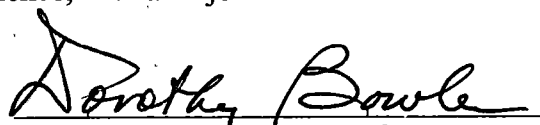
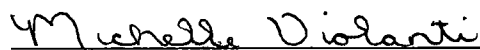
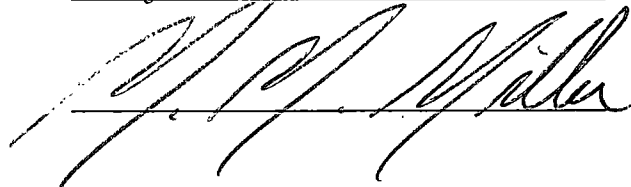


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Casey McDonald Patrick entitled "Framing and Gender-Stereotyped Personality Traits: A study of media coverage of senatorial candidates in the 1998 election." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communications.


Dorothy Bowles, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

Framing and Gender-Stereotyped Personality Traits:
A study of media coverage of senatorial candidates in the 1998 election

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Science Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Casey McDonald Patrick
August 1999

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Bob and Debby Patrick, my parents, and to Frances Patrick, my grandmother.

Three people who have shown me that family is not only about sharing a name. It is more about unfailing encouragement, respect for one another and a genuine pride in being a member of such wonderful company.

And to Bill Kenley, my fiancé, and his family, who are now a part of my life and my family, as I am a part of theirs.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the use of gender-based personality traits in media coverage of two 1998 U.S. senatorial races, including two male and two female candidates. A content analysis of three newspapers uses frame analysis to quantitatively determine the nature of the representation of Barbara Boxer and Matt Fong in the California race and Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Dottie Lamm in the Colorado race. The prevalence of gender stereotypes in society, the importance of personal appeal to American voters and the existence of particular gender-based personality stereotypes, as determined by a previous study, enhances the importance of pursuing such a study. This study determines to an extent how the media present the four candidates in terms of gender-charged adjectives and whether the material is attributed. Results show that gender framing occurs much more frequently for females than for male candidates, and all candidates are generally framed as being more masculine than feminine. Also, unattributed gender-based personality traits occur much more frequently than attributed material—especially for the female candidates.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

On November 21, 1922, Rebecca Latimer Felton made history by becoming the first female senator in the United States Congress. The governor of Georgia had made the appointment a month before in a futile attempt to better his own chances at a Senate seat after he unsuccessfully opposed the constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote. In her acceptance speech in the Senate chamber's galleries she acknowledged that "there may be but very few [women senators] in the next few years, [but] when the women of this country come in and sit with you ...you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness" ("Senate Chamber: First Women Senators," 1999). Felton may have underestimated women in the race for Senate seats. Since her short-lived career in politics, 24 women have earned senatorial status, with a record number of nine women senators serving simultaneously.

People running for public office, men and women, rely on the mass media to present them in a positive light. They run campaign ads in the local paper, they provide "meaningful" sound bites for the evening news, and they shake hands with children and ministers for photo opportunities. They spend incredible amounts of money on media-related strategies like commercials and publicized special events during elections, indicating their dependence on positive or at least neutral media coverage.

In the same sense of dependence, the American voter relies on the media to acquaint the electorate with the political candidates running for office. Campaigns of

the 1990s are a new breed, emerging from a combination of electoral reforms and technological advances to put the media above political parties in communicating messages to voters (Inyengar, 1997, p. 144). During campaign seasons, local and national news broadcasts, newspapers, newsmagazines and news providers on the Internet report on every move made by major contenders, and the voter listens.

But is everyone getting a fair shake from the media? Are women getting a fair shake? 1992 was coined "The Year of the Woman" in the congressional elections, with the election of 24 new women to the House of Representatives and four new women to the Senate (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997, p. 133). But this period was marked with two general components: "the institutional developments of increasing numbers of women in lower-level offices and a high rate of open seats and vulnerable incumbents" and a "public and media frenzy" (Fox, 1997, p. 9). Critics belittled the success of women in Congress by saying the election simply left a window open for Democrats, and women happened to take advantage of the chance. The media supported the "year of the woman" by giving female candidates an unprecedented amount of coverage, compared to their male opponents, and an increased concentration on "women's issues," such as abortion, day care and domestic violence (p. 11). But, it is 1999, and the "year of the woman" is long gone. Does this mean that another media frenzy or window of opportunity must open for female candidates to get elected in record numbers again?

Because the media play such a significant role in elections, their part in disseminating information is of vital importance to candidates as well as to the electorate. "Increasingly, media-cultivated facts and *values* become standards by

which we judge,” (Graber 1997, p. 193) so what if the values accepted and used by the media are biased stereotypes? What if the “year of the woman” was more a media event and less a sign of the progression of women in gaining political power in Congress? The possibility of the media’s use of gender-related stereotypes, as well as the repercussions of their use, needs to be carefully considered to assure both the candidate and the electorate that coverage is as objective as it can be. If the media use gender bias to describe the personalities of candidates, this might be an essential factor in a voter’s decision-making process. Could the framing of a candidate’s personality by the media have a direct effect on the candidate’s success?

Kim Fridkin Kahn (1992), who has explored the topic of women in politics perhaps more than any other researcher, suggests that it “would be useful to explore sex stereotyping of Senate candidates in the real political environment with national survey data” (p. 507). Perhaps a more limited study could suggest where one such national study could lead.

THE PROBLEM

Considering the importance of a candidate’s personality to the electorate, a journalist’s critical role in disseminating information relevant to elections, and the use of media-cultivated values that become ideals by which people make judgements, the role of the media prior to a campaign must be carefully examined. To examine the existence of gender personality stereotypes in U.S. media coverage of political candidates, a study of competing female and male candidates was performed. In this way a comparison could be made regarding treatments of each sex.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following research questions:

RQ 1: (a) To what extent are personality-related attributes used to describe female candidates as compared to male candidates?

(b) To what extent are personality-related attributes used to describe winners/incumbents as compared to losers/challengers?

RQ 2: (a) Do the media use feminine attributes more often to frame female candidates than male candidates?

(b) Do the media use masculine attributes more often to frame female candidates than male candidates?

RQ 3: To what extent are references to candidates' personality traits attributed to sources as opposed to being published without attribution?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

GENDER STEREOTYPES

Although journalists recognize that pure objectivity is an impossible goal, objectivity remains a commonly held attribute of good journalism, which is often simply upholding the status quo. Indeed, as Walter Lippmann (1922) states in Public Opinion:

For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture. (p. 81)

Price (1992) defines attitudes as “enduring predispositions to respond positively or negatively to a general class of stimuli” (p. 50). A person’s attitude toward something, what an individual approves or disapproves of, is also described as “part of the raw materials, or building blocks, that form opinions” (p. 49). In conjunction with Price’s literature on public opinion, these predispositions are similar to the stereotypes with which people use to make judgements. Is it conceivable that a popular approval of masculine traits and a disapproval of more feminine traits could be “building blocks” in the formation of public opinion, affecting voters’ decisions at the polls?

Reliance on stereotyping, “describing individuals positively or negatively on the basis of characteristics seen as common to their group” (Norris, 1997, p. 153), can lead people to believe things about both men and women that are not necessarily accurate. For example, research has shown that men are generally viewed as being

more competent than women are (Kahn & Gordon, 1997, p. 62). Could the media play a role in disseminating this and other stereotypes by framing political candidates in a certain manner? And are candidates who are represented in a stereotypically masculine light more apt to win an election? Research shows that, despite women's progress, the media still treat them differently. Adhering to stereotypes could be a part of the dilemma (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1997, p. 161-162). Research on sex stereotypes indicates that people depend on gender representations to process information in gender-relevant terms (Bem, 1981). More specifically, studies have suggested that people use sex stereotypes when evaluating equivalent male and female candidates (Sapiro, 1982; Sigelman and Sigelman, 1984).

It may seem logical for a candidate, male or female, to give in to gender stereotypes to sway public opinion.

Given the pervasiveness of sex stereotypes...women candidates may choose to *play to stereotypes* by emphasizing their perceived areas of strengths in their campaigns... (Kahn and Gordon, 1997, p. 61)

When women choose to stress personal characteristics in their campaigns, they need to decide which types of traits to focus on. (p. 62)

Could it be necessary for women to play to gender stereotypes to get votes, emphasizing masculine role characteristics and making a concerted effort to accentuate their more masculine traits?

Personality Stereotypes

Rosencrantz (1968, p. 287) found a significantly higher "valuation of stereotypically masculine than feminine characteristics" by both men and women subjects in American universities. The study of 154 college students (74 men and 80 women) examined "the relation of self-concepts to differentially valued sex-role

stereotypes" (p. 287). The results indicated that both men and women perceived stereotypically masculine characteristics as more socially desirable (p. 290-291). In fact, roughly 70 percent of the items determined to be "male-valued" or masculine were socially desirable.

