WOMEN AND THE RACE GAP IN AMERICAN POLITICS

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Format of Presentation

- Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Vote Choice in Recent Elections

- Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Vote Choice Beyond 2016

- Where do we go after Election Day?
  - Discourse around gender and race/ethnicity in American Politics
  - Building partnerships beyond the ballot box
Gender, Race and Party Politics

• The 2016 Presidential Election forced an uncomfortable conversation about gender, race and party politics in the U.S.

• Academics to journalists, kitchen-table activists to beauty shop patrons, wondered by so many white women choose the Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton.

• White women voters are the single largest race-gendered group of voters in the U.S. and hold substantial sway over who gets elected, particularly in the general Presidential Election.
(recall) Changing Demographics and the U.S. Electorate

Racial/ethnic minorities made-up nearly a third of all voters in the 2016 election.

Notes: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. Whites, blacks and Asians include only non-Hispanics who reported a single race. Hispanics are of any race. Data for non-Hispanic Asians were not available in 1988.


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2016 Share of the Electorate, by Race and Gender

Pew Research Center: Based on 3,014 validated 2016 general election voters. Validated voters are those found to have voted in any of five commercial voter files; corrected for questionable matches. Vote choice is from a post-election survey and excludes those who refused to answer or reported voting for a candidate other than Trump, Clinton, Johnson or Stein. Survey conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 2016.
RACE/ETHNICITY, GENDER AND VOTE CHOICE
Gender gap in vote choice: 1972-2016

Presidential candidate preference, by gender

Source: Based on exit polls conducted by Edison Research for the National Election Pool, as reported by CNN. Data from prior years from national exit polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Democrat</th>
<th>% Republican</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>43</td>
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</table>
Percent of white women who voted for the Democratic Party candidate, 1952-2012

Women’s 2016 Vote Choice

Source: Collaborative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS 2016),
Notes: Full samples includes 10,145 completed surveys including Black (n=3,102), Latino (n=3,003), Asian (n=3,006) and White (n=1,034) respondents, surveyed in English, Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Korean and Vietnamese. Female only samples: Black (n=1,727), Latina (n=1,605), Asian (n=1,433) and White (n=519) respondents. The data are weighted within each racial group to match the adult population in the 2015 Census ACS 1-year data file for age, gender, education, nativity, ancestry, and voter registration status.
Women’s 2016 Presidential Candidate Evaluations

Source: Collaborative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS 2016),
Notes: Full samples includes 10,145 completed surveys including Black (n=3,102), Latino (n=3,003), Asian (n=3,006) and White (n=1,034) respondents, surveyed in English, Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Korean and Vietnamese. Female only samples: Black (n=1,727), Latina (n=1,605), Asian (n=1,433) and White (n=519) respondents. The data are weighted within each racial group to match the adult population in the 2015 Census ACS 1-year data file for age, gender, education, nativity, ancestry, and voter registration status.
RACE/ETHNICITY, GENDER, AND VOTE CHOICE BEYOND 2016
2017 U.S. Senate race in Alabama: 
White Women Vote Republican

Doug Jones 50% (D) v. Roy Moore 48% (R)

Gender gap for Jones is 15%

White women support Moore (63%) over Jones (34%)
White men support Moore (72%) over Jones (26%)
White college women support Moore (52%) over Jones (45%)

Black women support Jones (98%) over Moore (2%)
Black men support Jones (93%) over Moore (6%)

Source: NBC News exit poll 2017
…….Not just Alabama
2017 Gubernatorial Elections:
In Blue States, White Women Vote Republican

Virginia: Ralph Northam (D) v. Ed Gillespie (R)
    Northam wins with 54% of vote
    Gender gap for Northam is 13%
    White women support Gillespie (51%) over Northam (48%)

New Jersey: Phil Murphy (D) v. Kim Guadagno (R)
    Murphy wins with 56% of vote
    Gender gap for Murphy is -1% (men more supportive of Murphy)
    White women support Guadagno (53%) over Murphy (45%)

Source: Washington Post exit poll 2017
Georgia: Stacey Abrams (D) v. Brian Kemp (R)

White women support Kemp (73%) over Abrams (25%)
White college women support Kemp (57%) over Abrams (43%)

Florida: Andrew Gillum (D) v. Ron DeSantis (R)

White women support DeSantis (51%) over Gillium (47%)
White college women support Gillium (57%) over DeSantis (42%)

Source: CNN Exit Polls 2018
Gender Gap in 2018 House Popular Vote
59% WOMEN voted Democrat; 40% WOMEN voted Republican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>AMONG MEN</th>
<th>AMONG WOMEN</th>
<th>GENDER GAP</th>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
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<td>D+10</td>
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Source: Voter Research & Surveys, Voter News Service, Edison Research, CNN
More white women voted for Democrats in 2018 than in 2016

- 2018 white women split their vote evenly (49% Dems to 49% Reps)

- White women move toward Democrats since 2016 (43%) and 2014 (42%)

- White college-educated women moved towards Democrats in many battleground states; 59% of White college-educated women voted for a Democrat in 2018

Source: CNN Exit Polls 2018
Gender gap continues to lean Democratic due to large numbers of women of color voters

- Black women remained the largest party supporters
- Latinas shifted to the left in greater numbers
Implications for Understanding Vote Choice

• White women voters are the single largest race-gendered group of voters in the U.S. and hold substantial sway over who gets elected, particularly in general Presidential Elections.

• White women consistently behave politically different from women of color, particularly Black women, in their vote choice.

• If we fail to look at both race AND gender we cannot fully understand differences among women voters.
What We Know About Gender and Voting Behavior in the US

• Partisanship and partisan concerns outweighs the role of gender identity in voter decisions

• Both women and men are likely to support the candidate of their own party, over the gender of the candidate

• Gender biases and stereotypes have been shown to influence evaluations of female candidates

• But, little evidence (prior to 2016) of systemic sexism on vote choice
What We Know About Gender and Voting Behavior in the US

- Most existing studies of gender differences on vote choice are undifferentiated by race and ethnicity

- May obscure substantial differences among women voters, by race/ethnicity

- Recent research finds that the same stimulus among different groups (ex. white women and women of color) can have different effects on their political behavior (“The same heat that melts the butter also hardens the egg” Allport, 1954, 1967)

- My recent research discusses the role of sexism and race on vote choice among women in the 2016 Presidential Election:
  
Where Do We Go After Election Day?

- Discourse around gender and race in American Politics

- White women are often the most sought after swing voters in the electorate ("suburban voters", "soccer moms", "security moms")

- Failure to discuss and understand group differences in race and ethnicity may present misleading results (underestimated, overestimated, or just plain wrong).
Where Do We Go After Election Day?

• Solving local problems and forming partnerships inside and outside of electoral politics:

  • Need to understand what factors influence voter turnout, voting behavior, and public policy views among women

• Opportunities for discourse and research that seeks to listen to and understand women across various backgrounds (race/ethnicity, education, income, age, nativity, geography, etc.)