

Spring 2019

The Effect of Threat on Preferences for Male Versus Female Candidates

Marley Sandberg

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/honorsthesis>

Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Sandberg, Marley, "The Effect of Threat on Preferences for Male Versus Female Candidates" (2019). *Honors Theses, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*. 111.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/honorsthesis/111>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors Program at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses, University of Nebraska-Lincoln by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

The Effect of Threat on Preferences for Male versus Female Candidates

An Undergraduate Honors Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
University Honors Program Requirements
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

by

Marley M. Sandberg, B.A.
Political Science, Women's and Gender Studies
College of Arts and Sciences

14 February 2019

Faculty Mentors:

Ingrid J. Haas, Ph.D., Political Science

Sarah Gervais, Ph.D., Psychology

Abstract

In the United States, there is a continuing question of why the political bodies of the government, (i.e. the Senate and the House of Representatives) lack descriptive representation for women (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). We have seen a growing body of research that tries to explain this lack of female politicians. While many explanations have been found that partially explain this, such as incumbent status favoring men, and fewer political role models for women (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007), there still has been no definitive answer. There is reason to believe that threat may play a role in a lack of female political leaders, as threat has been found to create powerful shifts in political attitudes in individuals that may make them prefer male candidates over female candidates (Jost & Thórisdóttir, 2011). This study examines the relationship between threat and preferences, voting intentions, and stereotypes of male versus female candidates with gendered descriptions. In order to examine this question, we manipulated threat using mortality salience (used in previous Terror Management Theory studies, e.g., Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989) and had participants answer questions regarding either a male or female candidate with a gendered description (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). We find in this study that threat does not have an impact on preferences, voting intention, or perception of gendered traits. This research does, however, demonstrate the need for further research regarding threat and candidate gender.

Keywords: threat, candidate gender, political attitudes, stereotype, candidate preference

Introduction

The United States currently has a very low proportion of female politicians to male politicians and has never had a female president, despite a woman being nominated in the 2016 election. While there are currently no legal barriers for women to overcome if they decide to run for office in the United States, descriptive representation remains low (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). The U.S. Senate currently has 25% women, and the House of Representatives currently has 23.4% women, while other countries, such as Bolivia and Costa Rica, having far better representation for women in their political bodies (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). Representation does remain higher in state governments in the United States than we see in the federal government, however, representation in state governments still remains low, with numbers well below 50% (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). While there are many factors that could be contributing to this lack of women in politics, one relevant factor may be threat. Americans often feel threatened by various factors. Some of the biggest perceived threats that Americans see are ISIS (an Islamic terrorist group), global climate change, and cyber attacks (Poushter & Manevich, 2017), and this perception of threat could affect the population's preferences, especially when it comes to politicians they are voting into office. This may be leading to more men being elected than women because voters could perceive men as being more competent in handling the threats Americans feel than women.

To understand how gender and politics are related, one must first understand gender as a general concept. The term gender refers to a status of either masculine or feminine. These concepts are socially and psychologically constructed and informed along the lines of the psychic (how one understands their gender), and how one performs their

gender. (Butler, 2004). While many often confuse gender with sex, it differs in the fact that sex is a biological concept, whereas gender is an achieved status created through interactions. In this regard, it is possible for one's preferred and performed gender to be different than the sex that individual was assigned at birth. Being as gender is a cultural concept, it has led to the creation of stereotypes along gender lines. Stereotypes are defined as pervasive and remarkably uniform differences in the personality traits, physical traits, and role-related behaviors ascribed to perceived groups (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). Women are a group that is often plagued by different stereotypes, including those about their professions and personalities. One factor that affects stereotypes is status. Someone with higher perceived status is seen as more competent, while someone with lower status is seen as possessing more warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002). Given that women are often perceived to have lower status than men, they are often seen as warmer and less competent. Stereotypes also often reflect actual observations of daily life. If people often observe a certain group of people engaging in an activity, they will believe that those people are more suited to that specific activity (Eagly & Steffen, 1984).

This is especially relevant to the present research since the concept of women as a group has been present throughout much of history, and in almost all societies, women have been seen in the domestic sphere (Kelly-Gadol, 1976). In the past century, women have often been observed in American culture as being housewives and mothers. This has shaped stereotypes towards women, and has led to women being stereotyped as more fitted towards domestic tasks. These activities are seen as more communal or warm, rather than agentic or competent and therefore, the stereotypes surrounding women have placed them into these categories. (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Fiske et al., 2002). Women who go

against these stereotypes (e.g., career women, feminists, childless women) are generally respected, but they are not usually well-liked, and more “traditional” women (e.g., mothers, stay-at-home wives) are pitied, well-liked, but not respected (Fiske et al., 2002).

