The Politics of Palin: Gender in the 2008 Presidential Election

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Erie,

my friend, my partner, my bocheecho.

Abstract

Sarah Palin, the Republican nominee for Vice President in the 2008 election, was only the second major party female nominee for the office of vice president in U.S. history and the first for the Republican Party. While criticized extensively by the left and the conservative intellectual elite, Palin's conservative credentials were never questioned and she was embraced by many grass-roots conservatives. Palin's strong conservatism and Republican partisan credentials stand in stark contrast to most female politicians, who overwhelmingly and increasingly hail from the Democratic Party in both state and national politics.

The central puzzle of this project is to determine how voters react to the competing stereotypes that conservative female Republican candidates, like Sarah Palin, must endure. The gender stereotype – that females are considered to be more empathetic, caring, and compassionate – is in conflict with the partisan stereotype – that Republicans are believed to possess more strength and leadership. Which stereotypes do voters apply, and how does that differ based on their own gender or partisan identity? Specifically, how do voters' own gender and party identification shape ratings of a conservative female candidate's traits and ideology, as well as the impact of each on vote choice and candidate evaluation?

Two public opinion surveys are utilized to answer these questions – a survey of Minnesotans and a national survey of women. The Minnesota data revealed that a citizen's gender and party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits, ideology, and overall evaluations. While party identification is the strongest predictor, gender did have some impact. Furthermore, the differences in how Palin is rated on her traits and ideology had significant impacts on overall evaluations of her, as measured by presidential

vote choice and evaluations of her performance in the vice presidential debate. Nationally, women's party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits and policy issue agreement. In addition, there is a strong relationship between party identification and overall evaluations, but this relationship is overshadowed when trait ratings or policy position agreement are included in the model. The strong, significant effects of party identification on overall evaluations disappear on measures of Palin's favorability measure and opinions of McCain's choice of Palin, but remain significant on vote for McCain.

Both traits and policy position agreement have a significant impact on overall evaluations of Palin. And while the effects of party remain directly significant on vote for McCain in the presence of these variables, it appears they are indirectly significant for evaluations of McCain's choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate on issue positions, and, to a lesser extent, trait ratings. Different traits and policy issues have significant impacts on McCain's choice of Palin for Republicans and Democrats.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Sarah Palin, the Republican nominee for Vice President in the 2008 election, was only the second major party female nominee for the office of vice president in U.S. history and the first for the Republican Party. Few pundits predicted Governor Palin would be John McCain's choice of running mate – she was relatively unknown nationally, seemingly lacking in experience, and from a *politically* noncompetitive and *electorally* inconsequential state (Alaska). The public and the mass media alike were unsure what to make of McCain's selection and her vice presidential candidacy, though Palin quickly became fodder for the entertainment and news industries. CBS News anchor Katie Couric and late night television show *Saturday Night Live* both garnered significant buzz by interviewing and parodying Palin, respectively.

While criticized extensively by the left and the conservative intellectual elite, Palin's conservative credentials were never questioned and she was embraced by many grass-roots conservatives as a staunch defender of the 2nd amendment, the 'right to life,' and a limited federal government. Palin's strong conservatism and Republican partisan credentials stand in stark contrast to most female politicians, who overwhelmingly and increasingly hail from the Democratic Party in both state and national politics.

Female politicians make up a small percentage of representatives at the local, state, and national levels, and gains in female representation have mostly occurred within the Democratic Party. Because women in the electorate comprise a larger percentage of the Democratic Party, it has a larger pool of female candidates from which to nominate and a larger group of female voters to rely upon come Election Day. Currently, 77 percent of

women in Congress hail from the Democratic Party (72 of 93). As a result, much of what has been studied about female representation has dealt with the advantages and challenges faced by female Democratic representatives. Still, prominent conservative female politicians like Sarah Palin have become more common over the past few decades, as increased levels of partisan polarization at the elite and mass levels had led politicians of both parties to become more and more extreme ideologically, and women representatives are no exception. As a minority subgroup within the Republican Party, these women face a different set of challenges than female Democratic representatives. There are three key findings from the current literature on female representation that help to frame the potential challenges and advantages held by conservative female politicians.

First, female candidates of both parties are perceived by voters as being more liberal than their male colleagues (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Dolan 2004; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a; King and Matland 2003; McDermott 1997). Because their core support group values liberalism, this is generally an advantage for female Democratic candidates. However, it disadvantages female *Republican* candidates who are trying to gain the support of a more *conservative* electorate (King and Matland 2003; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009). Secondly, women are rated as better able to handle 'female issues', such as education and social welfare, thus giving them an advantage when these issues are salient in a given election.

Thirdly, women are stereotypically characterized as being caring, empathetic, and compassionate. While these characteristics do not hold negative connotations, they are not particularly beneficial to female candidates as voters value masculine traits such as leadership for their representatives (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993b; Lawless 2004; Rosenwasser and Seale 1988). However, when evaluating female Republicans, voters are

presented with conflicting stereotypes. The gender stereotype – that females are considered to be more empathetic, caring, and compassionate – is in conflict with the partisan stereotype – that Republicans are believed to possess more strength and leadership (Hayes 2005). Less conservative female Republican candidates may be able to better tread the line between these stereotypes, and benefit from both their gender and party in comparison to more conservative female GOPers. Because they are not seen as displaying strong partisan stereotypes, they are able to gain the support of women voters in the ideological center and avoid the more obvious tension between gender and party that more conservative Republican women face.

In this project, I seek to examine voter reactions to one prominent conservative female Republican candidate, Sarah Palin, in order to determine how voters' own gender and party identification shape evaluations of a candidate's traits and ideology, as well as to evaluate Palin in the context of other GOP female candidates. In addition, I will test the *relative* impact of candidate traits, ideology, and issue positions on vote choice and candidate evaluation. Are traits more important in determining support, or is policy agreement a better predictor of vote choice? And how does this relationship differ, if at all, between gender and partisan groups? I will address these questions through an analysis of two sets of public opinion data on Sarah Palin during the run up to the 2008 presidential election. One is a survey of Minnesotans conducted in early October 2008, around the time of the vice presidential debate. The other is a national survey of women conducted in mid-September 2008 after Palin formally became the GOP's nominee at the Republican National Convention.

This chapter lays the groundwork for the subsequent analyses by discussing the relationships between gender and politics. It will examine sources of the gender gap as well

as the importance of gender and partisan stereotypes in candidate evaluation and vote choice. Finally, it will look at the historical importance of vice presidential candidates on electoral outcomes and describe the analyses to be conducted in subsequent chapters.

I. The Gender Gap

The gender gap – the differences between men and women on issue positions, partisanship, and voting behavior – is pervasive, existing outside of the context of specific elections or issues (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef, and Lin 2004). Although these three dimensions are heavily related, research has shown policy preferences to be the most significant source of the gender gap. Controlling for political attitudes largely erases gender gaps in voting behavior and party identification (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). In addition, the gender gap in support for a government that takes a more activist stance on social policy issues is larger than the gap associated with ideology, and equal in magnitude to gaps among partisan and voters of difference race groups (Schlesinger and Heldman 2001).

The gap in policy preferences is important in three respects. First, differences in policy preferences may alter the salience of various political issues, thus prompting changes in the political agenda and the direction of public policy (Conover 1988). Secondly, women constitute a large voting bloc, and the emergence of even small gender differences in issue preferences can have substantial consequences on public policy (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Thirdly, policy cleavages in the electorate are important to the outcome of elections. Women voters are more likely to use gender-related issue positions in determining their vote choice when there is a female candidate on the ballot (Dolan 1998).

The substantive political opinions of men and women are increasingly disparate(Erskine 1971; Smith 1984). Women are more likely to be concerned with

'women's issues,' that is, "public concerns that impinge primarily on the private (especially domestic) sphere of social life, and particularly those values associated with children and nurturance" (Sapiro 1981, 703). Gender cleavages on these issues only partially overlap with other types of cleavages, suggesting that gender is a primary determinant of issue position (Schumaker and Burns 1988).

Women are also more likely to be concerned with social welfare policy, specifically services and issues that directly affect their rights and the rights of children – for example, abortion, child care, education, parental leave, sexual harassment, and women's rights (Dolan 1998; Schlozman et al. 1995; Schumaker and Burns 1988). In fact, social welfare issues may be the predominant contributors to the gender gap (Conover 1988; Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). However, recent research has shown that women's votes are more heavily influenced by ideology than women's issues, and the main source of the gender gap is shaped by differences on the opinions on the role of government and society (Kanthak and Norrander 2002).

These gender gap differences are partly a result of particular life circumstances that men or women are more likely to experience, or the presence of distinctively masculine or feminine responses to those circumstances – namely, women are more likely to bear a disproportionate share of the child-rearing responsibilities and to be poor (Schlozman, Burns, Verba, and Donahue 1995).

The gender divide over social welfare policy took root during the onset of the struggle for welfare benefits from the government. As early as the latter part of the 19th century, women became increasingly organized and active in promoting social welfare, with a particular emphasis on women's welfare issues. Women heavily influenced the development of American social welfare policy (Sapiro 1986), and were prominent

proponents of the notion that the federal government should provide a safety net for its citizens (Skocpol 1992). Women continue to be concerned with ensuring equal opportunity for all and helping others, and believe government should take an activist role in social welfare. Women are consistently more likely than men to think government should be proactive in assisting the poor by guaranteeing jobs and a minimum standard of living (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997). These values may be learned early in life. Due to a sustained attachment to their mother, female children learn to emphasize fairness and equality, and thus develop as more empathetic and responsive to the needs of others than male children who are pushed quickly into the public sphere where morality is based on rules, rationality, and self-interest (Chodorow 1974). This is reinforced for women as culture continues to place strong expectations on them to remain noncompetitive, care giving, and cooperative (Howell and Day 2000).

The gender gap in attitudes toward social welfare is borne out in political behavior. Research on the activities and types of issues on which political activists are focused points to significant differences in issue priorities among men and women activists, especially for education and abortion policy – with women giving them a higher status (Schlozman, Burns, Verba, and Donahue 1995). In addition, women act on behalf of neighborhoods and social service policies more often than men (Schumaker and Burns 1988).

Women are also less militaristic than men and have demonstrated greater opposition to war. Gender differences are most pronounced when women are asked about specific military involvement, as opposed to hypothetical scenarios for the use of force (Conover and Sapiro 1993). Shapiro and Mahajan's (1986) study of public opinion data collected over a period of twenty years reveals sizable and persistent gender differences in attitudes toward issues involving the use of force, in addition to smaller gender differences

toward other policies concerning regulation and public protection, social welfare, and traditional values. These differences between the genders on military and social welfare issues, and especially in how men and women use their attitudes on these issues in presidential evaluations, were the most important contributors of the gender differences in approval of President Reagan's job performance (Gilens 1988).

The reasons for gender gaps vary from issue to issue, but four factors are primarily responsible for the differences in opinion: women are more concerned with equality of opportunity and hold egalitarian views, women place greater value on helping others, women are more likely to hold occupations affected by redistributive government policies, and the obtaining of a higher level of education has had a liberalizing effect on women (Howell and Day 2000). However, Conover (1988) finds that gender differences exist in basic value *orientations*, not in political values such as egalitarianism, individualism, racism, or liberalism. Instead, the gap arises because women are more committed to religious fundamentalism than are men and have more positive feelings toward the disadvantaged in society. Furthermore, holding feminist values, and indeed, the process itself of becoming a feminist may "be a catalyst that helps women recognize their underlying 'female' values" (1005). However, further examination of the relationship between feminist attitudes and policy preferences suggests that feminism does not promote uniquely feminine values. Instead, a feminist perspective, consisting of egalitarian values and generally liberal policies, is associated with distinctive values and policy preferences for both men and women (Cook and Wilcox 1991).

Closely related to the gender gap on policy issues are gender gaps in ideology and party identification. Since the 1970s, both men and women have moved in a conservative direction. However, one segment of the female population – well-educated and single

women – has kept its liberal self-identifications (Norrander and Wilcox 2008). Similarly, women have moved to the Democratic Party, while men have increasingly identified themselves as Republicans. Beginning in the 1980s, women began giving their allegiance to the Democratic Party to such an extent that they began to comprise the majority of Democratic identifiers (Frankovic 1982). During the same time period, men have become increasingly Republican in both their party identification and voting behavior (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999).

This partisan gender gap has grown for a number of reasons: the political climate moved in a more conservative direction, the economy deteriorated, and the percentage of economically vulnerable, single women increased (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef, and Lin 2004). In addition, the culture war, along with the increased salience of cultural issues it brought to the nation in the 1990s (e.g. reproductive rights, female equality, and legal protections for homosexuals) played a role in the increasing partisan identity gap among men and women. Woman began to give these issues significantly more weight in their partisan identity, while men continued to base their partisan choice more centrally on social welfare issues (Kaufmann 2002).

Both the gender gaps in policy preferences and partisanship have contributed to a gender gap in voting. Coinciding with the increases in the number of women joining and the number of men leaving the Democratic Party, the 1980 presidential election was the first time a gender gap, defined as the difference between the percentage of women and the percentage of men voting for a given candidate, was evident. This gender gap has persisted in every election since that time, with women more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate, according to exit polling data. The gender gap in voting was lowest in 1992, at four percentage points, and reached a high of 11 percentage points in 1996. In the most

recent presidential election in 2008, women were seven percentage points more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate, Barack Obama.

The gender gap is not only observed in the nation as a whole, but also persists among different demographic subsets of the population. If fact, some scholars have argued that the gender gap is better understood as being composed of smaller "cohort gender gaps" (O'Regan, Stambough, and Thorson 2006). Gender gaps have been shown to exist among different groups based on age, marital status, and religious affiliation (Bendyna and Lake 1994; Cook and Wilcox 1995; Edlund and Pande 2002; Greenberg 2001; Howell and Day 2000; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Mattei and Mattei 1998; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997). Gender gaps among different racial groups are less clear. Studying issue attitudes, partisan identification, and voting behavior among African Americans, Welch and Sigelman (1989) find few differences between men and women. A later study conducted by the authors focusing on gender gaps among Hispanics, blacks, and Anglos found gender gaps among all three racial groups, with the most prominent difference being that the gender gap in political ideology was weaker among Hispanics and blacks than for Anglos (Welch and Sigelman 1992).

The differences in issue positions that contribute to the gender gap in voting have been shown to be larger than the differences in attitudes expected based on ideology (Schlesinger and Heldman 2001). Women are more likely to support Democratic candidates (Klein 1985; Wirls 1986). In addition, an increasing amount of economic independence and autonomy from men have exacerbated the electoral gender gap. Married women with high status occupations and advanced education along with unmarried women at all socioeconomic levels differ the most from men in their voting behavior and presidential approval ratings (Carroll 1988). Gender-based voting can also partly be attributed to gender

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identity, which is driven by feelings of group solidarity. By running as representatives of women, female candidates for public office invoke heightened feelings of gender identity among female voters (Plutzer and Zipp 1996).

II. Stereotypes

Image is important to candidates running for any office, and especially so for the presidential nominee hoping to win the vote of people who are likely to rely on mental shortcuts and cues when choosing a candidate instead of a detailed examination of each candidate's policy platform. A candidate's personality, appearance, and demeanor can provide a valuable shorthand for voters as they make these calculations. Popkin (1991) asserts that voters are able to make rational choices between candidates by using information shortcuts they receive during campaigns. Specifically, campaigns increase the importance of some issues, strengthen the connections between issues and the office, and increase the perceived differences between candidates. Given the importance of campaigns in voter preferences, candidates spend increasingly large sums of money and time perfecting their campaign materials and cultivating the best outward appearance. This can lead to generous praise and predictions of success, as with Barack Obama's campaign signs and logo (see, for example, DesignBay 2008) or lead to a public roasting if the designer clothes purchased are too expensive (Cummings 2008).

Research has shown that candidates do indeed employ distinctive *image priming strategies*. Druckman, Jacobs, and Ostermeier (2004) further research on issue priming to show that candidates are also able to design strategies that appeal to voters based on the candidate's image. Political psychologists have identified four images, or traits, as most appealing to the public. Competence, as indexed by ratings on qualities such as knowledge

and intelligence, along with integrity, as measured by ratings of candidate morality or honesty, have been shown to be the most universally relevant to candidate evaluations. The impact of leadership, assessed as strength or inspiring, and empathy, gauged as compassion and caring, is less clear (Funk 1999, 702; Kinder 1986). These four attributes can be grouped into two broad clusters: competence and leadership are *performance-based*, while integrity and empathy are *interpersonal* (Druckman, Jacobs, and Ostermeier 2004; Iyengar and Kinder 1987).

How are male and female candidates perceived in terms of personality traits? Research has shown that citizens are more likely to identify men as strong, assertive, and self-confident, while women are identified as more compassionate, warm, and kind (I. K. Broverman et al. 1972; Deaux and Lewis 1984; McKee and Sherriffs 1957; Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1974; Williams and Best 1982). In addition, female candidates are more likely to be perceived as competent in maintaining honesty and integrity in government, and dealing with issues that revolve around poverty, women, and children. Conversely, men are more likely to garner higher ratings in dealing with military issues and making decisions on agricultural issues (Lawless 2004; Sapiro 1981).

In an experimental study of a hypothetical presidential race between a male candidate and a female candidate, Rosenwasser, et. al (1987) find evidence of gender stereotyping. To define their list of masculine and feminine presidential tasks, the authors instructed a group of college students to rate 23 different presidential duties on a five point masculine-feminine scale. A different group of respondents then rated hypothetical male and female candidates on each of the four most masculine items, the four most feminine items, and the two most neutral items.

The authors find that the male candidate was evaluated as being more effective on the masculine items of dealing with terrorism, dealing with a military crisis, ensuring an adequate military defense system, and filling the president's role as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The female candidate, meanwhile, received higher ratings on four feminine tasks – solving problems in the educational system, guaranteeing the rights of racial minorities, solving problems of the disabled and handicapped, and solving problems of the aged – as well as on two neutral items, conserving and wisely utilizing natural resources and being able to relate to and lead the American public.

In addition, on both the feminine and masculine traits, the researchers found significant interactions between candidate sex and scores on a scale of attitudes toward women. Respondents with less favorable attitudes toward women rated the female candidate significantly lower than the male candidate on the masculine items, while those with more favorable attitudes toward women rated the female candidate higher than the male candidate on the feminine items.

The differences in candidate trait stereotypes matter. Mueller (1986) finds that voters were unwilling to support a female presidential or vice-presidential candidate because she was seen as less competent to handle the military, war, and the economy. Asking participants to rate whether or not a list of masculine and feminine qualities should be possessed by a good politician, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993b) find that while feminine qualities were not a liability for candidates, typical male qualities "are considered crucial for higher office" (1993b, 518). This type of gender stereotyping continues in the post-September 11th era. Lawless (2004) shows that citizens prefer masculine traits and characteristics in their elected officials. Through the use of a differential measure of trait possession (hypothetical male candidate vs. hypothetical female candidate), Lawless shows

that citizens believe that men are more likely than women to possess these masculine qualities.

One masculine trait that is valued in elected officials is leadership, and people's beliefs about what makes a good leader are more similar to their stereotypical views of men than women (Schein 2001). Because of this, and the perceived incongruity between women's stereotypic qualities (e.g. affectionate, helpful, and kind) and typical leadership qualities (e.g. assertive and instrumentally competent), both women's potential for leadership and actual leadership behavior are rated unfavorably (Eagly and Karau 2002). The stereotypes regarding gender and leadership potential or ability come about because of inferences people make linking observed behavior of men and women in their social roles to the personal qualities associated with those behaviors (Eagly 1987).

In addition to gender stereotypes, voters use partisan stereotypes to infer candidates' issue positions and traits (Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985; Hayes 2005; Rahn 1993). Research has shown that these partisan stereotypes fall along gendered lines. Through an examination of National Election Studies data from the 1980-2004 presidential elections, Hayes (2005) shows that voters perceive GOP candidates as stronger leaders than Democratic candidates, a trait commonly thought of as masculine. At the same time, Democratic candidates are viewed as having more compassion and empathy, which are typically identified as feminine traits. These findings are particularly important for this study, because they present competing expectations for public opinion towards Sarah Palin – her gender evokes feminine stereotypes, while her party identification would trigger contrasting masculine stereotypes.

Voters are faced with multiple cues when evaluating a candidate. Two of these are the social stereotypes based on the candidate's gender and party. In their parallel-

constraint-satisfaction model, Kunda and Thagard (1996) assert that social stereotypes and information such as traits or behavior work together to jointly influence impressions of individuals. When applied to the relationship between voters and candidates, Huddy and Capelos (2002) find limited evidence in support of this model. They do find that voters are able to apply two stereotypes simultaneously, though their results show that partisanship plays a more significant role than gender in shaping evaluations. As such, "voters regard a Republican woman politician as a Republican first and a woman second" (47). In addition, among Republican candidates, there is no evidence that gender stereotypes come into play (King and Matland 2003).

However, there are certain instances in which gender stereotypes can have a more powerful role in candidate evaluations. Sanbonmatsu and Dolan (2009) find that perceived issue competency and issue positions differ by gender for both Democrats and Republicans, to the detriment of Republican candidates. Similar to other studies, the authors find that nearly a third of their sample perceive female candidates as having an advantage on a traditional female issue, education, and male candidates as having an advantage on a typical masculine strength, crime. Evaluations of female candidates by their same party members of the electorate show that Democrats are more likely to hold attitudes that benefit women candidates. On education, Democratic female candidates are more likely than Republican female candidates to be perceived favorably by members of their party. Furthermore, Democratic women in the electorate are less likely than Republicans to see an advantage for male candidates on the issue of crime.

III. Implications

Sarah Palin is a useful test case to study perceptions and evaluations of her traits not only for being an example of a conservative female politician, but also because of her role as a the first female Republican Party vice presidential nominee. McCain's choice of Sarah Palin to be his running mate was seen by some analysts as a return to his maverick image designed to shake up the presidential race and draw attention not simply *to* his campaign but *away* from Barack Obama's. The strategy seemed to work, at least in the short term. McCain's numbers shot up in horserace polling immediately after the announcement and were sustained through Palin's rousing speech at the Republican National Convention. Ultimately, the strategy was not successful enough to win the presidency, and may have done more harm than good, as McCain lost the general election in November by nearly two hundred electoral votes.

A presidential nominees' selection of his running mate is frequently seen as the nominee's first act as president. The choice of a running mate can impact the presidential election, and is potentially important for succession. The American people pay close attention to the selection and evaluate the vice presidential nominee "with their constitutional role as a presidential successor uppermost in mind…[i]llnesses, impeachment proceedings, and assassination attempts have made succession an active possibility" (Goldstein 1982, 207-8). The potential ability of a vice president to lead the country is viewed as even more important at this stage in U.S. history, as the world becomes a more and more dangerous place. "[E]ver since the importance of having an able and faithful vice president available to assume the presidency became unmistakably clear with the birth of the nuclear age, the public has demanded that governance criteria be served in vice presidential selection, lest electoral consequences be paid" (Nelson 1988).

For a presidential candidate, many considerations come into play when selecting a running mate. One of the most important considerations is the potential strategic advantage a vice presidential nominee can have in the general election. Anecdotal evidence points to the usefulness of the vice president as traditionally ending after Election Day. For example, an aide to Vice President Hubert Humphrey proclaimed, "Once the election is over, the Vice President's usefulness is over. He's like the second stage of a rocket. He's damn important going into orbit, but he's always thrown off to burn up in the atmosphere" (Light 1984, 11). Indeed, research shows that the choice of vice presidential running mate is "far more likely to be based on short-term electoral calculations than on long-term governance considerations" (Sigelman and Wahlbeck 1997, 855).

How can a vice president be most useful in a general election? A candidate can serve one of two purposes – solidifying the base or reaching out to independents and more moderate voters. With either strategy, balancing the party's ticket has been shown to be an important consideration for presidential candidates (Goldstein 1982; Natoli 1985; Nelson 1988). The home state, ideology, age, and insider vs. outsider status of the candidate are all areas in which balance can be achieved. However, the perceived importance of balancing the ticket has lessened over time as a result of two occurrences. First, the guidelines issued by the McGovern-Fraser Commission both resulted in candidate-centered campaigns that gave more power to the president in selecting his running mate and gave presidential candidates more time to do so. Second, George McGovern's hasty and un-researched selection of Senator Thomas Eagleton (who was later discovered to have undergone electroshock therapy and replaced in the campaign) as his running mate on the 1972 Democratic ticket led future presidential candidates to implement a more intricate vetting process for their potential running mates (Hiller and Kriner 2008).

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Research on the strategic effectiveness of vice presidential selections is mixed. Some research findings at the individual level of analysis suggest that the selection is an important one. Employing American National Election Studies data, Wattenberg (1984) estimated that voter evaluation of the vice presidential candidates contributed about 0.75 percent toward the national presidential vote margin from 1952 to 1980, generated about one-half the influence as presidential candidate evaluations and party identification, and is approximately one-and-a-half times as impactful as ideological influences on vote choice. More recently, Wattenberg (1995) examined the 1968 to 1992 presidential elections, and although his findings are less dramatic, his empirical results suggest that the typical voter *is* substantially influenced by his or her evaluation of vice presidential nominees: voters with split presidential and vice presidential preferences (about 11 percent in a typical election year) are more likely to defect from their preferred presidential candidate than those with consistent evaluations (15.6 percent vs. 2.9 percent).

In opposition to these studies, Romero (2001) utilizes the 1972-76 National Election Studies panel study to show that voters' rationalization of their intended vote exaggerates the influence vice presidential nominees are estimated to have on the presidential vote. After controlling for these rationalization affects, he finds that vice presidential candidate evaluations do not maintain a statistically and substantively meaningful influence on the vote for president. Furthermore, aggregate-level analyses find that vice presidential candidates have little to no influence, bringing the national ticket no home state or regional advantage. Examining presidential contests from 1884 to 1984, Dudley and Rapoport (1989) find that on average, the vice-presidential candidate gains only about 0.3 percent more than expected in his home state. In addition, vice presidential candidates on average neither increase their ticket's share of the two-party vote nor the presidential candidate's

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ability to carry the vice president's home state. Similarly, Holbrook (1991) employs a state-level model of presidential election outcomes for elections between 1960 and 1984, and finds that while presidential candidates enjoy both a home state and home region advantage, vice presidents do not receive either.

IV. Going Forward

This project will examine voter reactions to Sarah Palin, a conservative female Republican, to determine how voters evaluate her given the conflict between stereotypes based on her gender and her party identification. Do voters see Palin as holding the feminine traits of caring and honesty, or do they view her as a stereotypical Republican candidate with leadership skills and preparedness for office? Furthermore, how do voters' own gender and party identification shape evaluations of Palin's traits and ideology, as well as overall evaluations of her candidacy? In addition, what is the *relative* impact of trait ratings, ideology assessment, and policy position agreement on vote choice and candidate evaluation? Are traits more important in determining support, or is policy agreement a better predictor of vote choice? And how does this relationship differ, if at all, between men and women and Democrats and Republicans?

Palin does not stand alone as a conservative female politician. Increasing levels of partisan polarization have given rise to the number of conservative women serving in Congress and in the electorate. Chapter Two will document the rise in polarization and its effect on the partisan composition of state and national political offices. An analysis of *National Journal* vote rankings will illustrate the trend in ideological polarization over the past three decades, and voter support for female Republican Senators as measured in public opinion surveys will be analyzed to demonstrate how the gender gap varies for the least

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conservative and most conservative Senators. Finally, a thorough investigation of public

opinion towards Palin will provide a backdrop for examinations of gender and partisan gaps

in support on trait ratings, ideology assessment, and overall evaluations.

Chapter Three will examine data from an early October survey of Minnesota

residents to determine to what extent gender and partisan identify influence ratings of Palin

on three traits (honesty, caring, and experience)[1] and her political ideology.[2] This chapter is

divided into two sections. The first will utilize descriptive statistics and regression analysis

to examine the public's assessments of Sarah Palin's ideology as well as ratings of Palin on

three traits – honesty, caring, and experience.

