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Political Research Quarterly 2013 66: 687 originally published online 22 January 2013
DOI: 10.1177/1065912912471974

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://prq.sagepub.com/content/66/3/687
What Is the Difference Between a Hockey Mom and a Pit Bull?
Presentations of Palin and Gender Stereotypes in the 2008 Presidential Election

Sarah Burns¹, Lindsay Eberhardt¹, and Jennifer L. Merolla¹

Abstract
This study explores what effect different campaign information frames have on voters’ evaluations of Sarah Palin using data from an online experiment. We show that descriptions highlighting more stereotypically feminine attributes cause individuals to perceive Palin as holding more feminine traits, while those highlighting more masculine attributes lead to higher assessments of her masculine traits. Those that mix feminine and masculine attributes lead to higher assessments of Palin’s masculine traits and null effects on her feminine traits. We show that Palin benefits the most in overall evaluations by being perceived as high on both masculine and feminine traits.

Keywords
Palin, gender stereotypes, campaigns, elections, framing, candidate evaluations, media

Introduction
In August of 2008, as a first-term Alaskan Governor, Sarah Palin became the vice-presidential nominee on the Republican ticket. Her novelty caused a great deal of both serious and entertaining media coverage—the content ranging from focus on her conservative policy stances, to her family life with a pregnant teenage daughter and an infant with Down’s syndrome, to her role as a maverick executive, to her wardrobe, and even to her quip equating a hockey mom to a pit bull.

Current academic literature tells us that in seeking executive office, female candidates often face a more challenging electoral arena than men due in part to gender stereotyping (e.g., Hayes 2005; Huddy and Capelos 2002; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b; McDermott 1998; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009). That is, based solely on gender, voters tend to ascribe certain characteristics to female candidates (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b). While female candidates can sometimes benefit from these stereotypes, they are generally perceived as having fewer of the characteristics and competencies associated with national executive office, such as strong leadership, and competence in foreign affairs and the military, placing them at a disadvantage (e.g., Duerst-Lahti 2008; Eagly and Carli 2007; Eagly and Karau 2002; Lawless 2004).

As a woman running for executive office, it seems likely that Sarah Palin would find herself subject to the tendency among voters to use stereotypes. However, the literature suggests that some factors, such as Republican partisanship, may counteract the influence of gender stereotypes (e.g., Brians 2005; Hayes 2005; Huddy and Capelos 2002). We explore how another factor, namely, different frames used in the campaign information environment, may serve to enhance or diminish the use of gender stereotypes, in this case toward a Republican female.

Considering the bias in favor of masculine qualities in executive office, Palin may have felt compelled to downplay her femininity and emphasize both masculine traits and issue areas when communicating with voters. However, that is not the persona that Palin put forward, nor was it one covered by the media. Instead, Palin projected a “Mamma Grizzly” persona, which consists of a blend of feminine and masculine qualities and capabilities. Her famous “hockey mom” quip, for example, shows her desire to combine femininity (as a hands-on and involved mother)

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and masculinity (as a tough, fearsome “pit-bull”-like candidate). Using an experimental design, we are able to explore the effect of framing Palin as stereotypically feminine, stereotypically masculine, and both masculine and feminine on candidate trait evaluations.

We conducted our experiment with a sample of Los Angeles registered voters in October of 2008. We expect to find that frames that highlight masculine qualities and capabilities will lead individuals to perceive Palin as holding more stereotypically masculine traits, while frames that highlight her feminine qualities and capabilities will lead individuals to perceive her as holding more stereotypically feminine traits. Frames that highlight both masculine and feminine traits may lead to higher evaluations on both.

We also explore how masculine and feminine trait evaluations of Palin influence overall feelings toward her. While scholars have looked at the additive effects of masculine and feminine traits on candidate evaluations, they have not considered the interplay of these evaluations, nor whether the effects vary across different partisan groups. The literature points in different directions with respect to whether feminine and masculine traits help women running for national executive office (Dolan 1998; Eagly and Carli 2007; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993b; Koch 2000), and there is limited scholarship that looks at how the combination of highly masculine and highly feminine traits in one candidate affects perceptions. Does the “Mamma Grizzly” persona boost summary feelings toward Palin, or does the combination of both gender traits work at cross-purposes? Does the effect vary across different partisans?

Our results make an important contribution to the literature on gender stereotypes. For one, there is limited research on how gendered frames in communication influence the masculine and feminine trait evaluations of female candidates running for executive office. As we mentioned above, scholars have also not explored how the intersection of masculine and feminine trait evaluations affect summary evaluations of female candidates. Finally, we advance the literature by considering whether these effects vary across different partisan groups. Our findings also have important implications for women running for national executive office: they speak to the particular mix of feminine and masculine qualities and issues that female candidates may want to emphasize in their communications with voters, depending on the partisan groups to which they need to appeal.