Stereotypes, therefore, have created a society where women are commonly perceived to be best suited for more domestic roles than those in the working or political world.

Gender and stereotypes can continue to negatively affect women when they decide to run for political office. As mentioned above, representation for women remains low in American politics despite the removal of legal barriers. The literature offers many different suggestions as to different factors that play a role in this lack of representation. This includes the fact that there continues to be fewer women running for office than men. This is partly because men are more interested in politics than women, and also see themselves as more qualified for political positions (Paxton, Kunovich, & Hughes, 2007). This could be because women lack role models in politics, as there is such a lack of representation, and because women are less encouraged to run for office. Men also are employed more often in the jobs that make up a majority of politicians, including lawyers and business-people, which could also play into why women are encouraged to run less than men. Furthermore, political parties act as gatekeepers for running for political office. In most cases, one must be selected and supported by the party in order to be successful in a political campaign. If a political party is more interested in having men run for their party, rather than women, this can be a barrier for their entry into office (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). However, there has been an incline in women running, with 494 women running for office in 2018, which is up 60 percent from 2016.

Another factor to consider is voting patterns along gender lines. When we look into these patterns, we find that the gender of the voter is related to voting for a female candidate, with women voters being more likely to vote for women candidates. This is especially true for Democratic female candidates, who are more likely to identify as feminist, which may make women believe their interests will be protected by them, and even more so for Independent candidates without party attachments (Plutzer & Zipp, 1996). When we look at voting, we also clearly see a pattern of voting for incumbents over new candidates (Paxton, Kunovich & Hughes, 2007). This has also been a barrier for women as men are more likely to be incumbents, because men have had control in politics much longer than women have. The stereotypes discussed earlier also contribute to a lack of women in politics. The literature shows that when women are described in more feminine terms, they are seen to be less competent in dealing with military issues, and more competent with dealing with 'compassion issues,' such as poverty and child care (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). All of these factors have played a part in why we see less representation of women in politics, however, they do not tell the whole story.

Another factor that may be contributing to a lack of female politicians is the concept of threat. Threat is "a situation in which one agent or a group has either the capability or intention to inflict a negative consequence on another agent or group" (Rousseau & Garcia-Retamero, 2007). Threat can take many forms, including mortality salience (having participants consider their own mortality), the threat of terrorism, or a threat to one's in-group, among others. It can have a significant impact on individuals by triggering powerful shifts in attitudes, including having an influence on various political attitudes (Lambert, Schott, & Scherer, 2011; Jost & Thórisdóttir, 2011). It can make people lean more politically

conservative (and be more likely to vote for more conservative candidates), along with creating in them more of a preference for authoritarianism (Jost & Thórisdóttir, 2011; Feldman & Stenner, 1997). Threat can also lead to a preference for strong defenders of the country in order to mitigate the threat felt, especially in regards to terroristic threat, or other national level threat, and for charismatic leaders (Willer & Adams, 2008; Cohen, Ogilvie, Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2005). This was made evident by America's growing preference for President George W. Bush after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, as he was seen as strong leader in his response to the attacks with beginning military operations in Afghanistan. Threat may negatively affect women running for office because the stereotypes associated with their gender are not the traits that people lean towards when threatened.

Gender, politics, and threat all intersect in the current research. While there is not a lot of research surrounding the intersection of these three ideas, there is literature that found that respondents who viewed terrorism, homeland security, or the war in Iraq (all different threats) as important issues, were less likely to view women as competent to handle said problems (Falk and Kenski, 2006). There was also significantly less support for a female president from those who were concerned about the conflict in Iraq, and ultimately terrorism led participants to believe that males were better leaders than females (Falk and Kenski, 2006). There is also literature that shows that a terroristic threat manipulation can make participants believe that women are less suited for office than men (Holman, Merolla, & Zechmeister, 2011). While this shows the connection between terroristic threat, and how participants viewed the competency of female candidates, there are still questions left to be answered regarding threat and representation in politics.

Specifically, this literature deals only with terroristic threat, and there are many other types of threat that Americans perceive as significant that could affect their attitudes towards female political candidates. The study from Falk and Kenski also only looked at a correlational relationship between whether participants thought female politicians were competent about issues that dealt with terrorism, while the present research manipulates threat, to test whether there is a casual relationship between threat and preference. This research does also not look into whether this could affect whether participants would vote for a female candidate when feeling threatened, or whether they consider the candidate in more feminine or masculine terms. The present research helps to answer some of these questions.