- *Research Question #1. What is the relationship between gender and party in the public's ratings of Sarah Palin on her traits and assessment of her ideology? Within partisan groups, is there a gender gap in ratings of Sarah Palin's traits and ideology? If so, on which traits and evaluations are gender gaps more pronounced?*

- *Research Question #2. Does a voter's gender and party identification have a significant effect on their ratings of Palin's traits and ideology, controlling for factors such as demographics and socioeconomic indicators? Is the effect of gender on Palin's traits and ideology moderated by party?*

- *Research Question #3. Does increased information about a candidate have a significant relationship with voters' ratings of a candidate's traits and ideology? Specifically, do those who watched the vice-presidential debate rate Sarah Palin differently than those who did not watch the debate? Are these relationships moderated by party or gender?*

The second section in Chapter Three will focus on overall evaluations of Palin as

measured by presidential vote choice and appraisals of her performance in the vice

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[1] Question wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin: a) Is honest? b) Has the right experience to be president? c) Cares about people like me?

[2] Question wording: Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

presidential debate.[3] In addition, the impact of trait ratings and ideology assessment on

these overall evaluations will be examined.

- *Research Question #4. Within partisan groups, is there a gender gap in vote for McCain and evaluations of Sarah Palin's performance in the debate?*

- *Research Question #5.What is the effect of gender and party on vote for McCain and evaluations of Sarah Palin's performance in the debate, controlling for other factors? Is the effect of gender moderated by party?*

- *Research Question #6. To what extent do trait ratings and ideology assessment have a significant effect on overall evaluations of Palin? Is the relationship between trait ratings, ideology assessment, and overall evaluations moderated by gender or party?*

Chapter Four will sharpen the analyses put forth in Chapter Three, by focusing on

the relationship between party, traits, and candidate evaluations among a national sample

of *women*. An examination of ratings of Palin's traits will be conducted on the dimensions of

women viewing her as being understanding, personally identifiable, prepared to take over

the Presidency, and prepared to be commander-in-chief.[4] In addition, the chapter will

examine differences in policy position agreement to determine if there is a gender gap

within each party, both in agreement as well as in how much salience these agreements

have for overall evaluations of Palin.[5] The specific policy issues examined are creationism

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[3] Question wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for ... Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If don't know or refused): As of today, who do you lean more towards?; Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

[4] Question wording: How well does Sarah Palin understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; How much do you personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of Sarah Palin – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?; And which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?

[5] Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable

and evolution, abortion, the right to bear arms, drilling for oil and gas, global warming, and

the war in Iraq.[6]

- *Research Question #7. What are the opinions of the nation's women in regards to Sarah Palin's traits and policy positions? How do these opinions vary by party identification?*

- *Research Question #8. Does a woman's party identification have a significant effect on her ratings of Palin's traits and agreement with Palin's policy positions, controlling for other demographic and socioeconomic factors?*

- *Research Question #9. Is there a partisan gap among women in overall evaluations of Palin – vote for McCain, approval of Sarah Palin, and opinion of McCain's choice of Palin?*

- *Research Question #10.What is the effect of party on vote for McCain, approval of Sarah Palin, and opinion of McCain's choice of Palin, controlling for demographic and socioeconomic factors?*

- *Research Question #11. To what extent do trait ratings have a significant effect on overall evaluations of Palin? Are the relationships between trait ratings and overall evaluations moderated by party?*

- *Research Question #12. To what extent does policy issue agreement have a significant effect on overall evaluations of Palin? Are the relationships between policy issue agreement and overall evaluations moderated by party?*

- *Research Question #13. Is policy issue agreement more important in overall candidate ratings than candidate traits or gender? Does this differ among Democrats and Republicans?*

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or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?
[6] Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position? Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools; She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger; Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns; She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge; She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans; Palin supports the war in Iraq

Chapter Five will summarize the findings from the previous chapters, and explore

the implications of the analyses for existing gender research. In addition, it will outline the

areas where conservative Republican female candidates hold advantages and are

challenged.

Chapter Two

Republican Women in a Partisan Era

Sarah Palin's 2008 vice-presidential run occurred at a time in American history when women are playing a greater role in elite-level politics, and when there is an elevated level of political polarization between the Democratic and Republican parties among both the party elite and the mass public.

This chapter will document the current political climate for elected female officeholders and trace the historical increase in female political representation that has taken place across state and national government. These trends will be situated against the backdrop of the increasingly polarized political climate in which females officeholders are participating. *National Journal* vote ratings will then be used to examine the rising partisan polarization of one group of female elected officials – women serving in Congress over the last three decades. Public opinion as measured through Election Day exit polling data will be used to assess support for female Republican Senators from different gender and partisan groups. Finally, an overview of public attitudes toward Republican Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin and Democratic Presidential nominee hopeful Hillary Rodham Clinton will be presented.

I. Female Representation in Elite Politics

While historically women have not achieved levels of representation in state and national political offices equal to their percentage in the population, women today are increasingly involved in all levels of government, including holding elected office at elite positions in Congress, state legislatures, and governorships.

At the state level, six of the 50 states are currently led by female executives (Jan Brewer of Arizona, Jodi Rell of Connecticut, Linda Lingle of Hawaii, Jennifer Granholm of Michigan, Bev Perdue of North Carolina, and Christine Gregoire of Washington), and during the 2009 legislative session, there were 1,793 women legislators serving in the 50 states, holding a total of 24.3 percent of state legislative seats – an all-time high (National Conference of State Legislatures 2009).

In the United States Congress, there are currently 17 female Senators and 73 female Representatives – also record highs. Nearly three decades ago in the 101st Congress (1989-1990), there were just 2 female Senators and 29 female Representatives. This marks an increase of 190 percent in the total number of female legislators at the national level (from 31 to 90). The election of 1992, known as the Year of the Woman (Dolan 1998), brought with it a surge in female legislators, and the number has been increasing steadily since that time.

While there are currently more women holding elite elected office today, these women are not coming from the two major political parties in equal numbers, and the GOP's share of female representatives in decreasing. While half of the female governors are Republicans, Democrats make up the majority of other female officeholders at the state and national level. In state legislatures, 70 percent of female officeholders in 2009 came from the Democratic Party (1,259 of the 1,793), with 29 percent (520) from the Republican Party, and the remaining 1 percent (14) belonging to a third party or having no official partisan affiliation (National Conference of State Legislatures 2009).

In the United States Congress, 76 percent of female Senators and 77 percent of female Representatives are Democrats. In the 101st Congress, there was an equal number of Republican and Democrat female Senators (1 of each), but Democrats have outnumbered Republicans in every year since (see Figure 2-1). In the U.S. House, Democrats have held the

advantage among female Representatives since the mid-1950s beginning with the 84th

Congress, with the exception of the 88th Congress in which each party had six female

Representatives (see Figure 2-2). The dominance of Democratic women representatives at

the state and national levels means that as a conservative Republican woman, Palin is an

anomaly among female politicians.

II. Partisan and Ideological Polarization

The political climate in which these women are serving as elected officials has

become increasingly polarized. The two parties are growing more homogenous in their

policy positions, and the differences between their stands on major policy issues are

expanding (Aldrich 1995; Coleman 1997; Fleisher and John R. Bond 2004; Roberts and S. S.

Smith 2003; Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003). In fact, data shows the two political

parties in the U.S. Congress are as ideologically divergent as they have been at any point

during the last three decades (Theriault 2003).

These trends suggest a puzzle, as formal theory literature suggests that converging

on a center point in the ideological spectrum is the optimal electoral strategy in a two-party

system (Davis, Hinich, and Ordeshook 1970; Hinich and Munger 1994). Downs (1957)

predicted that political parties would race toward this ideological center in hopes of

capturing the "median voter". While candidates may begin their campaigns with relatively

extreme ideologies, possibly in order to navigate their way successfully through a tough

primary, they will moderate their positions in the general election in order to appeal to the

median voter.

However, empirical data show that the two major parties are not currently ascribing

to this strategy. Party voting in the U.S. Congress decreased during the late 1960s and

1970s, and the parties became more ideologically closer to one another than they would be

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at any point thereafter. Since that time, the Democratic Party has become noticeably more liberal while the Republican Party has become much more conservative. Party-line voting increased dramatically from the early 1980s through the mid-1990s, reaching a high of 73 percent in 1995. After a steady rise from 1970 through 1995, the percentage of party votes dropped, reaching only 47 percent in 1999 and 43 percent in 2000 (Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003, 6)[7]. There is also evidence of growing party polarization on congressional committees (Aldrich and Rohde 2000; Sinclair 2000) and in members' support for presidential initiatives (Edwards and Barrett 2000; Fleisher and Jon R. Bond 2000; Sinclair 2000).

The increase in party polarization in Congress has had important consequences for both lawmaking and the public's perception and ratings of the institution. More ideologically extreme members have begun to fill pivotal legislative roles as political moderates have become scarcer. As a result, the vast middle of the electorate has become under-represented in its political institutions (Poole and Rosenthal 1984). Additionally, congressional polarization fuels the negative view that most Americans have of Congress. Polarization and partisanship have been blamed for a decrease in congressional comity (Jamieson and Falk 2000; Uslaner 1993) as well as an increase in legislative gamepersonship (Aldrich and Rohde 2000; Sinclair 2000, 2000). These two factors are often mentioned by the public as reasons why they disapprove of Congress (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995, 2002).

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[7] Scholars have shown the same basic pattern across different measures of polarizations - Poole-Rosenthal DW-NOMINATE scores (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Dolan 2004; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a; King and Matland 2003; McDermott 1997), party unity scores (Coleman 1997; Rohde 1991; Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003), Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) scores (Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003), American Conservative Union (ACU) scores (2000), and a mixture of ADA and ACU scores (Fleisher and Bond 2000).

Member conversion and member replacement are two mechanisms through which a shift in party polarization may occur. Member conversion happens when elected officials become more partisan later in their career. Members tend to be more ideologically moderate in order to get elected (Downs 1957), as well as early in their career when they are most politically vulnerable (Jacobson 2009). However, officeholders face increased party pressure to tow the party line as they move into a protectionist stage of their careers after having developed a level of trust with their constituency that allows them more freedom in their voting behavior (Fenno 1977). Empirical research has found that only 10 percent of congressmen become more ideologically extreme by voting differently (Fleisher and Bond 2004). However, when looking specifically at the definitive polarizing phases for each of the parties (the 98th to 100th Congresses for Democrats and the 102nd to 104th Congresses for Republicans), member conversion was shown to account for between 50 and 82 percent of the polarization of the parties (Roberts and Smith 2003).

Member replacement can happen suddenly (e.g. 1974 liberal Democrats, 1994 conservative Republicans, and 2002 conservative Republicans), or more gradually as slightly more partisan candidates replace less partisan members (Clausen 1973; Kingdon 1989). Member replacement is responsible for more than half of the Senate polarization and more than two-thirds of the House polarization, and is facilitated in one of three ways: incumbent defeat, cross-party replacement, or same party replacement (Theriault 2003).

Two primary explanations have been given for why Congress has become so polarized. The first focuses on changes in congressional decision-making over the last three decades. The increasing restrictiveness of congressional rules has made it difficult for moderate members to demonstrate moderate ideologies (S. S. Smith 1989), and majority leaders have an even greater ability than in the past to control the agenda, committee

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assignments, and other key resources (Sinclair 1995). In addition, both the types of issues

being debated in Congress (Theriault 2003) and the party leadership itself (Collie and Mason

2000; C. L. Evans and Oleszek 1997; Roberts and S. S. Smith 2003; Rohde 1991) are more

ideologically extreme than ever before.

The second explanation is electorally-based. Members' voting behaviors have

changed as the districts they are representing have changed. Social changes such as

increasing rates of Hispanic immigration, residential segregation among racial and class

lines, and increasing mobility have contributed to a homogenization of districts (Gimpel

1999; Gimpel and Schuknecht 2001; Oppenheimer 2005; Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani

2003). As a result, Democrats are more likely to represent urban, lower-income, heavily

non-white districts, while Republicans are more likely to be voted into office by districts

that are suburban or rural with more affluent, white populations (Stonecash, Brewer, and

Mariani 2003). This homogenization of districts, which has been jolted every ten years by

redistricting (Carson et al. 2007; Jacobson 2009), has emboldened party leaders to pursue

explicitly ideological strategies (Rohde 1991).

Ideological differences are not only increasing among the party elite. Indeed, there

has also been a significant increase in the ideological differences between those who vote

Republican and those who vote Democrat in congressional elections (Abramowitz and

Saunders 1998; Jacobson 2009; Pomper and Weiner 2002; Weisberg 2002). Moreover,

levels of polarization at the mass and elite levels tend to feed off of one another. The

increase in polarization among the elites has been driven in part by the ideological

polarization that is seen at the mass level (Jacobson 2000). In turn, the increase in

polarization at the mass level is influenced by the increased polarization of the elites

(Carmines and Stimson 1989; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976; Zaller 1992). This is facilitated

by the political parties, which can send cues down from elites, to party activists, and finally to the masses (Bartels 2000; Carsey and Layman 1999).

However, not all individuals in the electorate receive and accept cues from political parties or elites. Those who have strong party affiliations, those who are aware of elite-level polarization, and those who are politically sophisticated are more likely to respond to partisan cues than those who pay little attention to elite-level politics or have weak ties to a political party (Box-Steffensmeier and De Boef 2001; Layman and Carsey 2002; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991). Even for those citizens with high levels of political awareness, political cues are most likely to be taken from those elites who share their political predispositions (Zaller 1992).

In 2008, the increased ideological polarization at the elite and mass level thus created a conundrum for the 'moderate maverick' John McCain. In light of the success achieved by George W. Bush chief strategist Karl Rove to rally the conservative base in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, as well as John McCain's own rocky history and moderate ideological reputation within the Republican Party, the selection of the more ideologically extreme Governor Palin to mobilize the GOP base for McCain in late August 2008 made strategic sense for his presidential campaign.

III. Female Congresswomen in a Polarized Era

Studies of women's voting patterns and legislative behavior have shown female legislators tend to display greater liberalism than their male counterparts, are more supportive of issues of concern to women, children, and families, and play an active role in fostering measures to further women's interests at both the local and state levels (Carroll 2001; Dodson and Carroll 1991; Epstein, Niemi, and Powell 2005; Norton 1999; Reingold

2000; Thomas 1994) as well as in the US House (Burrell 1994; J. J. Evans 2005). A Representative's gender has been found to have a significant effect on voting for women's issues in the House, and influences both the nature of the bills placed on the national agenda and the choices made about those bills (Dodson 1998, 2006; Swers 1998, 2002).

Republican women in Congress have historically played an important role in contributing to collective gender differences that have been found to exist on women's issues. In order to vote for women's issues, Republican women must frequently defect from their party's more conservative platform and leadership positions (Swers 1998). In addition, for specific issues such as the arts, gender differences are primarily a result of the greater support of Republican women than their male counterparts (Boles and Scheurer 2007).

However, during the past 15 years since the 1994 elections, a new group of more conservative female Republicans have been elected to the U.S. House, largely from the Southern and Western areas of the United States. These women are less supportive of traditional female issues, and their views on issues such as abortion, taxes, and national security are more in step with the Republican party line (Dodson 2006; J. J. Evans 2005; Gertzog 2004; Klatch 1987; Swers 2002). In fact, female Republican Representatives remained slightly less conservative than male Republicans until the 108th Congress, when Republican women in Congress were for the first time no longer ideologically distinguishable from their male colleagues (Frederick 2009).

In his study of roll-call voting behavior of women in the U.S House of Representatives from 1981 to 2006, Frederick (2009) finds that in the 108th and 109th Congresses, female Republicans were not ideologically distinguishable from their male colleagues. In addition, Republican and Democratic female Representatives in 2006 were more divided among partisan ideological lines than at any time during the past 25 years.

Frederick also finds that in the 97th Congress the difference between the two party's female Representative DW-Nominate scores was approximately .55 points. In the 109th Congress, this difference had catapulted to .94 points, with female Democrats having a mean score of -.46 points, and female Republicans scoring a mean of .47.

The yearly ideological rankings on key votes compiled by *National Journal* is another measure by which to study the voting behavior among female Representatives and Senators. These rankings, which have been conducted since 1981, examine key votes in three areas (economic issues, social issues, and foreign policy) to rank lawmakers relative to one another on a conservative-to-liberal scale (National Journal 2008). In order to analyze these rankings over time, I created a data set containing the economic, social, foreign policy, and composite rankings for each female member of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate. I then charted the over-time averages for each branch of Congress using conservative rankings for Republican Congresswomen and liberal rankings for Democratic Congresswomen to confirm previously seen upward trends in party polarization in Congress.

Indeed, the analysis shows increasing ideological polarization for both Republican and Democratic female Representatives, with female Senators of both parties equally or less polarized than in the early 1980s. The average conservative composite ranking of Republican female Representatives has increased gradually from 54.9 in 1981 to 74.9 in 2008, with an average ranking of 65.3 for the time period. This 36 percent increase means that female Republicans have, on average, moved from being in the ideological center of the House to being more conservative than 74.9 percent of the other members of Congress (see Figure 2-3).

This rise in conservatism generally was also mirrored in the conservative ratings of female Republicans across all three areas of policymaking. Female Republicans began the 1980s as more conservative on economic issues than social and foreign policy issues, with a ranking of 65.5. This ranking oscillated from year to year throughout the 1980s, finally stabilizing in the mid-1990s, and increasing steadily since that time. The rankings on foreign policy saw the largest increase in conservative voting by female Republicans. In 1981, the average female Republican in the House was more conservative on foreign policy votes than just 45.1 percent of all members of the House. This ranking increased steadily, with the exception of a brief drop after the 1998 elections, ending at a conservative ranking of 75.0 in 2008. Conservative rankings on social issues saw an increase of 20 points (from 51.1 in 1981 to 71.5 in 2008), with an average of 59.2 for the time period studied. Half of the jump occurred during the last six years, following the 2002 elections.

Similarly, the average *liberal* composite ranking of female Representatives in the *Democratic* Party has increased from 72.4 in 1981 to 79.8 in 2008, reaching a low of 67.5 following the elections of 1986 and a high of 84.3 following the elections of 2002 (see Figure 2-4). The rise in overall liberalism is largely a result of more liberal attitudes in votes on foreign policy. In fact, the liberal rankings of female Representatives on economic issues is slightly lower today (75.3) than in 1981 (76.2), and the rankings on social issues have only marginally increased (73.1 in 1981 to 75.0 in 2008). The averages for the time period (75.3 and 75.9 respectively) are nearly equal with the rankings in 1981 and 2008, indicating that the liberal rankings on economic and social issues have been stable over time. On foreign policy, the average Democratic female Representative was 64.3 percent more liberal than the rest of the House in 1981. By 2008, this had increased 18%, so that the average female Democrat Representative was more liberal than 76.1 percent of the House.

The patterns of increasing polarization, however, do not hold in the Senate. Since these rankings are dealing with averages, there is more room for fluctuations from year-to-year due to the smaller N for both the number of female Senators (2 in 1981 to 16 in 2008) and the number of other seats with which those females are being compared (100 versus 435 for the House). The first Democratic female Senator to be ranked by *National Journal*, Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, was elected in 1986, and was first ranked in 1987. Her cumulative liberalism ranking was 84.2 in that year. In 2008, *National Journal* ranked 11 female Democratic Senators, with an average liberal rating of 74.2 (see Figure 2-5). There have been across the board decreases in liberalism across the three areas of policymaking that comprise the cumulative rankings, with each aggregate policy component averaging approximately 76 percent for the entire time period. Member cumulative liberalism rankings decreased from 74.0 to 72.5 on economic issues, from 74.0 to 71.5 on social issues, and from 81.0 to 66.5 on foreign policy.

In both 1981 and 2008, female Republican Senators had a conservatism ranking of 59.8, with an average ranking of 62.7 over this time period (see Figure 2-6). Rankings on economic issues were also almost equal in 1981 and 2009, increasing only 0.2 points from 57.0 to 57.2, though there was quite a bit of movement during the intervening years. At the end of the 1980s and again in the early 1990s, the average conservative ranking of female Republican Senators on economic issues reached upwards of 70.0 and 80.0, driving the average ranking for the time period to 63.5. During this time period, female Republican Senators became more conservative on foreign policy issues, but less conservative on social issues. The average conservative ranking on foreign policy increased 33 percent from 44.0 in 1981 to 58.4 in 2008, though spikes in the early and late 1990s to 70.0 resulted in an average conservative ranking of 61.4 for the time period. Alternatively, the conservative

ranking on social issues decreased from 73.0 in 1981 to 58.8 in 2008. The ranking in 1981 was an aberration for the period, falling to 45.0 in the following year, and matched in only one other year, 1994. The average ranking was 58.0.

IV. Public Opinion towards Female Republicans

Since the elections of 1994, there have been 11 elections in which a female Republican candidate was elected to the U.S. Senate. In 1994, Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX) was elected to her first full term in the Senate. Hutchison had first been elected to the Senate via a special election in 1993, and was reelected to her second and third terms in 2000 and 2006 with overwhelming majorities of the vote. After serving eight terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, Olympia Snowe (ME) was elected to her first term in the Senate in 1994 with 60 percent of the general election vote. She was reelected in 2000 with 69 percent of the vote and again in 2006 with 74 percent of the vote. In 1996, Susan Collins (ME) became the 15th woman to be elected to the Senate in her own right. She was re-elected in 2002 with 59 percent of the general election vote and again in 2008 with 61 percent of the vote. After serving more than two decades in the White House and making an unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 2000, Elizabeth Dole (NC) successfully ran for Senate in 2002. She was elected with 54 percent of the vote. In 2008, Dole lost her reelection race to Democratic challenger Kay Hagan by eight points, receiving only 44 percent of the votes. Lisa Murkowski (AK), a former three-term state congresswoman, was appointed to the Senate in December 2002 by her father, Governor Frank Murkowski. She was elected to a full six-year term in 2004 with 49 percent of the vote.

These 12 elections, including Elizabeth Dole's unsuccessful 2008 contest, will serve as the data points for a brief examination of public opinion attitudes towards female

Republican Senators. In order to examine public opinion, I gathered exit polling data for each U.S. Senate contest. For the elections prior to 2008, the full data sets of exit polling were obtained, and thus the results are examined along gender and party lines simultaneously. The data for the elections of 2008 are only available in the form of crosstabs, and will be examined in terms of gender or party, but not both.

In this section I seek to identify trends among support by gender and partisan groups for female Republican Senators. Due to the small sample size, as well as the fact that these Senatorial elections are occurring across different states, years, and candidates, I average support for the least conservative and most conservative Senators and focus on the average differences among gender and partisan groups. Thus, in each of the tables presented, the candidates are listed in order of their *National Journal* conservatism rankings. Of the 12 cases included in this analysis, Senator Olympia Snowe in 2006 received the lowest conservativism rating, with a score of 44.5, while Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison received the highest rating in 1994, with a score of 85.7. The average rating for the six least conservative Senators was 47.9, while the average rating for the six most conservative Senators was 70.4. The average across the 12 cases was 59.1.

A. The Gender Gap

The exit polling data shows that, on average, women were slightly more likely to vote for *less* conservative Senators than for *more* conservative Senators (see Table 2-1). The six least conservative female Republican Senators were the candidate of choice for an average of 61.7 percent of the women who voted in the respective elections, while the six most conservative Senators received an average of 55.5 percent of the vote among the female electorate. The gap in support for both groups by male voters (2.9 points) was

smaller than that of female voters (6.2 points) – averaging 63.2 percent support for the least conservative Senators and 60.3 percent support for the most conservative. Overall, women were slightly less likely to support female candidates than were men (3.1 percentage points), and this gap was not significant.

On average, women were 1.5 percentage points less likely than men to vote for the least conservative candidates, and 4.8 percentage points less likely to vote for the most conservative candidates. However, the gender gaps in vote for female Republican Senators were largely statistically insignificant.[8] There was a significant gap between male and female support in only three of the 12 races – Susan Collins in 2008 (one of the less conservative candidates), and Elizabeth Dole in 2008 and Lisa Murkowski in 2004 (both more conservative candidates). In all three of these cases, women were less likely to support the female Republican candidate than men.

B. The Partisan Gap

Not surprisingly, Republicans were more likely to vote for female Republican Senators across the board than were Democrats (see Table 2-2). In fact, Republicans supported the least conservative and most conservative candidates in equal numbers (91.5 percent and 91.2 percent respectively). Democrats were less likely to support these candidates, though on average over one-third (35.2 percent) supported the least conservative Senators, while only 16.3 percent supported the most conservative Senators. The gaps in support by Republicans and Democrats were highly significant in every race.

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[8] Levels of significance throughout this section are obtained using the difference in proportions method.

C. Partisan Gender Gaps

The data thus far have shown that women are more likely to vote for less conservative female Republican candidates than more conservative candidates, and less likely to vote for both of these groups when compared to male voters. However, the effects of party identification are strong, with Republicans overwhelmingly supporting these female Republican candidates. What does support look like when controlling for party identification? That is to say, do gender gaps remain among Democratic voters and Republican voters?

Among Republican voters, women are slightly more likely to support less conservative candidates than more conservatives ones (see Table 2-3). While 93 percent of Republican women supported the less conservative candidates on average, 91.4 percent supported the more conservative candidates. Meanwhile, men are just slightly more likely to support more conservative candidates (91.6 to 90.8 percent). The gender gap among Republicans is larger for less conservative candidates. Women are *more* likely than men to vote for less conservative candidates (2.2 percent), but *less* likely to vote for more conservative candidates (-.02 percent). However, the gender gap is only significant in three of the 10 races – Susan Collins in 2002, and Kay Bailey Hutchison in 2000 and 2006.

Both male and female Democrats were more likely to support the less conservative candidates than the more conservative candidates (see Table 2-4). Women were 18.9 percentage points more supportive of less conservative candidates (38.4 to 19.5 percent), while men were 15.5 percentage points more supportive of less conservative candidates (32.0 to 16.5 percentage points). The gender gap among Democratic voters was larger for less conservative candidates (6.4 percent) than for more conservative candidates (3.0 percent). However, none of the gender gaps are statistically significant.

Majorities of Independent voters were supportive of female Republican candidates, with both men and women supporting less conservative and more conservative candidates in approximately the same percentages (around 65 and 57 percent respectively; see Table 2-5). The gender gap was slightly larger for the most conservative candidates, with men 1.3 percentage points more supportive of the most conservative female Republican candidates and 0.2 percentage points more supportive of the least conservative candidates. The gender gap among Independent voters was significant in only two of the 10 races – Olympia Snowe in 1994 and Kay Bailey Hutchison in 2000.

D. Gender Partisan Gaps

Does party identification have a greater effect on female support or male support for female Republican Senators? The gap in support among male Republicans and male Democrats was 4.2 percentage points larger on average than the gap among female Republicans and Democrats (see Tables 2-6 and 2-7). Republican women in the electorate were an average of 63.2 percentage points more likely to vote for female Republican Senators than Democratic women, while Republican men were 67 percentage points more likely to vote for female Republican Senators than Democratic men. These gaps are driven more by the lack of support by both male and female Democrats for the most conservative female Republican candidates. For the most conservative candidates, only 19.5 percent of female Democrats and 16.5 percent of male Democrats gave their support to the most conservative female Republican Senators on average, while both male and female Republicans were 91.6 and 91.4 percent in approval for this group.

V. Female Candidates on the National Stage

Despite the number of female politicians in elite positions, no woman has ever been nominated by one of the two major parties for President of the United States. Hillary Clinton came close to achieving that distinction in 2008. After eight years as the country's First Lady, and eight years as a Democratic Senator from New York, Hilary Clinton made a run for the White House in 2008. Through most of 2007, Clinton was the frontrunner in public opinion horserace polling. However, towards the end of that year, the race tightened considerably as the mood of the country became more favorable toward Barack Obama's message of change than to Clinton's platform of experience (Tumulty 2008). In the first contest of 2008, the Iowa caucuses, Clinton placed third behind Obama and John Edwards. Although Clinton won several important contests (the New Hampshire primary, the largest states on Super Tuesday), Obama won more states and more pledged delegates. By the June 3rd primaries, Obama had enough delegates to become the presumptive nominee, and Clinton ended her campaign shortly thereafter.