What was most disturbing to researchers in the "Sex-Role Stereotypes" study was that more than half of their sample included "enlightened, highly selected college girls who typically more than hold their own intellectually vis-à-vis boys" (Rosenkrantz, 1968, p. 293). But this was more than 30 years ago. Since that time many more women have joined the workforce and secured high-level positions in politics. And more and more women combine the role of wife and mother with professional positions.

Surely this pattern toward a desire for male-valued or masculine traits has changed since 1968. But perhaps male-oriented traits are still valued more than female-oriented traits. And if so, could these stereotypes and values affect political campaigns? Do the media present political candidates in terms of stereotypically masculine or feminine characteristics? Geraldine Ferraro felt the bite of gender stereotyping when she was Walter Mondale's running mate in the 1984 U.S. presidential election. Colorado Congresswoman Pat Schroeder commented, "All this focus on haircuts, hemlines, manners and how many pearls she has really trivializes Gerry's candidacy" (Lague, August 13, 1984, p. 31). "The focus right now is on newness, womanliness, excitement, the fun stuff," Connecticut Congresswoman Barbara Kennelly said regarding the treatment of Ferraro in the media prior to the

election. Could Ferraro's "womanliness" have affected public opinion toward her as a serious vice-presidential candidate?

Personal Appeal

Margaret Chase Smith was the first woman to serve in both Houses of Congress as well as the first woman elected to the Senate without first having been elected or appointed to fill a vacant Senate seat. Her thirty-three year tenure in Congress from 1940 to 1973 is still the longest such Congressional career for any woman (Sherman, 1993, p. ii). Smith relied on the media in her Senate run prior to the Republican Party's primary in Maine and recognized the media's significance in helping her gain supporters. "The Smith campaign was built around her personal appeal. Her record in Congress, while important, mattered less than her reputation for hard work, integrity and affability" (Sherman, p. 293).

Four months before her party's primary, Smith fell on ice and fractured her right elbow. She was rushed to the hospital, where the cast was set. She quickly returned to her prearranged speaking engagements. The press loved it, making much of her "unwomanly" qualities, her "courageousness" and "perseverance" (p. 294). Have the media progressed beyond praising "unwomanly" characteristics like back in the 1940s or is it necessary for a woman to tough out an injury to prove her worth (p. 294)? Why was Smith's record in Congress and stand on issues less impressive to the media than her ability to bounce back after an injury? Could these masculine traits, valued by voters and disseminated by the media, affect voting patterns?

Previous Studies

Several studies have looked at different aspects of women in public offices. Kahn (1992) examined the effects of a candidate's gender and campaign coverage on evaluations of U.S. senatorial candidates. Despite a variety of explanations that suggest reasons for women's poor electoral success, such as a lack of political resources and sex stereotyping by voters, Kahn insists that differences in media coverage need to be explored. More specifically, two questions need to be asked. The first issue, regarding the existence of systematic differences in coverage between male and female candidates, has been reported in other studies. The second, more important question is whether "press coverage leads voters to develop more negative evaluations of female candidates and more positive evaluations of male candidates" (p. 498).

Kahn conducted a content analysis of 26 U.S. Senate races from 1982-1986 to determine differences in news coverage of male and female candidates. She limited the study to issues from the literatures of "voting, sex stereotypes, and women in politics" (p. 499) in her analysis. Four "mock Senate" articles were created based on the findings from the content analysis to evaluate voter response to the determined coverage differences. Variations between the articles included article length, prominence in the paper, tone, sex of the author and traits mentioned in the article (p. 501). One of the four "mock Senate" articles and two national politics articles were given to each of the experiment participants. They were then asked a series of questions that required them to evaluate the candidate in the mock Senate article.

Results showed that participants rated the females as better able to deal with “softer” issues like education, health and women’s issues. Female candidates were also viewed as more compassionate and more honest than the male candidates. Also, female stereotyping was pervasive for women, but male stereotyping of men did not occur at all (p. 506).

Kahn and Ann Gordon (1997) looked at how women campaign differently than men (p. 59-76). A survey of campaign managers running U.S. campaigns in the 1988, 1990 and 1992 elections for male and female candidates was conducted to examine gender differences in campaign messages and strategy. Regarding expectations of campaign messages, the researchers hypothesized that women would “stress issues more than traits as a way of demonstrating their competence,” and that women would “seek to revise damaging stereotypes by demonstrating their knowledge and experience in their campaigns” (p. 63). Post-election telephone interviews with 147 of 194 campaign managers indicated which issues were stressed in each candidate’s campaign, main themes of the campaign, and personal characteristics stressed during the campaign. Finally, the campaign managers were asked how useful television ads and personal contact were as campaign techniques (p. 65).

Of interest to this study, Kahn and Gordon’s findings indicated a significant difference in the importance of hard issues in campaigning. For instance, 78% of the themes mentioned by female candidates’ campaign managers as being a main theme of their campaign were related to policy matters. Twenty-two percent focused on personal traits. On the other hand, campaigns for male candidates stressed issues

only 61% of the time, while addressing traits 39% of the time. Kahn and Gordon also found that the campaign managers of both male and female candidates were equally likely to view the news media as unresponsive to candidates' agendas (p. 66). It is also suggested that both women and men may play to stereotypical issues to gain support (p. 67). For example, men may focus on the economy and defense, while women stress the environment and civil rights.

While the campaign managers surveyed said they focus mostly on issues, they also recognized the importance of personal traits. The candidates will play up stereotypically desirable traits in their campaigns. Of the personality traits candidates emphasized, the researchers found that the women's perceived strengths like "honesty" and "compassion" (p. 71) were rarely stressed.

Other researchers have looked at the impact of women as portrayed in the media, specifically in 1993's 103rd Congress (Carroll and Schreiber, 1997, p. 131-148). Focusing on women in Congress, not campaigning for a position, the study included more than 250 in-depth interviews with women members of Congress, staffers and lobbyists who worked on seven major policy issues that were discussed during the 103rd Congress.

More relevant to this study, the researchers conducted a *Lexis/Nexis* database search of 291 articles on women in the 103rd Congress published between January 1993 and October 1994 in 27 major newspapers (p. 133). Results indicated that stories about women in Congress declined after the "year of the woman" faded, and 14% of the articles about all women in Congress appeared in the style sections of newspapers (p. 137). The study also suggested that an increase in coverage of women

in Congress is at least partly attributed to coverage by female journalists. Biases and themes in coverage were also addressed in the content analysis, exposing a peculiar focus on Congresswomen's bathroom situations, stories about women being mistaken for staffers, and pieces about women juggling work and family life. A few stories discussed women's attire, but none was considered offensive. The analysis also indicated that Republican women were mentioned far less often than Democratic women in Congress, and in the Senate three of the freshmen senators were cited more frequently than senior Democratic senator Barbara Mikulski.

Three overall conclusions were made. First, the attention surrounding the "year of the woman" seemed to influence coverage of the women in the 103rd Congress, despite a decline in overall coverage following the election. Second, coverage is generally positive, especially on softer issues like women's health, abortion and sexual harassment. The third conclusion is that media coverage does not necessarily include biased information, such as comments on attire and appearance, but more often the media exclude more pertinent information. Women are not treated through media coverage like active members in the legislative process when it comes to policy-related topics outside of "women's" issues (p. 145). Despite their involvement in foreign affairs, international trade and regulatory reform, the researchers found little mention of Congresswomen in stories dealing with these issues.

The lives of women in Congress, including Barbara Mikulski (Robson, 1995) and Margaret Chase Smith (Sherman, 1993) have also been examined, but not

specifically media coverage prior to their elections. The Smith study noted that the media praised the senatorial candidate's "unwomanly" traits (p. 294).

Carol Gilligan (1982) and Belenky et al. (1986) studied how women approach politics differently than men. Gilligan concluded that there are distinctly male and female perspectives. The female's voice embraces mores of "responsibility, caring and interconnectedness," while men view "rules and individualism" (p. 172-173) as ideals. Belenky et al. found that women face obstacles of emotional, psychological and intellectual development that do not parallel the experiences of men.

Pippa Norris (1997) looked at the media's role in representing female world leaders through a gender-salient or gender-neutral perspective. The study was based on the amount of representation of female leaders in the news, sex-stereotyped coverage in terms of issues and personal traits, and the existence of gender frames, but no American leaders were included (p. 150). The research method compared each leader with her closest male counterpart (p. 156). "To measure the more subtle forms of sex stereotyping and gender framing, the study adopted a more focused, qualitative, and interpretative approach" (p. 157). Norris's study noted that media representation of women leaders has increased over the years, and rarely did "simple and crude sex-role stereotypes" (p. 159) appear.