Overview of Present Research

The present research examined whether threat perceptions affect preferences for male versus female political candidates and gendered traits. It was hypothesized that the manipulation of threat would cause participants to prefer male candidates over female candidates (H1a). We also hypothesized that threat would cause participants to be more likely to vote for male candidates over female candidates (H1b), and be more likely to believe that male candidates were more inspiring and stronger leaders than female candidates (H1c). This is because, as Holman and colleagues (2011), along with Falk and Kenski (2006) found, participants are less likely to view female politicians as competent to deal with threat, and therefore may be less likely to prefer, and vote for them when presented with threat. We also hypothesized that the manipulation of threat would cause participants to prefer non-stereotypical female candidates over stereotypical ones (H2a), and that they would be more likely to vote for them (H2b). We also hypothesized that

participants would be more likely to believe that non-stereotypical female candidates were more inspiring and stronger leaders than stereotypical females (H2c). This is because as Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) found, when gendered descriptions are used for female political candidates, it can affect how people perceive the candidates. The manipulation of threat may intensify this finding. Further, we hypothesized that the manipulation of threat will not affect whether participants prefer stereotypical or non-stereotypical male candidates (H3a), or whether they would vote for them or not (H3b). They would also not believe that stereotypical males are more inspiring or a strong leader over non-stereotypical males (H3c). Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) also found that the gendered description used on male candidates did not affect their perception, and the manipulation of threat will probably not change this.

Methods

The present research looked at how threat affects preferences towards candidate gender, and gendered traits that they possess. This was examined by using a threat manipulation, followed by measurement of emotion to serve as a delay between the independent and the dependent variable. Participants then read a gendered description of a political candidate and answered questions regarding their preferences towards the candidate. The study ended with participants completing demographic information.

Participants

Participants included 214 undergraduate students recruited through a student participant pool. 22 participants were excluded from the study due to incomplete data, resulting in 192 cases for data analysis. Data were collected using the Political Science Experimental Participation Pool (PSEPP) and students were awarded class credit for

participation. Participants were from a large Midwestern university in a conservative state. Data collection began September 15, 2018 and stopped November 9, 2018. 42% of participants identified as male, 57% identified as female, with one participant identifying as another option. With regards to race and ethnicity, 77% identified as White, with 5% identifying as Asian, 4% as Hispanic/Latino, 3% as Black, and the rest of the respondents identifying as a mixture of various races and ethnicities. The measure of partisanship found that 38% of respondents identified as either a strong Democrat, a Democrat, or leaned Democrat. 41% of respondents were either strong Republicans, Republicans, or leaned Republican, and 21% of respondents were Independents.

Procedure

Data were collected using web-based survey software (i.e. Qualtrics). Participants gave informed consent and then completed an experiment designed to examine how threat changed their preferences towards political candidates based on their gender and gendered descriptions. Threat was manipulated using mortality salience (used in previous Terror Management Theory studies, e.g., Greenberg et al., 1990; Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989), then participants completed the PANAS (PANAS-X; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Participants read a gendered description of a political candidate, and were then asked questions regarding their preferences towards the candidate. Additional questions were then asked about how the participant viewed the candidate in terms of gendered traits, such as “honesty” (feminine) or “strong leader” (masculine). Participants then completed demographic information, ideological identification, and party identification. At the end of the survey, participants were debriefed and awarded course credit for participation.

Materials

Threat Manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to either the threat, or to the control condition. To manipulate threat, participants were asked to think about their own death and write about the feelings that their death aroused in them. This manipulation was used in order to create a more generalizable threat than a terrorist threat, or a threat to one's group because there are so many different threats that Americans feel. In the control condition, participants were asked to think about and write about the emotions that dental pain aroused in them. This manipulation was based on the mortality salience manipulation used in previous Terror Management Theory studies (e.g., Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989). 97 participants were placed into the control condition, with 95 being placed into the manipulation condition.