If Clinton had emerged as the Democratic presidential nominee, national exit polling data on Election Day indicates that she would likely have been the victor. A majority of voters (52 percent) said they would have voted for Clinton over John McCain if she had been the Democratic nominee. Some of Clinton's supporters were dismayed by the political process and the treatment of Clinton by the media and the Obama campaign. After Michigan and Florida – both of which were won by Clinton – were stripped of their convention delegates as punishment for holding their primaries earlier than the Democratic rules allowed, Clinton's supporters turned out in mass numbers to protest at the party's rules committee meeting. In addition, some Clinton backers turned their support to Palin and McCain. In October, a reception held specifically for former Clinton supporters raised more

than $500,000 for the McCain campaign (Luo 2008), and national exit polling conducted on Election Day 2008 indicates that 15 percent of voters who would have voted for Clinton had she been the Democratic nominee, chose to vote for McCain instead of Obama in the presidential election (CNN 2008).

Because of her years in the White House (as First Lady) and Senate, Clinton was well known to the electorate in the 2008 campaign. However, McCain's choice for the GOP's vice presidential nominee was quite unknown. Born in 1964, Sarah Heath moved to Alaska with her family at age three months. She spent her formative years in Wasilla, a small town about 40 miles north of Anchorage, and was a former co-captain of her high school state championship basketball team and runner up for Miss Alaska. After earning her degree in journalism at the University of Idaho in 1987, she became a sports reporter in Anchorage. In 1988, Sarah married Todd Palin, and they went on to have five children: Track, Bristol, Willow, Piper, and Trig.

Palin began her political career in 1992 by winning a seat on the Wasilla City Council. Four years later, she defeated a three-term incumbent to become mayor of Wasilla. She ran her first statewide campaign in 2002, but fell 2,000 votes short of the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor. A year later, she was appointed to chair Alaska's Oil and Gas Conservation Commission by Governor Frank Murkowski, but resigned in 2004 in protest over what she perceived to be a lack of ethics among her fellow Republican leaders. In 2006, Palin defeated Murkowski in the Republican primary race for Governor and became both the first woman and youngest ever governor of Alaska by winning the general election against former Democratic Governor Tony Knowles, 49 to 41 percent.

On August 29, 2008, Republican presidential nominee John McCain introduced Palin as his running mate at a campaign rally in Dayton, Ohio. Palin was formally nominated on

September 4 at the Republican National Convention, becoming only the second woman to run for vice president on a major party ticket and the first Republican female to do so. Addressing the party's convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 3rd, Palin depicted herself as an average 'hockey mom,' memorably joking that the only difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull is lipstick.

As a conservative Protestant, Palin is pro-life, pro-marriage, pro-gun, and supports oil drilling both offshore and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She opposes gay marriage, embryonic stem cell research, and all abortions unless the mother's life is in danger. Palin supports the teaching of creationism alongside evolution in public schools, and is a long time member of the National Rifle Association. Palin is a supporter of drilling, and as Governor she enthusiastically pursued a pipeline to deliver natural gas from the North Slope of Alaska to oil companies. In addition, she passed a major tax increase on state oil production, giving most of that money back to Alaskans.

After the McCain campaign lost the 2008 presidential election, Palin returned to her home state of Alaska to finish her term as governor. On July 3, 2009, just two and half years into her term, Palin announced her resignation. She is currently a fixture in both tabloid and mainstream news outlets. Palin's outspoken views on health insurance reform and other political matters, as well as her visibility since resigning, have fuelled speculation that she is planning a run for the White House in 2012.

Between the time of her announcement as vice presidential nominee on August 29th to Election Day, Palin was the subject of a multitude of public opinion polling questions as the media scrambled to learn more about this unknown quantity and the American public's reaction to her. Roper's iPOLL databank of online survey questions catalogued 330 questions relating to Palin conducted between August 29, 2008 and November 3, 2008, or

roughly five questions per day. The remainder of this section will analyze the responses to these questions, which range from attitudes toward Palin's traits, positions, and performance in the vice presidential debate to her effect on vote choice for McCain and the news media's treatment of her.[9]

The desire to elect the first female vice president in history was not enough to give John McCain a boost in support to carry him to victory. In an early September poll conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for *Newsweek*, only 18 percent of registered voters said electing the first woman vice president would make them more likely to vote for McCain, while 77 percent responded it did not make them more likely to do so.[10] As to the specific effect of McCain's choice of Palin as the GOP vice presidential nominee on vote choice, an average of 43 percent of respondents said it made no difference across 24 polls. Equal numbers of respondents said it made them more likely and less likely to vote for McCain (27 percent each).

Before her vice presidential nomination acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention on September 1, 2008, most people were not aware enough of Palin to give her favorable or unfavorable marks. In her speech, Palin portrayed herself as a reformer as well as an "average hockey mom". She defended her perceived lack of political experience by focusing on her time as Mayor and Governor, and criticized Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama at length. Palin's speech was well received among the electorate. In public opinion polling conducted a few days after the convention, 42 percent

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[9] In this section, if the public opinion data is based upon findings from one survey, the source and question wording is included as a footnote. In all other cases, the percentages reported are averages from multiple surveys.

[10] Princeton Survey Research Associates International/*Newsweek* Poll, September 10-11, 2008. Question wording: If elected (in 2008), Sarah Palin would be the first woman vice president. Does this make you more likely to vote for John McCain and the Republican ticket this fall, or not?

of respondents rated the speech as excellent,[11] and 48 percent of registered voters said they had watched the speech and it had made them think better of Palin.[12] After the speech, Palin's favorability rating jumped to 50 percent and reached levels as high as 58 percent over the next few days. Over the subsequent two month period before the election, across 52 polls, there were many peaks and valleys in Palin's favorability ratings, but the overall pattern was one of gradual decline. Just before the election, Palin's rating had settled into the mid 40s. Palin's thermometer ratings tell a similar story. Starting with a mean rating of 52 on September 3rd, Palin's rating at dropped to 45 by October 7th, across four polls.

Palin's policy positions and traits could have been factors in her favorability ratings. Overall, an average of 45 percent of respondents agreed with Palin on the issues that mattered most to them, and 54 percent felt she shared their own positions on current issues. In particular, a majority of respondents personally agreed with Palin's positions on teaching both creationism and evolution in public schools, the right to bear arms, and the need to drill for oil and gas to alleviate the nation's energy problems. On the other hand, a majority of Americans disagreed with her policy positions on abortion, global warming, and the war in Iraq.

Palin fared much better on interpersonal traits than on her experience and qualification ratings. Respondents found her to be personally likeable (70 percent), down-to-earth (70 percent), not arrogant (65 percent), and caring (51 percent). Furthermore, Palin was seen as sharing the concerns and values of the people – respondents believed she understood the everyday concerns of people (57 percent) and felt they could relate to her

[11] Gallup / *USA Today* Poll, September 5-7, 2008. Question wording: (Turning to the recent (2008) Republican convention...) From what you have heard or read, how would you rate vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin's acceptance speech at the Republican Convention on Wednesday night (September 3, 2008), as--excellent, good, just okay, poor, or terrible?
[12] CBS News Poll, September 5-7, 2008, Registered Voters. Question wording: Did you watch or listen to any of Sarah Palin's acceptance speech at the (2008) Republican National Convention? (If Yes, ask:) Did what you see of Palin's speech make you think better of her or worse of her?

(58 percent). However, Palin was not viewed as experienced (39 percent), well-informed (40 percent), qualified (43 percent), prepared (44 percent), or having the leadership qualities a President should have (44 percent). Despite these ratings, 56 percent would have still felt at least somewhat comfortable with Palin as vice president.

One opportunity the public had to get to know Palin better was during the vice presidential debate with Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Joe Biden. Leading up to the debate, expectations for Palin's performance were not high. Across four polls, only 38 percent of respondents thought she would do a better job than Biden. Palin was expected to be more likeable (65 percent), but less informed on the issues (28 percent). While Palin did score high marks in some areas, she did not fare well vis-à-vis Biden. An average of only 29 percent of respondents across four polls thought Palin won the debate, and the majority thought Biden was more intelligent, expressed his views more clearly, was more in touch with the needs and problems of the people, and seemed more likely to bring the kind of change the country needs. The only victory Palin scored over Biden was that she seemed more likeable. When not comparing her performance to Biden's, however, the majority of respondents thought Palin's performance in the debate was good or excellent (65%), and 84 percent of respondents thought she did better than expected. Fifty-five percent of all voters and 29 percent of registered voters changed their opinion of Palin for the better after the debate, with only 14 and 11 percent changing their opinion for the worse. After the debate, Palin was generally viewed as prepared for the job of Vice President, sharing respondent's values and positions on most issues, and coming across as knowledgeable about the important issues facing the country.

According to the public, the media was increasingly unfair to Palin as Election Day neared. In early September, half of respondents rated the media's coverage as fair, and 41

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percent rated it as unfair.[13] By the end of that month, only 31 percent rated the coverage as fair, while 57 percent rated it as unfair.[14] Fifty four percent of respondents in early September thought the media was being harder on Palin than on any of the other candidates, 29 percent felt all candidates were treated the same, and only 10 percent thought Palin had it easier.[15] In a poll conducted one week later, only 14 percent of respondents said the media was favoring McCain and Palin over Obama and Biden, while 34 percent felt Obama and Biden were being favored by the media, and 49 percent said both sets of candidates were being treated equally.[16]

The country was evenly split on whether Sarah Palin's gender played a role in criticisms of her by the press and the public. In early September, 45 percent of Americans believed Palin was the target of sexist or gender-based attacks by the press, while 48 percent disagreed.[17] In addition, 45 percent believed Palin was criticized for not having experience only because she is a women, while 50 percent believed criticisms based on her lack of experience were fair.[18] In late September, 35 percent of Americans felt Palin received more criticism because of her gender than for her experience and record, and 58 percent

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[13] ABC News Poll, September 4, 2008. Question wording: Overall, do you think the news coverage of (Sarah) Palin has been fair or unfair?

[14] NBC News, *Wall Street Journal*, September 19-22, 2008. Question wording: Do you think that the criticism that Sarah Palin has received (in the 2008 presidential election campaign) has been mostly fair and deserved or mostly unfair and undeserved?

[15] CBS News Poll, September 5-7, 2008, Registered Voters. Question wording: Compared to the way the news media have treated other (2008 presidential election) candidates, have the news media been harder on Sarah Palin, easier on Sarah Palin, or have they treated him the same as other candidates?

[16] Quinnipiac University Poll, September 11-16, 2008. Question wording: Do you think the news media coverage of the (2008) Presidential (election) campaign has favored--John McCain and Sarah Palin, has favored Barack Obama and Joe Biden or has it treated them about equally?

[17] FOX News/Opinion Dynamics Poll, September 8-9, 2008. Question wording: Do you think Sarah Palin has been the target of sexist or gender-based attacks in the press?

[18] CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll, September 5-7, 2008. Question wording: Some people say Sarah Palin does not have enough experience to be vice president. Do you think they are making a fair criticism of her, or are they saying that only because she is a woman?

believed Palin's lack of experience, not gender, was the reason for the criticism.[19] Only 36 percent of likely voters in mid-September thought Palin's gender would not be an issue for voters, while 33 percent said it would matter to a few voters, 27 percent said it would matter to some voters, and 3 percent said it would matter to a lot of voters.[20]

VI. Conclusion

Women in state and national political offices are not hailing from the two major political parties in equal number, and in fact, the GOPs share of female representatives is shrinking. Sarah Palin's emergence as the Republican vice-presidential nominee occurred not only against this political backdrop, but also during a time of heightened political polarization. In Congress and in the electorate, the differences between the parties is widening as Democrats are becoming more liberal and Republicans are becoming more conservative. Party-line voting has dropped dramatically since the mid-1990s, congressional committees have become more polarized, and presidential support has been drawn along partisan lines, leading to negative ratings of Congress, as well as changes in lawmaking. Congressional polarization has been blamed for a decrease in congressional comity, the under-representation of the vast middle of the electorate, and an increase in legislative gamesmanship.

Those female GOPers who are elected into office have also become less moderate as their party has become more ideologically polarized. A new group of conservative female Republicans in the House are less supportive of traditional female issues, and their views

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[19] NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, September 19-22, 2008. Question wording: Do you think that Sarah Palin has received criticism (in the 2008 presidential election campaign) more because of her gender or more because of her experience and record?

[20] Associated Press/Gfk Poll, September 5-10, 2008, Likely Voters. Question wording: Regardless of what people say publicly, how many people do you think will not vote for John McCain and Sarah Palin (for president in 2008) because Palin is a woman? Do you think a lot of people won't vote for them, some people won't, just a few won't, or do you think Palin's gender won't be an issue to anyone?

are more in step with the Republican Party line. In the 108th Congress, Republican women were no longer ideologically distinguishable from their male colleagues.

An analysis of *National Journal* rankings for women in the House of Representatives confirmed this pattern of increasing levels of polarization. Female Republicans in the House have, on average, moved from being in the ideological center to being more conservative than 74.9 percent of the other members of Congress (from 54.9 in 1981 to 74.9 in 2008). Female Representatives in the Democratic Party have become even more liberal today than they were in 1981, with their liberal ranking increasing from 72.4 in 1981 to 79.8 in 2008.

This ideological separation is important because the gender gaps in candidate support are related to the conservatism of the candidate. Exit polling data of the twelve elections resulting in a female Republican Senator shows that, on average, both women and men were slightly more likely to vote for *less* conservative Senators than for *more* conservative Senators. In the three elections in which there was a significant gender gap, women were less likely than men to support the female Republican candidate. The gaps in support by Republicans and Democrats were highly significant in every race, with Republicans supporting the least conservative and most conservative candidates in equal numbers. The least conservative Senators received more support from Democrats than did the most conservative Senators.

Though there is no ideological rating for governors comparable to the rankings of congresswomen provided by *National Journal*, Sarah Palin is known by her public statements and policy positions to be very much on the conservative side of this spectrum. John McCain's selection of Palin as his running mate should thus be seen through the lens of increased political polarization and successful past efforts in recent presidential elections to tap the support of the conservative base. Based on the trends identified in this chapter in

the differences in support for candidates along the conservative ideological spectrum, it is expected that Republicans in the electorate will have high ratings of Palin and Democrats will have low ratings, though women in both parties will have lower levels of support for Palin than their male counterparts.

The next two chapters will examine evaluations of Palin, both overall and on specific traits, to determine the effects of gender and party identification at the state and national level. Chapter Three will examine data from an early October survey of Minnesota residents to determine to what extent gender and partisan identify influence ratings of Palin on three traits (honesty, caring, and experience) and her political ideology, and how these traits in turn affect overall evaluations of Palin as measured by presidential vote choice and appraisals of her performance in the vice presidential debate.

Chapter Four will focus on the relationship between party, traits, and candidate evaluations among a national sample of *women*. An examination of ratings of Palin's traits will be conducted on the dimensions of women viewing her as being understanding, personally identifiable, prepared to take over the presidency, and prepared to be commander-in-chief. In addition, the chapter will examine differences in policy position agreement – on creationism and evolution, abortion, the right to bear arms, drilling for oil and gas, global warming, and the war in Iraq – to determine if there is a gender gap within each party, both in agreement as well as in how much salience these agreements have for overall evaluations of Palin.

Figure 2-1. Number of Women in the United States Senate by Party, 1918-2009
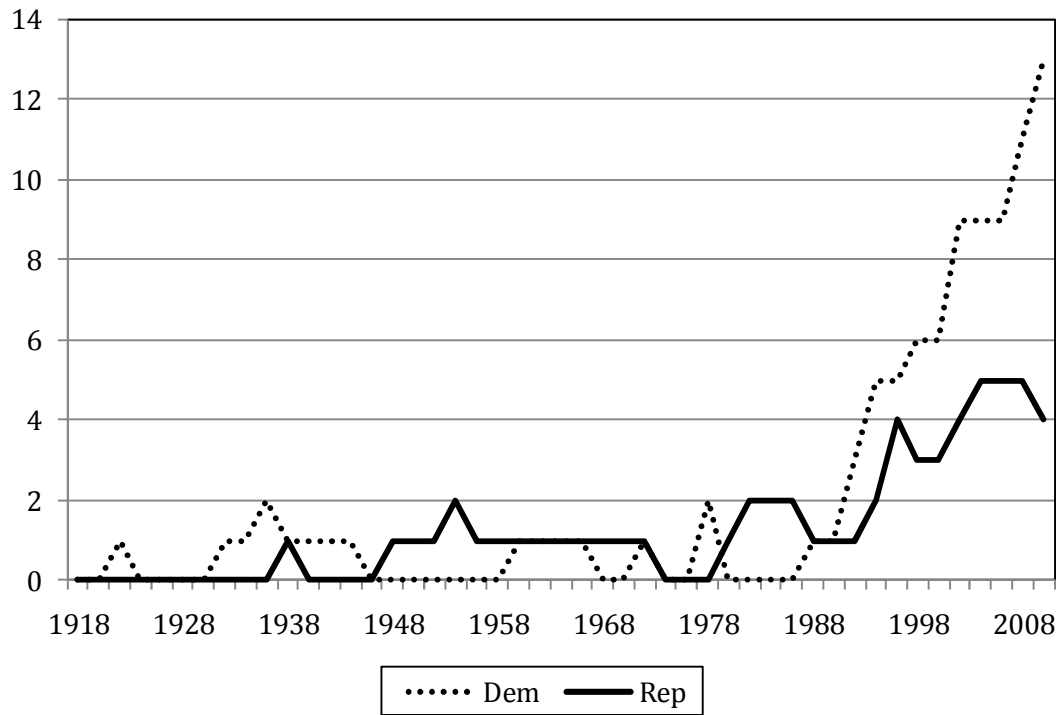
Figure 2-2. Number of Women in the United States House of Representatives by Party, 1918-2009
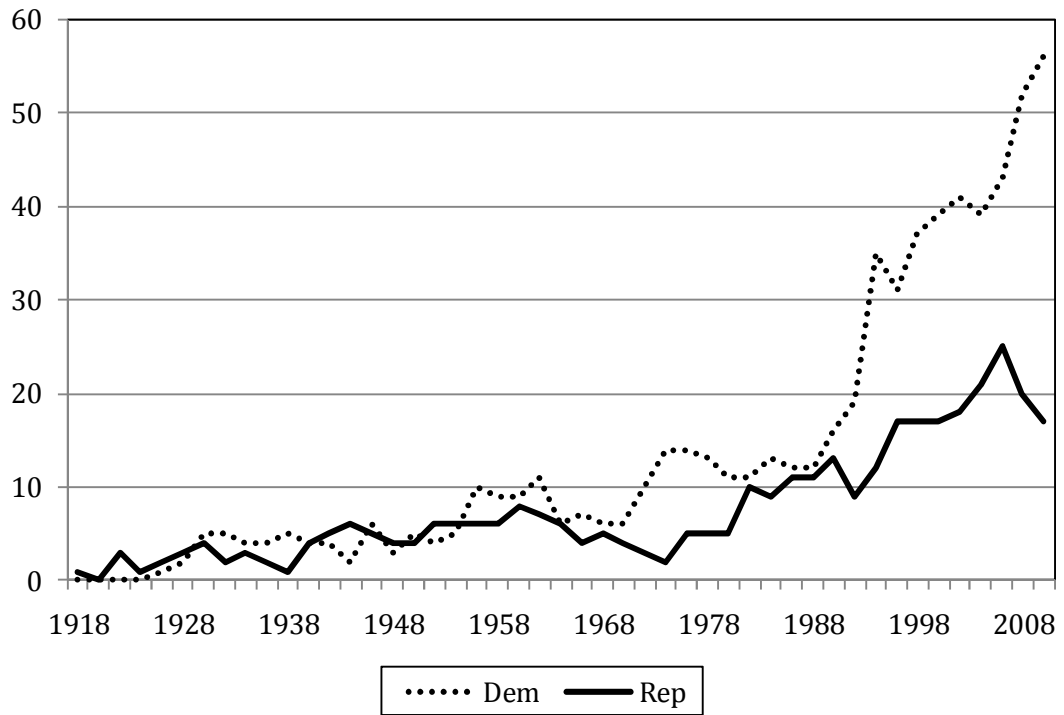
Figure 2-3. Conservative Ideology Rankings of Republican Women in the United States House of Representatives, 1981-2008
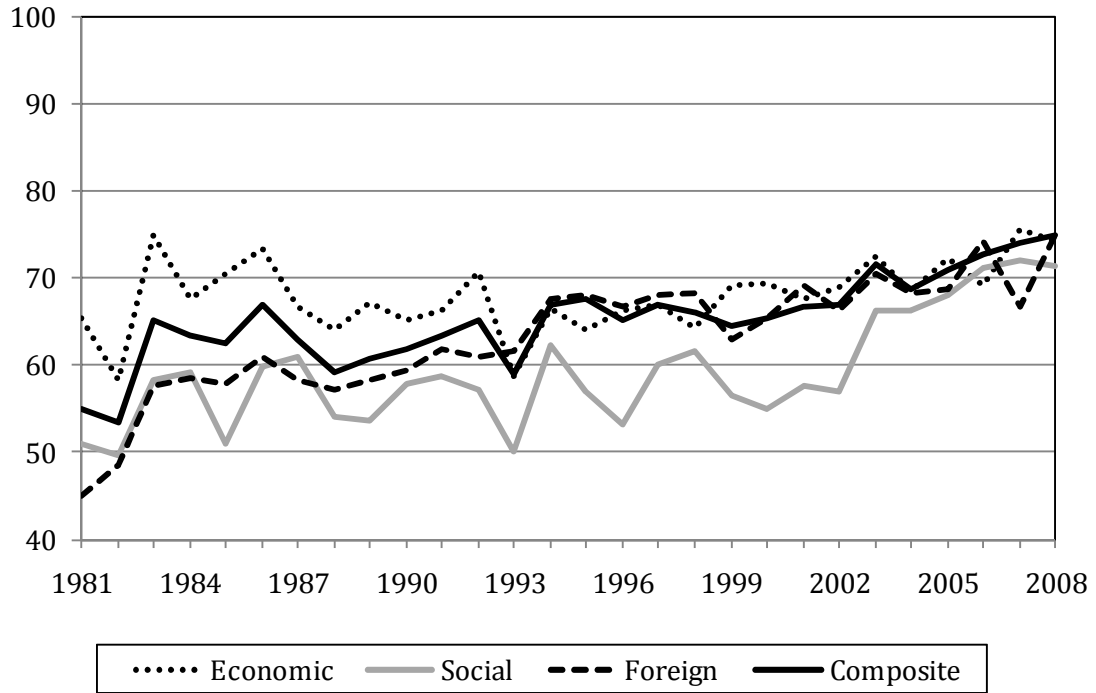
Note: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. These rankings, which have been conducted since 1981, examine key votes in three areas (economic issues, social issues, and foreign policy) to rank lawmakers relative to one another on a 100 point liberal-to-conservative scale.

Figure 2-4. Liberal Ideology Rankings of Democratic Women in the United States House of Representatives, 1981-2008
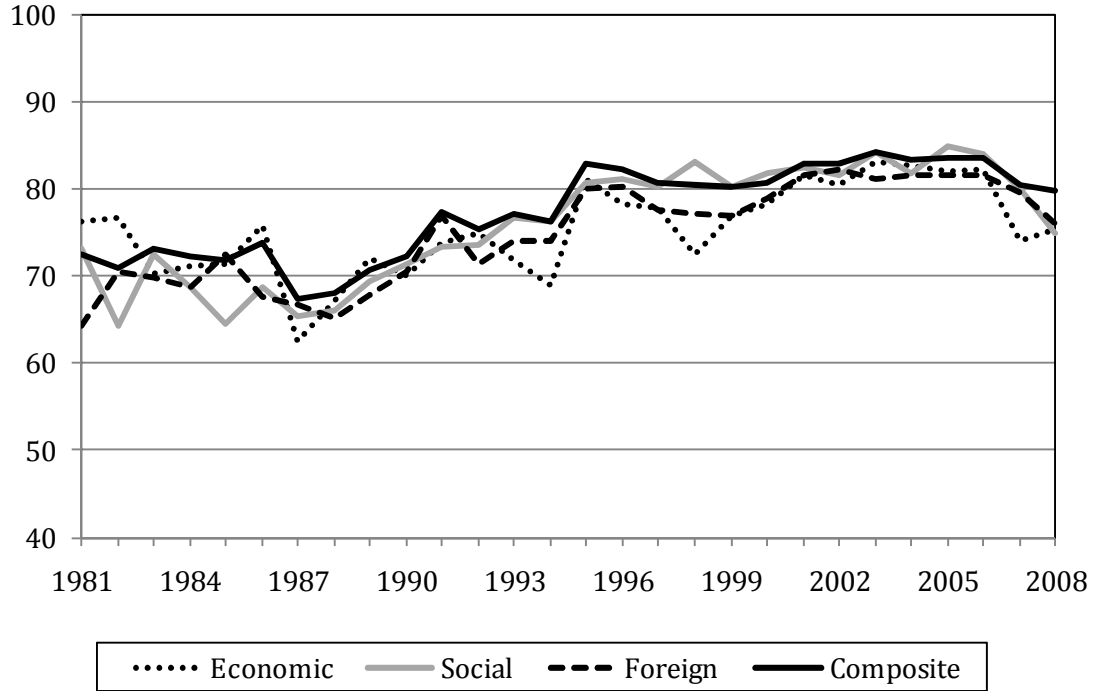
Note: Liberal Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. These rankings, which have been conducted since 1981, examine key votes in three areas (economic issues, social issues, and foreign policy) to rank lawmakers relative to one another on a 100 point conservative-to-liberal scale.

Figure 2-5. Conservative Ideology Rankings of Republican Women in the United States
Senate, 1981-2008
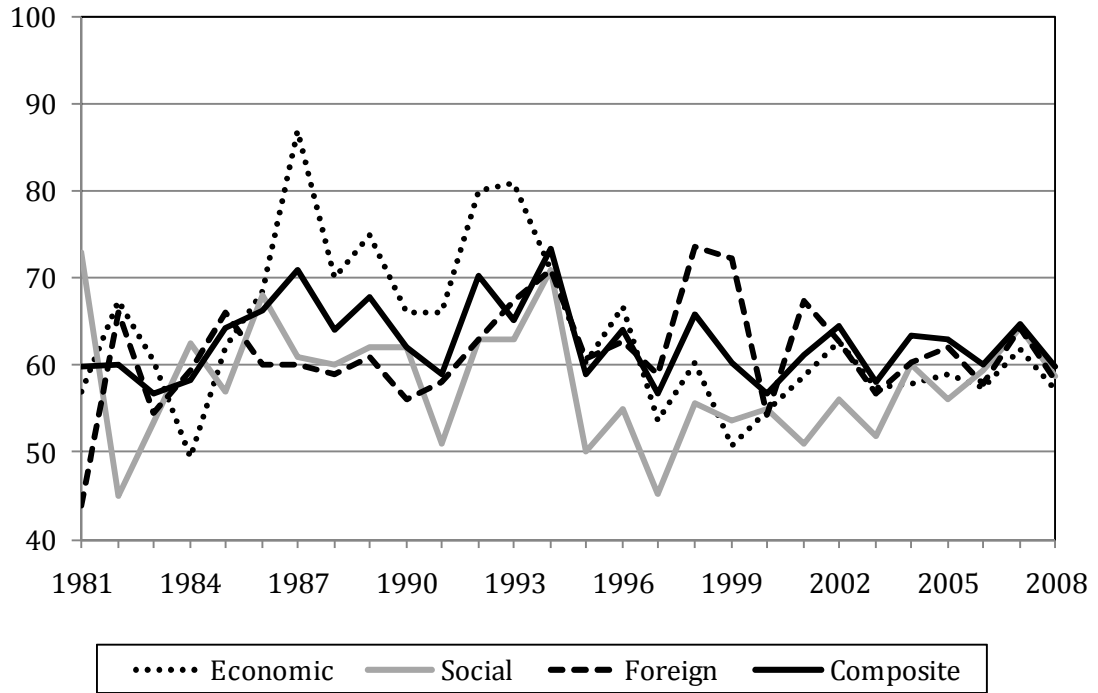
Note: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. These rankings, which
have been conducted since 1981, examine key votes in three areas (economic issues, social issues,
and foreign policy) to rank lawmakers relative to one another on a 100 point liberal-to-conservative
scale.