In a study of the conditions that determined the political behavior of Americans in the presidential campaign of 1940, Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet (1968) found that the candidates themselves, not the issues, determined a vote change in most cases. In fact, of all the voters who changed their decision, not one mentioned either party's platform or either vice-presidential

nominee as a reason for change (p. 71-72). The candidates themselves and their party's presentation at convention determined the change in opinion and change in votes. Because every American voter could not attend the conventions, media coverage probably played an important role informing people of the conventions.

Group identifications have been of concern to social psychologists and communications researchers as a strong influence on public opinion for quite some time (Price, 1992, p. 56). Taking into consideration the Lazarsfeld study, group identifications of voters could have directly influenced public opinion and voting habits (Lazarsfeld et al., p. 137-149). At least one common group identification exists among American voters. They are all Americans. Despite the many differences in the group, commonalities may exist that affect public opinion—commonalities regarding people's attitudes toward gender as defined by commonly held stereotypes in the United States.

Kay Deaux (1976) discusses gender stereotypes and notes specific traits that have been found to be regarded as stereotypically male or female. Males are typically viewed as being "independent, objective, active, competitive, adventurous, self-confident, and ambitious," while women are "dependent, subjective, passive, not competitive, not adventurous, not self-confident, and not ambitious" (p. 13). Women are also seen as "tactful, gentle, aware of the feelings of others, and able to express tender feelings easily." In contrast, men are "blunt, rough, unaware of the feelings of others, and unable to express their own feelings" (p. 13).

Similarly, Rosenkrantz (1968) finds that male-valued or masculine traits, meaning traits associated with males, include the following: "aggressive,"

“independent,” “unemotional,” “hides emotions,” “objective,” “easily influenced,” “dominant,” “likes math and science,” “not excitable in a minor crisis,” “active,” “competitive,” “logical,” “worldly,” “skilled in business,” “direct,” “knows the way of the world,” “feelings not easily hurt,” “adventurous,” “makes decisions easily,” “never cries,” “acts as a leader,” “self-confident,” “not uncomfortable about being aggressive,” “ambitious,” “able to separate feelings from ideas,” “not dependent,” “not conceited about appearance,” “thinks men are superior to women,” and “talks freely about sex with men” (p. 291).

In the same study female-valued or feminine traits included the following: “does not use harsh language,” “talkative,” “tactful,” “gentle,” “aware of feelings of others,” “religious,” “interested in own appearance,” “neat in habits,” “quiet,” “strong need for security,” “appreciates art and literature,” and “expresses tender feelings” (p. 291).

FRAMING: A METHOD TO STUDY GENDER STEREOTYPING

Most newspapers, newsmagazines and television news reports strive to present an objective view of political candidates, but Robert Entman (1991) insists that “news organizations shape their reports to elicit favorable reactions from readers and viewers” (p. 7). Despite the absence of overt opinions about a subject, seemingly insignificant treatments to a news article may affect public opinion, without the reporters or editors even realizing they are doing it. They may simply be trying to please readers by producing a comfortably “digestible” story, free from openly conflictive language. Media influence on public opinion is a subject of constant debate in communication research, and framing may be a key to answer

some questions. Of interest in this study is whether media frame political candidates in terms of gender stereotypes. Media framing analysis could show that gender stereotypes most people do not consciously recognize could actually play a significant role in media coverage of political leaders.

History of Framing Theory

Sociologist Erving Goffman pioneered frame analysis in 1974. He was fascinated by how we all make mistakes in our daily lives, including the things we never notice, and he was convinced that daily life was much more complicated than we thought. Goffman said people's views of situations are constantly changing, and in his 1974 work, Frame Analysis, he described his own studies as chiefly addressing "secondary things" (Manning, 1980, p. 272). These changes in view are due to social cues, which are things people notice without even thinking about them. Unnoticed social cues can actually tell a person that a change is about to take place. These social cues or frames act as indicators for a simple set of expectations (Baran & Davis, 1995, p. 298-299). In Frame Analysis, he asks the questions:

How can everyday life be contrasted with other self-recognised activities such as games, ceremonies, plays, novels, the cinema?...How are these types of experience not only different from, but also like, everyday life? What do distinctions between everyday life and other forms reveal, obscure, or blur about such generically applied concepts as persons, characters, roles, bodies and selves? (Manning, 1980, p. 274)

Similarly, how is media coverage of political candidates reflective of the real candidate? Are there significant correlations between media coverage of political candidates and gender stereotypes? Or do the media readily use stereotypes and inhibit the progression of equality in socialization of gender roles? By the time a baby girl is handed a pink doll and a baby boy a blue ball, socialization has begun.

Socialization encourages boys to be assertive and assume leadership roles, while girls are urged to be sensitive and nurturing (Kahn & Gordon, 1997, p. 61). The media's submission to these unfailing biases could play a role in framing political candidates and affecting a woman's election chances.

Although Goffman initiated fame analysis, he borrowed the term "frame" from social scientist Gregory Bateson. Bateson used the 'frame' metaphor to include the frame that hangs around a picture to mark both the canvas and also that which is not the picture, but the frame itself. Bateson also described a frame as referring to both the literal and the conceptual definitions or understandings of words (Manning, 1980, p. 273). For example, a literal meaning for *booking* is loaning out something for a fee or renting. But the conceptual definition could be to give a book to someone. There are two meanings. One is not as conspicuous as the other, but it still exists.

Use of Framing Relevant to Study

In the same sense, the gender-valued traits in the Sex-Role Stereotypes and Self-Concepts in College Students study previously considered could have contradictory meanings with possible consequences. If they were included in a context that hid their potentially negative connotations by not overtly stating opinions, would consumers of media be able to disconnect their experience with the intended meaning of the terms? In other words, if the word "emotional" turned up in a newspaper article would it affect how the media consumer viewed the subject of the word? Would a reader understand it literally as "being passionate" or conceptually as "being weak"? And, could the person's experiences of socialization play a role,

making a female seem "weak" and a male "passionate"? As another example, if "confident" were used to describe a woman candidate, would it be perceived as meaning "self-assured" or "rude"?

This is significant to the study because of the importance of personal appeal to the voter. If media do indeed treat candidates in an objective manner in terms of personality traits, and because the voter does indeed look more to a candidate's personal appeal rather than his or her stand or issues, experience, etc., then the consumers' interpretation of personality attributes as they are related to specific genders, may be important. For example, if two competing candidates, a man and a woman, were framed using the same personality traits, voters' different interpretations of the words, literally or conceptually as related to either men or women, may play a role in determining their opinion of the candidate.

A 1991 study by Robert M. Entman looks at media coverage of two very similar events and the framing of each in several types of media. On September 1, 1983, a Soviet fighter plane shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, killing its 269 passengers and crew, and on July 3, 1988, a U.S. Navy ship shot down Iran Air Flight 655, killing its 290 passengers and crew. In both instances military officials identified a passenger plane as a possibly hostile target, and in both instances the bombing nation's officials claimed the shooting was justifiable.

Framing played a significant role in conveying to the American public the actual facts surrounding both the Korean AirLines and Iran Air Flight tragedies as well as attributing issues of guilt and morality. Entman looked at coverage in several media, including work published in *Time* and *Newsweek*, and he included a study of

keywords, phrases, and metaphors in coverage of these stories. By looking for consistencies in these items, his results from quantitative study supported the hypothesis that these seemingly simple words, though they may appear harmless, can actually shape how media consumers view an event. Part of the danger in this is that public opinions are shaped.

The newsmagazines' headlines influenced readers' opinions. For example, the first *Newsweek* cover after the KAL incident (September 13, 1983) was headed "Murder in the Air," and the headline for this cover title's accompanying article was "A Ruthless Ambush in the Sky." In the same light, the *Time* cover that week was "Shooting to Kill/The Soviets Destroy an Airliner" with the lead story titled "Atrocity in the Skies/The Soviets Shoot Down a Civilian Airliner." These headlines put all of the blame on the Soviets, and make them appear to be cold-blooded killers with no remorse or excuses. On the other hand, the *Newsweek* cover of the Iran incident attempts to offer an explanation for the U.S.'s actions with the headline "Why It Happened," while *Time* simply contributed a corner of the cover to Iran, saying "What Went Wrong in the Gulf."

The framing of the story, or the seemingly harmless use of simple words as opposed to others in each event's coverage, affected public opinion regarding each country's roles in the events. The Entman example may seem sensational compared to the differences between two political candidates, but it is simply an example on a larger scale that is easier to see the differences in coverage than in an election or a comparison of the treatments of two different people or groups.

Laura Ashley and Beth Olson's 1998 study, *Constructing Reality: Print Media's Framing of the Women's Movement, 1966 to 1986*, helps to bring frame analysis back into the sphere of media coverage and gender. The researchers coded 499 *New York Times* articles during a twenty-year period for, among other things, reporting on the appearance of women, such as the style and color of their dress, their bodies, and their hair and makeup (p. 265, 268). They found a significant number of references to the appearances of feminists (145 occurrences) compared to anti-feminists (12 occurrences). The researchers concluded that media framing served to "delegitimize" feminists and the feminist movement (p. 269). Also, Ashley and Olson cite M. Junior Bridge's study showing that men's appearances are generally not reported on in the media (p. 269).