PANAS. After completing the mortality salience manipulation, participants completed the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-X; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). They were given a list of 60 emotions, and asked to respond with how much they were feeling that emotion at the moment on a scale of one to five, with one being "very slightly or not at all," and five being "extremely." Including a delay after the manipulation allows participants to get separation from the mortality salience prompts, which has been shown in prior work to increase the effects of the manipulation (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, & Solomon, 1999; Wichman, Brunner, & Weary, 2008)

Political Candidates. Participants saw one of four hypothetical political candidates. The candidate either had a female name (Elizabeth McGuire) or a male name (Robert McGuire). The candidate also either had stereotypically feminine attributes (i.e., intelligent, compassionate, trustworthy, family-oriented) or stereotypically male attributes (i.e., tough,

articulate, ambitious). The full text of the candidate descriptions is included in the Appendix. These traits are comparable to the stereotypes associated with men and women found by Fiske (2002), and have been used in prior research (Fiske et al., 2002; Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993).

Candidate Preference and Voting Intentions. Participants were asked on a scale of one to seven, with one being “extremely unlikely” and seven being “extremely likely” how likely they would be to vote for the candidate they had read about. They were also asked how much they like the candidate on a scale of one to five, with one being “dislike a great deal,” and five being “like a great deal.” The full text of these questions is found in the Appendix.

Feminine/Masculine Traits. Participants were asked to think of the candidate they had seen, then were asked how well certain words described the candidate. The words used were ones that are associated with a certain gender (Huddy & Capelos, 2002; Alexander & Andersen, 1993) These words were ‘Honest’ and ‘Moral’ (feminine), and ‘Strong Leader’ and ‘Inspiring’ (masculine). Participants were asked whether the words described the candidate on a scale of one to four, with one being “Not well at all” and four being “Extremely well.” The full text of these questions can be found in the Appendix. The feminine traits ‘Honest’ and ‘Moral’ were correlated ($r = .56, p = < .01$) and therefore combined by computing the average score. The masculine traits ‘Strong Leader’ and ‘Inspiring’ were also correlated ($r = .41, p = < .01$) and therefore combined for analysis by computing the average score.

Results

Threat and Candidate Gender

In order to test the hypotheses related to how threat affects preferences towards for male versus female candidates (H1a-H1c), we conducted a series of univariate ANOVAs. First, we looked at how threat affected whether participants preferred male or female candidates more. Contrary to the first hypothesis, H1a, threat did not impact the preference for male candidates over female candidates ($F(1, 187) = .337$ $p = .562$). There was also no support for the next hypothesis, H1b. Threat did not make participants more likely to vote for male candidates over female candidates ($F(1, 188) = .184$ $p = .668$). Furthermore, in regards to H1c, participants in the threat condition were not more likely to associate male candidates with the more masculine traits of 'leader' and 'inspiring' ($F(1, 188) = .001$ $p = .977$). There was no main effect of the stereotype condition on preference, voting intention, or prescribed for any of the hypotheses (all $ps > .1$).

Threat and Female Candidate Stereotypes

As above, a series of univariate ANOVAs was conducted in order to test the relationship between the manipulation and preferences towards the gendered stereotypes used to describe the female candidates (H2a-H2c). To run these analyses, we first selected only participants that saw female candidates. We again looked at preferences towards stereotypical versus non-stereotypical female candidates. Going against the hypothesis H2a, we found that threat did not cause participants to prefer non-stereotypical female candidates over stereotypical female candidates ($F(1, 92) = .675$, $p = .413$). When we looked at whether or not participants would vote for non-stereotypical female candidates over stereotypical female candidates because of threat for hypothesis H2b, we still do not see significant results, however, this relationship does come closer to significance, with participants in the threat condition actually being more likely to vote for stereotypical

females ($M = 3.04, SD = 1.27$) over non-stereotypical ones ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.15$). In the control there was not evidence that participants would be more likely to vote for stereotypical ($M = 2.44, SD = .66$) over stereotypical ones ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.52; F(1, 92) = 2.108, p = .150$), or vice-versa (*See Figure 1*). The results for voting intentions for stereotypical versus non-stereotypical females actually goes in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. For hypothesis H2c, threat did not make participants be more likely to associate non-stereotypical females with the masculine traits 'leader' and 'inspiring' ($F(1, 92) = .259, p = .612$). There was no significant main effect of stereotype condition on preference, voting intention, or prescribed gendered traits (all $ps > .1$).

