often serve multiple purposes. When women's issues are the most flattering way to frame an issue, they may be used for persuasive purposes more broadly.

Hypothesis Two: Gender Encroachment

Though speeches tended to parallel platforms in terms of attention devoted to women's issues (i.e. if a party discussed women a lot in a platform in a given year,
they discussed women a lot in speeches too), I did find that Republicans paid considerably more attention to women in their speeches than in their platforms. I argue this represents an attempt at gender encroachment as Republicans seek to rhetorically frame themselves as a party sympathetic to women and women's interests, and to do so without compromising their positions on women's issues. For example, the Republican platform in 2012 offers relatively minimal discussion of women's issues (just 4.04% of paragraphs relative to Democrats 7.27% of paragraphs), but the speeches offer extensive discussion of women's issues, female elites in the party, and how Republican policies help women (10 comments to Democrats seven).

Viewed another way, this finding could be a result of the fact that feminists represent a powerful group of party activists for Democrats. Party activists are particularly attuned to the content of party platforms, so Democrats may have felt compelled to place more concrete policy pledges addressed towards women in their platform. Both understandings are consistent with Aldrich's (2001) theory of parties as constrained by partisan activists.

Broadening the traditional understanding of women's issues also appeared to be a common tactic used by the Republicans. While Democrats offered in-depth treatment of those issues traditionally associated with feminism such as pay equality and contraception, Republicans sought to reframe other issues as women's issues. The two most striking examples are the status of women in the Middle East (in 2004 and 2008), and women and small businesses (in 2008 and 2012). In this manner, Republicans displayed a flexibility in connecting women to the most salient issues of
the elections. Issues such as women in small businesses and the status of women abroad have not been historically crystallized as major issues on a Democrat-Republican, feminist-anti-feminist spectrum (Sanbonmatsu 2002a; Schreiber 2008). Republicans argued that they had the best policies on these "new" women's issue.

Interestingly, Republican frames about abortion seemed to shift in my sample. In 2004 Republican's framed abortion as an issue of unborn children, which was consistent with Sanbonmatsu's analysis (2002a). By 2012, however, Republicans seemed more interested in defending their stance on abortion as consistent with a pro-women position, discussing sex-selective abortion, the detrimental effects of abortion on women, and generally framing the issue as helping women as well. Such a shift might represent an attempt at gender encroachment, as Republicans refute the claim that they ignore women in their prioritization of stopping abortion. Notably such rhetoric was especially common in 2012 when Republicans were under siege for their supposedly anti-women remarks and policies about rape, contraception and abortion. The "War on Women" narrative may have incentivized Republicans to frame their stance on abortion as consistent with women's interests.

**Hypothesis Three: Differential Identity Claims**

Though family-invoked rhetoric was common among men and women in both parties, I did find some support for my hypothesis that women in the Democratic Party and women in the Republican Party would make differential use of their identity. Explicit appeals to motherhood were present for the nominees' wives of both parties, but consistent and highly salient for Republican candidate's wives. Laura
Bush, Cindy McCain, and Ann Romney all invoked their status as mother's to defend central components of their speeches. Michelle Obama did this as well, but only in one of her two speeches, and Theresa Heinz Kerry offered virtually no discussion of being a mother. Interestingly the increased proclivity for Republicans to evoke motherhood was not reflected by the descriptive characteristics of the female elites that spoke at the G.O.P.'s convention: two of the seven female speakers, Elizabeth Dole and Condoleezza Rice, were not themselves mothers—though Elizabeth Dole has a stepdaughter.

Most notably, Sarah Palin invoked her status as a mother in defending her credibility as a candidate. So too did John and Cindy McCain in their discussion of Palin. Because Palin was running for an elected office, and not speaking as a wife of a candidate, this is particularly striking. Compare this to Joe Biden's comparison of the two 2012 presidential candidates. He said of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney: "they're both loving husbands, they're both devoted fathers. But let's be straight. They're bringing a vastly different vision and vastly different values to the job." This suggests that for Obama and Romney, their role in their family was disconnected from and subordinate to their political life. Palin, on the other hand, was framed as credible precisely because of her status as a head of the household, as a PTA volunteer, a hockey mom, as someone who has to pay attention to the cost of groceries. Being a parent seems to have different meaning for male and female candidates.

This dynamic may be a partisan one, as a comparison between Palin and Hillary Clinton's 2008 speeches will attest. The majority of identity claims in
Clinton's speech focused on the historic nature of her campaign and discussed the status of women in politics. Consistent with H2.3 she focused almost entirely on her status as a woman, and did not discuss motherhood as formative for her political life. The comparison is certainly imperfect: Palin was making an unprecedented run as a female Vice Presidential candidate and Clinton was attempting to unite the party around Obama. Still, the way in which the two women consider the historic role of their campaign and their qualifications for the job suggests that partisanship may have interacted with gender to drive different identity narratives.