Importance of Sources

Journalists count on sources for their information. But in many instances, including political campaigns, these sources have an ulterior motive. As Walter Lippmann said: "Every official is in some degree a censor...every leader is in some degree a propagandist" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 158). One must consider attribution in a news article when forming opinions and conclusions about a subject, including a political candidate. If a candidate is described negatively by his or her challenger in a political race, the source plays a role in evaluating the legitimacy of the comment. If a journalist accepts one source's view in favor of another source, the journalist's objectivity may be affected. Reporters find it useful to see the world from the perspectives of their sources (Paletz & Entman, 1981, p. 20). In covering political

racism, objectivity may be threatened if the perspective of one candidate is accepted over another candidate.

The Entman study, for instance, did not analyze the sources that journalists used for information about the two commercial airline tragedies. That the media rely heavily on governmental sources (Gans, 1979; Sigal, 1973) and that the government maintains a vast public relations operation to manipulate public opinion (Davis, 1987; Fulbright, 1971; Parenti, 1993; Wise, 1973; Yudof, 1984; Zagarell, 1984) are well documented. The media may have followed the lead of government officials in putting a pro-U.S. spin on the airliner accident.

SUMMARY

Gender stereotypes exist, and people tend to abide by the status quo (Walter Lippmann, 1922). Research shows that the media still treat women differently, and that masculine gender stereotypes are more valued than feminine gender stereotypes (Rosencrantz, 1968, p. 287). Research has shown that gender stereotyping occurs more frequently for women than for men (Kahn, 1992, p. 506), and that how a candidate's personality is covered by the media is indeed important to the candidate's campaigning (Kahn and Gordon, 1997). It has also been found that the subject matter and amount of media coverage of females in Congress is quite different than how and how much males in Congress are covered (Carroll and Schreiber, 1997). These findings demand that research continue regarding gender stereotyping and elected officials; frame analysis is a useful way to study such points in media coverage.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

SAMPLE STUDIED

Two 1998 U.S. Senate races were studied to assess the existence of personality gender stereotypes and to address the research questions. In each race, a male and a female candidate's media coverage was compared.

Media Content

To study media coverage of senatorial candidates and what Norris (1997) refers to as "subtle forms of sex stereotyping and gender framing" (p. 157), the race for the U.S. Senate seats in California and Colorado were studied, using content analysis. Coverage of Democrat incumbent Barbara Boxer and Republican challenger Matt Fong in the California race was used as an example in which a male candidate lost to a female candidate. This race also illustrated a case in which an incumbent beat a newcomer. Despite Boxer's re-election, it should be noted that she "withstood a furious challenge" from Fong toward the end of the race, fighting disappointing public opinion poll results to retain her job as senator ("The 1998 Elections," 1998, November 4). Colorado Republican incumbent Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Democrat Dorothy "Dottie" Lamm represented a Senate race in which the male incumbent was elected over a female candidate.

Although both incumbents won re-elections the fact that a man lost to a woman in one case and a woman lost to a man in the other is significant to the study. These two elections present diversity in terms of successful parties and genders. The

issue of incumbency seems to be important only in terms of the amount of media coverage given to each candidate.

The 1998 election was studied because it was six years—the duration of a Senate term—from the media frenzy surrounding the 1992 “year of the woman.” As the media were not specifically targeting women candidates, the amount of coverage should be more balanced between men and women. Also, looking at a race following the groundbreaking elections of 1992 provides a more timely foundation for future research of gender stereotypes and candidates.

Content Analysis

In addition to a systematic content analysis, a descriptive study was done. The *Lexis/Nexis* database was used to search the *New York Times* for articles about all four candidates, the *Los Angeles Times* for the California candidates, and the *Denver Post* for Colorado senatorial candidates. The period from September 7, 1998 (Labor Day is the official start of the campaign season) to November 4, 1998 (the day of the election) was searched. The *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times* were searched using the simple search terms “Barbara Boxer” and “Matt Fong.” The *Denver Post* and *New York Times* were searched using the comparable simple search terms “Ben Nighthorse Campbell” or “Ben Campbell” and “Dottie Lamm” or “Dorothy Lamm.”

Rationale

The *New York Times* was included because of its “national readership and reputation as an elite press” (Ashley & Olson, 1998, p. 265) and its longstanding position as the newspaper of record. The *Los Angeles Times* and the *Denver Post*

were chosen because they have the largest circulation of any state newspaper in California and Colorado respectively.

Each article was deemed salient before it was coded. For the article to be considered salient, the article had to be a news story. News stories, rather than editorials and polls, were studied because editorials and polls could represent blatantly biased beliefs or opinions. This study was concerned with evaluating objectivity in news media and the news journalists' coverage. Therefore, if *Lexis/Nexis* indicated that an article was from the Metro Desk, National Desk or by a staff writer, the article was considered in the coding. But, if the *Lexis/Nexis* database indicated in the "SECTION" or "HEADLINE" at the top of the printout that articles were editorials, perspective pieces, letters or opinion columns, the articles were not coded. A poll included opinion polls and polls in which the voter was questioned after exiting the voting booth. If a poll were embedded within the article or included at the end of the article, paragraphs that did not include just poll questions and results were coded. If a news story reported poll results within a paragraph, that paragraph was included because it was not just straight poll results. To be included in this study, articles had to contain at least two paragraphs that were specifically salient to the candidate in question. Any reference to the candidate made the paragraph salient. For example, paragraphs in a story about the Colorado race for the Senate with references to "the Republican incumbent" or "the former senator" were coded for Ben Nighthorse Campbell.

A distinction was made on the coding sheet to separate journalists' comments from matter attributed to a source, such as a voter, campaign manager or opponent,

regarding a candidate's personality traits. This distinction was made because unattributed material included word choices made specifically by the writer of the article, and his or her objectivity was at stake. For example, if a candidate were described negatively by his or her challenger in a political race, the source played a role in the evaluation of the legitimacy of the comment. The article's reader may consider that the comment is attributed to a candidate's opponent, and take it for what it is worth. Conversely, if a journalist makes a comment without attributing the material to a specific source, it appears to be a common fact, not a biased opinion. The journalist's objectivity could be called into question if unattributed material is used, particularly in the ambiguous matter of determining a person's specific personality traits.

The importance of an incumbent's "distinct advantage over challengers" (Graber 1997, p. 242) to attract additional attention through his or her official duties was considered in choosing which races to cover. Minor candidates and newcomers have a hard time getting media coverage simply because their chances of winning are questionable, and they lack the public platform that comes with holding office. Therefore, to offset the incumbency effect, two races were chosen, one in which the incumbent was a woman and one in which the incumbent was a man.

MEANING OF FRAMES

Based on the Rosenkrantz (1968) study and information from Deaux's (1976) work regarding stereotypes, gender-specific frames were defined by the presence of or an implication to certain characteristics. These characteristics were listed on the coding sheet, and their presence in an article was noted. To carry out a content

analysis of media coverage, all personality traits present in news stories about the candidates were recorded. Those characteristics not specifically listed in the Rosenkrantz study were compared to the listed characteristics so that equivalent terms could be included in the results. Personality traits that were found but were not equivalent to a gender trait were also listed on the coding sheet. If a recurring personality trait or traits emerged from these non-gender adjectives, they could serve as a starting point for further research.

The articles were coded for the following male-valued traits to define the masculine frame: "independent," "objective," "active," "competitive," "adventurous," "self-confident," "ambitious," "blunt," "rough," "unaware of the feelings of others," and "unable to express their own feelings." The female frame was defined by references or implications to being "dependent," "subjective," "passive," "not competitive," "not adventurous," "not self-confident," "not ambitious," "tactful, gentle," "aware of the feelings of others," and "able to express tender feelings easily" (Deaux, 1976, p. 13). Although the Rosenkrantz study was published 31 years ago, researchers still refer to its findings to illustrate masculine and feminine traits (Robson, 1995, p. 78; Deaux, 1976, p. 13).

The coding unit of analysis was each paragraph. Each element of analysis—the personality trait references—was counted to obtain more quantifiable and evidentiary results. For paragraphs that contained a number of personality trait references, each trait was coded individually. One double-sided coding sheet was completed for each article salient to a candidate. Therefore, if the same article was salient for both candidates, it was coded twice (once for each candidate).

INTERCODER RELIABILITY

A second coder coded 18 of the 142 salient articles as a measure of intercoder reliability. This equaled 12.67% of the total number of salient articles coded. The coder was not required to determine if an article was salient because this could have resulted in an inadequate number of coded articles. For example, if the coder was handed 25 articles, and only 5 were salient, the coder would have coded only 3.52% of the total number of salient articles. This small percentage would not be sufficient in establishing intercoder reliability. Both coders were required to count the total number of paragraphs in each salient article, and both found 469 total paragraphs for the 18 articles.