Threat and Male Candidate Stereotypes

A series of ANOVA tests were again used in order to test the relationship between the manipulation and preferences towards the gendered stereotypes used to describe the male candidates (H1a-H1c). For these analyses, we first selected only participants that saw male candidates. As hypothesized in H3a, threat did not influence whether participants preferred stereotypical men over non-stereotypical men ($F(1, 91) = .93, p = .761$). There was, however, a positive main effect of stereotype condition on preference (*See Figure 2*). Overall, participants preferred stereotypical male candidates ($M = 2.43, SD = .69$) over non-stereotypical male candidates ($M = 2.06, SD = .69; F(1, 91) = 6.281, p = .014$). As hypothesized in H3b, threat also did not impact voting intentions for stereotypical men over non-stereotypical men ($F(1, 92) = .013, p = .909$). Furthermore, in conformity with H3c, threat did not impact how likely participants were to associate the masculine traits of 'leader' and 'inspiring' with stereotypical male candidates over non-stereotypical male candidates ($F(1, .92) = .403, p = .527$).

Discussion

The present research examined whether threat could have an impact on preferences towards female versus male politicians and their gendered traits. This study resulted in threat not being found to have an impact on preference, voting, or the attribution of feminine or masculine traits to female versus male candidates (H1a, H1b, and H1c, respectively). There was also no relationship between the stereotype condition and preference, voting intentions, or perceived gendered traits for male versus female candidates, regardless of threat. Similarly, we did not find threat to have an effect on preference, or the attribution of feminine or masculine traits to stereotypical versus non-stereotypical female candidates (H2a, H2b, and H2c, respectively). However, threat may affect voting intentions towards stereotypical versus non-stereotypical female candidates, making them more likely to vote for stereotypical females, but the effect was weak, and more research may be needed. For male candidates, threat was not found to affect preferences, voting, or the attribution of gendered traits for non-stereotypical versus stereotypical traits (H3a, H3c, and H3c, respectively). However, we did find a relationship between preference and stereotypical versus non-stereotypical male candidates, with there being more of a preference for stereotypical men than non-stereotypical regardless of threat condition.

The results of the present study are inconsistent with past research. Threat did not cause participants to prefer or vote for male candidates over female candidates. This goes against research that has found that threat makes the public believe that female candidates are less competent than male candidates, have less of a preference for a female president, and have more a belief that males are better leaders than females (Holman et al. 2011; Falk

& Kenski, 2006). The results surrounding the stereotype traits used in the descriptions are also quite inconsistent with past research. Studies have found that women who are described in more feminine terms are seen as less competent than those who were described in more masculine terms (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). In the present research, we found that these descriptions did not affect preferences or voting patterns towards the female candidates, regardless of the threat manipulation. We also found that while threat did not affect preferences or voting patterns towards male candidates, there was a main effect, which showed that participants preferred stereotypical male candidates over non-stereotypical ones. This goes against the literature, which showed that stereotypes of men did not affect preferences towards the male candidates (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993).

Furthermore, when we consider previous research, we expected to see threat have more of an impact. Threat has been found to make the public more politically conservative and prefer (and vote for) more politically conservative leaders (Jost & Thórisdóttir, 2011). This contradicts with our results, since women are often viewed to be more liberal (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). While our study did not include party labels, leaving it up to the participant to base their decision solely on gender, being as women are viewed as more liberal, we might have expected them to make assumptions about the hypothetical candidates' party identification, believing that the women are actually Democrats. However, we did not see threat have an impact on preference or voting for female candidates. It has also been found that threat causes participants to prefer strong defenders of the county and more charismatic leaders (Willer & Adams, 2008; Cohen et al., 2005). In this research, although our stereotypically male descriptive traits included words such as "tough" and "ambitious," whereas the stereotypically female descriptive traits

included words such as “compassionate” and “family-oriented,” threat did not cause participants to prefer the candidates described with the stereotypically male traits. The literature also would suggest that because threat causes a want for a strong defender that threat would have caused participants to prefer and vote for male candidates over female candidates, regardless of stereotypical description, since, generally, women are stereotyped with more compassionate traits, and men with more competent ones (Fiske et al. 2002). However, this was not the case.

There are several possible reasons that we did not see threat have an impact on preferences, voting intentions, or prescribed gendered traits towards gendered political candidates in the present research. One being our sample size, which was fairly small, with only 192 participants. This could have prevented us from seeing an effect because it creates a larger margin of error (Hackshaw, 2008). Further, our threat manipulation may not have worked, however it is hard to know if this was the case or not, as there is often not a change in identified emotions in the PANAS. The demographics of our sample may have played a role as well. Our participants were composed completely of undergraduate students. While there needs to be more research done, the Barbara Lee Family Foundation found in a 2000 survey, that people over 65 were the most averse to female candidates, even if they were in their political party, with younger people being more open to female candidates (Voter Trends, 2000). While the survey also found that most of the voting patterns fell along party lines regardless of gender, as mentioned above, the present research did not use political party affiliations in its candidate descriptions, which left participants to make their decisions solely based on gender. Another factor is related to the tests used in the present research in comparison with those used in the literature. Many studies in the past