CONCLUSION

This chapter began with the story of the emergence of women at national conventions. An analysis of party platforms and speeches, however, demonstrates that gender considerations infuse conventions even when the speaker is not female. Both male and female elites discussed how their policies connected to women, often invoking personal stories to drive home their point. Further, both parties' platforms throughout the years discussed women's issues and connected the party's major policies to their impact on women, for example the war in Afghanistan for Republicans, and the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act for Democrats.

Yet there were important differences between how the two parties presented themselves in gendered terms at the national convention. Democrats paid women relatively more attention in platforms than Republicans did, but Republicans more than made up for the deficit in their attention to women in convention speeches. Such an imbalance suggests Republicans may be attempting to rhetorically encroach on
Democrats feminine reputation, all the while maintaining conservative stances on gender gap issues and women's issues.

Further, female elites from each party tended to draw on different aspects of their identity in speeches. Though identity claims on the basis of motherhood were certainly common on both sides and tended to play an especially important role in the presidential nominee's wife acceptance speech, Republican women made more substantial assertions on the basis of motherhood.

Taken together these findings form an image of a Republican Party working hard to both appeal to the women who may watch convention speeches and satisfy a conservative base that will be highly attuned to the content of the party platform. They navigate this challenge by relying on appeals to women in speeches, rhetorically linking their policies to women's interests, and repeatedly underscore the link between their party and motherhood. Though both parties engage with gender issues and gender rhetoric, the style and substance of such appeals varies significantly between the two conventions.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

The website of Burning Glass Consulting states a singular mission: "Our goal is to help our clients win enough women voters to produce a win at the ballot box" ("Women" 2013). In other words, the firm wants to reimage the Republican Party as more feminine and woman-friendly in order to appeal to female voters. This parallels the logic that I adopted in my first chapter, positing the gender gap as a problem that the parties seek to overcome by altering their gender image.

But appealing to women is only one reason that Republicans have to appear more feminine. Owing to the linkages between, issue, trait, and gender reputations, I argued that altering a gender reputation may allow a party to seem more competent at certain issues and possessing of certain desirable traits. Empirically I found that gendered rhetoric might be used to frame an issue (such as the War in Afghanistan) in a more favorable light. Gendered messengers may also be used to appear more credible on "feminine" (and not just Women's issues) like social welfare.

In this chapter I undertake this broadened consideration of my theory and findings. I begin by summarizing the trajectory of the work. I then consider the limitations of my work and normative implications that arise from it.

REVIEW OF FINDINGS

This thesis began the work with a consideration of the gender gap. The gender gap, I argued, has dual meanings for the parties. It both contributed to party's gender images as masculine or feminine and it constituted a catalyst for parties to rework
those gender images in order to gain more voters. I considered other dimensions on which parties possessed gender reputations: elite demographics, women's rights issues, and even within the public's subconscious. Arguing that these dimensions are mutually reinforcing and self-perpetuating, I proposed that party's could be understood as "owning" gender territory much the same way as they own trait and issue territory. Integrating gender into a framework equivalent to those developed by issue and trait ownership scholarships, I developed a theory of gender theory and encroachment, that suggested that party's possess baseline gender traits, but they will attempt to encroach on one another's gender territory to appear more competent and credible on a spectrum of gender stereotyped issues. Turning to the literature on parties I argued that Republicans would be prevented from perusing more woman-friendly policies by partisan activists, who were highly attuned to policy making. Instead parties strategically frame issues, through both messengers and rhetoric, to alter their gender image.

This theory motivated the empirical analysis of Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 3 I examined a sample of 400 ads for the 2012 Senate elections. Consistent with the notion that Democrats own gender territory I found that ads sponsored by Democrats were significantly more likely to talk about women's issues, and this effect was largely attributable to the larger number of female candidates running as Democrats. I found evidence for gender encroachment in this analysis as well. First, despite the Democrat's ownerships of women's issues, Republicans were not less likely to use woman-invoked rhetoric in their ads. Second, Republicans strategically used more female non-candidate messengers than male non-candidate messengers, especially on
feminine stereotyped issues like social welfare. I interpreted this use of messengers as Republican attempting to feminize their image. Finally, I found that family-invoked rhetoric was more common in ads sponsored by Republicans and in ads featuring female non-candidate messengers. I took this as an indication that family-centric frames, too, may offer Republican a means to appeal to women.