Holsti's equation¹ was used to calculate the percentage of agreement between coders on subjective variables. In the 18 articles used to test intercoder reliability, the first coder judged a total of 299 of 469 paragraphs as salient to a candidate; the second coder found a total of 293 of 469 paragraphs as salient to a candidate. The 293 paragraphs found by the second coder were also coded as salient by the first coder. Therefore, the percentage of agreement between coders on the number of paragraphs determined to be salient to a candidate was 98.72%. Intercoder reliability for decisions regarding personality attribute selection and attribution were determined using the 293 salient paragraphs as the number of coding decisions made. All of the gender-based personality traits were found in these salient paragraphs.

¹ $R = \frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$ Where R equals reliability; M equals the number of coding decisions in which two coders agree; and N equals the total number of coding decisions made by coder 1 and coder 2.

In those same 18 articles, both coders found three unattributed occurrences of "gentle," one unattributed occurrence of "self-confident," and one unattributed occurrence of "rough." The single coding disagreement was found in the "Other" category of traits. The first coder found five unattributed occurrences of "Other" adjectives, while the second coder found six unattributed occurrences of "Other" adjectives.

Altogether, the total number of coding decisions made by both coders was 293. This figure can be effectively used as the number of coding decisions because no two adjectives were found in the same paragraph. Therefore, the number of paragraphs the coders looked at can be used as the number of coding decisions made for each intercoder reliability coefficient.

For personality attribute selection, coders agreed 292 of 293 times. Therefore, the percentage of agreement between coders based on personality attribute selection, the actual category in which an adjective was grouped (i.e. "tactful," "gentle," "not ambitious," etc.), was 99.65%.

For decisions regarding attribution, coders also agreed 292 of 293 times. Therefore, the percentage of agreement between coders based on decisions made regarding attribution, "Quoted Material" or "Journalist's Total," was 99.65%.

The percentage of agreement did not indicate any significant differences between the two coders' decisions. Therefore, no adjustments were made to the data, and the first coder's decisions were used for the "Findings" calculations. The first coder coded the remaining 124 articles.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

OVERVIEW OF DATA

The *Lexis/Nexis* database found 243 total articles using the candidates' names. Of this group, 142 articles were judged salient according to the requirements devised for this study.

As was expected, the incumbents received more newspaper coverage than challengers. In fact, as shown in Table 1, incumbents were the subjects of more than two-thirds of the total number of candidate-related paragraphs. Barbara Boxer received 40.29% of the coverage and Ben Nighthorse Campbell received 27.13%². Matt Fong came in a close third with 24.25%, and Dottie Lamm's coverage was only 8.31% of the total. Therefore, the men received 51.38 % of the coverage and the female candidates received 48.6% of the coverage, a very slight difference between genders. The difference lies in looking at the winner/loser comparison. Winners or incumbents were referred to in 67.42 % of the total number of candidate-related paragraphs, while the losers/challengers had only 32.56% of the coverage.

Table 2 indicates differences in state and national media coverage of the candidates. The California race attracted more than twice as much coverage from the state's largest circulation newspaper than the Colorado race attracted from the *Denver Post*. In fact, Table 2 shows that the *Los Angeles Times* devoted 2,218 paragraphs to Boxer and Fong, while Campbell and Lamm received only 1,061 paragraphs of coverage from their home state paper. The *New York Times*, representing a national

paper, ignored the race in Colorado, based on the requirements for saliency of an article, but published 16 salient stories or 257 paragraphs about the California race.

RELATED TO RQ 1

(a) To what extent do the media use personality-related attributes to describe female candidates as compared to male candidates?

(b) To what extent do the media use personality-related attributes to describe winners/incumbents as compared to losers/challengers?

Results from coding the articles indicated to what extent the media used personality-related attributes to describe female candidates as compared to male candidates, and winners/incumbents compared to losers/challengers. It also indicated which specific attributes were used to describe each candidate.

The 1,876 salient paragraphs included a total of 80 gender-based traits. Of those 80 traits, 58 (72.5%) described female candidates, and 22 (27.5%) were used to describe male candidates. More specifically, 62.5% of the traits were used to describe Boxer, 10% were used to describe Lamm, 11.25% described Campbell, and 16.25% described Fong.

Because the amount of coverage of each candidate would inevitably be different, a figure was needed to compare each candidate's relative coverage. Because the number of traits and the number of salient paragraphs were found for each candidate, one such figure could be calculated. Dividing the total number of

² All tables relevant to the study appear in Appendix B.

gender traits into the total number of salient paragraphs for a particular candidate yields a measure of how often traits appeared. For winners/incumbents a gender trait appeared every 21.44 paragraphs. For losers/challengers a gender trait appeared every 29.09 paragraphs, as shown in Table 4. These figures indicate that losers/challengers were framed in terms of gender-based personality traits more often than winners/challengers, relative to the amount of coverage they received.

Female candidates were framed using gender traits much more often than male candidates were. In fact, one gender trait appeared every 15.72 paragraphs for female candidates. For males, one gender trait was found for every 43.81 paragraphs of coverage (Table 5).

More specifically, Boxer and Lamm were framed every 15.12 and 19.5 paragraphs respectively in paragraphs associated with them. Campbell and Fong were framed only every 56.55 and 35 paragraphs respectively, indicated in Table 4.

Comparing media coverage of winners/incumbents to losers/challengers, Table 6 shows the proportion of masculine personality attributes of winners/incumbents is higher (67.69%) than it is for losers/challengers (61.9%).

The most commonly used trait was "blunt," which was used 16 times, constituting 20% of the total number of gender traits used. In 15 of the 16 instances, the term was used to describe female candidates. "Active" was used 10 times, and "independent" was used seven times, as shown in Table 7.

For feminine traits, "gentle" was used a total of seven times. Five of these instances were to describe Matt Fong. "Subjective" was found six times and "not self-confident" five times, as indicated in Table 8.

Other non-gender related personality traits found are listed in Table 9.

RELATED TO RQ 2

(a) Do the media use feminine attributes more often to frame female candidates than male candidates?

(b) Do the media use masculine attributes more often to frame female candidates than male candidates?

Comparisons were made between coverage of candidates to determine whether the media framed the candidates according to either masculine or feminine stereotypes. This showed to what extent the media framed female candidates as possessing feminine personality traits, and framed male candidates as possessing masculine personality traits. It also showed to what extent females were framed with masculine traits and men were framed with feminine traits.

Of all 80 gender-related attributes used by the media, 66.25% were masculine and 33.75% were feminine, as shown in Table 10. Surprisingly, one half of the total number of traits were masculine terms used to describe the female candidates. Only 13 of the 80 traits (16.25%) were found to be masculine traits used to describe men.

All of the candidates were framed more often with masculine traits than with feminine, except for Matt Fong. Fong's coverage included 7 feminine traits, as shown in Table 8. Compared with his opponent, Fong's coverage was 53.84% feminine and Boxer's was only 34%. Of Dottie Lamm's eight gender-based traits, 87.5% were masculine. Her opponent, Ben Nighthorse Campbell received coverage

that was 77.77% masculine, including a total of nine masculine traits, all indicated in Table 10.

Table 11 shows that Boxer and Campbell's gender framing was 32.2% feminine and 67.79% masculine. Their losing challengers' gender framing was 38.09% feminine and 61.9% masculine. This does not indicate an outstanding difference in gender framing between winners and losers.

RELATED TO RQ 3

To what extent are references to candidates' personality traits attributed to sources as opposed to being published without attribution?

Journalist's attributed statements and quoted or attributed material related to personality traits of candidates were compared, providing evidence of not only the journalists' choice of words, but also their choices in including such stereotypes by their sources.

Of the attributed material, 70.83% was masculine gender stereotyping, and 29.16% was feminine. Unattributed material accounted for 64.28% masculine and 35.71% feminine gender traits, as shown in Table 12.

Table 13 also shows that only 30% of the total number of gender traits included in the media coverage were attributed material. Seventy percent of the gender framing came from material published by the journalist without attribution.

The difference between the use of attributed/unattributed material for males compared to females is much more extreme. The media used attributed material to

frame female candidates about one-fourth of the time, but framed male candidates with attributed material 40.9% of the time (Table 14).

Another interesting finding was the comparison of election outcome or incumbency and the amount of unattributed material used. More than half of all of the gender-based traits found were unattributed and were used to describe winners/incumbents (Table 15).