Figure 2-6. Liberal Ideology Rankings of Democratic Women in the United States Senate, 1981-2008
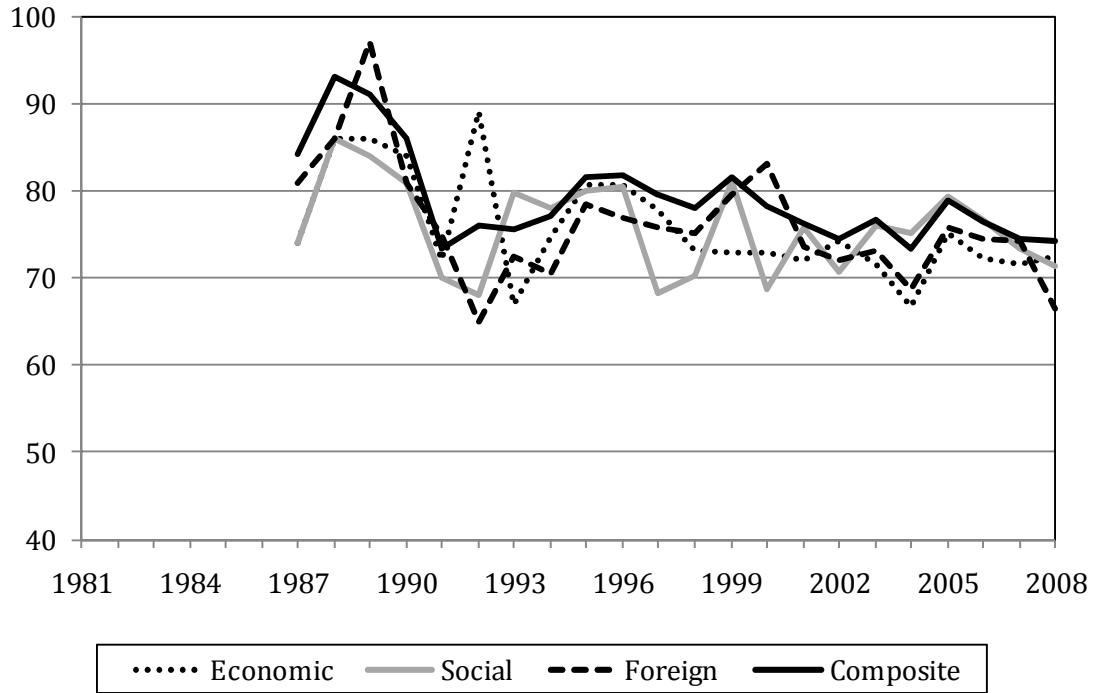
Note: Liberal Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. These rankings, which have been conducted since 1981, examine key votes in three areas (economic issues, social issues, and foreign policy) to rank lawmakers relative to one another on a 100 point conservative-to-liberal scale.

Table 2-1. The Gender Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2008

	Conservative Ranking	Female		Male		Gender Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	75.1	301	72.8	275	2.3
Collins ('02)	44.5	60.0	69	55.6	69	4.4
Collins ('96)	47.7	47.1	305	58.7	383	-11.6
Snowe ('94)	49.8	60.0	439	60.5	401	-0.5
Snowe ('00)	49.8	68.7	307	68.3	274	0.4
Collins ('08)	51.0	59.0	832	63.0	709	-4.0+
Dole ('08)	60.8	41.0	1487	50.0	1266	-9.0***
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	59.6	611	62.4	614	-2.8
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	45.4	272	57.1	323	-11.7**
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	63.0	260	67.7	273	-4.7
Dole ('02)	71.8	63.6	161	63.7	116	-0.1
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	60.5	507	61.1	452	-0.6
Average Least Conservative	47.9	61.7		63.2		-1.5
Average Most Conservative	70.4	55.5		60.3		-4.8

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Female and Male percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first six candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last six candidates. Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of men supporting a candidate from the percentage of women supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the gender gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-2. The Partisan Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2008

	Conservative Ranking	Republican		Democrat		Independent		Partisan Gap
		%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	96.0	218	55.6	159	74.1	195	40.4***
Collins ('02)	44.5	94.5	69	24.7	20	61.0	36	69.8***
Collins ('96)	47.7	86.1	298	22.4	101	57.2	243	63.7***
Snowe ('94)	49.8	90.6	358	31.2	139	62.0	299	59.4***
Snowe ('00)	49.8	91.7	198	44.1	105	71.2	242	47.6***
Collins ('08)	51.0	90.0	401	33.0	539	67.0	616	57.0***
Dole ('08)	60.8	89.0	853	6.0	1156	55.0	743	83.0***
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	95.9	766	18.2	109	57.4	312	77.7***
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	82.7	378	11.1	24	38.4	172	71.6***
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	95.1	312	27.8	73	69.1	125	67.3***
Dole ('02)	71.8	92.2	200	14.9	17	54.1	46	77.3***
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	92.2	545	19.9	101	65.0	266	72.3***
Average Least Conservative	47.9	91.5		35.2		65.4		56.3
Average Most Conservative	70.4	91.2		16.3		56.5		74.9

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Republican, Democrat, and Independent percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first six candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last six candidates. Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats supporting a candidate from the percentage of Republicans supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-3. The Republican Gender Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2006

	Conservative Ranking	Female Republican		Male Republican		Republican Gender Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	97.1	100	95.9	116	1.2
Collins ('02)	44.5	100.0	33	90.0	36	10.0*
Collins ('96)	47.7	85.3	116	86.6	181	-1.3
Snowe ('94)	49.8	90.3	186	90.9	170	-0.6
Snowe ('00)	49.8	92.4	97	90.8	99	1.6
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	93.7	386	97.9	379	-4.2**
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	80.4	160	84.0	216	-3.6
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	97.4	148	93.2	165	4.2*
Dole ('02)	71.8	92.3	108	91.8	90	0.5
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	93.3	294	91.2	248	2.1
Average Least Conservative	47.3	93.0		90.8		2.2
Average Most Conservative	72.3	91.4		91.6		-0.2

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Female Republican and Male Republican percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first five candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last five candidates. Republican Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Republicans supporting a candidate from the percentage of Female Republicans supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the Republican gender gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-4. The Democratic Gender Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2006

	Conservative Ranking	Female Democrat		Male Democrat		Democratic Gender Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	59.1	91	51.5	67	7.6
Collins ('02)	44.5	29.3	12	19.5	8	9.8
Collins ('96)	47.7	23.6	62	20.5	38	3.1
Snowe ('94)	49.8	33.3	86	28.3	51	5.0
Snowe ('00)	49.8	46.6	69	40.0	36	6.6
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	19.5	65	15.9	42	3.6
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	12.8	17	8.3	7	4.5
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	27.5	42	28.2	31	-0.7
Dole ('02)	71.8	16.9	13	10.8	4	6.1
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	20.9	59	19.3	42	1.6
Average Least Conservative	47.3	38.4		32.0		6.4
Average Most Conservative	72.3	19.5		16.5		3.0

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Female Democrat and Male Democrat percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first five candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last five candidates. Democratic Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats supporting a candidate from the percentage of Female Democrats supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the Democratic gender gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-5. The Independent Gender Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2006

	Conservative Ranking	Female Independent		Male Independent		Independent Gender Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	76.3	106	71.3	87	5.0
Collins ('02)	44.5	60.0	18	65.5	19	-5.5
Collins ('96)	47.7	51.9	107	62.2	135	-10.3*
Snowe ('94)	49.8	63.9	147	60.3	149	3.6
Snowe ('00)	49.8	74.0	125	68.0	115	6.0
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	55.8	134	58.4	177	-2.6
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	34.9	87	42.9	85	-8.0
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	64.4	56	75.0	69	-10.6+
Dole ('02)	71.8	62.2	28	46.2	18	16.0
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	64.4	123	65.7	142	-1.3
Average Least Conservative	47.3	65.2		65.5		-0.2
Average Most Conservative	72.3	56.3		57.6		-1.3

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Female Independent and Male Independent percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first five candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last five candidates. Independent Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Independents supporting a candidate from the percentage of Female Independents supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the Independent gender gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-6. The Female Partisan Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2006

	Conservative Ranking	Female Republican		Female Democrat		Female Partisan Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	97.1	100	59.1	91	38.0***
Collins ('02)	44.5	100.0	33	29.3	12	70.7***
Collins ('96)	47.7	85.3	116	23.6	62	61.7***
Snowe ('94)	49.8	90.3	186	33.3	86	57.0***
Snowe ('00)	49.8	92.4	97	46.6	69	45.8***
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	93.7	386	19.5	65	74.2***
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	80.4	160	12.8	17	67.6***
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	97.4	148	27.5	42	69.9***
Dole ('02)	71.8	92.3	108	16.9	13	75.4***
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	93.3	294	20.9	59	72.4***
Average Least Conservative	47.3	93.0		38.4		54.6
Average Most Conservative	72.3	91.4		19.5		71.9

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Female Republican and Female Democrat percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first five candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last five candidates. Female Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Female Democrats supporting a candidate from the percentage of Female Republicans supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the female partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 2-7. The Male Partisan Gap in Support for Republican Women in the United States Senate, 2000-2006

	Conservative Ranking	Male Republican		Male Democrat		Male Partisan Gap
		%	N	%	N	%
Snowe ('06)	44.5	95.9	116	51.5	67	44.4***
Collins ('02)	44.5	90.0	36	19.5	8	70.5***
Collins ('96)	47.7	86.6	181	20.5	38	66.1***
Snowe ('94)	49.8	90.9	170	28.3	51	62.6***
Snowe ('00)	49.8	90.8	99	40.0	36	50.8***
Hutchison ('06)	66.3	97.9	379	15.9	42	82.0***
Murkowski ('04)	67.3	84.0	216	8.3	7	75.7***
Hutchison ('00)	70.5	93.2	165	28.2	31	65.0***
Dole ('02)	71.8	91.8	90	10.8	4	81.0***
Hutchison ('94)	85.7	91.2	248	19.3	42	71.9***
Average Least Conservative	47.3	90.8		32.0		58.9
Average Most Conservative	72.3	91.6		16.5		75.1

Notes: Conservative Ideology Rankings compiled by *National Journal* magazine. Male Republican and Male Democrat percentages are based on national exit polling conducted by Edison Media Research and reported by CNN. Entries in the Average Least Conservative row are averages from the first five candidates. Entries in the Average Most Conservative row are averages from the last five candidates. Male Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats supporting a candidate from the percentage of Male Republicans supporting that candidate. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the male partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

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Chapter Three

Minnesotans' Opinions of Sarah Palin

The previous two chapters have provided theoretical and empirical backdrops on political behavior, especially as it relates to stereotypes and differences in gender opinion and voting behavior, and the increasing climate of political polarization in Washington, D.C. Chapter Two also surveyed public opinion towards female candidates in the Senate as well as attitudes toward 2008 Republican Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin. The next two chapters will delve more deeply into public opinion about Palin by analyzing public attitudes towards her in a battleground state and in a national sample. Specifically, these chapters will analyze trait ratings, ideology assessments, policy position agreement, and overall evaluations of Palin in the 2008 Presidential contest.

While the next chapter will concentrate on the opinions and attitudes of a national sample of women, this chapter will focus on the state of Minnesota. The opinions of Minnesotans regarding the traits and evaluations of Sarah Palin are well suited to this research project for three reasons. First, as a battleground state, the actions of Minnesota voters were politically important on Election Day, and with 10 electoral votes, Minnesota is able to affect the outcome of presidential elections. Secondly, Minnesota voters have recently demonstrated support of a female candidate for federal office, as shown by the election of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar in 2006. Thirdly, a public opinion survey was administered in the Gopher State around the time of the 2008 Vice Presidential debate – specifically, three days before and three days after. This allows for an examination of the differences in attitudes among those who watched the debate and those who did not in

order to ascertain the potential effects increased information can have on candidate

evaluations and how that varies by gender and party.

The Minnesota public opinion survey was conducted by Minnesota Public Radio and

the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota's

Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs after the selection of the Democratic and Republican

vice presidential running mates and both political party conventions. The survey was

conducted of 1,141 residents between September 29th and October 5th, 2008. The margin

of error is +/-3.6 percentage points.[21]

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first will utilize descriptive statistics

and regression analysis to examine the public's assessments of Sarah Palin's ideology as

well as ratings of Palin on three traits – honesty, caring, and experience[22]. The second

section will focus on overall evaluations of Palin as measured by presidential vote choice

and appraisals of her performance in the vice presidential debate[23]. In addition, it will study

the impact of trait ratings and ideology assessment on these overall evaluations.

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[21] The survey was fielded by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut, which has extensive national and state experience conducting non-partisan surveys on politics and government policy. CSRA called a sample of telephone exchanges that was randomly selected by a computer from a list of active residential exchanges within the State of Minnesota. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. The results are weighted to reflect the number of adults and telephone lines in a household as well as the demographic characteristics of adults in Minnesota based on region, sex, age, education, and race.

[22] Ideology is assessed with the following question: "Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?" Traits are rated with the following questions: "Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin: a) Is honest? b) Has the right experience to be president? c) Cares about people like me?"

[23] Question wording: Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

I. Trait Ratings and Ideology Assessment

A. Introduction

A candidate's personality, appearance, and demeanor can provide a valuable shorthand for voters (Popkin 1991). Voters are faced with multiple cues when evaluating a candidate, and two of these are the social stereotypes based on the candidate's gender and party. Citizens are more likely to identify men as strong, assertive, and self-confident, while women are identified as more compassionate, warm, and kind (I. K. Broverman, Vogel, D. M. Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz 1972; Deaux and Lewis 1984; McKee and Sherriffs 1957; Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1974; Williams and Best 1982). Partisan stereotypes fall across these gendered lines. GOP candidates are typically viewed as stronger leaders than Democratic candidates, a trait commonly thought of as masculine, while Democratic candidates are viewed as having more compassion and empathy, which are typically identified as feminine traits (Hayes 2005).

These stereotypes create a conflict when a candidate is both female and Republican, as is the case with Sarah Palin. On the one hand, findings about how voters evaluate the traits of female candidates would predict that voters are likely to rate Palin highly on feminine measures of honesty and caring. On the other hand, literature on stereotypes of GOPers indicates that voters would rate Palin highly on more masculine traits.

This study focuses on three traits. Previous research has identified two of the candidate traits as both feminine and interpersonal (honesty and caring), while the third trait is regarded as performance-based (experience). While the trait of experience is not masculine per se, the fact that it is related to performance makes it a close proxy. All three traits are measured relative to Palin's Democratic vice presidential opponent, Joe Biden. This method of measuring traits for a female candidate relative to her male opponent is one

of the two primary ways evaluations of traits have been examined in previous research. One set of studies asks respondents to rate a hypothetical male candidate and a hypothetical female candidate individually (e.g. Rosenwasser et al. 1987). Alternatively, candidate traits have been asked as a relative rating, or as an either/or choice between candidates (Lawless 2004).

In addition to trait ratings, this section analyzes assessments of Palin's ideology. Female candidates of both major political parties are perceived by voters as being more liberal than their male colleagues (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Dolan 2004; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a; King and Matland 2003; McDermott 1997). While the Minnesota survey does not provide assessments of Sarah Palin's ideology compared to a *male* Republican candidate, it does ask respondents to assess whether Palin's ideology is about right, too conservative, or too liberal.

One important reason for the selection of the Minnesota survey for analysis is its timing: the fact that it was conducted both before and after the vice presidential debate gives leverage to answer questions about the differences in opinions of those who were exposed to increased information about the candidates, and those who were not. The vice-presidential debate between Sarah Palin and Democratic vice-presidential nominee Joe Biden, held on October 2nd, 2009, was viewed across the nation by 69.9 million Americans. This set a new record for vice presidential debate television audience size, beating the Ferraro-Bush debate of 1984 by 13.2 million viewers. The debate also surpassed the first presidential debate between Barack Obama and John McCain, which drew an audience of 52.4 million on September 26th, 2008 (Nielsen 2008b). In the Minneapolis-St. Paul television market area, 49.8 percent of households viewed the debate, leading the metro

area to be ranked 16th in viewership among the 56 market areas tracked by Nielsen (Nielsen 2008a).

B. Results

Research Question #1. What is the relationship between gender and party in the public's ratings of Sarah Palin on her traits and assessment of her ideology? Within partisan groups, is there a gender gap in ratings of Sarah Palin's traits and ideology? If so, on which traits and evaluations are gender gaps more pronounced?

Overall, only 9.8 percent of the sample viewed Palin as too liberal. An additional 46.1 percent believed her ideology is about right, and 44.1 percent believed she is too conservative (see Table 3-1).[24] In order to take an in-depth look at the way Minnesotans assess Sarah Palin's ideology, I grouped the data into gender partisan groups (male Democrats, female Democrats, male Republicans, female Republicans, male Independents, and female Independents). This allows for an examination of variations in the assessment of ideological ratings across different subsets of the population. These gender and partisan gaps were then tested for significance using a difference in proportions test.

The data indicate there are no statistically significant gender or partisan gaps among those assessing Palin's ideology as too liberal. However, there is evidence of significant gender gaps within political parties on ratings of Sarah Palin's ideology as about right and too conservative. Within the Democratic Party, women are 6.9 percentage points less likely than men to think Palin is too conservative. In addition, Republican women are 5.8 percentage points more likely than Republican men to think Palin's ideology is about

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[24] Question wording: Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

right. In addition, there are partisan gaps for both genders. Republican women are 62.7 percentage points more likely to rate Sarah Palin's ideology as about right and 54.3 percentage points less likely to rate her as too conservative than Democratic women. Similarly, men in the Republican Party are 59.0 percentage points more likely to rate Palin as about right and 54.7 percentage points less likely to rate Palin as too conservative than men in the Democratic Party.

Consistent with the research finding that women are more likely to be rated as having feminine traits is the finding from the Minnesota survey data that Palin is rated higher than Joe Biden on the trait of caring. Fifty five percent believed Palin was more caring, while 44.9 percent believed this trait best described Biden.[25] However, Minnesotans rated Palin only equally with Biden on the trait of honesty, another trait commonly associated with females, with each being named by about 50 percent of the sample as holding this trait.[26] In addition, Palin was rated as less experienced than Biden by an overwhelming margin, with 74.8 percent saying he was the vice presidential candidate who had the right experience to be president (see Table 3-2).[27]

Examining the differences among gender partisan groups, Democratic women judged Palin more favorably than Democratic men on caring (22.3 percent to 18.9 percent), but less favorably on honesty (16.2 percent to 20.2 percent) and experience (3.2 percent to 4.6 percent). Republican women judged Palin more favorably than Republican men on caring (96.6 percent to 92.6 percent) and honesty (93.5 percent to 90.3 percent), but less

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[25] Question wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin: Cares about people like me?

[26] Question wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin: Is honest?

[27] Question wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin: Has the right experience to be president?

favorably on experience (51.5 percent to 55.2 percent). Independent women rated Palin less favorably than Independent men on all three traits: caring (76.1 percent to 77.2 percent), honesty (53.7 percent to 59.6 percent), and experience (29.5 percent to 37.7 percent). While these gaps give some clue as to differences in ratings among gender and partisan groups, the only significant gender gap is among Republican men and women on the trait of caring. Partisan gaps within gender groups are significant for all three traits. The male partisan gap was nearly equal to the female partisan gap on all three traits: caring (73.6 to 74.3 percent), honesty (70.1 to 77.3 percent), and experienced (50.6 to 48.3 percent).

Research Question #2. Does a voter's gender and party identification have a significant effect on their ratings of Palin's traits and ideology, controlling for factors such as demographics and socioeconomic indicators? Is the effect of gender on Palin's traits and ideology moderated by party?

Descriptive statistics show that a voter's party identification is a strong predictor of candidate traits and ideology assessment, while gender has a more nuanced effect. In order to more fully test the relationship between a voter's own gender and party identification on their ratings of Sarah Palin as caring, honest, and experienced, as well as assessments of her ideology as about right, I ran a series of logistic regression models. Each model uses one of the traits or ideology assessment as the dependent variable. Demographic and socioeconomic variables are included as controls in each model. These include a dummy variable for religious fundamentalism, and categorical variables for age, income, and education.

The results of the logistic regressions are shown in Table 3-3. The variables of interest in Model 1 for each trait are dummy variables for Female, Republican, and Independent. The findings indicate that gender is not significantly associated with any of the trait ratings or assessment of ideology. However, party identification is highly significant. Republicans are more likely to think Palin is caring by a factor of 60.2, honest by a factor of 40.8, experienced by a factor of 19.4, and ideologically about right by a factor of 14.1.

While party may overshadow the effects of gender in a simplified model, it is possible that gender plays a role in trait ratings of Sarah Palin *within* partisan groups. In order to test this hypothesis, Model 2 introduces an interaction term between Female and Party identification. The interaction between being Republican and female has a significant effect on ratings of Palin as honest (b=1.16, sig at the .05 level), but is not significantly associated with any of the other ratings. When examining the relationships between gender and trait ratings for each party individually, being female is not associated with rating Sarah Palin as honest for Democratic respondents. However, being female is significantly associated with ratings of honesty for Republicans. For Republicans, the odds of rating Sarah Palin as honest are increased by a factor of 2.2 by being female rather than male.

Research Question #3. Does increased information about a candidate have a significant relationship with voter's ratings of a candidate's traits and ideology? Specifically, do those who watched the vice-presidential debate rate Sarah Palin differently than those who did not watch the debate? Are these relationships moderated by party or gender?

In order to test the differences between respondents who watched the debate, and those who did not, logistic regression was again used with each of the traits along with ideology assessment, as dependent variables. In this analysis, the independent variable of interest is a dummy variable indicating whether or not a respondent watched the debate.[28] The results shown in Table 3-4 indicate that watching the debate had a significant effect on voter's evaluations of two of Palin's traits. Those who viewed the debate were less likely to think Palin was caring (b = -.90, sig at the .001 level) or honest (b=-.59, sig at the .01 level). There was no significant relationship between having watched the debate and ratings of Palin as experienced or ideologically about right.

In order to determine how these relationships varied by gender and party identification, I ran two additional sets of models (results not shown in table). In one, I included interaction terms between gender and having watched the debate; in the other, I included interaction terms between party identification and having watched the debate. The results show that that the relationship between watching the debate and rating Sarah Palin did vary by subgroup in certain instances. The relationship between watching the debate and rating Sarah Palin as caring varied by gender (b=-1.49, sig at the .001 level). For men, watching the debate did not have a significant impact on ratings of Sarah Palin as caring, but it did have a significant impact for women. Women who watched the debate were less likely to rate Palin as caring than women who did not watch the debate by a factor of .18. The relationship between watching the debate and rating Palin as honest varied by party (b=.97, sig at the .10 level). Democrats who watched the debate were less likely to rate Sarah Palin as being honest than Democrats who did not watch the debate by a factor of .47. However,

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[28] Question wording: Did you happen to watch any of the Vice Presidential debate between Joe Biden and Sarah Palin that was televised on Thursday, Oct. 2?

for Republicans, watching the debate did not have a significant effect on rating Sarah Palin as honest.

II. Candidate Evaluations

A. Introduction

The Minnesota survey provides two measures that capture overall evaluations of Sarah Palin: presidential vote choice and the impact of her performance in the vice presidential debate on vote choice.[29] While it may seem a stretch to think that opinions of a vice-presidential candidate may be affecting *presidential* vote choice, research has shown that vice presidential candidates can make a difference. Studies conducted at the individual level of analysis on the impact of vice presidential candidates on vote choice have found that voter evaluation of the vice presidential candidates contributed about 0.75 percent toward the national presidential vote margin from 1952 to 1980, generated about one-half the influence as presidential candidate evaluations and party identification, and was approximately one-and-a-half times as impactful as ideological influences on vote choice (Wattenberg 1984). Moreover, in the presidential elections taking place between 1968 and 1992, voters were substantially influenced by their evaluations of vice presidential nominees: voters with split presidential and vice presidential preferences were more likely to defect from their preferred presidential candidate than those with consistent evaluations (Wattenberg 1995).

This section proceeds along two lines of analysis. The first examines differences in overall evaluations of Sarah Palin by gender and partisan groups. The second focuses on the

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[29] Question wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for ... Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If don't know or refused): As of today, who do you lean more towards?; Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

impact of the trait ratings and ideology assessment investigated above on those overall evaluations and how that impact varies for gender and partisan groups.

Research has shown that when voters are faced with competing gender and partisan cues, as is the case with a female Republican politician like Sarah Palin, partisanship plays a more significant role than gender in shaping evaluations (Huddy and Capelos 2002). In addition, for Republican candidates specifically, studies have shown that gender stereotypes do not even come into play (King and Matland 2003). The literature is less clear about which traits should be more powerful in shaping overall evaluations of candidates, especially in the context of conflicting stereotypes.

B. Results

Research Question #4. Within partisan groups, is there a gender gap in vote for McCain and evaluations of Sarah Palin's performance in the debate?

Table 3-5 presents data on presidential vote choice for gender partisan groups. For partisans, there were very small gender gaps in vote choice (0.4 percentage points between Democratic men and women, and 1.4 percentage points between Republican men and women). Among Independents, there was a wider gender gap with men 15.6 percentage points more favorable to McCain (60.3 percent to 44.7 percent). However, the gender gaps within parties were not significant. There were similar significant partisan gaps among the genders. Republican women were 85.9 percentage points more likely than Democratic women to vote for McCain, while Republican men were 86.9 percentage points more likely to do so than Democratic men.

Those who watched the vice presidential debate were asked whether they were more or less likely to vote for McCain as a result of Palin's performance in the debate, or whether it made no difference.[30] As shown in Table 3-6, female and male Democrats were equally as likely to be more apt to vote for McCain (3 percent to 3.1 percent), but women were more likely to penalize McCain as a result of Palin's performance (33.1 percent to 29 percent). Republican women were less likely than Republican men to reward McCain (30.3 percent to 36.8 percent), and equally likely to punish him (2.2 percent to 2.6 percent). Among Independents, women were more likely than men to reward McCain (29.2 percent to 25 percent) and less likely to punish him (12.5 percent to 15.6 percent). However, none of these gaps are statistically significant.

There were significant differences between partisan groups among men and women on being less likely and more likely to vote for McCain. Republican women were 30.9 percentage points less likely than Democratic women to punish McCain for Palin's performance in the debate, and 27.3 percentage points more likely to reward McCain for Palin's performance. Similarly, Republican men were 26.4 percentage points less likely than Democratic men to punish McCain and 33.7 percentage points more likely to reward him.

Research Question #5.What is the effect of gender and party on vote for McCain and evaluations of Sarah Palin's performance in the debate, controlling for other factors? Is the effect of gender moderated by party?