regarding gender have focused mainly on the competence participants perceived in the candidates, while this study focused on candidate preference. This leads us to speculate that preference and perceived competence are not always strongly correlated, and further research may need to look instead at perceived competence. Another factor that could be in play is the fact that the politicians in this study were running for local, rather than national, office. In the literature, threat has impacted attitudes towards presidential candidates, which operate on a much more national level than local politicians. Participants may feel like local politicians cannot protect citizens as much from threat as more national politicians, like the president can. All of these factors mentioned could have played some part in why this study did not find an impact in the variables that research has found in the past.

In sum, the present research opens up the possibility to further explore how threat can impact preferences towards male versus female political candidates. While this study did not find an impact of threat on preferences towards candidate gender, its inconsistency with previous research and other various factors previously discussed that could have led to the lack of impact leave room to continue to question the relationship between threat and preference. For future research on the topic, a larger sample size could make the study more successful. Further, one could look at prescribed competence for male versus female candidates, rather than preference, since that has worked in the literature more clearly, and see if threat has an impact. If we were to recreate this study, it may have been effective to have had our hypothetical candidates run for national, rather than local, office, which may make participants think they could protect them from threats more easily. Continued study on preferences towards candidate gender can help scholars further

understand the lack of descriptive representation with gender that we currently see in American politics, and can hopefully help mitigate the problem.

References

- Alexander, D., & Andersen, K. (1993). Gender as a Factor in the Attribution of Leadership Traits. *Political Research Quarterly*, 46(3), 527-545.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing gender*. Routledge.
- Cohen, F., Ogilvie, D. M., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. (2005). American roulette: The effect of reminders of death on support for George W. Bush in the 2004 presidential election. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 5(1), 177-187.
- Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1984). Gender stereotypes stem from the distribution of women and men into social roles. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46(4), 735.
- Falk, E., & Kenski, K. (2006). Issue saliency and gender stereotypes: Support for women as presidents in times of war and terrorism. *Social Science Quarterly*, 87(1), 1-18.
- Feldman, S., & Stenner, K. (1997). Perceived threat and authoritarianism. *Political Psychology*, 18(4), 741-770.
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. In *Social Cognition* pp. 171-222. Routledge.
- Hackshaw, A. (2008). Small studies: strengths and limitations. *European Respiratory Journal*. pp. 1141-1143.
- Holman, M. R., Merolla, J. L., & Zechmeister, E. J. (2011). Sex, stereotypes, and security: A study of the effects of terrorist threat on assessments of female leadership. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 32(3), 173-192.
- Huddy, L., & Capelos, T. (2002). Gender stereotyping and candidate evaluation. In *The social psychology of politics* (pp. 29-53). Springer, Boston, MA.

- Huddy, L., & Terkildsen, N. (1993). Gender stereotypes and the perception of male and female candidates. *American journal of political science*, 119-147.
- Kelly-Gadol, J. (1976). The social relation of the sexes: Methodological implications of women's history. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 1(4), 809-823.
- Lambert, A. J., Schott, J. P., & Scherer, L. (2011). Threat, politics, and attitudes: Toward a Greater Understanding of Rally-'Round-the-Flag Effects. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 20(6), 343-348.
- Paxton, P., Kunovich, S., & Hughes, M. M. (2007). Gender in Politics. *Annu. Rev. Sociol.*, 33, 263-284.
- Plutzer, E., & Zipp, J. F. (1996). Identity politics, partisanship, and voting for women candidates. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60(1), 30-57.
- Poushter, J., & Manevich, D. (2019, January 17). ISIS and Climate Change Seen as Top Threats Globally. Retrieved from <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/08/01/globally-people-point-to-isis-and-climate-change-as-leading-security-threats/>
- Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., & Solomon, S. (1999). A dual-process model of defense against conscious and unconscious death-related thoughts: an extension of terror management theory. *Psychological Review*, 106(4), 835.
- Rosenblatt, A., Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Pyszczynski, T., & Lyon, D. (1989). Evidence for terror management theory: I. The effects of mortality salience on reactions to those who violate or uphold cultural values. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 57(4), 681.
- Rousseau, D. L., & Garcia-Retamero, R. (2007). Identity, power, and threat perception: A cross-national experimental study. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 51(5), 744-771.