Because the amount of coverage between incumbents and challengers is so different, in order to compare the amount of attributed/unattributed material used by the media, the research looked specifically at each category of candidate. Table 16 shows that unattributed gender traits of winners/incumbents' covered 72.88% of their total gender framing, for a total of 43 instances. Losers/challengers had 61.9% unattributed, for a total of 13 instances.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

DISCUSSION RELEVANT TO FINDINGS

A gender trait occurred almost three times more often for women's coverage than for men's coverage (Tables 5 and 6). For example, if the average voter read about four, 40-paragraph articles related to a male candidate and four articles of the same length related to a female candidate, with every paragraph related to the candidate in consideration, the reader would read about 3.65 gender-related traits describing males and 10.17 gender-related traits describing females (calculated from Table 5). It should be noted, however, that this figure includes Boxer's disproportionately large amount of coverage.

The higher frequency of gender framing for women may also be the result of female candidates' attempts to cast off female stereotypes and convey more masculine traits, intentionally playing to stereotypes in order to gain support. But Kahn and Gordon's findings (1997)—that female candidates stress issues more than male candidates while campaigning—seem to contradict that suggestion. In conjunction with their survey of campaign managers, it appears that the media are simply not focusing on candidates' intended agendas. Given the amount of framing of female candidates compared to male candidates, what would media coverage be like if female candidates' campaigns concentrated as much on personality as male candidates? Would a woman's campaign be covered with even more focus on her personality?

Considering the great amount of gender framing of female candidates compared to male candidates, the content of male candidates' media coverage must be considered. If the media concentrate more on women's personalities than on men's, are the men receiving more hard-issue coverage, despite the fact that a man's campaign manager attempts to draw more attention to his or her candidate's personality than a female candidate's campaign manager does? Because research has shown that voters seem to be more concerned with a candidate's personality than his or her position on hard issues, this excessive concentration on personality traits could actually give women the upper hand—if they are framed in a way that impresses the electorate (Lazarsfeld et al., 1968). This impressive way of framing may be for the candidate to appear more masculine than feminine. Indeed, winners were framed as being more masculine than losers were (Table 11).

Voters should be able to read news stories about candidates that are as objective as possible. If the media treat men and women's coverage differently, then how is this objective? Instead of her stand on hard issues, a woman may have to concentrate on how she is portrayed in the newspaper, because the media are more likely to report on her personality than that of a competing male candidate. But, Kahn and Gordon (1997) found that campaign managers for women in past Senate elections tended to emphasize issues more than male candidates did. Their evidence suggests that the media, in relation to the findings from this study, do not recognize or report on what candidates really want to communicate. The Carroll and Schreiber (1997) study, which examined media coverage of women who were in Congress, found that even after a female was elected, coverage of policy-related stories

excluded women. The male candidates, not as interested in issues, according to Kahn and Gordon (1997), may actually receive more hard-issue coverage by the media, while issue-concentrated women's campaigns receive more coverage on personal attributes than the males do.

Coverage of both candidates from the Colorado race included more masculine traits than feminine traits. In fact, Lamm was framed as being more masculine than the male winner, Campbell. The female winner of the California race, Boxer, was also framed as being more masculine than the male loser was. Therefore, the findings do not indicate any connection between the framing of the candidate as either masculine or feminine and the outcome of the race. The findings indicate more of a role reversal. After being faulted by critics for focusing on dresses and bathrooms in Congress, perhaps the media are trying to be as politically correct as possible. In this case, they may be going beyond the call of duty to frame women as being more masculine than men.

However, the dominance of masculine traits strongly suggests that these characteristics are more appealing to voters than feminine traits are; or, this abundance of masculine traits could indicate an assumption by campaigning candidates that masculine traits are more valued to voters. If Price's (1992, p. 50) definition of attitudes is considered, masculine traits seem to be valued qualities used by candidates as building blocks for positive public opinion. Perhaps candidates communicate "bluntness" over "tact" and "competitiveness" over "non-competitiveness" because these valued attributes will help a candidate gain voters' support. If attributed material coded in the study is any indication of candidates'

motives, candidates are pushing these personality traits in their campaigns to get support; indeed, attributed material is more masculine than unattributed material (Table 12). Another rationale for this large number of masculine traits could be that the adjectives used in this research are based on a study that is over 30 years old. Perhaps "dependence" is no longer a feminine trait. Maybe "ambition" and "adventurousness" are just as common to the women of today as they are to the men.

The similarities in framing between men and women could be a sign of progress in socialization. The media's more balanced use of masculine and feminine traits between male and female candidates may have played a role in bringing about a more impartial arena for political races, despite the fact that women are still framed more often. In fact, in a content analysis of media coverage from 1982 to 1986, Kahn found that female stereotyping of female candidates was pervasive, while men were not described using masculine stereotypes at all (1992). According to the findings from this study, times have indeed changed. Both male and female candidates were framed, but both were framed as being more masculine than feminine. The "year of the woman" of 1992, described by some as a fluke, may not have been such an oddity. Perhaps it will serve as a milestone in women's political history, a time when women emerged as steadfast, serious competitors in political races.

Another interesting implication can be made in light of that fact that nearly 70 percent of the gender-related traits used were masculine, half of these were used to describe the two female candidates (Table 10), and unattributed material was much more prevalent than attributed (Table 14). Perhaps female candidates are trying to project a more masculine image in campaigns, or maybe journalists are simply

choosing to frame women in this way. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to objectively measure whether this projection of a more masculine or feminine image is by the candidate's design or journalists' bias. But the findings prompt one to ask: If the media are coming up with this gender framing on their own, how fair is media coverage in presenting candidates in an objective light?

The much higher number of occurrences of unattributed gender-based traits in relation to female candidates is a pertinent area of concern. According to Table 14, women were framed using unattributed material for 74.13% of their total gender traits. In contrast, for male candidates 59.09% of their total gender traits was unattributed material. If the media do indeed publish more unattributed gender traits than attributed traits, and if they tend to frame female candidates more often than males, the consequences could be a need for the female to promote, refine, and concentrate more on her image for the sake of the media than men do.

These figures bring into question the objectivity of the press. More frequent framing of female than male candidates in news stories might reflect journalistic objectivity if such statements were attributed to political detractors. Then framing could be chalked up to journalists simply reporting gender-biased statements made by others. This study indicates, however, that the majority of gender traits are not attributed to political opponents, but rather come from the writers themselves—writers who apparently ignore fundamental cautions against editorializing in news stories.

Table 16 indicates that gender traits describing winners/incumbents included more unattributed material than that of losers/challengers. One common sense reason

for this is that the media are more familiar with incumbents. They have served in office for years, and reporters simply know their personalities better than challengers, who perhaps have not been in the public's interest as much prior to campaigning for senator. Assumptions have already been made about incumbents' personalities, and the media simply use what they know.

Another explanation for this rather small discrepancy could be that the journalist's unattributed comments played a definite role in influencing public opinion. Because the winners received a greater percentage of unattributed material, perhaps this affected voters' actions at the polls more than attributed material. The reader may trust the journalist more than sources when evaluating a candidate. If the findings do indeed indicate a voter's tendency to trust the journalist's unattributed material rather than his or her sources' material, the subject of attributed versus unattributed material should be further studied.

Overall, results show that gender framing occurs much more frequently for females than for male candidates, and all candidates are generally framed as being more masculine than feminine. Also, unattributed gender-based personality traits occur much more frequently than attributed material—especially for the female candidates.

LIMITATIONS TO RESEARCH

One limitation to this study was the disproportionately large amount of media coverage given to one of the candidates, Barbara Boxer. The fact that Boxer's daughter was married to Hillary Clinton's brother brought a lot of media attention to the senatorial candidate during the Clinton sex scandal. Public opinion regarding

Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky, the impeachment charges, and questions of morality were hot issues during the candidates' campaigning period. Boxer's relationship, not only by party but also by family, made her a target of the media to take an immediate stand on the president's original denial of accusations of sexual misconduct. Her hesitance in supporting or condemning the president led to much criticism and media coverage. This is one reason the amount of coverage of Boxer surpassed the other candidates studied.

The large amount of media coverage of Barbara Boxer is significant because it somewhat skews the results. Her coverage includes 40.29% of the total number of candidate-salient paragraphs coded (Table 1). Such a large amount of Boxer coverage makes it difficult to generalize the implications to other campaigns or to indicate a definite change in political races overall. For example, despite the fact that women were framed more often than men were, 13 of the 53 masculine traits found were occurrences of "blunt" used to describe Boxer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The content analysis found that gender stereotyping of male and female candidates is not necessarily drawn down gender lines, with men being framed as stereotypically male, and females being framed as stereotypically female. One reason to explain this, despite its seemingly positive implications, may be that the adjectives coded are no longer associated with either men or women. The traits may not even be socially-desirable anymore. Rosencrantz's study from 1968 presents findings that are interesting and rather surprising, but it needs to be brought up to date. If it were

revised, it could better serve to answer many of the questions posed in this thesis, and it would illustrate a more historical perspective on changing gender stereotypes.