While the crosstabs used to answer the previous question give insight into the differences between gender and partisan groups, regression analysis provides a better way

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[30] Question wording: Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

to investigate the effects of party and gender on overall evaluations of Sarah Palin. The dependent variables used above, vote for McCain and Palin's performance in the debate, are again employed here.[31] In models that use vote for McCain – a dichotomous variable – as the dependent variable, logistic regression is used. The question regarding Palin's performance in the debate has three possible responses: it asks whether a respondent less likely to vote for McCain, more likely to vote for McCain, or whether the debate performance makes no difference in the vote for McCain. Therefore, ordinal logistic regression is used. In addition to the control variables used thus far in this chapter's analyses, the models using vote choice and evaluations of Palin's performance in the debate as dependent variables include as a control variable John McCain's ideology, as that is potentially a large predictor of attitudes toward McCain.[32]

Table 3-7 shows the effects of gender and party on the two measures of candidate evaluation. The results indicate that women are less likely than men to vote for McCain (by a factor of .48), while Republicans, not surprisingly, are more likely than Democrats to support McCain (by a factor of 159.46). Furthermore, women were more likely than men to punish McCain for Palin's performance in the debate, while Republicans were more likely than Democrats to reward McCain. In order to test if the impact of gender on overall evaluations varies within partisan groups, Model 2 for each dependent variable in Table 3-7 includes interaction terms between party and gender. These interactions were not significant, indicating that party does not moderate the effects of gender on these two evaluations.

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[31] Question wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for ... Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If don't know or refused): As of today, who do you lean more towards?; Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

[32] Question Wording: Do you think John McCain's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

Research Question #6. To what extent do trait ratings and ideology assessment have a significant effect on overall evaluations of Palin? Is the relationship between trait ratings, ideology assessment, and overall evaluations moderated by gender or party?

In order to answer this question, I ran the previous models using vote for McCain and Palin's performance in the debate as dependent variables, adding the trait ratings and ideology assessment as independent variables. The results in Table 3-8 indicate that those who view Sarah Palin as honest (b=3.77, sig at the .001 level), experienced (b=5.91, sig at the .001 level), and ideologically about right (b=2.17, sig at the .05 level) were more likely to vote for McCain, and those who viewed her as caring (b=2.22, sig at the .001 level), honest (b=.91, sig at the .10 level), and experienced (b=.67, sig at the .10 level) were more likely to vote for McCain after viewing Palin's performance in the vice presidential debate.

To determine if these relationships varied by gender, I ran the models again and included interaction terms (see Table 3-8, Model 2). There were no significant interactions between gender and ratings of any of the four traits on evaluations of Palin's performance in the debate. Likewise, there were no significant interactions between gender and three of the ratings on vote for McCain. While ratings of Palin as honest, experienced, and ideologically about right did not vary in their impact on vote for McCain by gender, there was a significant interaction between gender and rating Palin as caring (b=5.08, sig at the .10 level). Women who rated Palin as caring were more likely than women who did not rate her as such to vote for McCain by a factor of 298.9, but there was no significant difference in vote for McCain among men who rated Palin as caring and those who did not.

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I also ran the models using interaction terms between party identification and ratings of Palin (results not shown in table). There were significant interactions between party and assessments of Palin as ideologically about right on vote for McCain (b=5.41, sig at the .05 level), as well as interactions between party and ratings of experience on evaluations of Palin's performance in the debate (b=-2.31, sig at the .05 level). On vote for McCain, among Republicans, those who thought Palin's ideology was about right, were more likely than those who thought she was more extreme to vote for McCain by a factor of 40.3. There was no relationship between opinions on Palin's ideology and vote for McCain among non-Republicans. Regarding Palin's performance in the debate, ratings of her experience impacted evaluations among non-Republicans, but did not for Republicans. Those Democrats and Independents who believed Palin was experienced were more likely than those who did not to reward McCain as a result of Palin's performance (b=1.65, sig at the .05 level).

III. Discussion

This chapter has analyzed ratings of Sarah Palin's traits, assessments of her ideology, and overall evaluations of her. While the literature asserts that female candidates of both major political parties are perceived by voters as being more liberal than their male colleagues (Alexander and Andersen 1993; Dolan 2004; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a; King and Matland 2003; McDermott 1997), the Minnesota data shows that Palin was not viewed as liberal among any group of voters. Overall, only 10 percent believed she was too liberal. However, women of both parties were more likely than their male counterparts to view Palin as too liberal, and surprisingly, Democratic women were more likely than Republican women to think of Palin as too liberal.

The conflict between partisan and gender stereotypes is at the heart of this analysis. Research on gender stereotypes indicate Palin should be seen as caring and honest, while research on partisan stereotypes would deemphasize these feminine traits in favor of more masculine traits. In fact, there were no significant gender gaps in ratings of Palin on any of the three traits studied, including the two feminine traits. Women were not more likely than men to rate Palin as caring, honest, or experienced. However, party identification was a very strong predictor of ratings on all three traits. Republicans were more likely than Democrats to view Palin as caring, honest and experienced. It is possible that because Republicans identify with Palin's party and views, they are more likely to have a positive view of her and thus rate her highly on any and all traits. But this strong effect of party identification does not seem to overshadow any gender effects. Only on the trait of honesty is there a significant difference in the ratings of Palin by female Democrats and Republicans.

It would not be surprising if Palin's strategy in the debate was to emphasize masculine traits, as research has long shown that voters prize those traits for their elected representatives (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993b; Lawless 2004; Rosenwasser and Seale 1988). However if Palin's goal was to play to her feminine strengths, she did not achieve success among Minnesotans. Watching the debate had significant, negative effects on viewer ratings of caring and honesty. Those who watched the debate were less likely to view Palin as having these stereotypical feminine traits than those who did not watch her performance. In this case, having increased information about the candidate did *not* reinforce stereotypical female traits. The effect of watching the debate also varied in some cases by gender and in some cases by party. Men who watched the debate were no different from men who did not watch the debate in their ratings of Palin on caring. However, for women, seeing Palin's performance in the debate made them less likely to rate her as caring.

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Ratings of Palin on the trait of honesty also varied by party. Watching the debate did not have a significant effect on Republicans' ratings of Palin as honest, but Democrats who watched the debate were more likely to rate Palin as being honest than those who did not.

In overall evaluations, there were no gender gaps within parties in vote for McCain or evaluations of Palin's performance in the debate. Democrat men and women were within just a few points of each other on these two measures. The largest gap among men and women was among Republicans on the rating of Palin's performance as making them more likely to vote for McCain, though this result was not statistically significant. When controlling for other variables, gender was a significant predictor of both overall evaluations, with women less likely than men to vote for McCain or reward McCain for Palin's performance in the debate. Party identification had a large impact on both measures, though it was larger for overall vote for McCain than for Palin's performance in the debate. These findings are not surprising given that research has shown that when voters are faced with competing gender and partisan cues, partisanship plays a more significant role than gender in shaping evaluations (Huddy and Capelos 2002).

It is important to examine what factors determine trait ratings and assessments, and thus far this project has found that ratings of a conservative female Republican candidate are driven by party identification of the respondents. However, this project goes even further to look at the *impact* of those ratings on overall evaluations. How much weight are feminine traits given in the decision of whom to vote? Are those who think Palin is caring more likely to vote for McCain? Is this different for men versus women, or Republicans versus Democrats?

Those who view Sarah Palin as honest, experienced, and ideologically about right were more likely to vote for McCain, and those who viewed her as honest, caring, and

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experienced were more likely to vote for McCain after viewing Palin's performance in the vice presidential debate. In addition, there were significant differences in the salience of these ratings among gender and partisan groups. Women who rated Palin as caring were more likely than women who did not rate her as such to vote for McCain, but there was no significant difference in vote for McCain among men who rated Palin as caring and those who did not. Republicans who thought Palin's ideology was about right were more likely than those who thought she was more extreme to vote for McCain. Regarding Palin's performance in the debate, ratings of her experience impacted evaluations among non-Republicans, but did not for Republicans. Those Democrats and Independents who believed Palin was experienced were more likely than those who did not to reward McCain as a result of Palin's performance.

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that a citizen's gender and party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits, ideology, and overall evaluations. Party identification is the strongest predictor, with gender playing a much smaller role. The differences in how Palin is rated on her traits and ideology are important as evidenced by their significant impact on her overall evaluations.

The next chapter will further investigate opinions towards Sarah Palin and the relationship between gender, party, and candidate evaluations using a national sample of females. I will examine ratings of Palin's traits on the dimensions of being caring, personally identifiable, being prepared to take over the Presidency, and being prepared to be commander-in-chief. A new dimension to be analyzed will be differences in policy position agreement, specifically on the issues of creationism and evolution, abortion, the right to

bear arms, drilling for oil and gas, global warming, and the war in Iraq. These measures will be used to determine if there is gender gap within each party, both in agreement as well as in how much salience these agreements have for overall evaluations of Palin.

Table 3-1. Minnesotans' Assessments of Sarah Palin's Ideology

	Too liberal	About right	Too conservative
	%	%	%
Total	9.8	46.1	44.1
Male Democrat	10.3	17.0	72.8
Female Democrat	14.7	19.4	65.8
Male Republican	5.6	76.3	18.1
Female Republican	6.4	82.1	11.6
Male Independent	9.7	58.1	32.3
Female Independent	11.6	46.5	41.9
Democrat Gender Gap	4.5	2.5	-6.9+
Republican Gender Gap	0.8	5.8+	-6.5
Independent Gender Gap	2.0	-11.6	9.6
Female Partisan Gap	-8.4	62.7***	-54.3***
Male Partisan Gap	-4.7	59.0***	-54.7***

Method: Crosstabs.

Question Wording: Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

Notes: Democratic Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Female Democrats giving that same response. Republican Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Republicans from Female Republicans. Independent Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Independents from Female Independents. Female Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Female Democrats from Female Republicans. Male Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Democrats from Male Republicans. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if these gaps are significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-2. Minnesotans' Ratings of Sarah Palin's Traits

	Palin	Biden	Palin Advantage
	%	%	%
Cares About People Like Me	55.1	44.9	10.3
Male Democrat	18.9	81.1	-62.1
Female Democrat	22.3	77.7	-55.5
Male Republican	92.6	7.4	85.2
Female Republican	96.6	3.4	93.1
Male Independent	77.2	22.8	54.4
Female Independent	76.1	23.9	52.2
Democrat Gender Gap	3.3		
Republican Gender Gap	4.0*		
Independent Gender Gap	-1.1		
Female Partisan Gap	74.3***		
Male Partisan Gap	73.6***		
Is Honest	50.8	49.2	1.5
Male Democrat	20.2	79.8	-59.6
Female Democrat	16.2	83.8	-67.6
Male Republican	90.3	9.7	80.6
Female Republican	93.5	6.5	87.0
Male Independent	59.6	40.4	19.2
Female Independent	53.7	46.3	7.3
Democrat Gender Gap	-4.0		
Republican Gender Gap	3.2		
Independent Gender Gap	-6.0		
Female Partisan Gap	77.3***		
Male Partisan Gap	70.1***		
Has the right experience to be president	25.2	74.8	-49.6
Male Democrat	4.6	95.4	-90.7
Female Democrat	3.2	96.8	-93.6
Male Republican	55.2	44.8	10.5
Female Republican	51.5	48.5	2.9
Male Independent	37.7	62.3	-24.6
Female Independent	29.5	70.5	-40.9
Democrat Gender Gap	-1.4		
Republican Gender Gap	-3.8		
Independent Gender Gap	-8.2		
Female Partisan Gap	48.3***		
Male Partisan Gap	50.6***		

Method: Crosstabs.

Question Wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin. Cares about people like me? Is honest? Has the right experience to be president?

Notes: Palin Advantage is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents saying the trait applies more to Biden from the percentage of respondents saying the trait applies more to Palin. Democratic Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Female Democrats giving that same response. Republican Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Republicans from Female Republicans. Independent Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Independents from Female Independents. Female Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Female Democrats from Female Republicans. Male Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Democrats from Male Republicans. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if these gaps are significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-3. Effects of Gender and Party Identification on Minnesotans' Trait Ratings and Ideology Assessment of Sarah Palin

	Caring		Honest		Experienced		Ideologically About Right	
	(1)	**(2)**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(1)**	**(2)**
Female	0.35	0.33	0.05	-0.22	-0.23	-0.57	0.09	-0.07
	(.22)	(.27)	(.21)	(.28)	(.20)	(.49)	(.18)	(.27)
Republican	4.10***	4.00***	3.71***	3.24***	2.97***	2.77***	2.65***	2.45***
	(.30)	(.38)	(.26)	(.33)	(.27)	(.37)	(.21)	(.28)
Independent	2.41***	2.47***	1.68***	1.64***	2.23***	2.00***	1.50***	1.51***
	(.30)	(.42)	(.29)	(.40)	(.34)	(.45)	(.26)	(.36)
Republican x		0.27		1.16*		0.39		0.43
Female		(.61)		(.55)		(.54)		(.40)
Independent x		-0.13		0.00		0.49		-0.09
Female		(.59)		(.57)		(.69)		(.53)
Age	-0.36***	-0.36***	-0.41***	-0.40***	0.01	0.01	0.10	0.10
	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)
Income	0.20*	0.20*	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	-0.12	-0.12
	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)	(.08)
Education	-0.43**	-0.42**	-0.21	-0.21	-0.35**	-0.36**	-0.23*	-0.23+
	(.14)	(.15)	(.14)	(.14)	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)
Evangelical	0.52*	0.50*	0.53*	0.49*	0.70***	0.70***	0.75***	0.73***
	(.24)	(.24)	(.22)	(.23)	(.20)	(.20)	(.19)	(.19)
Constant	-0.89**	-0.88*	-0.65+	-0.49	-2.80***	-2.63***	-1.23***	-1.15***
	(.36)	(.36)	(.35)	(.36)	(.39)	(.44)	(.31)	(.33)
N	759	759	722	722	773	773	750	750
Cox and Snell R^2	.438	.438	.413	.417	.270	.271	.301	.302

Method: Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin. Cares about people like me? Is honest? Has the right experience to be president? Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For the first three dependent variables, 0 = this trait applies more to Biden, and 1 = this trait applies more to Palin. For the fourth dependent variable, 0 = too conservative and too liberal, and 1 = about right. Two models were run for each dependent variable. Model 2 includes all variables of Model 1 in addition to interaction variables between party and gender. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-4. Effects of Watching the Vice Presidential Debate on Minnesotans' Trait Ratings and Ideology Assessment of Sarah Palin

	Caring	Honest	Experienced	Ideologically About Right
Watched Debate	-.90***	-.59**	-.17	-.20
	(.22)	(.21)	(.21)	(.19)
Female	.34	.03	-.24	.08
	(.23)	(.21)	(.20)	(.19)
Republican	4.19***	3.72***	2.97***	2.64***
	(.31)	(.26)	(.27)	(.21)
Independent	.24***	1.66***	2.22***	1.48***
	(.31)	(.29)	(.34)	(.27)
Age	-.34**	-.39***	.03	.12
	(.11)	(.11)	(.10)	(.09)
Income	.21*	.03	.02	-.12
	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.08)
Education	-.40**	-.19	-.35**	-.22+
	(.15)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)
Evangelical	.54*	.53*	.71***	.76***
	(.24)	(.22)	(.20)	(.19)
Constant	-.60+	-.45	-2.78***	-1.19***
	(.37)	(.36)	(.39)	(.31
N	759	722	773	750
Cox and Snell R^2	.451	.420	.271	.302

Method: Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin. Cares about people like me? Is honest? Has the right experience to be president? Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For the first three dependent variables, 0 = this trait applies more to Biden, and 1 = this trait applies more to Palin. For the fourth dependent variable, 0 = too conservative and too liberal, and 1 = about right. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-5. Minnesotans' Presidential Vote Choice by Gender and Party Identification

	McCain	Obama	McCain Advantage
	%	%	%
Total	45.4	54.6	-9.3
Male Democrat	7.3	92.7	-85.5
Female Democrat	6.9	93.1	-86.3
Male Republican	94.1	5.9	88.3
Female Republican	92.7	7.3	85.5
Male Independent	60.3	39.7	20.7
Female Independent	44.7	55.3	-10.5
Democrat Gender Gap	0.4		
Republican Gender Gap	1.4		
Independent Gender Gap	15.6		
Female Partisan Gap	85.9***		
Male Partisan Gap	86.9***		

Method: Crosstabs.
Question Wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for … Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If Don't Know or Refused, ask: As of today, who do you lean more towards?)
Notes: McCain Advantage is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents saying they would vote for Obama from the percentage of respondents saying they would vote for McCain. Democratic Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Female Democrats giving that same response. Republican Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Republicans from Female Republicans. Independent Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Independents from Female Independents. Female Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Female Democrats from Female Republicans. Male Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Democrats from Male Republicans. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if these gaps are significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-6. Minnesotans' Evaluation of Sarah Palin's Performance in the Vice Presidential Debate by Gender and Party Identification

	Less likely to vote for McCain	It didn't make a difference	More likely to vote for McCain
	%	%	%
Total	19.0	64.2	16.8
Male Democrat	29.0	67.9	3.1
Female Democrat	33.1	63.9	3.0
Male Republican	2.6	60.7	36.8
Female Republican	2.2	67.4	30.3
Male Independent	15.6	59.4	25.0
Female Independent	12.5	58.3	29.2
Democrat Gender Gap	4.1	-4.1	0.0
Republican Gender Gap	-0.3	6.7	-6.4
Independent Gender Gap	-3.1	-1.0	4.2
Female Partisan Gap	-30.9**	3.6	27.3**
Male Partisan Gap	-26.4**	-7.3	33.7**

Method: Crosstabs.
Question Wording: Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?
Notes: Democratic Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Male Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Female Democrats giving that same response. Republican Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Republicans from Female Republicans. Independent Gender Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Independents from Female Independents. Female Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Female Democrats from Female Republicans. Male Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting Male Democrats from Male Republicans. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if these gaps are significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-7. Effects of Minnesotans' Gender and Party Identification on Presidential Vote Choice and Evaluations of Sarah Palin's Performance in the Vice Presidential Debate

	Vote for McCain		Palin's Performance in the Debate	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Female	-.74*	-0.80+	-.35+	-0.32
	(.31)	(.46)	(.21)	(.31)
Republican	5.07***	5.15***	2.10***	2.19***
	(.40)	(.54)	(.32)	(.38)
Independent	2.73***	2.56***	1.54***	1.24*
	(.41)	(.52)	(.40)	(.52)
Republican x Female		-0.14		-0.20
		(.73)		(.44)
Independent x Female		0.40		0.67
		(.76)		(.73)
Age	-.28+	-0.28+	.21*	0.20+
	(.16)	(.16)	(.10)	(.10)
Income	.03	0.03	.05	0.05
	(.14)	(.14)	(.10)	(.10)
Education	-.18	-0.19	-.32*	-0.33*
	(.21)	(.21)	(.15)	(.15)
Evangelical	.16	0.18	-.12	-0.09
	(.32)	(.32)	(.23)	(.24)
McCain Ideology About Right	3.02***	3.03***	.72***	0.74**
	(.35)	(.35)	(.26)	(.26)
Constant	-2.71***	-2.68***		
	(.56)	(.58)		
[palinperf = .00]			-.67*	-0.68+
			(.35)	(.37)
[palinperf = 1.00]			3.14***	3.14***
			(.41)	(.43)
N	723	723	394	394
Cox and Snell R^2	.616	.617	.274	.277

Method: Vote for McCain = Logistic Regression; Palin's Performance in the Debate = Ordinal Logistic Regression.

Question Wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for … Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If Don't Know or Refused, ask: As of today, who do you lean more towards?); Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin's Performance in the Debate, 0 = Less Likely to Vote for Him, 1 = It didn't make a difference, and 2 = More Likely to Vote for Him. Two models were run for each dependent variable. Model 2 includes all variables of Model 1 in addition to interaction variables between party and gender. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3-8. Effects of Minnesotans' Ratings of Sarah Palin on Presidential Vote Choice and Evaluations of her Performance in the Vice Presidential Debate

	Vote for McCain		Palin's Performance in the Debate	
	(1)	**(2)**	**(1)**	**(2)**
Palin Cares	1.08	-0.61	2.22***	2.22**
	(.97)	(1.18)	(.62)	(.86)
Palin Honest	3.77***	5.34***	0.91+	0.89
	(.99)	(1.62)	(.55)	(.87)
Palin Experience	5.91***	4.03**	0.67+	1.01*
	(1.68)	(1.53)	(.35)	(.47)
Palin Ideology About Right	2.17*	1.97	0.33	0.34
	(.91)	(1.27)	(.40)	(.51)
Female	-1.74*	-4.69+	-0.46+	-0.19
	(.81)	(2.55)	(.25)	(.37)
Palin Cares x Female		5.08+		-0.06
		(2.81)		(1.09)
Palin Honest x Female		-2.36		-0.11
		(2.36)		(1.09)
Palin Experience x Female		19.08		-0.77
		(3425.5)		(.70)
Palin Ideology About Right x Female		0.45		0.13
		(2.09)		(.82)
Republican	4.97***	5.80***	0.09	0.17
	(1.00)	(1.23)	(.43)	(.44)
Independent	2.79**	3.58**	-0.43	-0.42
	(1.11)	(1.41)	(.55)	(.57)
Age	0.54	0.43	0.22+	0.21+
	(.34)	(.36)	(.13)	(.13)
Income	0.70*	0.85*	0.14	0.14
	(.34)	(.38)	(.12)	(.12)
Education	0.57	0.41	-0.17	-0.19
	(.48)	(.56)	(.18)	(.18)
Evangelical	-1.53+	-1.94+	0.08	0.08
	(.92)	(1.01)	(.27)	(.27)
McCain Ideology About Right	2.70***	2.81**	-0.18	-0.14
	(.78)	(.90)	(.33)	(.33)
Constant	-10.27***	-10.47***		
	(2.08)	(2.21)		
[palinperf = .00]			-0.11	0.03
			(.41)	(.42)
[palinperf = 1.00]			4.53***	4.68***
			(.59)	(.60)
N	567	567	307	307
Cox and Snell R^2	.715	.718	.377	.382

Method: Vote for McCain = Logistic Regression; Palin's Performance in the Debate = Ordinal Regression.

Question Wording: If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for … Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain? (If Don't Know or Refused, ask: As of today, who do you lean more towards?); Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin's Performance in the Debate, 0 = Less likely to vote for him, 1 = It didn't make a difference, and 2 = More likely to vote for him. Two models were run for each dependent variable. Model 2 includes all variables of Model 1 in addition to interaction variables between trait ratings and gender. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Chapter Four

Opinions of Sarah Palin Among the Nation's Women

The previous chapter illustrates how Minnesotans' gender and party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits, ideology, and overall evaluations. Party identification is the strongest predictor, with gender playing a lesser role. Furthermore, the differences in how Gopher State residents rate Palin on her traits and ideology have a significant impact on overall evaluations. Those who view Sarah Palin as honest, experiences, and ideologically about right were more likely to vote for McCain, and those who viewed her as caring, honest, and experienced were more likely to vote for McCain after viewing Palin's performance in the vice presidential debate.

While Minnesota makes a good case study for opinions of Sarah Palin because of its status as a battleground state and its demonstrated support for a female candidate for federal office, it is an open question as to whether the findings presented in the previous chapter apply to the nation as a whole. This chapter will sharpen the analyses put forth in Chapter Three, by focusing on the relationship between party, traits, and candidate evaluations among a national sample of *women*.

The central puzzle of this project is to determine how voters react to the competing stereotypes that conservative female Republican candidates must endure. As a female candidate, they are subject to a set of feminine stereotypes, but as a Republican candidate, they are subject to an opposing set of masculine stereotypes. Which stereotypes do voters apply, and how does that differ based on their own gender or partisan identity? Research conducted in this area prior to this study indicates that partisan stereotypes plays a more significant role in evaluations than gender stereotypes, so much so that "voters regard a

Republican woman politician as a Republican first and a woman second" (Huddy and

Capelos 2002, 47). Studies have even shown that there is no evidence that gender

stereotypes come into play among Republican candidates (King and Matland 2003).

In this chapter, I focus solely on women, and specifically on the differences between

Republican and Democratic women in the electorate. Do women in the electorate share a

social identity with female candidates, regardless of that woman's party identification? Is it

possible that they are more likely to use gender stereotypes than partisan stereotypes as a

result of this shared identify, or do the effects of party identification overwhelm gender

stereotypes? In addition, what stereotypical traits are related to overall evaluations? Do

high ratings on feminine traits impact overall vote choice, for example, or do high ratings on

Republican traits have a larger effect? Is this relationship moderated by party (i.e. is the

relationship between trait ratings and overall evaluations different for Republicans and

Democrats)?

To answer these questions, an examination of ratings of Palin's traits will be

conducted on the dimensions of women viewing her as being understanding, personally

identifiable, prepared to take over the Presidency, and prepared to be commander-in-

chief.[33] Respondents were asked to rate Sarah Palin on a scale of 'not at all' to 'a great deal'

on two traits: how well she understands the everyday concerns and needs of people and

how much they personally identify with her values and life experiences. On the two

preparedness trait questions – preparedness to take over the Presidency and preparedness

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[33] Question wording: How well does Sarah Palin understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; How much do you personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of Sarah Palin – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?; And which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?

to be commander-in-chief – respondents were asked to compare Sarah Palin to Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Joe Biden.

Another dimension will also be analyzed, that of differences in policy position agreement, specifically on the issues of creationism and evolution, abortion, the right to bear arms, drilling for oil and gas, global warming, and the war in Iraq.[34] These measures will be implemented in a model to determine the size of the partisan gap in issue agreement as well as in how much salience these agreements have for overall evaluations of Palin. The evaluation measures in this chapter are presidential vote choice, favorability of Sarah Palin, and the impact of McCain's choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate on vote for McCain.[35]

In selecting a national public opinion survey for this chapter, I undertook a comprehensive search of all surveys conducted by the leading academic and industry pollsters during the final months before the 2008 presidential election. Eighty-five surveys conducted between August 29 and November 4, 2008 mentioned Sarah Palin in one or more questions. In some cases, this was as simple as including her name as vice presidential candidate in the presidential horse race question; other surveys asked a battery of questions related to Palin's opinions, actions, and media coverage. However, only one survey asked the range of question necessary to allow for a thorough examination of female

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[34] Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position? Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools; She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger; Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns; She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge; She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans; Palin supports the war in Iraq

[35] Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

voters' reactions to Sarah Palin generally, and to her traits and policy positions more specifically.

Time Magazine conducted a survey of 913 female likely voters between September 11-15, 2008.[36] Respondents were interviewed via landlines and cellular telephones. The survey was fielded by Abt SRBI, a full-service global strategy and research organization specializing in public policy and opinion surveys. Abt SRBI has an established track record of providing high quality, timely and cost effective research and analysis.[37] The data set was made available through the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut.

I. Trait Ratings and Policy Position Agreement

A. Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, voters are faced with multiple cues when evaluating a candidate. Two of these are the social stereotypes based on the candidate's gender and party, and a conflict emerges when a candidate is both female and Republican. While women are typically seen as more compassionate, warm, and kind, GOP candidates are typically viewed as being stronger leaders and having less compassion and empathy than Democratic candidates (I. K. Broverman, Vogel, D. M. Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz 1972; Deaux and Lewis 1984; Hayes 2005; McKee and Sherriffs 1957; Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1974; Williams and Best 1982).

In addition to cues based on social stereotypes, voters also weigh a candidate's ideology and positions on policy issues. The public opinion survey analyzed in this chapter

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[36] The full sample size of the survey is 1,290 women. All of these women were asked demographic questions. However, only those who indicated they were registered and would likely or definitely vote in the 2008 Presidential Election were given the full survey.

[37] http://www.srbi.com/what_we_do.html

asks respondents a series of six policy issue questions – specifically, whether or not they personally agree with Sarah Palin's position on the issues of creationism and evolution, abortion, the right to bear arms, drilling for oil and gas, global warming, and the war in Iraq.[38]

The policy issues men and women find important are different, and research has shown that the substantive political opinions of men and women are increasingly disparate (Erskine 1971; Smith 1984). Women are more likely to be concerned with 'women's issues,' and social welfare policy, specifically services and issues that directly affect their rights and the rights of children such as abortion, child care, education, parental leave, sexual harassment, and women's rights (Dolan 1998; Sapiro 1981; Schlozman, Burns, Verba, and Donahue 1995; Schumaker and Burns 1988). One such women's issue, abortion, is examined in this chapter. Respondents are asked whether they agree with Palin's opposition to abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger.