In Chapter 4 I extended these same themes—the role of female messengers, woman-invoked rhetoric, and family frames—to a multi-year content analysis of both parties' convention speeches and platforms. An analysis of platforms demonstrated that Democrats generally paid more attention to women's issues. This was consistent with a gender territory theory as well as the Chapter 3 finding that Democrat's discussed women's issues more in their campaign ads. Republicans, on the other hand, discussed women slightly more in their speeches. Notably these findings were not entirely consistent across years. As in Chapter 3, I took this as an indication that Republicans' use of woman-invoked rhetoric, but not women's policy discussion, was a mechanism for gender encroachment. Republicans faced a high degree of pressure from party activists at the convention, and the platform reflects those activists' policy preference. But the party also faced a high degree of visibility in their speeches, and thus attempted to appear friendly and attentive to women and women's issues. This can also be seen in the way that the party's female elites invoked family. I found that Republican women tended to tout their roles as mothers, whereas Democrat women tended to tout their roles as women. I interpret these differential identity claims as consistent with the notion that Republicans draw on images of family to appeal to women.
LIMITATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

My researches is limited on several empirical and theoretical fronts, and overcoming these limitations offers promising venues for scholars interested in studying how party's construct and negotiate their gender images. First, it must be noted that here I have considered partisan gender images as a largely static phenomenon. Given the significant realignment that Wolbrecht (2000) has found on gender issues, it seems unlikely that gender reputations have been or will be unchanging. This limitation extends to my empirical exploration as well. In both my analyses of campaign ads, and party conventions I was limited to a narrow time period. No conclusions about how party's have changed positions on gender issues over time, altered their gender image, or altered their approach to gendering over time, can be formed. Creating a dynamic model of party gender images and investigating it empirically, with larger samples or comprehensive datasets of party messaging over a larger period of time would enhance the realism of this theory. Enlarging sample size could also have the added benefit of clarifying some findings that were only weakly significant, for example the role of female non-candidate messengers in Republican ads discussing social welfare issues.

Second, a key issue that my theory has largely avoided is whether or not gender encroachment strategies in fact are effective. The primary point of this thesis was understanding which strategic behaviors parties engage in and developing a theory of what causal mechanisms motivate those behaviors. The point was not to figure out if those strategy works, if gender encroachment actually woos women...
voters. Filling in this gap would be a logical next step for future research, and central to any dynamic understanding of parties as gendered. If gender encroachment is not an effective strategy to capture more votes, then strategic parties would likely abandon such an effort. Scholars have previously assessed the effectiveness of various persuasion strategies in political advertising (Goldstein and Ridout 2004; Franz and Ridout 2009; Huber and Arceneaux 2007), even specifically with respect to gender (Strach et al. 2015). Applying such analysis to questions such as the role of non-candidate messengers in advertisements, or women- and family-invoked rhetoric in political speeches would help establish if Republican gender encroachment strategies are effective among female viewers.

**NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Three broad themes emerge from my findings that present some normative considerations. I argue that gender encroachment mechanisms can be understood as problematic when they are exclusionary, confer symbolic benefits, or forestall greater elite gender diversity. I found that family-invoked rhetoric was a prominent gender encroachment technique. While references to the value of the family as a unit of society is was certainly present among members of both parties, I argued that Republicans especially invoked family and motherhood in an attempt to appeal to women. Such rhetoric is potentially exclusionary and regressive. If women's political participation is contingent on her status as a member of a family, then women who are not mothers, or unmarried mothers, may be less valued politically. Further, such an association reinforces gender stereotypes that associate women with domesticity.
and family, perhaps undermining the strides that women have made into the public sphere.

Second, it is plausible that the rhetorical nature of gender encroachment confer only symbolic benefits. The Chapter 4 finding that Republicans focused on women in speeches, but not in platforms, seems to confirm this. Scholars have previously been concerned with the notion that women's rights advances are largely symbolic (Sanbonmatsu 2002a). The notion that parties may be able to appeal to women with pure rhetoric is therefore concerning. The degree to which this represents a real problem is reliant on the degree to which gender encroachment is effective and voters are not attuned to policy changes. Scholars have expressed anxiety that framing effects may be manipulative to voters (Druckman 2001). Connecting studies on the manipulative power of frames to a framework of gender encroachment would help to assess the potential degree to which gendered rhetoric is a problem.

In a similar vein, if gender encroachment techniques that deploy messengers can effectively mask the dearth of female politicians in the Republican Party, this would pose a problem for those that see descriptive representation as beneficial (i.e. Mansbridge 1999). If an actor hired to play an average-seeming woman is just as effective at feminizing the Republican Party as an actual female candidate, then Republicans have less incentive to recruit female candidates.

Note that many of these consequences rely on gender encroachment actually being an effective tactic. For example, for the use of non-candidate messengers to depress female candidate recruitment, it must actually persuade viewers and voters...
analogously to how a female candidate might. This underscores how important it is to establish if the gender encroachment techniques that I have identified in this thesis here are, in fact, persuasive to women. Pundits have generally concluded that Republicans have done poorly among women in recent elections, fundamentally due to their extreme policies (Editorial 2012), poor word choice (Sides and Vavreck 2013), or other factors (Sherman and Palmer 2014). Understanding if Republicans can overcome these deficiencies and begin to appeal to women is the central question that arises out of this thesis. If the answer is yes, then the normative considerations listed above deserve a deeper consideration.
REFERENCES