In regard to Bateson's (Manning, 1980, p. 273) definition of framing regarding different interpretations of common terms, the fact that women were framed more masculinely than men should be addressed. If an experiment were conducted to determine whether these women were actually viewed more positively, based on the fact that the masculine coded adjectives were socially-desirable traits, the existence of different interpretations due to the candidate's sex could be evaluated. For example, if participants in an experiment viewed the female candidates as being "gentler" or "less ambitious" than the male candidates, a more conceptual definition, based more on the candidate's gender than the actual adjective, may have been used. In this example, instead of seeing that the women were not as gentle as the men in the media coverage, gender stereotypes might have led participants to simply accept that the women were gentler. This possible phenomenon in framing should be explored in light of the amount of masculine framing of female candidates.

The results also determined the amount of gender stereotyping that took place in the media coverage of these two senatorial races, which could serve as a starting point for further evaluation of framing of political candidates in terms of gender stereotypes. Perhaps times have indeed changed. A more historical perspective spanning several years should be done to indicate possible changes over time. Elections could be of a type other than senatorial, but could still focus on gender stereotyping.

Although the focus of the study was not to look at each individual gender-based personality attribute, the separate coding of each attribute shows which personality characteristics were most widely used by each paper for each candidate. For example, the most commonly used traits for men, women, losers and winners are noted in Tables 7 and 8. Using this study as a starting point, future research could more specifically address whether males, females, winners, losers, incumbents or challengers are described in very consistent terms by the media. For example, could the term "blunt," which was used to describe Boxer 13 times, actually be a common term to describe incumbents in political elections?

Non gender-related attributes were included to indicate any recurring adjectives as a foundation for further study. Table 9 lists such traits, but no specific adjectives seem to consistently reappear. Terms referring to Boxer's "hypocrisy" appear several times, but these are all related to her relationship to the Clinton scandal. The Lewinsky matter is a unique situation that can not be generalized for further research.

The inclusion of both state and national newspapers in the study allows a comparison between the frequency of instances of framing by each, as well as the prevalence of attributed and unattributed material in each. Despite the fact that this study did not indicate any significant findings regarding gender trait differences between state and national coverage, this topic might be interesting to address on a larger scale.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings overall, it seems the greatest challenge for candidates is to figure out exactly how they should be framed by the media in a positive manner. Also, the implication that journalists fail to faithfully follow candidate' agendas may be a sign of objectivity in reporting. Despite some discrepancies in the amount of gender-biased trait usage for each candidate, perhaps this is less pertinent than the media's efforts toward objectivity. How a person's personality is assessed is a subjective judgment. Because people interpret things differently, whether it is an action, a criticism, a stance or how one presents one's self, personality is not a matter of fact. A political candidate may support a bill, stand up for a certain group's rights or denounce a competitor's actions. These are facts. Whether a candidate is outspoken, gentle or attentive to voters' feelings is debatable. But, according to the findings, these personality traits do not saturate media coverage. This appears to be evidence of the media's tendency to be objective, while still treating female and male candidates differently.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CODING DOCUMENTS

Coding Sheet**Total number paragraphs** _____

In _____ coverage (September 7-Nov. 4, 1998)

Article Date: _____ Article name: _____

A. Female frame characteristics:

1— dependent

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

2— subjective

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

3— passive

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

4— not competitive

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

5— not adventurous

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

6— not self-confident

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

7— not ambitious

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

8— tactful

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

9— gentle

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

10— aware of the feelings of others

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

11— able to express tender feelings easily

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

12— Other (specify):

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

B. Male frame characteristics:

1— independent

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

2— objective

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

3— active

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

4— competitive

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

5— adventurous

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

6— self-confident

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

7— ambitious

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

8— blunt

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

9— rough

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

10— unaware of the feelings of others

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

11— unable to express their own feelings

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

12— Other (specify):

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

_____ Quoted Material Total _____ Journalist's Total _____

CODER INSTRUCTION SHEET

Framing and Gender-Stereotyped Personality Traits:

A study of media coverage of senatorial candidates in the 1998 election

One double-sided coding sheet will be completed for each article salient to a candidate. Therefore, if the same article is salient for both candidates, it will be coded twice (once for each candidate). A sample coding sheet is provided to help illustrate the coding process. You will be supplied with the articles to be coded, the coding sheets, a pen or pencil, and Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus. *Each candidate will be coded for both feminine and masculine personality traits, regardless of the candidate's gender.* There is no order in which the coding process must be completed on the coding sheet. You will probably have to refer to both sides of the coding sheet often to check and see if a characteristic is listed or not.

General Information—1 through 6

The *initials* of the candidate you are coding the article for should be entered in line 1. The *name of the newspaper* in which the article appears should be listed in line 2. The *date* of the article's publication and the *title or headline* should be noted in lines 3 and 4 respectively.

Input the *total number of paragraphs in the article* in the space marked 5, and input the *total number of paragraphs that refer to the candidate* in space marked 6. A reference to the candidate may include the candidate's name (i.e. Barbara Boxer or Boxer), or it could be a less straightforward, but still definite, reference to the candidate (i.e. her, the Democratic candidate or Fong's opponent). Just be sure the reference is definitely referring to the candidate you're coding for. If there is any question, do not count the reference in the total number of paragraphs in the space marked 6. If a poll is included *within* an article, and the article is otherwise deemed salient, the paragraph(s) with poll results should not be counted in the number of paragraphs with references to the candidate (space 6). Do not include photo captions in the number of paragraphs counted in spaces 5 or 6.

A. Female frame characteristics—7 through 9

"Female frame characteristics" include any of the eleven personality traits listed under this heading. You will be coding each article for these and other characteristics if they refer directly to the candidate you're concerned with (initials appear in line 1). A tick mark will indicate each characteristic found, and can be entered in lines marked 7, so that tallying can be done easily after each article is coded. A total number of tick marks will be included in lines marked 8 or 9 for each characteristic coded.

Characteristics Not Listed

References to the candidate's personality that are not specifically listed should also be included. In many cases an unlisted personality trait will have a synonym to a listed trait. For example, a candidate may be referred to as being "submissive" or "laid-back." When a case like this occurs, you should refer to the thesaurus to check

for synonyms. For “submissive” and “laid-back,” “passive” is a synonym, and these adjectives should be coded under the “passive” heading.

If a personality trait does not fit into any of the listed characteristics, just note the trait under number “12—Other.” It is also important to check the context of the sentence to make sure your interpretation makes sense.

Always jot down the trait you coded off to the side of the tick mark on the coding sheet, so that you can refer back to words for which you’ve found synonyms.

Quoted Material or Journalist’s

You should also note whether the reference is quoted/attributed material or the journalist’s choice of words. For example:

Lamm appeared *sensitive to the voters’ feelings*. “She has been very *polished* in the race with Campbell,” her campaign manager told representatives at the press conference. Campbell disregarded the compliments, saying his opponent was too *gentle* concerning the issue of guns in schools.

In the above case, “sensitive to the voters’ feelings” would be coded with a tick mark under number “10—aware of the feelings of others,” and as the “Journalist’s” choice of words (line 9). Her campaign manager’s reference to Lamm as “polished” requires the thesaurus. It would be marked under number “8—tactful,” and as “Quoted Material,” because the journalist quoted someone else (line 8). In the third paragraph, Campbell reportedly called Lamm “gentle.” In this case, “gentle” is attributed to Campbell, therefore it would be counted as “Quoted Material” on the coding sheet. When jotting down any characteristic, note whether or not it was “Quoted Material” or the “Journalist’s.”

B. Male frame characteristics:

“Male frame characteristics” should be treated exactly like the “Female frame characteristics.” Include any of the eleven personality traits listed under this heading in the same manner. If a personality trait does not fit into any of the listed characteristics and a comparable synonym can not be found in the thesaurus, just note the trait under number “12—Other.” It makes no difference on which side of the coding sheet you list *any* of the “12—Other” characteristics.

Double-Check

When you have completed coding an article, simply double-check to make sure all of the applicable information has been noted, and start with the next article using a new coding sheet.