Another of the policy positions in this study is support for the war in Iraq. Research has shown that women are less militaristic than men and have demonstrated greater opposition to war. There are sizable and persistent gender differences in attitudes toward issues involving the use of force, though gender differences are most pronounced when women are asked about specific military involvement, as opposed to hypothetical scenarios for the use of force (Conover and Sapiro 1993; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986).

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[38] Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position? Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools; She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger; Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns; She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge; She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans; Palin supports the war in Iraq

Because the survey being utilized in this study is of female respondents only, it is impossible to determine whether or not there is a gender gap on these issues. However, it is possible to look at *partisan* gaps as well as to see if these issues are significant in shaping overall evaluations of Sarah Palin..

B. Results

Research Question #7. What are the opinions of the nation's women in regards to Sarah Palin's traits and policy positions? How do these opinions vary by party identification?

Respondents were asked a total of four trait questions focusing on the dimensions of being understanding, personally identifiable, prepared to take over the Presidency, and prepared to be commander-in-chief. [39] As a whole, women rated Sarah Palin highly on the feminine trait of understanding and on the dimension of being personally identifiable. Palin did less well on the masculine traits of preparedness, though it is possible the differences between the feminine and masculine traits are a result of question type and not stereotyping. The feminine trait of understanding is measured on a scale, while the masculine traits are asked in comparison to Biden. Both Democrats and Republicans rated Palin less well on the masculine traits than the feminine trait, and the gap between the parties was larger on the masculine traits.

Overall, 40.3 percent of respondents felt the feminine traits of understanding described Palin a great deal, 32.1 percent felt this described her some, while 10 percent felt

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[39] Question wording: How well does Sarah Palin understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; How much do you personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of Sarah Palin – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?; And which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?

not much and 18 percent felt it did not describe her at all (see Table 4-1). A second trait question asked respondents whether they personally identified with Palin's everyday life experiences and values. This interpersonal trait is neither feminine nor masculine, but does provide additional insight into women's views of Sarah Palin. When asked if this trait described Palin, 30 percent said a great deal, 35.7 percent said some, 11.9 percent said not much, and 22.4 percent said not at all. Respondents were also asked two masculine, performance-based traits – prepared to take over the Presidency and prepared to be Commander in Chief. In these two questions, respondents were asked to rate Palin compared to Joe Biden. In both instances, Palin was thought to greater display the trait by only about 40 percent of the women sampled (see Table 4-2).[40]

There are stark differences as to how Palin was perceived on each of these measures along party lines. Republicans were more likely to think Palin is understanding: 95.6 percent of Republican women felt the phrase "understands the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself" described Palin some or a great deal, compared to only 53.6 percent of Democratic women. Likewise, 91.1 percent of Republican women felt they could "personally identify with her everyday life experiences and values" some or a great deal, while only 44.3 percent of Democratic women feel this is true. There were even greater gaps between the parties on the two masculine stereotype traits. Republicans felt Palin was "prepared to take over the presidency" and "prepared to be Commander in Chief" by 77.1 and 76.2 percent respectively, while Democrats held these beliefs 11.9 and 13.1 percent of the time.

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[40] This section utilizes crosstabs between party identification and the trait ratings and policy position agreement measures. These gaps were then tested for significance using a difference in proportions test.

Table 4-3 shows that majorities of Republican women agreed with Sarah Palin on the six policy issues in the survey: 89.8 percent support more drilling for oil and gas, 86.3 percent support the right to bear arms, 85.5 percent support the war in Iraq, 59.3 percent oppose abortion in all cases, 57.7 percent favor teaching creationism alongside evolution in public schools, and 50.8 percent do not believe global warming is caused by humans.[41] Conversely, a majority of Democratic women disagreed with Palin on every measure. Only 45.4 percent support the right to bear arms, 38.3 percent favor teaching creationism alongside evolution in public schools, 33.6 percent support more drilling for oil and gas, 13.7 percent support the war in Iraq, 13.7 percent oppose abortion in all cases, and 5.6 percent do not believe global warming is caused by humans. Because there are more Democrats in the sample, which mirrors the American public at large whereby the majority of women belong to the Democratic Party, the majority of women in the total sample of respondents only agree with Sarah Palin on three of the six issues – teaching creationism alongside evolution in public schools, the right to bear arms, and more drilling for oil and gas.

Research Question #8. Does a woman's party identification have a significant effect on her ratings of Palin's traits and agreement with Palin's policy positions, controlling for other demographic and socioeconomic factors?

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[41] Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position? Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools; She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger; Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns; She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge; She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans; Palin supports the war in Iraq

The descriptive statistics employed in the previous section show that a woman's party identification is strongly related to the trait ratings of and policy position agreement with Sarah Palin, though there are some differences among the two party's use of feminine and masculine stereotypes. In order to more fully test the relationship between women's party identification and their ratings of Sarah Palin as being understanding, personally identifiable, prepared to be vice president, and prepared to be Commander in Chief, as well as agreement with her policy positions, I ran a series of regression models. The results show that party identification is indeed a strong predictor of trait ratings of Sarah Palin, on both the feminine and masculine stereotypical traits.

In order to see if the relationship between party identification and trait ratings remains strong when controlling for other demographic and socioeconomic variables, I used the four trait ratings and six policy issues discussed previously as dependent variables in regression models. Because the traits of understanding and being personally identifiable were answered on a four-part scale ranging from "none" to "a great deal", these models use OLS regression. Since the traits concerning preparedness to be vice president and preparedness to be Commander in Chief were asked vis-à-vis Joe Biden, these models use logistic regression. Logistic regression was also used when designating any of the six policy issues as the dependent variable.

The independent variable in these models is party identification as a Republican, with Democrats as the reference group. In addition, several control variables are included: dummy variables for race, evangelicalism, and conservativism; and categorical variables for age, income, and education.

Table 4-4 shows that Republican women were significantly more likely to rate Palin as having all four of the traits tested. Being Republican is associated with an increase in the

ratings of Palin as understanding and personally identifiable by .86 and .83 points

respectively, giving Palin a boost almost equal to one whole rating category. In addition,

being Republican is associated with an increase in the ratings of Palin as prepared to be vice

president and prepared to be Commander in Chief by a factor of 11.5 and 10.2 respectively.

Similarly, table 4-5 shows that being Republican is associated with an increase in

agreeing with Sarah Palin on all six policy issues. This is not surprising, since she holds the

party-line Republican view on these issues, and one would expect Republicans in the

electorate to share many of the same viewpoints. It is interesting, however, to note the

differences in agreement among the issues. On one end of the scale, agreeing with Palin on

creationism, abortion, and the right to bear arms is increased by a factor of between four

and five for Republicans. On the other end, agreeing with Palin on drilling, global warming,

and the war in Iraq are increased by factors of 9.1, 8.3, and 16.4 respectively.

II. Candidate Evaluations

A. Introduction

Three measures of overall candidate evaluation were asked in this sample. First,

respondents were asked which presidential candidate they would vote for if the election

were held that day.[42] As discussed in Chapter Three, research has shown that vice

presidential candidates are able to make a difference in presidential vote choice (Wattenberg

1984, 1995). Secondly, respondents were asked whether or not they had a favorable view of

Sarah Palin.[43] This question is the most direct test of opinions toward the Republican Vice

Presidential nominee. Thirdly, respondents were asked if John McCain's choice of Sarah

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[42] Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?
[43] Question Wording: Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?

Palin as his running mate made them less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or if didn't make much difference.[44]

This section has two main goals. The first is to examine the partisan differences among women in their overall evaluations of Sarah Palin. These partisan differences are expected to be quite large, as partisanship plays a significant role in shaping candidate evaluations (Huddy and Capelos 2002; King and Matland 2003). The second goal is to study the impact of the trait ratings and policy position agreement discussed earlier on overall evaluations of Palin in order to determine which traits and issues have the largest impact and whether or not party identification moderates this relationship. Is the relationship between trait ratings and overall evaluations different for Republicans and Democrats?

B. Results

Research Question #9. Is there a partisan gap among women in vote for McCain, favorability of Sarah Palin, and opinion of McCain's choice of Palin?

The four research questions posed in this section use three separate measures of overall evaluation of Sarah Palin – presidential vote choice, favorability of Sarah Palin, and the impact of McCain's choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate on vote for McCain.[45] The first step employed to determine the relationship between party identification and overall candidate evaluations is a set of crosstabs, used to examine how

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[44] Question Wording: Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

[45] Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

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responses vary by the respondent's party identification. Based on the literature on the strong role party identification plays in shaping candidate evaluations, as well as the results of this project so far, it is expected that there will be large differences among the two party's responses. The results show that to be the case (see Table 4-6).

In total, 49 percent of the women in the sample said they would vote for McCain, 62.6 percent said they held a favorable opinion of Sarah Palin, and 32.3 percent said they were more likely to vote for McCain as a result of his choice of Palin as vice presidential running mate. There are significant differences in these measures among the opinions of Republicans and Democrats. The Republicans were 79 percentage points more likely than Democrats to vote for McCain (92.2 to 13.2 percent). In addition Republicans were 84.4 percentage points more likely to vote for McCain than Obama, and Democrats were 73.6 percentage points more likely to vote for Obama.

Respondents who identified as Republican were also much more likely to hold a favorable view of Sarah Palin than those who identified themselves as Democrats (62.6 to 33.2 percent). Palin's net favorability rating was 87.6 percent for Republicans and -33.6 percent for Democrats. For many respondents of both parties, McCain's choice of Palin did not make much of a difference in their voting behavior. However, a slight majority of Republicans did say they were more likely to reward McCain for his choice of Palin (53.4 percent). This was 39.6 percentage points higher than the percentage of Democrats who said McCain's vice presidential selection made them more likely to vote for him (13.8 percent). In fact, a third of Democrats said they were even less likely to vote for McCain because of his choice (33.9 percent).

Research Question #10.What is the effect of party on vote for McCain, favorability of Sarah

Palin, and opinion of McCain's choice of Palin, controlling for demographic and socioeconomic

factors?

Having established through the use of crosstabs that there are significant

differences in the overall evaluations of Sarah Palin by Republicans and Democrats, the next

step in examining the relationship between party identification and evaluations is to use

regression models. These models control for other factors that have been shown to be

related to vote choice and other measures of candidate evaluation. Specifically, controls for

race, evangelicalism, conservativism, age, income, and education are included. In addition,

when vote for McCain is the dependent variable, a measure of McCain's favorability is

included as a control since candidate favorability has a large impact on vote choice.[46]

Of the three overall evaluation questions asked to respondents concerning Sarah

Palin, two are dummy variables (vote for McCain and Palin favorability), and therefore

require the use of logistic regression. The third measure, impact of McCain's choice of Palin

as running mate on presidential vote choice, has ordered responses, ranging from making

voters "less likely" to vote for McCain, to having "no difference" in their vote, to "more

likely" to vote for McCain. Thus, ordinal logistic regression is used.

Table 4-7 shows the results of three regression models, one for each of the three

measures of overall evaluation. Being a Republican is significantly associated with all three

dependent variables. Party identification has the strongest effect on vote for McCain.

Republicans are more likely to vote for McCain by a factor of 37.5. In addition, Republicans

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[46] Question Wording: Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of John McCain?

are more likely to hold a favorable view of Sarah Palin by a factor of 10.9, and are more

likely to vote for McCain as a result of his vice presidential pick (b=1.59).

Research Question #11. To what extent do trait ratings have a significant effect on overall

evaluations of Palin? Are the relationships between trait ratings and overall evaluations

moderated by party?

The opinions of Minnesotans examined in the previous chapter showed that

residents of the Gopher State used trait ratings in their overall evaluations of Sarah Palin.

The relationship between trait ratings of Palin and overall evaluations of her were

significant in most cases, and the relationship between the masculine trait of experience

and one candidate evaluation measure, Palin's performance in the vice presidential debate,

varied by party identification. Democrats who rated Palin as experienced were more likely

than those who did not rate her as experienced to reward McCain for Palin's performance in

the debate, but there was no relationship between opinions on Palin's experience and her

performance in the debate for Republicans

Are there similar relationships between trait ratings and overall evaluations of Palin

among the nation's women? Do ratings of Sarah Palin's traits have a significant relationship

with overall evaluations? Does this relationship differ for masculine and feminine traits, or

based on the party identification of the respondent?

To answer these questions, I ran three regression models, one for each of the overall

evaluation measures, with each of the four trait ratings as an independent variable. The

results as shown in Table 4-8 indicate that rating Palin highly on any of the trait ratings,

does indeed, have a positive effect on overall evaluations. Specifically, the traits of

understanding, preparedness to be vice president, and preparedness to be Commander in Chief have a positive impact on vote for McCain, while understanding, being personally identifiable, and preparedness to be vice president have a positive impact on Palin's favorability rating. All four traits have a positive impact on McCain's choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate.

The two masculine traits of being prepared to be vice president and commander in chief have the strongest relationship with overall evaluations. Believing that Palin was prepared to be vice president has the largest relative impact of the four traits on vote for McCain (b=3.2, sig at the .001 level) and favorable ratings of Palin (b=4.87, sig at the .001 level). Believing Palin was ready to be Commander in Chief if necessary has the largest impact on McCain's choice of Palin as a reason to be more likely to vote for him (b=.94, sig at the .01 level). The feminine trait of understanding is highly and significantly associated with ratings of Palin unrelated to vote choice. Those who rated Palin as understanding were more likely to have a favorable opinion of her (b=1.2, sig at the .001 level). In addition, believing Palin was someone that one could personally identify with also increased her favorable ratings (b=.97, sig at the .001 level).

At first blush, these findings make intuitive sense. If a woman in the electorate rates Palin highly on her characteristics, she is likely to also rate her highly in general, and vice versa. However, these findings are nonetheless revealing in several respects. First, even while controlling for a host of factors that predict vote choice, the characteristics of the vice presidential candidate have significant and sizeable effects on vote choice. Second, while important to overall ratings, the feminine trait of understanding does not have as large of an impact as the masculine traits dealing with her preparedness for office. Third, and perhaps most strikingly, for two of the overall evaluation measures, favorability of Palin and

McCain's choice of Palin, including trait ratings of Palin in the model wipes out the strong effects of party identification seen previously. This is likely due, at least in part, to the strong relationship between party identification and trait ratings established earlier in this chapter. However, it is striking that party identification remains a significant predictor of vote for McCain, even when including all four trait ratings in the model.

Do these relationships between trait ratings and overall support for Palin differ among Republicans and Democrats? To answer this question, I ran a reduced version of the model, with the addition of interaction terms.[47] The results show two significant interactions (see Table 4-9). For Republicans, being able to identify with Palin on a personal level is a significant predictor of whether or not McCain's choice of Palin makes one more likely to vote for him (b=1.04, sig at the .01 level). This relationship is also significant for Democrats, but at a significantly lower magnitude (b=.33, sig at the .01 level). Additionally, believing Palin was prepared to be Commander in Chief was a strong predictor of whether or not to reward McCain for his choice of Palin for Democrats (b=2.70, sig at the .001 level), but was not significant for Republicans.

The relationship between rating Palin highly on the masculine trait of preparedness to be Commander in Chief and rewarding McCain for his choice of Palin mirrors the finding from the Minnesota survey that the relationship between the masculine trait of experience and rewarding McCain for Palin's performance in the vice presidential debate was significant for Democrats but not Republicans.

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[47] A fully specified model was also run. The results were very similar. However, problems with multicollinearity among the independent variables made the use of a reduced model more appropriate.

Research Question #12. To what extent does policy issue agreement have a significant effect on overall evaluations of Palin? Are the relationships between policy issue agreement and overall evaluations moderated by party?

As in the previous research question, answering this querying required the use of three regression models, one for each of the overall evaluation measures. Instead of ratings of Sarah Palin's traits, this section focuses on the impact of policy position agreement on overall evaluations. There are six models in total, one for each of the policy issues included in the survey. The results shown in Table 4-10 indicate that agreeing with Palin on any of these issues has a positive effect on overall evaluations. Specifically, the issues of abortion, drilling, global warming, and the war in Iraq have a positive impact on vote for McCain, while all six traits have a positive impact on Palin's favorability rating. Creationism, abortion, drilling, and the war in Iraq have a positive impact on rewarding McCain for his choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate.

Agreeing with Palin on the war in Iraq is the largest predictor of the six issues for all three measures of overall candidate evaluation. Supporting the war in Iraq is associated with a greater likelihood of voting for McCain (b=2.1, sig at the .001 level), holding a favorable opinion of Sarah Palin (b=1.8, sig at the .001 level), and rewarding McCain for his vice presidential pick (b=.93, sig at the .001 level). Agreeing with Palin on support for drilling has the next largest impact on the three measures. The only feminine issue among the six is that of abortion, which Palin opposes under most circumstances. Agreeing with Palin on this issue was related to all three measures, but only weakly so for Palin's favorability and McCain's choice of Palin.

In a reduced model that includes interactions between two of the issues – abortion

and the war in Iraq – and party identification, there was one significant difference in how

policy position agreement affects overall evaluations for Republicans and Democrats (see

Table 4-11).[48] The issue of abortion operated differently for Republicans and Democrats as

it relates to McCain's choice of Palin. Democrats who agreed with Palin on the issue of

abortion were more likely to reward McCain for his choice of her as vice president (b=1.05,

sig at the .001 level), but this relationship was not significant for Republicans.

Research Question #13. Is policy issue agreement more important in overall candidate ratings

than candidate traits or gender? Does this differ among Democrats and Republicans?

The previous sections have shown that both trait ratings and policy issue agreement

have been shown to be significant in women's evaluations of Sarah Palin. It would be

interesting to see which of the two makes more of an impact – are there stronger

relationships between trait ratings and candidate evaluations, or between policy position

agreement and candidate evaluations. However, including all of these variables in one

model and drawing comparisons about statistical impact is not easy due to the relationships

among the independent variables – trait ratings, policy agreement, and partisan

identification. Another way to test the relative impact of each is through a question that

directly asks women which is more important in their favorability rating of Sarah Palin, her

personal qualities (i.e. traits) or her policy positions. In this national sample of women,

immediately after rating Palin, respondents were asked which was more important in their

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[48] A fully specified model was also run. The results were very similar. However, problems with multicollinearity among the independent variables made the use of a reduced model more appropriate.

favorable or unfavorable rating – her personal qualities such as her experience, family life and leadership qualities or her positions on specific issues.[49]

Overall, the women were nearly equally split between thinking Palin's positions on specific issues or her personal qualities were more important in determining their favorability ratings (51.9 to 48.1 percent; see Table 4-12). Republicans were also equally split, with 49.2 percent saying Palin's issue positions were more important, and 50.8 percent saying her personal qualities mattered more in their rating. The gap for Democrats was slightly larger, with a majority believing Palin's positions were more important (55.6 to 44.4 percent).

When controlling for other factors in a logistic regression model (age, income, education, race, evangelicalism, and conservatism), party identification does not have a significant effect on whether the respondent thought personal qualities or issue positions were more important. However, when examining Palin's favorability ratings as a dependent variable, believing Palin's personal qualities were more important *is* significant. Those who thought Palin's personal qualities mattered more than her issue positions were more likely to rate Palin favorably by a factor of 2.88 (see Table 4-13). There are no interaction effects between party identification and thinking Palin's personal qualities mattered more.

Is the candidate's gender more important than policy issue agreement? While not asked about Palin specifically, respondents were asked whether they felt they should try to support a female candidate for office, even if they did not agree on many issues.[50] The overwhelming majority of women responded that gender does not matter (95.5 percent).

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[49] Which is more important to you in your (favorable or unfavorable) rating of Sarah Palin – her personal qualities such as her experience, family life and leadership qualities or her positions on specific issues?
[50] In general, do you feel that you should try to support a female candidate for office, even if you don't agree with the female candidate on many issues, or doesn't the gender of the candidate really matter to you?

Only 4.5 percent of women said one should try to support a female candidate for office, even if one does not agree with them on many issues. Democrats were slightly more likely than Republicans to believe this was true (6.4 percent to 2.8 percent). Despite this small difference between Democrats and Republicans, in a logistic regression model, party is a significant predictor of believing one should vote for the female candidate. Republicans are less likely to believe gender should matter by a factor of .25, controlling for other variables. Believing one should vote for female candidates, regardless of issue positions, is not significantly related to favorability ratings of Sarah Palin (results not shown in table).

III. Discussion

Research has shown that women candidates are typically seen as more compassionate, warm, and kind, and Republican candidates are typically viewed as being stronger leaders and having less compassion and empathy than Democratic candidates. In this study of Sarah Palin's traits, I have found that a majority of women did in fact feel that the feminine trait of understanding described Sarah Palin either some or a great deal. In addition, a majority of women thought Palin was someone they could relate to on a personal level. On the masculine traits, also associated with GOP candidates, preparedness to be vice president and preparedness to be Commander in Chief, 40 percent of women felt these traits applied more towards Palin, while 60 percent felt they applied more towards Biden. There were significant gaps between Republicans and Democrats on all four traits, with Republicans having a much more positive view of Palin's traits. This partisan gap was larger on the masculine traits than the feminine traits.

Rating Palin higher than Biden on any of the four trait ratings has a positive effect on overall evaluations, and this relationship varies by party. For Republican women, being able

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to identify with Palin on a personal level is a significant predictor of whether or not McCain's choice of Palin makes one more likely to vote for him, but does not have a significant impact for Democratic women. Conversely, believing Palin was prepared to be Commander in Chief was a strong predictor of whether or not to reward McCain for his choice of Palin for Democrats, but was not significant for Republicans.

This study confirmed that female voters also weigh a candidate's ideology and positions on policy issues. Women have historically been concerned with 'women's issues,' and social welfare policy, specifically services and issues that directly affect their rights and the rights of children. One such issue is abortion. The data from the *Time* survey shows that 33.5 percent of respondents agreed with Palin in opposing abortion in most cases. Republicans were more likely to agree with Palin than Democrats (59.3 to 13.7 percent). Agreeing with Palin's on the issue of abortion was significantly related to an increase in vote for McCain, Palin favorability, and rewarding McCain for his choice of Palin. This issue operated differently for Republicans and Democrats. Democrats who agreed with Palin on the issue of abortion were more likely to reward McCain for his choice of her as his vice presidential running mate, but this relationship was not significant for Republicans.

Research has also shown that women are less militaristic than men and have demonstrated greater opposition to war, especially when asked about specific military involvement. Overall 45.2 percent of the sample agreed with Palin's position of supporting the war in Iraq, including 85.5 percent of Republicans and 13.7 percent of Democrats. Agreeing with Palin on the war in Iraq was the largest predictor of the six issues studied for all three measures of overall candidate evaluation. Supporting the war in Iraq is associated with a greater likelihood of voting for McCain, holding a favorable opinion of Sarah Palin, and rewarding McCain for his vice presidential pick.

When asked directly whether policy issues or the personal qualities of Sarah Palin were more important in their favorability rating of her, half of the women stated policy issues and half stated personal qualities, with Democrats a little more likely to say that her positions were more important in their ratings. This study also found policy issue agreement to be much more important to women than voting for a candidate solely because she is female, at least in the abstract. Less than five percent of women said they felt they should try to support a female candidate for office, even if they don't agree with her on many issues. These five percent of women were not more likely to rate Palin as favorable than those who believed gender does not matter.

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that women's party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits and policy issue agreement. In addition, there is a strong relationship between party identification and overall evaluations, but this relationship is overshadowed when trait ratings or policy position agreement are included in the model. The strong, significant effects of party identification on overall evaluations disappear on measures of Palin's favorability measure and opinions of McCain's choice of Palin, but remain significant on vote for McCain.

Both traits and policy position agreement have a significant impact on overall evaluations of Palin. And while the effects of party remain directly significant on vote for McCain in the presence of these variables, it appears they are indirectly significant for evaluations of McCain's choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate on issue positions, and, to a lesser extent, trait ratings. Different traits and policy issues have significant impacts on McCain's choice of Palin for Republicans and Democrats.

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Finally, data in this chapter shows that women of both parties are equally split between saying Palin's personal qualities and policy positions were more important in their ratings of her.

Table 4-1. Women's' Trait Ratings of Sarah Palin on Being Understanding and Personally Identifiable

	Not at all	Not Much	Some	A Great Deal
	%	%	%	%
Understands the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself	17.5	10.1	32.1	40.3
Republican	2.9	1.4	25.7	69.9
Independent	13.8	16.1	32.2	37.9
Democrat	30.4	16.0	37.3	16.3
Partisan Gap	-27.5	-14.6	-11.6	53.6
Personally identify with her everyday life experiences and values	22.4	11.9	35.7	30.0
Republican	3.8	5.2	37.3	53.8
Independent	22.5	7.9	37.1	32.6
Democrat	37.5	18.2	34.2	10.1
Partisan Gap	-33.7	-13.0	3.1	43.7

Method: Crosstabs.

Question Wording: How well do each of the following candidates understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; How much do YOU personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of Sarah Palin – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?

Notes: Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Republicans giving that same response. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-2. Women's' Trait Ratings of Sarah Palin on Preparedness

	Palin	Biden	Palin Advantage
	%	%	%
Prepared to take over the Presidency	40.0	60.0	-20.0
Republican	77.1	22.9	54.2
Independent	46.6	53.4	-6.8
Democrat	11.9	88.1	-76.2
Partisan Gap	65.2***		
Prepared to be Commander in Chief	39.6	60.4	-20.8
Republican	76.2	23.8	52.4
Independent	38.7	61.3	-22.6
Democrat	13.1	86.9	-73.8
Partisan Gap	63.1***		

Method: Crosstabs.
Question Wording: Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?; And which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?
Notes: Palin Advantage is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents saying the trait applies more to Biden from the percentage of respondents saying the trait applies more to Palin. Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Republicans giving that same response. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-3. Women's Agreement with Sarah Palin's Policy Positions

	Agree	Disagree	Difference
	%	%	%
Favors teaching creationism and evolution in public schools	57.7	42.3	15.4
Republican	80.3	19.7	60.6
Independent	65.1	34.9	30.2
Democrat	38.3	61.7	-23.4
Partisan Gap	42.0***		
Opposes abortion in all cases	33.5	66.5	-33.0
Republican	59.3	40.7	18.6
Independent	31.5	68.5	-37.0
Democrat	13.7	86.3	-72.6
Partisan Gap	45.6***		
Supports the right to bear arms	64.4	35.6	28.8
Republican	86.3	13.7	72.6
Independent	71.1	28.9	42.2
Democrat	45.4	54.6	-9.2
Partisan Gap	40.9***		
Favors more drilling for oil and gas	58.6	41.1	17.5
Republican	89.8	10.2	79.6
Independent	56.7	43.3	13.4
Democrat	33.6	66.4	-32.8
Partisan Gap	56.2***		
Does not believe global warming is caused by humans	24.6	75.4	-50.8
Republican	50.8	49.2	1.6
Independent	23.5	76.5	-53.0
Democrat	5.6	94.4	-88.8
Partisan Gap	45.2***		
Supports the war in Iraq	45.2	54.8	-9.6
Republican	85.5	14.5	71.0
Independent	44.6	55.4	-10.8
Democrat	13.7	86.3	-72.6
Partisan Gap	71.8***		

Method: Crosstabs.