Thórisdóttir, H., & Jost, J. T. (2011). Motivated closed-mindedness mediates the effect of threat on political conservatism. *Political Psychology, 32*(5), 785-811.

Voter Trends. (2000). Retrieved from

<https://www.barbaraleefoundation.org/research/speaking-with-authority/voter-trends/>

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: the PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(6), 1063.

Wichman, A. L., Brunner, R. P., & Weary, G. (2008). Immediate and delayed effects of causal uncertainty inductions on uncertainty accessibility. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*(4), 1106-1113.

Willer, R., & Adams, N. (2008). The threat of terrorism and support for the 2008 presidential candidates: Results of a national field experiment. *Current Research in Social Psychology, 14*(1), 1-22.

Tables and Figures

Figure 1. Stereotypical versus Non-Stereotypical Female Voting Means

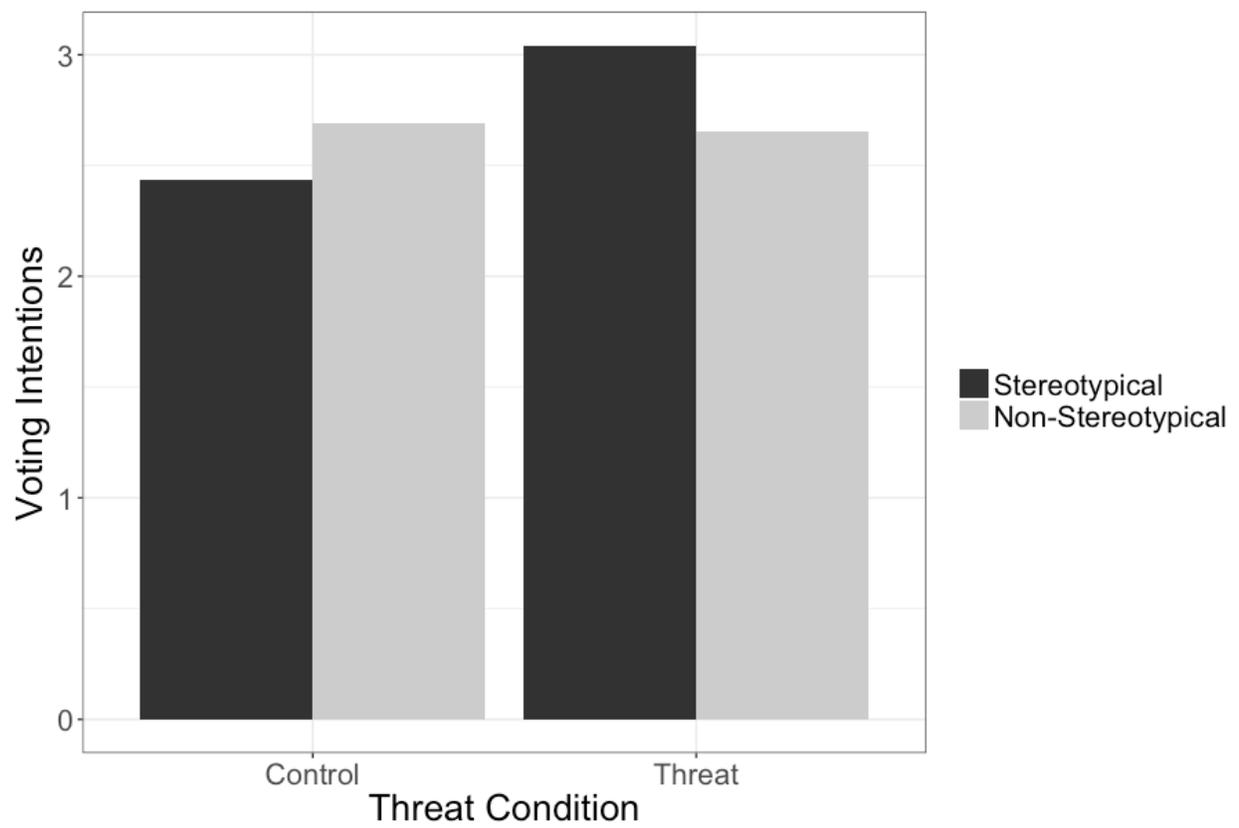
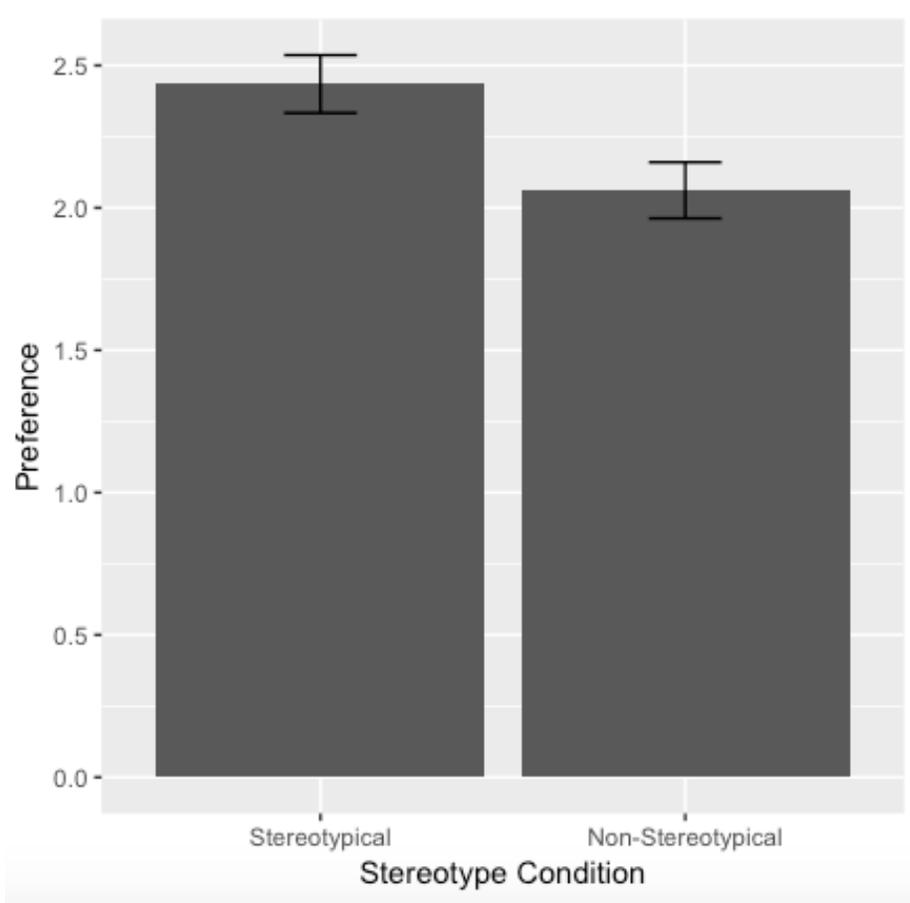