Coding SheetTotal number paragraphs 5 6
1 In 2 coverage (September 7-Nov. 4, 1998)Article Date: 3 Article name: 4**A. Female frame characteristics:**

1— dependent

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

2— subjective

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

3— passive

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

4— not competitive

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

5— not adventurous

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

6— not self-confident

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

7— not ambitious

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

8— tactful

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

9— gentle

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

10— aware of the feelings of others

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

11— able to express tender feelings easily

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

12— Other (specify):

7 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 97 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 97 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 97 Quoted Material Total 8 Journalist's Total 9

B. Male frame characteristics:

1— independent

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

2— objective

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

3— active

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

4— competitive

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

5— adventurous

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

6— self-confident

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

7— ambitious

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

8— blunt

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

9— rough

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

10— unaware of the feelings of others

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

11— unable to express their own feelings

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

12— Other (specify):

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

_____ 7 _____ Quoted Material Total __ 8 __ Journalist's Total __ 9 __

APPENDIX B
TABLES

Table 1: Amount of Coverage Per Candidate

	<u>Winners/Incumbents</u>		<u>Losers/Challengers</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<i>Boxer (female)</i>	<i>Campbell (male)</i>	<i>Lamm (female)</i>	<i>Fong (male)</i>	<i>All cand.</i>
Articles	42.95%	21.12%	12.67%	23.23%	100%
	61	30	18	33	142
Paragraphs	40.29%	27.13%	8.31%	24.25%	100%
	756	509	156	455	1876

Note: Information from Table 1 is used for calculations in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 2: Coverage by Candidate by Newspaper
Articles (# Paragraphs)

Newspaper Element	Winners/Incumbents		Losers/Challengers		No Specific Candidate	Totals (paragraphs)
	<i>Boxer</i> (female)	<i>Campbell</i> (male)	<i>Lamm</i> (female)	<i>Fong</i> (male)		
LAT	50 (683)	N/A	N/A	28 (424)	(1,111)	(2,218)
Den P	N/A	30 (509)	18 (156)	N/A	(396)	(1,061)
NYT	11 (73)	0	0	5 (31)	(153)	(257)
Totals	61 (756)	30 (509)	18 (156)	33 (455)	(1,507)	(3,383)

Notes: "LAT" = Los Angeles Times, "NYT" = for New York Times, and "Den P" = Denver Post. A total of 243 articles were found by LEXIS-NEXIS ; 142 were deemed salient.

Table 3: Gender Trait Usage by Gender
Number of traits used (Percentage of the total number)

Personality Traits	Female Cand.		Male Cand.		Totals
	<i>Boxer</i>	<i>Lamm</i>	<i>Campbell</i>	<i>Fong</i>	All cand.
Total	50 (62.5%)	8 (10%)	9 (11.25%)	13 (16.25%)	80 (100%)

Table 4: Amount of Framing Per Candidate by Election Outcome
Number of paragraphs per gender trait by election outcome (Total number of traits/
Total number of paragraphs)

	Winners/Incumbents		Losers/Challengers		Average
	<i>Boxer</i> (female)	<i>Campbell</i> (male)	<i>Lamm</i> (female)	<i>Fong</i> (male)	All cand.
# of paragraphs per trait	15.12 (50/756)	56.55 (9/509)	19.5 (8/156)	35 (13/455)	23.45 (80/1876)
Ave. # paragraphs per trait	21.44 (59/1265)		29.09 (21/611)		

Table 5: Amount of Framing Per Candidate by Gender
Number of paragraphs per gender trait by gender (Total number of traits/
Total number of paragraphs)

	Female Cand.		Male Cand.		Average
	<i>Boxer</i> (winner)	<i>Lamm</i> (loser)	<i>Campbell</i> (winner)	<i>Fong</i> (loser)	All cand.
# of paragraphs per trait	15.12 (50/756)	19.5 (8/156)	56.55 (9/509)	35 (13/455)	23.45 (80/1876)
Ave. # paragraphs per trait	15.72 (58/912)		43.81 (22/964)		

Table 6: Gender Trait Usage for All Candidates by Election Outcome
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of that number

Personality Traits	Winner/Incumbent		Loser/Challenger		Totals
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>All cand.</i>
Feminine	19	32.2%	8	38.09%	27 or 33.75%
Masculine	40	67.69%	13	61.9%	53 or 66.37%
Total	59	100%	21	100%	80 or 100%

Table 7:

Masculine Gender Trait Usage by Candidate

Masculine Personality Traits	Winners/Incumbents		Losers/Challengers		Totals
	<i>Boxer (female)</i>	<i>Campbell (male)</i>	<i>Lamm (female)</i>	<i>Fong (male)</i>	
independent	4	3	0	0	7
objective	0	0	1	0	1
active	8	0	1	1	10
competitive	0	1	1	0	2
adventurous	0	0	0	0	0
self-confident	2	2	1	1	6
ambitious	1	1	1	0	3
blunt	13	0	2	1	16
rough	2	0	0	2	4
unaware of the feelings of others	3	0	0	1	4
unable to express tender feelings easily	0	0	0	0	0
Total	33	7	7	6	53

Table 8: Feminine Gender Trait Usage by Candidate

Feminine Personality Traits	Winners/Incumbents		Losers/Challengers		Totals
	<i>Boxer (female)</i>	<i>Campbell (male)</i>	<i>Lamm (female)</i>	<i>Fong (male)</i>	
dependent	1	0	0	0	1
subjective	6	0	0	0	6
passive	3	0	0	1	4
not competitive	0	0	0	0	0
not adventurous	0	0	0	0	0
not self-confident	3	1	0	1	5
not ambitious	0	1	0	0	1
tactful	2	0	1	0	3
gentle	2	0	0	5	7
aware of the feelings of others	0	0	0	0	0
able to express tender feelings easily	0	0	0	0	0
Total	17	2	1	7	27

Table 9: Non-gender-related Personality Traits by candidate

Candidate	Traits
Barbara Boxer	Angry, Irate, Mad (4 times) Contemplative Dedicated Defensive Desperate Disciplined Even-tempered Feisty (3 times) Fierce High-voltage Hospitable Hypocritical, Hypocrite, Hypocrisy (8 times) Leading, (her "leadership") Polarizing (3 times) Pointed Proudest Reliable Scrappy Uncompromising Vulnerable, Vulnerability (2 times) Weary
Matt Fong	Edgy Serious Sympathetic Threat Vulnerable
Ben N. Campbell	Bitter (he has "bitterness") Inconsistent, Lacks consistency (2 times) Leading (his "leadership")
Dottie Lamm	Admirable Frustrated Leading (a "leader") Moral (2 times) Whiny

Table 10: Gender Trait Usage for Each Candidate by Gender
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of the total number

Personality Traits	Female Cand.		Male Cand.		Totals
	Boxer	Lamm	Campbell	Fong	All cand.
Feminine	17 (34%)	1 (12.5%)	2 (22.22%)	7 (53.84%)	27 (33.75%) 53 (66.25%)
Masculine	33 (66%)	7 (87.5%)	7 (77.77%)	6 (46.15%)	
Feminine	18 (31.03%)		9 (40.9%)		
Masculine	40 (68.96%)		13 (59.09%)		
Total	58 (100%)		22 (100%)		80 or 100%

Table 11: Gender Trait Usage by Election Outcome
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of the total number

Personality Traits	Winner/Incumbent		Loser/Challenger	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Feminine	19	32.2%	8	38.09%
Masculine	40	67.79%	13	61.9%
Total	59	100%	21	100%

Table 12: Gender Trait Usage by Use of Attribution
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of the total number

Personality Traits	Attributed		Unattributed	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Feminine	7	29.16%	20	35.71%
Masculine	17	70.83%	36	64.28%
Total	24	100%	56	100%

Table 13: Gender Trait Usage for All Candidates by Use of Attribution
Number (Percentage)

Personality Traits	Attributed		Unattributed		Totals
	Male Cand.	Female Cand.	Male Cand.	Female Cand.	
Feminine	2 (2.5%)	5 (6.25%)	7 (8.75%)	13 (16.25%)	27 (33.75%)
Masculine	7 (8.75%)	10 (12.5%)	6 (7.5%)	30 (37.5%)	53 (66.25%)
Total	9 (11%)	15 (19%)	13 (16%)	43 (54%)	80 (100%)

Table 14: Attribution of Gender Trait Usage by Candidate Gender
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of the total number

Personality Traits	Male Candidates		Female Candidates	
	n	%	n	%
Attributed	9	40.90%	15	25.86%
Unattributed	13	59.09%	43	74.13%
Total	22	100%	58	100%

Table 15: Attribution of Gender Trait Usage by Election Outcome
Number (Percentage)

Personality Traits	Attributed		Unattributed		Totals
	Winner/Incum.	Loser/Chall.	Winner/Incum.	Loser/Chall.	
Feminine	5 (6.25%)	2 (2.5%)	14 (17.5%)	6 (7.5%)	27 (33.75%)
Masculine	11 (13.75%)	6 (7.5%)	29 (36.25%)	7 (8.75%)	53 (66.25%)
Total	16 (20%)	8 (10%)	43 (53.75%)	13 (16.25%)	80 (100%)

Table 16: Attribution of Gender Trait Usage for Each Election Outcome Category
n = Number of traits used % = Percentage of the total number

Personality Traits	Winners/Incumbents		Losers/Challengers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Attributed	16	27.11%	8	38.09%
Unattributed	43	72.88%	13	61.90%
Total	59	100%	21	100%

VITA

Casey McDonald Patrick was born in Milan, Tennessee, on March 9, 1975. She attended the University School of Jackson, where she graduated in May 1993. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mass Communication from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in May 1997. Casey enrolled in the University of Tennessee's Master's program in Communications in January 1998, to better prepare her for a career in journalism. While in school, she worked at the Amputee Coalition of America as Editorial Assistant for *inMotion* magazine. The master's degree was received in August 1999. She got hitched a month later.