Question Wording: Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position?

a. Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools
b. She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger
c. Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns
d. She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge
e. She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans
f. Palin supports the war in Iraq

Notes: Difference is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents who disagree with Palin's policy position from the percentage of respondents who agree with Palin's policy position. Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Republicans giving that same response. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-4. Effects of Party Identification on Women's Ratings of Sarah Palin's Traits

	Understanding[1]	Personally Identifiable[1]	Prepared to be Vice President[2]	Prepared to be Commander in Chief[2]
Republican	.86***	.83***	2.45***	2.33***
	(.08)	(.09)	(.24)	(.23)
Independent	.37**	.49***	1.62***	1.07***
	(.12)	(.12)	(.35)	(.33)
Age	-.03	-.05	-.36**	-.17
	(.04)	(.04)	(.12)	(.11)
Income	.02	.03	.05	.02
	(.02)	(.02)	(.07)	(.07)
Education	-.05	-.01	-.23	.02
	(.05)	(.05)	(.14)	(.14)
White	.46***	.27**	1.19***	.71**
	(.09)	(.09)	(.29)	(.27)
Evangelical	.16*	.28***	.76***	.32
	(.08)	(.08)	(.23)	(.22)
Conservative	.17***	.21***	.73***	.73***
	(.03)	(.04)	(.11)	(.11)
Constant	.81***	.57***	-3.90***	-3.79***
	(.13)	(.13)	(.47)	(.44)
N	728	738	762	758
R^2	.316	.312	.413	.376

Method: 1. OLS Regression; 2. Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: How well do each of the following candidates understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; How much do YOU personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of Sarah Palin – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?; Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?; And which Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For the first two dependent variables, 0 = Not at all, 1 = Not much, 2 = Some, and 3 = A great deal. For the last two dependent variables, 0 = this trait applies more to Biden, and 1 = this trait applies more to Palin. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-5. Effects of Party Identification on Women's Agreement with Sarah Palin's Policy Positions

	Creationism	Abortion	Right to Bear Arms	Drilling	Global Warming	War in Iraq
Republican	1.45***	1.60***	1.58***	2.21***	2.12***	2.80***
	(.21)	(.22)	(.23)	(.24)	(.28)	(.24)
Independent	1.07***	.74*	.98***	.71**	1.01*	1.33***
	(.29)	(.33)	(.30)	(.29)	(.42)	(.33)
Age	-.17+	-.03	-.31**	.28**	.01	.10
	(.09)	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)	(.12)	(.13)
Income	-.10+	-.12+	.04	.04	.12+	.23**
	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.07)	(.07)
Education	-.04	.13	-.16	-.38**	-.26+	-.12
	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.15)	(.15)
White	.48*	.55*	.93***	.68**	.83**	1.14***
	(.21)	(.25)	(.22)	(.23)	(.33)	(.29)
Evangelical	.14	1.11***	.41*	.58**	.59**	.25
	(.18)	(.20)	(.20)	(.21)	(.22)	(.24)
Conservative	.37***	.69***	.21*	.44***	.77***	.93***
	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.12)	(.12)
Constant	-.96**	-3.94***	-.68*	-2.35***	-5.45***	-5.38***
	(.33)	(.43)	(.34)	(.38)	(.56)	(.53)
N	799	816	807	797	779	800
R^2	.188	.293	.196	.329	.301	.467

Method: Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. Do you agree or disagree with her position?
   a. Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools
   b. She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger
   c. Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns
   d. She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge
   e. She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans
   f. Palin supports the war in Iraq
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For all dependent variables, 0 = Disagree, and 1 = Agree. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.
Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-6. Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin by Party Identification

Presidential Vote Choice:	McCain	Obama	McCain Advantage
	%	%	%
Total	49.0	51.0	-2.0
Republican	92.2	7.8	84.4
Independent	52.2	47.8	4.4
Democrat	13.2	86.8	-73.6
Partisan Gap	79.0***		

Palin Favorability:	Favorable	Unfavorable	Net Favorable
	%	%	%
Total	62.6	37.4	25.2
Republican	93.8	6.2	87.6
Independent	66.2	33.8	32.4
Democrat	33.2	66.8	-33.6
Partisan Gap	60.6***		

McCain's Choice of Palin:	Less Likely	Not Much Difference	More Likely
	%	%	%
Total	20.5	47.2	32.3
Republican	4.3	42.3	53.4
Independent	18.9	41.1	40.0
Democrat	33.9	52.3	13.8
Partisan Gap	-29.6	-10.0	39.6

Method: Crosstabs.
Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?
Notes: McCain Advantage is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents saying they would vote for Obama from the percentage of respondents saying they would vote for McCain. Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Republicans giving that same response. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-7. Effects of Party Identification on Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin

	Vote for McCain[1]	Palin Favorability[1]	McCain's choice of Palin[2]
Republican	3.63***	2.39***	1.59***
	(.44)	(.27)	(.19)
Independent	2.35***	1.03***	1.18***
	(.58)	(.32)	(.26)
Age	-.34+	-.26*	-.26***
	(.20)	(.12)	(.08)
Income	.15	.06	-.02
	(.12)	(.07)	(.05)
Education	.14	-.24+	-.03
	(.24)	(.15)	(.10)
White	1.70***	1.35***	.35+
	(.51)	(.27)	(.19)
Evangelical	.87*	.50***	.21
	(.39)	(.23)	(.16)
Conservative	1.15***	.67***	.40***
	(.20)	(.11)	(.08)
McCain Favorability	4.68***		
	(.51)		
Constant	-9.29***	-2.51***	
	(1.06)	(.43)	
[McCain's Choice = .00]			-.19
			(.28)
[McCain's Choice = 1.00]			2.41***
			(.30)
N	728	740	751
Cox and Snell R^2	.649	.379	249

Method: 1. Logistic Regression; 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin Favorability, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. For McCain's Choice of Palin, 0 = Less likely, 1 = Not much difference, and 2 = More likely. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-8. Effects of Ratings of Sarah Palin's Traits on Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin

	Vote for McCain[1]	Palin Favorability[1]	McCain's choice of Palin[2]
Palin Understands	.68+	1.16***	.70***
	(.38)	(.23)	(.12)
Palin Personally Identifiable	-.06	.97***	.22*
	(.35)	(.22)	(.12)
Palin Prepared to be	3.20***	4.87***	.68+
Vice President	(.91)	(1.37)	(.39)
Palin Prepared to be	1.48+	-.25	.94**
Commander in Chief	(.86)	(.82)	(.38)
Republican	2.92***	.72	.31
	(.63)	(.48)	(.24)
Independent	1.61+	.43	.65*
	(.87)	(.62)	(.32)
Age	.01	-.11	-.18+
	(.32)	(.20)	(.09)
Income	.21	.01	-.09
	(.18)	(.12)	(.06)
Education	.70+	-.21	.05
	(.43)	(.25)	(.12)
White	1.60*	.60	-.17
	(.78)	(.46)	(.22)
Evangelical	-.32	-.07	-.13
	(.62)	(.41)	(.19)
Conservative	1.31***	.49**	.20*
	(.29)	(.17)	(.09)
McCain Favorability	4.23***		
	(.78)		
Constant	-13.05***	-5.34***	
	(2.02)	(.83)	
[McCain's Choice = .00]			.33
			(.33)
[McCain's Choice = 1.00]			3.62***
			(.38)
N	632	642	636
Cox and Snell R[2]	.697	.613	.431

Method: 1. Logistic Regression; 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable

or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin Favorability, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. For McCain's Choice of Palin, 0 = Less likely, 1 = Not much difference, and 2 = More likely. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-9. Effects of Party Identification and Ratings of Sarah Palin's Traits on Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin

	Vote for McCain[1]	Palin Favorability[1]	McCain's choice of Palin[2]
Palin Personally Identifiable	.28	1.42***	.33**
	(.38)	(.22)	(.12)
Palin Prepared to be	3.62***	2.41***	2.61***
Commander in Chief	(.79)	(.64)	(.38)
Palin Personally Identifiable x	.06	-.08	.71***
Republican	(.59)	(.40)	(.22)
Palin Prepared to be Commander	1.07	.46	-2.15***
in Chief x Republican	(1.56)	(1.01)	(.50)
Palin Personally Identifiable x	.41	.70	.21
Independent	(.87)	(.71)	(.30)
Palin Prepared to be Commander	-.97	.57	.13
in Chief x Independent	(1.61)	(1.79)	(.80)
Republican	2.97**	1.11	.32
	(1.15)	(.75)	(.45)
Independent	1.33	-.77	.29
	(1.77)	(1.43)	(.52)
Age	-.26	-.05	-.20*
	(.27)	(.16)	(.09)
Income	.19	.02	-.09+
	(.17)	(.10)	(.05)
Education	.31	-.44*	.00
	(.36)	(.21)	(.11)
White	2.12**	1.43***	.11
	(.73)	(.39)	(.20)
Evangelical	.09	.07	-.10
	(.53)	(.33)	(.18)
Conservative	1.10***	.33*	.21**
	(.26)	(.15)	(.09)
McCain Favorability	4.29***		
	(.74)		
Constant	-11.15***	-4.21***	
	(1.60)	(.68)	
[McCain's Choice = .00]			-.23
			(.32)
[McCain's Choice = 1.00]			3.03***
			(.36)
N	657	671	670
Cox and Snell R^2	.688	.563	.412

Method: 1. Logistic Regression; 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin Favorability, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. For McCain's Choice of Palin, 0 = Less likely, 1 = Not much difference, and 2 = More likely. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-10. Effects of Policy Position Agreement with Sarah Palin on Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin

	Vote for McCain[1]	Palin Favorability[1]	McCain's choice of Palin[2]
Creationism	.19	1.02***	.73***
	(.54)	(.29)	(.19)
Abortion	1.60**	.66+	.35+
	(.63)	(.38)	(.22)
Right to Bear Arms	.13	.74**	.31
	(.57)	(.29)	(.20)
Drilling	1.74**	1.28***	.91***
	(.59)	(.31)	(.23)
Global Warming	2.14*	.86+	.14
	(1.06)	(.49)	(.24)
War in Iraq	2.06***	1.84***	.93***
	(.58)	(.39)	(.26)
Republican	1.46*	.07	.25
	(.66)	(.45)	(.26)
Independent	1.47+	-.02	.79**
	(.84)	(.45)	(.31)
Age	-.57+	-.35*	-.26**
	(.30)	(.16)	(.09)
Income	.25	.10	.03
	(.18)	(.09)	(.06)
Education	.40	-.27	-.03
	(.38)	(.20)	(.11)
White	2.16**	1.17***	.10
	(.78)	(.36)	(.21)
Evangelical	.34	.16	.12
	(.58)	(.31)	(.18)
Conservative	.55*	.25+	.13
	(.27)	(.14)	(.09)
McCain Favorability	4.57***		
	(.81)		
Constant	-10.51***	-3.14***	
	(1.67)	(.59)	
[McCain's Choice = .00]			-.04
			(.34)
[McCain's Choice = 1.00]			3.04***
			(.37)
N	610	620	626
Cox and Snell R^2	.687	.511	.348

Method: 1. Logistic Regression; 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression.

Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you? Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin Favorability, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. For McCain's Choice of Palin, 0 = Less likely, 1 = Not much difference, and 2 = More likely. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-11. Effects of Party Identification and Policy Position Agreement with Sarah Palin on Women's Evaluations of Presidential Vote Choice, Favorability of Sarah Palin, and John McCain's Choice of Sarah Palin

	Vote for McCain[1]	Palin Favorability[1]	McCain's choice of Palin[2]
Abortion	1.72**	.72+	1.40***
	(.65)	(.42)	(.32)
War in Iraq	1.83***	1.95***	.95**
	(.54)	(.42)	(.32)
Abortion x	-.08	.52	-1.57***
Republican	(1.21)	(.74)	(.41)
War in Iraq x	-.24	.95	.07
Republican	(1.00)	(.70)	(.47)
Abortion x	-1.60	19.90	-1.29+
Independent	(2.04)	(9224.00)	(.76)
War in Iraq x	1.75	.58	1.65*
Independent	(1.81)	(1.08)	(.69)
Republican	3.25***	.68	1.57***
	(.81)	(.43)	(.35)
Independent	1.55+	.25	.64+
	(.86)	(.45)	(.36)
Age	-.54*	-.39**	-.30***
	(.25)	(.13)	(.09)
Income	.10	.02	-.03
	(.15)	(.08)	(.05)
Education	.26	-.33*	.01
	(.29)	(.17)	(.10)
White	2.02**	1.34***	.19
	(.64)	(.31)	(.20)
Evangelical	.68	.40	.18
	(.48)	(.27)	(.17)
Conservative	.67**	.35**	.23**
	(.23)	(.12)	(.08)
McCain Favorability	4.16***		
	(.64)		
Constant	-8.73***	-1.84***	
	(1.26)	(.46)	
[McCain's Choice = .00]			-.43
			(.31)
[McCain's Choice = 1.00]			2.44***
			(.33)
N	696	708	713
Cox and Snell R^2	.671	.458	.318

Method: 1. Logistic Regression; 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?; Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?; Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?
Notes: Dependent Variables are listed across the top of the table. For Vote for McCain, 0 = No, and 1 = Yes. For Palin Favorability, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. For McCain's Choice of Palin, 0 = Less likely, 1 = Not much difference, and 2 = More likely. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-12. Women's Reason for Rating of Sarah Palin and Opinions about Supporting Female Candidates

Reason for Rating of Palin:	Her Positions on Specific Issues	Her Personal Qualities
	%	%
Total	51.9	48.1
Republican	49.2	50.8
Independent	44.2	55.8
Democrat	55.6	44.4
Partisan Gap	-6.4	
Supporting Female Candidates:	Gender Doesn't Matter	Should Try to Support Female Candidates
	%	%
Total	95.5	4.5
Republican	97.2	2.8
Independent	97.8	2.2
Democrat	93.6	6.4
Partisan Gap	3.6	

Method: Crosstabs.

Question Wording: Which is more important to you in your rating of Sarah Palin (her personal qualities such as her experience, family life and leadership qualities) or (her positions on specific issues)?; In general, do you feel that you should try to support a female candidate for office, even if you don't agree with the female candidate on many issues, or doesn't the gender of the candidate really matter to you?

Notes: Partisan Gap is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Democrats giving a response from the percentage of Republicans giving that same response. A difference in proportions test was used to determine if the partisan gap is significant. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 4-13. Effects of Saying Personal Qualities Were More Important in Favorability Rating of Palin on Having a Favorable Opinion of Sarah Palin

	Palin Favorability	
	(1)	(2)
Personal Qualities More Important	1.06***	1.08***
	(.24)	(.29)
Republican	2.16***	2.14***
	(.29)	(.36)
Independent	.92*	1.09*
	(.40)	(.56)
Personal Qualities More Important x Republican		.09
		(.60)
Personal Qualities More Important x Inependent		-.36
		(.79)
Age	-.26*	-.27*
	(.13)	(.13)
Income	.11	.10
	(.08)	(.08)
Education	-.32*	-.32+
	(.16)	(.16)
White	1.64***	1.64***
	(.31)	(.31)
Evangelical	.56*	.57*
	(.26)	(.26)
Conservative	.55***	.55***
	(.12)	(.12)
Constant	-3.00***	-2.99***
	(.50)	(.51)
N	578	578
Cox and Snell R^2	.377	.377

Method: Logistic Regression.
Question Wording: Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?
Notes: For Dependent Variable, 0 = Unfavorable, and 1 = Favorable. Two models were run. Model 2 includes all variables of Model 1 in addition to interaction variables between party and feeling personal qualities were more important in favorability rating of Sarah Palin. Entries are beta coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Female politicians make up a small percentage of representatives at the local, state, and national levels, and gains in female representation have mostly occurred within the Democratic Party. Currently, 77 percent of women in Congress hail from the Democratic Party (72 of 93). Still, prominent conservative female politicians like Sarah Palin have become more common over the past few decades, as increased levels of partisan polarization at the elite and mass levels had led women of both parties to become more and more extreme ideologically. Indeed, the two parties are growing more and more homogenous in their policy positions, and the differences between their stands on major policy issues are expanding (Aldrich 1995; Coleman 1997; Fleisher and John R. Bond 2004; Roberts and S. S. Smith 2003; Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003). In fact, the two political parties in the U.S. Congress are as ideologically divergent as they have been at any point during the last three decades (Theriault 2003).

This finding was borne out in my analysis of *National Journal* rankings, which revealed how Congresswomen have become more polarized since the early 1980s. The average conservative composite ranking of Republican female Representatives has increased gradually from 54.9 in 1981 to 74.9 in 2008. This 36 percent increase means that Republican women have, on average, moved from being in the ideological center of the House to being more conservative than 75 percent of the other members of Congress. Similarly, the average *liberal* composite ranking of female Representatives in the *Democratic* Party has increased from 72.4 in 1981 to 79.8 in 2008.

Given the increased polarization of female candidates, and the rise in conservative female Republican candidates it has precipitated, the goal of this project was to examine voter reactions to one such conservative female candidate, Sarah Palin. Specifically, it examined how voters' own gender and party identification shape evaluations of a conservative female candidate's traits and ideology, as well as the impact of each on vote choice and candidate evaluation. I was able to address these questions by utilizing two public opinion surveys conducted in the months preceding the 2008 presidential election. One, a survey of Minnesotans, was selected because of the Gopher state's status as a battleground state and demonstrated support for a female candidate for federal office, as well as the timing of the survey around the vice presidential debate. The other, a survey of a national sample of women, was the only poll conducted that posed the range of questions necessary to conduct a thorough examination of female voters' reactions to Sarah Palin generally, as well as to her traits and policy positions specifically.

The Minnesota data revealed that a citizen's gender and party identification shape their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits, ideology, and overall evaluations. While party identification is the strongest predictor, gender did have some impact. Furthermore, the differences in how Palin is rated on her traits and ideology had significant impacts on overall evaluations of her, as measured by presidential vote choice and evaluations of her performance in the vice presidential debate. Nationally, women's party identification shapes their perceptions of Sarah Palin's traits, policy issue agreement, and overall evaluations. Both traits and policy position agreement have a significant impact on overall evaluations of Palin, as measured by vote choice, favorability ratings, and increased likelihood of voting for McCain as a result of his choice of Palin for his vice presidential

running mate. In addition, women are equally split between saying Palin's personal qualities and policy positions were more important in their ratings of her.

Implications

This study has two important implications. Firstly, ratings of the traits and ideology of vice presidential candidate matter for outcome of the *presidential* race. Secondly, while party is a main driver of candidate evaluation, opinions on traits also contribute to overall evaluations, and do so in different ways for Democratic and Republican women.

Palin's effect on the presidential campaign could be seen immediately in the horserace polls that between John McCain's announcement of her as his running mate through her speech at the Republican National Convention. Palin made her presence felt at every stop along the way. Research has shown that a vice presidential candidate can serve one of two purposes – solidifying the base or reaching out to independents and more moderate voters, and adding Palin to the ticket was clearly an attempt at the former (Goldstein 1982; Natoli 1985; Nelson 1988).

Scholarly work has shown that vice presidential candidates can make a difference in presidential outcomes. Studies conducted at the individual level of analysis on the impact of vice presidential candidates on vote choice have found that voter evaluation of the vice presidential candidates contributed about 0.75 percent toward the national presidential vote margin from 1952 to 1980, generated about one-half the influence as presidential candidate evaluations and party identification, and was approximately one-and-a-half times as impactful as ideological influences on vote choice (Wattenberg 1984). Moreover, in the presidential elections taking place between 1968 and 1992, voters were substantially influenced by their evaluations of vice presidential nominees: voters with split presidential

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and vice presidential preferences were more likely to defect from their preferred presidential candidate than those with consistent evaluations (Wattenberg 1995).

This study has shown that ratings of Palin's traits were important predictors of vote choice for both Minnesotans and women across the nation. Minnesotans who viewed Palin as honest, experienced, and ideologically about right were more likely to vote for McCain. Furthermore, ratings operated differently for men and women. In particular, the trait of caring was salient for women, but not for men. Women who rated Palin as caring were more likely than women who did not rate her as such to vote for McCain, but there was no significant difference in vote for McCain among men who rated Palin as caring and those who did not. There were also differences between the ways Republicans and Democrats used traits in their vote choice. Republicans who thought Palin's ideology was about right were more likely than those who thought she was more extreme to vote for McCain, but this relationship was not significant for Democrats.

Nationally, rating Palin as understanding, prepared to be vice president, and prepared to be Commander in Chief each have a positive impact on vote for McCain. All four traits studied – the three above in addition to Palin being personally identifiable – had a positive relationship with being more likely to vote for McCain as a result of his choice of Palin as his vice presidential running mate. These relationships varied by party for two of the traits. For Republican women, being able to identify with Palin on a personal level was a significant predictor of whether or not McCain's choice of Palin makes one more likely to vote for him, but does not have a significant impact for Democratic women. Conversely, believing Palin was prepared to be Commander in Chief was a strong predictor of whether or not to reward McCain for his choice of Palin for Democrats, but was not significant for Republicans.

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Future Research

There are three areas in which this research could benefit from further exploration, and all three deal with expanding the data to be studied. Firstly, this project deals with only one candidate, Sarah Palin. This 'n' of one does not allow larger statements to be made about enduring patterns of behavior by the electorate. Though Palin is a prominent example of a recent conservative female candidate running for a national office, expanding the study to look at others would help to suss out whether the findings from this study are applicable to a broader group of female candidates.

Secondly, there are male and female stereotypes that could not be tested with the available data. Conducting a study with a fuller litany of both feminine and masculine traits would give greater insight into how candidates are perceived. Similarly, one measure that is closely related to traits that was not studied in this project is the difference in how male and female candidates are rated on their perceived ability to handle certain issues. Research has demonstrated that female candidates are more likely to be perceived as competent in dealing with issues that revolve around poverty, women, and children. Conversely, men are more likely to garner higher ratings in dealing with military issues and making decisions on agricultural issues (Lawless 2004; Sapiro 1981). In addition to trait ratings, ideology assessment, and policy position agreement, perceived candidate abilities could impact overall evaluations along gendered lines.

Thirdly, there may be other factors that drive differences among female Democrats and Republicans. One such example is feminism. Research has shown that holding feminist values, and indeed, the process itself of becoming a feminist may "be a catalyst that helps women recognize their underlying 'female' values" (Conover 1988, 1005) (1005). These

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values may in turn affect how women use feminine values, traits, and issues to evaluate candidates. In addition, this may not be limited to the manner in which women form opinions. Scholarly examination of the relationship between feminist attitudes and policy preferences suggests that a feminist perspective, consisting of egalitarian values and generally liberal policies, is associated with distinctive values and policy preferences for both *men* and women (Cook and Wilcox 1991).

In sum, there remains a lot to learn about female conservative politicians and voters' reactions to them. Much of what has been studied thus far has focused on the challenges faced by Democratic female candidates in overcoming feminine stereotypes that are not advantageous to them in elections. However, this case study of voter's opinions and attitudes about Sarah Palin has begun to offer insight on gender and partisan differences as to how conservative Republican female politicians are perceived on both feminine and masculine traits, as well as ideology and policy positions.

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Appendix A. Minnesota Questionnaire

Title: HHH.MPR Early October Public Opinion Survey

Survey Organization: Center for Survey Research and Analysis, University of Connecticut

Sponsor: Humphrey Institute and Minnesota Public Radio

Field Dates: September 29 – October 5, 2008

Sample: Minnesotans

Sample Size: 1,141

Interview method: Telephone

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling from the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut. We are conducting a survey about the upcoming Presidential Election. May I please speak to the YOUNGEST MALE in this household, at least 18 years of age or older? Your answers to these questions are completely confidential and the results will only be reported in anonymous form. (NOTE: If there is a male that lives in the household and is not available at this time, schedule a callback. Only complete interview with female if there is no male in the household.)

LV1. Are you currently registered to vote in the precinct or township where you live?

> 1. Yes (SKIP TO LV3)
> 2. No
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

LV2. Do you have plans to register to vote on or before November 4, 2008?

> 1. Yes
> 2. No
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

LV3. How likely is it that you will vote in the November 4th general election? Would you say you definitely will vote, probably will vote, probably won't vote or definitely won't vote in the November general election?

> 1. Definitely will
> 2. Probably will
> 3. Probably won't
> 4. Definitely won't
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q1. If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for … (READ CHOICES 1-2, ROTATE) (IF DK/REF: As of today, who do you lean more towards?)

> 1. Democrat Barack Obama

2. Republican John McCain
80. Somebody else (specify)
97. Won't vote (volunteered)
98. Don't know (volunteered)
99. Refused (volunteered)

Q2. Are you certain now that you will vote for <q1> for president, or do you think you may change your mind between now and the November election?

1. Certain
2. Might change mind
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q3. When deciding for whom to vote for President, which one of the following qualities is most important to you? Someone who… (READ CHOICES 1-7; ROTATE)

1. Will bring about change
2. Is closer to you on the issues
3. Shares your values
4. Is a strong leader
5. Has experience
6. Has the best chance of being elected
7. Is in touch with people like you
80. Other (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q4. If the 2008 Senate election were being held today, would you vote for… (READ CHOICES 1-3; ROTATE 1-2) (IF DK/REF: If you had to choose today, for whom would you vote?)

1. Democrat Al Franken
2. Republican Norm Coleman
3. Independence Party member Dean Barkley
80. Somebody else (specify)
97. Won't vote (volunteered)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q5. Which candidate for the U.S. Senate do you think best represents the Minnesota way of life? (READ CHOICES 1-3, ROTATE 1-2)

1. Democrat Al Franken
2. Republican Norm Coleman
3. Independence Party member Dean Barkley
80. Somebody else (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q6. If the 2008 elections for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you vote for… (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE)

> 1. Democrat Party candidate
> 2. Republican Party candidate
> 80. Somebody else (specify)
> 97. Won't vote (volunteered)
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q7. If the 2008 elections for the Minnesota State Legislature were being held today, would you vote for... (READ CHOICES 1-2: ROTATE)

> 1. Democrat Party candidate
> 2. Republican Party candidate
> 80. Somebody else (specify)
> 97. Won't vote (volunteered)
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q8. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

> 1. Right direction
> 2. Wrong track
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q9. Which ONE of the following issues do you think is the single MOST important problem facing the United States today: (READ CHOICES 1-6; ROTATE) (PROBE IF NECESSARY for SINGLE MOST important issue)

> 1. The war in Iraq
> 2. The economy and jobs
> 3. Education
> 4. Health Care
> 5. Taxes
> 6. Terrorism
> 80. Or something else (specify)
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q10. Which ONE of the following issues do you think is the single MOST important problem facing Minnesota today: (READ CHOICES 1-5; ROTATE) (PROBE IF NECESSARY for SINGLE MOST important issue)

> 1. Transportation
> 2. The economy and jobs
> 3. Education

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4. Health Care
5. Taxes
80. Or something else (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q11. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? (PROBE: STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT APPROVE/DISAPPROVE)

    1. Strongly approve
    2. Somewhat approve
    3. Somewhat disapprove
    4. Strongly disapprove
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q12. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Tim Pawlenty is handling his job as governor? (PROBE: STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT APPROVE/DISAPPROVE)

    1. Strongly approve
    2. Somewhat approve
    3. Somewhat disapprove
    4. Strongly disapprove
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q13. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Norm Coleman is handling his job as US Senator? (PROBE: STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT APPROVE/DISAPPROVE)

    1. Strongly approve
    2. Somewhat approve
    3. Somewhat disapprove
    4. Strongly disapprove
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q14. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Amy Klobuchar is handling her job as US Senator? (PROBE: STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT APPROVE/DISAPPROVE)

    1. Strongly approve
    2. Somewhat approve
    3. Somewhat disapprove
    4. Strongly disapprove
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Next, we would like to ask you about some of the issues in the presidential campaign.

Q15. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in the upcoming Presidential election? (READ CHOICES 1-4)

    1. A great deal
    2. A fair amount
    3. Only a little
    4. No interest at all
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q16. How would you rate economic conditions in this country today? (READ CHOICES 1-4)

    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q17. Would you say the problems currently facing financial institutions and the stock market make you feel scared, concerned but not scared, or are you not concerned by those events?

    1. Scared
    2. Concerned but not scared
    3. Not Concerned
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q18. Do you think the federal government should step in and try to address these problems, or should the federal government stay out and let the financial markets and the economy try to recover on their own?

    1. Step in
    2. Stay out
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q19. Do you think the federal government should provide financial help to home owners who are having trouble paying their mortgages because their rates went up, or should the federal government not get involved?

    1. Help out
    2. Don't get involved
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q20. What do you think is mainly responsible for the problems in the investment banking industry - bad management by those who run the investment banks or a lack of close supervision by the government?

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1. Bad management by those who run the investment banks
2. Lack of close supervision by the government
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q21. Do you think the federal government should or should not significantly increase its regulation of the investment banking industry?