Figure 2. Stereotypical versus Non-Stereotypical Male Preference Means



Appendix

Candidate Descriptions

Feminine:

(Robert McGuire/Elizabeth McGuire), a lawyer, has been described by legal colleagues as an *intelligent, compassionate, trustworthy, and family-oriented* opponent with proven leadership skills and strong people skills. Mr. McGuire, forty-two, is a life-long resident of Connecticut, a long-time political activist, and currently is seeking office at the local level.

Masculine:

(Robert McGuire/Elizabeth McGuire), a lawyer, has been described by legal colleagues as an tough, articulate, and ambitious opponent with proven leadership skills and administrative skills. Ms. McGuire, forty-two, is a life-long resident of Connecticut, a long-time political activist, and currently is seeking office at the local level.

Preference

How likely would you be to vote for this candidate?

- 1) Extremely unlikely
- 2) Moderately unlikely
- 3) Slightly unlikely
- 4) Neither likely nor unlikely
- 5) Slightly likely
- 6) Moderately likely
- 7) Extremely likely

How much do you like this candidate?

- 1) Dislike a great deal
- 2) Dislike a little
- 3) Neither like nor dislike
- 4) Like a little
- 5) Like a great deal

Gendered Traits

Think about the candidate. In your opinion, does the phrase HONEST describe them extremely well, quite well, not too well or not well at all?

- 1) Not well at all
- 2) Not too well
- 3) Quite well
- 4) Extremely well

Think about the candidate. In your opinion, does the phrase STRONG LEADER describe them extremely well, quite well, not too well or not well at all?

- 1) Not well at all
- 2) Not too well
- 3) Quite well
- 4) Extremely well

Think about the candidate. In your opinion, does the phrase INSPIRING describe them extremely well, quite well, not too well or not well at all?

- 1) Not well at all
- 2) Not too well
- 3) Quite well

4) Extremely well

Think about the candidate. In your opinion, does the phrase MORAL describe them extremely well, quite well, not too well or not well at all?

1) Not well at all

2) Not too well

3) Quite well

4) Extremely well