1. Should increase its regulation
2. Should not increase its regulation
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q22. Which presidential candidate do you think will do a better job handling the problems in the investment banking industry? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE)

1. Barack Obama
2. John McCain
3. Same (volunteered)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Now like to ask you about the campaign in Minnesota.

Q23. How likely is it that the outcome of the presidential election will be determined by who wins the state of Minnesota? (READ CHOICES 1-4)

1. Very likely
2. Somewhat likely
3. Not too likely
4. Not at all likely
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q24. In this presidential election, do you think Minnesota will vote Republican, Democrat, or is it currently a toss-up between the two candidates?

1. Republican
2. Democrat
3. Toss-up
98. Don't know
99. Refused

ROTATE Q25 AND Q26
Q25. How much do you think presidential candidate Barack Obama cares about the voters in Minnesota? (READ CHOICES 1-4)

1. A great deal

2. A fair amount
3. Only a little
4. Not at all
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q26. How much do you think presidential candidate John McCain cares about the voters in Minnesota? (READ CHOICES 1-4)

1. A great deal
2. A fair amount
3. Only a little
4. Not at all
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q27. A state constitutional amendment will be placed on the ballot in November to raise the Minnesota sales tax by three-eighths of one percent until the year 2034 to pay for clean water, wildlife habit, parks and trails, and arts projects. Do you plan to vote for this amendment or against it, or are you not planning to register a vote on this issue?

1. For it
2. Against it (SKIP TO Q28B)
3. Not planning to vote on this (SKIP TO IQ29)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO IQ29)
99. Refused (SKIP TO IQ29)

Q28A. Some people argue that the state of Minnesota has existing revenues to pay for these projects, and that it is bad policy to dedicate funding in the Constitution for them. Does hearing these reasons make you more likely to vote against the amendment, more likely to vote in favor of it, or do these reasons have no impact on your decision?

1. More likely to vote against it (SKIP TO IQ29)
2. More likely to vote for it (SKIP TO IQ29)
3. These reasons have no impact on the decision (SKIP TO IQ29)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO IQ29)
99. Refused (SKIP TO IQ29)

Q28B. Some people argue that this tax is necessary to protect Minnesota's quality of life, and that the Legislature has proven unable to adequately fund things like drinking water, wildlife habitat and arts programs with existing revenue. Does hearing these reasons make you more likely to vote in favor of the amendment, more likely to vote against it, or do these reasons have no impact on your decision?

1. More likely to vote against it
2. More likely to vote for it
3. These reasons have no impact on the decision
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Next, we have a few questions about the vice presidential debate on Thursday night.

Q29A. Did you happen to watch any of the Vice Presidential debate between Joe Biden and Sarah Palin that was televised on Thursday, Oct. 2?

> 1. Yes
> 2. No
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q29B. Did you happen to read or hear any news reports about the Vice Presidential debate, or talk to anyone about the debate?

> 1. Yes
> 2. No
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

ROTATE Q30 AND Q31
Q30. Does Palin's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for McCain, or didn't it make a difference?

> 1. More likely to vote for him
> 2. Less likely to vote for him
> 3. It didn't make a difference
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q31. Does Biden's performance in the debate make you more or less likely to vote for Obama, or didn't it make a difference?

> 1. More likely to vote for him
> 2. Less likely to vote for him
> 3. It didn't make a difference
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to Joe Biden or Sarah Palin.

ROTATE Q32, Q33, AND Q34
Q32. Is honest? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE) (PROBE: Which candidate does this statement apply more to?)

> 1. Joe Biden
> 2. Sarah Palin
> 98. Don't know
> 99. Refused

Q33. Has the right experience to be president? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE) (PROBE: Which candidate does this statement apply more to?)

       1. Joe Biden
       2. Sarah Palin
       98. Don't know
       99. Refused

Q34. Cares about people like me? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE) (PROBE: Which candidate does this statement apply more to?)

       1. Joe Biden
       2. Sarah Palin
       98. Don't know
       99. Refused

Next, I am going to asking about some of the political candidates competing in this year's election.

ROTATE Q35 AND Q36
Q35. Do you think John McCain's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

       1. Too Conservative
       2. About Right
       3. Too Liberal
       98. Don't know
       99. Refused

Q36. Do you think Barack Obama's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

       1. Too Conservative
       2. About Right
       3. Too Liberal
       98. Don't know
       99. Refused

ROTATE Q37 AND Q38
Q37. Do you think Joe Biden's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

       1. Too Conservative
       2. About Right
       3. Too Liberal
       98. Don't know
       99. Refused

Q38. Do you think Sarah Palin's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

1. Too Conservative
2. About Right
3. Too Liberal
98. Don't know
99. Refused

ROTATE Q39 AND Q40
Q39. If John McCain were elected President, do you think he would generally continue George W. Bush's policies, or would he take the country in a different direction?

1. Continue George W. Bush's policies
2. Take the country in a different direction
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q40. Does the fact that Barack Obama is relatively new to national politics make you more likely to vote for him, less likely to vote for him, or wouldn't it make a difference?

1. More likely to vote for him
2. Less likely to vote for him
3. It wouldn't make a difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

ROTATE Q41 AND Q42
Q41. Does the fact that Barack Obama is African-American make you more likely to vote for him, less likely to vote will help him, or wouldn't it make a difference?

1. More likely to vote for him
2. Less likely to vote for him
3. It wouldn't make a difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q42. Does the fact that John McCain is 71 years old make you more likely to vote for him, less likely to vote for him, or wouldn't it make a difference?

1. More likely to vote for him
2. Less likely to vote for him
3. It wouldn't make a difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q43. Thinking about the presidential race between John McCain and Barak Obama, have the television advertisements in this race been more negative or less negative as presidential races from previous years or haven't you seen much of a difference?

1. More negative
2. Less negative

3. Haven't seen much of a difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q44. Who do you think is running more negative television advertisements? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE)

    1. John McCain
    2. Barack Obama
    3. No difference (SKIP 1)
    98. Don't Know (SKIP 1)
    99. Refused (SKIP 1)

Q45. Does this make you more likely to vote for <Q44>, less likely, or doesn't it make a difference?

    1. More Likely
    2. Less Likely
    3. Make No difference
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

ROTATE Q46 AND Q47
Q46. Thinking back to the Democratic nomination contest, who did you prefer more? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE)

    1. Barack Obama
    2. Hillary Clinton
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Q47. Thinking back to the Republican nomination contest, who did you prefer more? (READ CHOICES 1-2)

    1. John McCain
    2. One of the other candidates
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

Now I would like to switch gears, and ask you several questions about the U.S. Senate race between Norm Coleman and Al Franken.

ROTATE Q48 AND Q49
Q48. Do you think Norm Coleman's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

    1. Too Conservative
    2. About Right
    3. Too Liberal

98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q49. Do you think Al Franken's political views are too conservative, about right, or too liberal?

1. Too Conservative
2. About Right
3. Too Liberal
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q50. Have the television advertisements in the Senate race between Norm Coleman and Al Franken been more negative, less negative, or as negative as Senate races from previous years?

1. More negative
2. Less negative
3. Haven't seen much of a difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q51. Who do you think is running more negative television advertisements? (READ CHOICES 1-2; ROTATE)

1. Al Franken
2. Norm Coleman
3. No difference (SKIP TO IQ53)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO IQ53)
99. Refused (SKIP TO IQ53)

Q52. Does this make you more likely to vote for <Q51>, less likely, or doesn't it make a difference?

1. More Likely
2. Less Likely
3. Make No difference
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Next, I am going to read you a list of statements. Tell me whether you think each statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama.

ROTATE Q53 THROUGH Q59
Q53. He will be a strong leader as commander in chief? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

1. John McCain
2. Barack Obama
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Q54. He cares about people like me? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

Q55. He is experienced? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

Q56. He will be bring about positive change? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

Q57. He is an independent thinker? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

Q58. He is honest? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

Q59. He is out of touch with people like me? (PROBE: Do you think this statement applies more to John McCain or Barack Obama?)

        1. John McCain
        2. Barack Obama
        98. Don't know
        99. Refused

LV4. Thinking back to 20…Did you vote in the 20 general election for President between Al Gore and George W. Bush or did something come up that kept you from getting to the polls that day?

　　　1. Voted
　　　2. Did not vote
　　　3. Not eligible (volunteered)
　　　98. Don't know
　　　99. Refused

LV5. Thinking back to 24…Did you vote in the 24 general election for President between George W. Bush and John Kerry or did something come up that kept you from getting to the polls that day?

　　　1. Voted
　　　2. Did not vote
　　　3. Not eligible (volunteered)
　　　98. Don't know
　　　99. Refused

LV6. Thinking about all of the elections that have been held in your community over the last several years, including local elections for school board members and budget issues, how many would you say you have voted in? Would that be all of them, almost all of them, most of them, some of them, a few of them, or none of them?

　　　1. All
　　　2. Almost all
　　　3. Most
　　　4. Some
　　　5. A few
　　　6. None
　　　98. Don't know
　　　99. Refused

LV7. Generally speaking, how enthusiastic are you about the upcoming Presidential election? (READ CHOICES 1-5)

　　　1. Extremely Enthusiastic
　　　2. Very Enthusiastic
　　　3. Somewhat Enthusiastic
　　　4. Not Too Enthusiastic
　　　5. Not Enthusiastic At All
　　　98. Don't know
　　　99. Refused

LV8. Compared to previous presidential elections, are you more enthusiastic about this election or less enthusiastic?

　　　1. More enthusiastic

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2. Less enthusiastic
3. Same (volunteered)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

Lastly, we have some questions for classification purposes only. First...

QD1. In what year were you born?

Record 4 digits
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD2. What racial or ethnic group would you most identify yourself with? African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, or some other group?

1. African American
2. Asian
3. Hispanic
4. Native American
5. White
80. Some other group (specify)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD3. For classification purposes only, is the total yearly income of all the members of your family now living at home less than $50,000 or is it $50,000 or more?

1. Less than $50,000
2. $50,000 or more (SKIP TO QD3B)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD4)
99. Refused (SKIP TO QD4)

QD3A. Is it…   (READ CHOICES 1-2)?

1. Under $25,000 (SKIP TO QD4)
2. $25,000 to less than $50,000 (SKIP TO QD4)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD4)
99. Refused (SKIP TO QD4)

QD3B. Is it…   (READ CHOICES 1-3)?

1. $50,000 to less than $75,000
2. $75,000 to less than $100,000
3. $100,000 or more
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD4. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

1. Republican
2. Democrat
3. Independent (SKIP TO QD4B)
80. Something else (specify) (SKIP TO QD4B)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD4B)
99. Refused (SKIP TO QD4B)

QD4A. Would you call yourself a strong or not very strong <QD4>?

1. Strong (SKIP TO QD5)
2. Not very strong (SKIP TO QD5)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD5)
99. Refused (SKIP TO QD5)

QD4B. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party or neither?

1. Republican Party
2. Democratic Party
3. Neither
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD5. Are you currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, or single?

1. Married
2. Widowed
3. Divorced
4. Separated
5. Single
6. Partnered/not married (volunteered)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD6. What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed and gotten credit for?

1. Grade school or less (0-8)
2. Some high school (9-11)
3. High school (12)
4. Some college (1-3 years)
5. College graduate (4 years)
6. Post graduate (Masters or Doctorate)
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD7. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what's right - just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or never?

    1. Just about always
    2. Most of the time
    3. Only some of the time
    4. Never
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

QD8. Are you currently employed full-time, employed part-time, retired, temporarily laid off, or not employed?

    1. Employed full-time
    2. Employed part-time
    3. Retired
    4. Temporarily laid off
    5. Not employed
    6. Stay at home parent/caregiver (volunteered)
    7. Student (volunteered)
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

QD9. Do you or does someone in your household belong to a labor union?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

QD10. Were you born in the United States?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

QD11. How many years have you lived at your current address?

    Record 2 digit year. Round to nearest year.
    1. Less than 6 months
    98. Don't know
    99. Refused

QD12. What is your religious affiliation: Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or something else?

    1. Protestant
    2. Catholic
    3. Jewish (SKIP TO QD14)

80. Something else (specify)
97. No religious affiliation (volunteered; SKIP TO QD15)
98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD14)
99. Refused (SKIP TO QD14)

QD13. Do you consider yourself to be an evangelical or born-again Christian?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know (volunteered)
99. Refused (volunteered)

QD14. How often do you attend religious services: every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?

1. Every week
2. Almost every week
3. Once or twice a month
4. A few times a year
5. Never
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD15. How many adults live in this household who are 18 years old or older including yourself?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7 or more
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD16. How many children live in this household who are 17 years old or younger?

0. 0
1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7 or more
98. Don't know
99. Refused

QD17. How many phone numbers do you have in your household that are connected to phones that can be answered by a person, excluding cell phones?

      1. 1
      2. 2
      3. 3
      4. 4
      5. 5
      6. 6
      7. 7 or more
      98. Don't know
      99. Refused

QD18. Sometimes a reporter likes to call a survey participant for further comment. Would you be willing to be contacted?

      1. Yes
      2. No (SKIP TO QD19)
      98. Don't Know (SKIP TO QD19)
      99. Refused (SKIP TO QD19)

QD18A. What is your first name?

      Record Name and Verify Spelling
      98. Don't know
      99. Refused

QD19. (RECORD GENDER. DO NOT ASK)

      Male
      Female

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Appendix B. National Questionnaire

Title: *Time* Magazine Poll # 2008-4545: 2008 Presidential Election
Survey Organization: Abt SRBI, Inc. (Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalas, Inc.)
Sponsor: *Time* Magazine
Field Dates: September 11-15, 2008
Sample: Women
Sample Size: 1,290
Sample Notes: Respondents were interviewed via landlines and cellular telephones.
Interview method: Telephone

LANDLINE INTRO

Hello, I am ____ calling from the SRBI Public Affairs Research Center. We are conducting an opinion poll which will be in Time Magazine next week and we'd like to get the opinions of someone in your household about major issues. This is not a sales call.May I please speak to the FEMALE 18 years or older living in your household who last had a birthday? (IF SELECTED RESPONDENT NOT AT HOME, ARRANGE A CALLBACK)

(IF NECESSARY:) MAKE CALLBACK APPOINTMENT for LATER THURSDAY-MONDAY NIGHT

(IF NECESSARY:) This is for research purposes only. Let me assure you that this is not a sales call. The results of the poll will be published in Time magazine next week.

(IF NECESSARY:) Your answers are strictly confidential and will be analyzed in statistical form only.

CELL PHONE INTRO

Hello, I am ____ calling from the SRBI Public Affairs Research Center. We are conducting an opinion poll which will be in Time Magazine next week and we'd appreciate the opportunity to include your opinions. We are not selling anything. Are you at least 18 years old?

READ: "This will only take about 12 minutes. If you are now driving or doing any activity requiring your full attention, I can call you back later [MAKE CALLBACK APPOINTMENT for LATER THURSDAY-MONDAY NIGHT]

(IF NECESSARY:) This is for research purposes only. Let me assure you that this is not a sales call. The results of the poll will be published in Time magazine next week.

(IF NECESSARY:) Your answers are strictly confidential and will be analyzed in statistical form only.

The first question is...

CELL1. Just to verify, is this a cell phone?

1. Yes
2. No [TERMINATE: "Thank you for your time, but we're only interviewing people with cell phones at this time."]
9. Don't know/Refused (volunteered; TERMINATE: "Thank you for your time.")

A. Gender (DO NOT ASK)

1. Male (RESCREEN FOR FEMALE WITH LAST BIRTHDAY IN LANDLINE VERSION; IN CELL VERSION THANK AND TERMINATE)
2. Female

1. These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district, or haven't you been able to register so far?

1. Yes, registered
2. No, not registered (SKIP TO QF1)
3. Registration not required to vote (volunteered)
8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered; SKIP TO QF1)

CELLREG. And, are you currently registered to vote in the Northeast, Midwest, South, or West?

1. Northeast
2. Midwest
3. South
4. West
5. Don't know/No answer

2. As you know, there will be a Presidential election this November. At this point, would you say you'll definitely not vote in the Presidential election, probably not vote, may or may not vote depending upon how you feel at the time, probably vote, or definitely vote in the Presidential election?

1. Definitely not vote (SKIP TO QF1)
2. Probably not vote (SKIP TO QF1)

3. May or may not vote (SKIP TO QF1)

4. Probably vote

5. Definitely vote

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered; SKIP TO QF1)

3. How closely have you been following the race so far – very closely, somewhat closely, not very closely, or haven't you really been following it much at all?

1. Very closely

2. Somewhat closely

3. Not very closely (SKIP TO QF1)

4. Haven't really been following it much at all (SKIP TO QF1)

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered: SKIP TO QF1)

5. If the Presidential election were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Barack Obama and Joe Biden (BY den), the Democrats, and John McCain and Sarah Palin (PAY lin), the Republicans, and you had to choose, for whom would you vote?

1. Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats (SKIP TO Q7)

2. John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans (SKIP TO Q7)

3. Other/Neither (volunteered; SKIP TO Q7)

4. Would not vote in election (volunteered; SKIP TO QF1 AND RECODE Q2 AS 1)

8. Undecided/Don't know/No answer

6. Do you lean more toward (SAME ROTATE AS IN Q3) Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, or more toward John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans?

1. Lean more toward Barack Obama and Joe Biden (SKIP TO Q8)

2. Lean more toward John McCain and Sarah Palin (SKIP TO Q8)

3. Other/Neither (volunteered; SKIP TO Q8)

4. Would not vote for either (volunteered; SKIP TO Q8)

8. Undecided/Don't know/No answer (volunteered; SKIP TO Q10)

7. Is there any chance that you might change your mind about voting for (NAME IN Q5) or not?

1. Chance might change mind

2. Not

8. Don't know/Not sure (volunteered)

8. Are you very enthusiastic about the candidate you're supporting for President, somewhat enthusiastic, not very enthusiastic, or not at all enthusiastic?

       1. Very enthusiastic

       2. Somewhat enthusiastic

       3. Not very enthusiastic

       4. Not at all enthusiastic

       8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

ASK IF Q5=1 or 2 OR Q6=1 or 2.

9. When did you decide to support/lean to (NAME IN Q. 5 OR Q.6)? Was it during or after the Democratic and Republican political conventions of the past few weeks, or before the political conventions?

       1. During or after political conventions

       2. Before

       8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

10. Some voters tell us that they're now supporting a different candidate than they were a few weeks ago. Thinking back BEFORE the political conventions of the past few weeks, was there a time when you were thinking about voting for another candidate for President, but then changed your mind in the past few weeks?

       1. Was a time when supported another candidate

       2. No

       8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

(ROTATE Q.11 AND Q.12)

11. Did John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate make you less likely to vote for McCain, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

       1. Less likely

       2. More likely

       3. Not much difference

       8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

12. Did Barack Obama's choice of Joe Biden as his running mate make you less likely to vote for Obama, more likely, or didn't it make much difference to you?

       1. Less likely

2. More likely

3. Not much difference

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

13. Based on what you've seen or heard, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of [INSERT NAME]? RANDOMIZE

a. Barack Obama

b. John McCain

c. Joe Biden

d. Sarah Palin

1. Favorable

2. Unfavorable

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

ASK IF Q13D=1 or 2.

14. Which is more important to you in your (RESPONSE IN Q13) rating of Sarah Palin (her personal qualities such as her experience, family life and leadership qualities) or (her positions on specific issues)?

1. Personal qualities

2. Her positions on specific issues

3. Both (volunteered)

4. Other (volunteered)

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

15. Do you feel that you know enough about (CANDIDATE) to make up your mind about the candidate, or not? (ROTATE)

a. Joe Biden

b. Sarah Palin (PAY lin)

1. Yes, I know enough

2. No, I do NOT know enough

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

16. In your opinion, which candidates, (ROTATE AS IN Q5) Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, or John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans, are MOST likely to bring real change to Washington?

1. Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats

2. John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans

3. None/Neither (volunteered)

4. Both equal (volunteered)

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

17. How well prepared is (READ NAME) to carry out the duties of the President of the United States - very prepared, somewhat prepared, not very prepared, or not at all prepared?

a. Barack Obama

b. John McCain

1. Very prepared

2. Somewhat prepared

3. Not very prepared

4. Not at all prepared

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

18. How well do each of the following candidates understand the everyday concerns and needs of people like yourself - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all? (RANDOM)

a. Barack Obama

b. John McCain

c. Joe Biden

d. Sarah Palin

1. A great deal

2. Some

3. Not much

4. Not at all

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

19. How much do YOU personally identify with the everyday life experiences and values of (CANDIDATE) – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all? (RANDOM)

a. Barack Obama

b. John McCain

c. Joe Biden

d. Sarah Palin

      1. A great deal
      2. Some
      3. Not much
      4. Not at all
      8. Don't know/no answer (volunteered)

20. Regardless of who you're voting for, which Vice Presidential candidate, (ROTATE) Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to take over the Presidency if that were necessary?

      1. Joe Biden, the Democrat
      2. Sarah Palin, the Republican
      3. Both equal (volunteered)
      4. Neither (volunteered)
      8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

21. And which Vice Presidential candidate, (ROTATE) Joe Biden, the Democrat, or Sarah Palin, the Republican, would be best prepared to be commander-in-chief?

      1. Joe Biden, the Democrat
      2. Sarah Palin, the Republican
      3. Both equal (volunteered)
      4. Neither (volunteered)
      8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

22. Please tell me whether you personally agree or disagree with Sarah Palin's positions on the following issues. (RANDOMIZE LIST. FOR EACH STATEMENT, ASK:) Do you agree or disagree with her position?

a. Palin supports teaching of both creationism and evolution in public schools
b. She opposes abortion in all cases, including rape and incest, except when the life of the mother is in danger
c. Palin supports the right to bear arms, including handguns
d. She favors more drilling for oil and gas, including in the Arctic wildlife refuge
e. She does not believe that global warming is caused by humans
f. Palin supports the war in Iraq

      1. Agree

2. Disagree

8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

23. Regardless of the candidates currently running for President, as things stand now, would you be more likely to vote for the (ROTATE) Democratic nominee for President or the Republican nominee? (Probe: As things stand now, which way do you lean?)

1. Democratic nominee

2. Republican nominee

3. Other party

8. No answer/Undecided/Don't know (volunteered)

Turning to Congress...

24. There will be elections for the U.S. House of Representatives this year. If the election were being held today, would you be more likely to vote for the (ROTATE: Republican candidate/Democratic candidate) in the district where you live? If you don't usually vote in Congressional elections just tell me.

1. Republican

2. Democratic

3. Other (volunteered)

4. Don't usually vote/Not registered (volunteered)

8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

25. Here are some issues in the news these days. Please tell me how important the issue is to you personally in voting in this year's Presidential election. First, is [INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE] an issue that is extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important to you?

How about [NEXT ITEM]? [IF NECESSARY] Is [ITEM] extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, not too important or not at all important to you?

a. The nation's economy

b. Gas prices at the pump

c. The situation in Iraq

d. Immigration

e. Global warming

f. So-called "values issues," such as abortion and gay marriage

g. Terrorism

h. Health care

i. Taxes

j. Reducing world poverty

1. Extremely important
2. Very important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not too important
5. Not important at all
8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

26. Just thinking about your own personal economic situation, do you feel that over the past twelve months things have gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same?

1. Better
2. Worse
3. Same
8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

27. In general, do you feel that you should try to support a female candidate for office, even if you don't agree with the female candidate on many issues, or doesn't the gender of the candidate really matter to you?

1. Yes, should try
2. Gender doesn't matter
8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

Turning to another issue…

28. In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling his job as President? (ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE)

1. Approve
2. Disapprove
8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

Next, just a few questions to help us classify your responses…

F1. What is your age? (READ LIST ONLY IF NECESSARY)

1. 18-24
2. 25-29
3. 30-34

4. 35-39

5. 40–44

6. 45-54

7. 55-64

8. 65 or older

9. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

F2. Are you of Hispanic origin or descent?

1. Yes

2. No

8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

F3. What is your race? Are you White, Black, Asian, or something else?

1. White

2. Black

3. Asian

4. Hispanic (volunteered)

5. Other (volunteered)

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F4. What is the highest grade of schooling that you've completed? (READ LIST ONLY IF NECESSARY)

1. 8th grade or less

2. Some high school

3. High school graduate

4. Some college

5. College graduate

6. Postgraduate study/law or medical school

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

ALL FEMALE SCREENOUTS TO DEMOGRAPHICS SHOULD TERMINATE HERE

F5. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a (ROTATE DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN) Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?

1. Republican (SKIP TO QF7)

2. Democrat (SKIP TO QF7)

3. Independent

4. Something else (SKIP TO QF7)

8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered; SKIP TO QF7)

F6. Do you lean more toward the (SAME ROTATION AS QF5) Republican party or more toward the Democratic party?

    1. Lean more toward Republican party

    2. Lean more toward Democratic party

    3. Don't lean/Independent/Something else (volunteered)

    8. No answer/Don't know (volunteered)

F7. In politics as of today, do you consider yourself very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal?

    1. Very conservative

    2. Somewhat conservative

    3. Moderate

    4. Somewhat liberal

    5. Very liberal

    6. Something else (volunteered)

    8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F7a. What is your marital status? (READ LIST)

    1. Married

    2. Single, never married

    3. Divorced/Separated

    4. Widowed

    8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F8. Do you have any children age 18 or under currently living at your home?

    1. Yes, have children

    2. No, do not

    8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F8a. Are you or anyone in your household currently caring for a parent?

1. Yes
2. No
8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F8b. Do you, or does anyone in your household currently own a firearm?

1. Yes, own a firearm
2. No, do not
8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F9. Are you currently employed full-time, part-time, laid off but looking for work, retired, a student, a homemaker, or something else?

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Laid off but looking for work
4. Retired
5. Student
6. Homemaker
7. Something else
8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F11. Did you vote in your state's Democratic party presidential primary election earlier this year or participate in any of the Democratic state caucuses?

1. Yes
2. No (SKIP TO F13)
8. Don't know/No answer (SKIP TO F13)

F12. Do you recall which Democratic Party candidate you supported in your state's primary election or caucus?

1. Hillary Clinton
2. Barack Obama
3. John Edwards
4. Chris Dodd
5. Joe Biden
6. Another Candidate

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F13. Just for classification purposes, do you consider yourself Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or some other religion?

    1. Catholic
    2. Protestant
    3. Jewish (SKIP TO F16)
    4. Some other religion
    8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F14. Do you consider yourself an evangelical or born-again Christian?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered)

F15. Do you consider yourself a feminist, however you wish to define it?

    1. Yes
    2. No
    8. Don't know/no answer (volunteered)

F16. Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

    1. More than once a week
    2. Once a week
    3. Once or twice a month
    4. A few times a year
    5. Seldom
    6. Never
    8. Don't know/no answer (volunteered)

F17. Finally, just for classification purposes, was your total family income before taxes last year: (READ LIST) PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

    1. Less than $20,000
    2. $20,000 to just under $35,000

3. $35,000 to just under $50,000

4. $50,000 to just under $75,000

5. $75,000 to just under $100,000

6. $100,000 to just under $150,000

7. $150,000 or more

8. Don't know/no answer (volunteered)

ASK IF: NO COLLEGE EDUCATION [F4= 1,2,3] AND AGES 45 AND OLDER [F1=6,7,8], AND WHITE [F3=1]:

F18. Thank you very much for your participation. May a reporter from Time Magazine call you to talk about some of the things we've been discussing?

1. Yes

2. No (SKIP TO END)

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered; SKIP TO END)

F18a. What would be the best day to reach you, tomorrow or over the weekend?

1. Tomorrow

2. Over the weekend

8. Don't know/No answer (volunteered; SKIP TO F18c)

F18b. And what time is the best to reach you [INSTER ANSWER ABOVE]?

1. RECORD TIME

8. Don't know/No answer

F18c. May I please have a phone number to reach you at and your first name so the reporter will know who to ask for on that day?

1. Record First name and phone number

8. Don't know/No answer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!