How Gender Stereotypes May (Dis)Advantage Female Political Leaders

The tendency for voters to use gender trait stereotypes stems from our view of a “typical woman” or “typical man,” which necessarily influences our views of male and female candidates. Scholars have explored two aspects of gender stereotypes in their research on female candidates: traits and issue competencies/ideology. With respect to the former, voters perceive female candidates as more compassionate and capable of compromising than men, whereas they see men as more decisive, strong, and aggressive (e.g., Dolan 2010; Eagly and Carli 2007; Eagly and Karau 2002; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b). Voters also tend to associate each sex with different ideological stances and policy expertise. While they think of female candidates as more liberal and better equipped to handle issues perceived as “feminine” such as education, health care, the environment, the arts, and poetry reduction, voters perceive men as more conservative, and better equipped to handle the military, foreign policy, and crime (e.g., Burrell 1994; Dolan 2010; Koch 2000; Lawless 2004; McDermott 1998).

At face value, these stereotypes may not seem harmful—women have an advantage in some domains, while men have an advantage in others. Problems arise for women, however, at the most powerful and prestigious levels of office, since they are disadvantaged in the policy arenas and character traits that are deemed most relevant. For example, using a hypothetical experiment, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993a) found that subjects rated candidates with masculine traits and expertise more favorably than those with feminine traits when both candidates were described as running for prestigious executive and national offices. In an analysis of state executive elections, Fox and Oxley (2003) discovered that females were less likely to run for “masculine” offices, those in which “male issues” dominate. Consequently, if voters use gender stereotypes when evaluating female candidates for executive offices, women may still face obstacles in that electoral arena.

Factors that Diminish or Enhance the Expression of Gender Stereotypes

Since stereotypes are only general tendencies to ascribe characteristics to female and male political leaders, we do not argue that it is necessarily the case that individuals will always and only apply stereotypes when assessing a given candidate’s traits and capabilities. This leads us to ask whether there are factors that may diminish or enhance the manifestation or expression of these stereotypes when voters go about evaluating female politicians. Partisanship is one such factor, since stereotypically “female” issues and traits are associated with the Democratic Party, whereas “male” issues and traits are associated with the Republican Party (Hayes 2005; Koch 2003; Winter 2010). Therefore, gender stereotypes may be diminished for Republican females and exacerbated for Democratic females. Some research has shown that Republican females are better able
to counteract gender stereotypes than Democratic females (Brians 2005; Hayes 2005; Huddy and Capelos 2002; McDermott 1998; see Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009 for the reverse effects). 3

The ways in which female candidates are framed, by their own campaigns and in the media, may also reinforce or counteract the influence of stereotypes. These frames in communication are normally associated with altering the weighting of information a voter uses to arrive at a global evaluation rather than necessarily changing the information a voter has (e.g., Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart 2001; Chong and Druckman 2007; Devitt 2002; Iyengar 1994). As Chong and Druckman explain,

The major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from multiple perspectives and evaluated on different bases, not all of which will yield the same attitude toward the issue. Framing refers to a process by which citizens learn to construe and evaluate an issue by focusing on certain “frames”—i.e., certain features and implications of the issues—rather than others. (Chong and Druckman 2010, 239) 4

While Chong and Druckman refer to issues, a similar process can be at work for evaluations of candidates. That is, framing a candidate in different ways can lead to different evaluations of the same candidate. Female candidates can try to diminish the influence of stereotypes by emphasizing masculine traits and issues in their campaign communication. As Huddy and Terkildsen (1993a) show, women who presented themselves with masculine traits did better in their hypothetical election than women who presented themselves with more stereotypically feminine traits, such as compromise and compassion (see also, Banwart 2010). Moreover, as can be expected, women presented as both conservative and competent in masculine issues are better able to counteract typical gender stereotypes than women whose feminine traits are emphasized, showing that although stereotypes may be pervasive—and they can influence voter perception—they are not deterministic (McDermott 1998). Thus, the effect of stereotypes may be diminished based on the frames used to present a candidate.

Research has shown that differing presentations in the media have been more harmful than helpful to female candidates (Kahn and Kenney 2002). Because the media tends to focus on women’s traditional roles, as well as emphasize the candidate’s appearance and personal lives, this framing requires female candidates to justify their fashion and lifestyle choices rather than focus on issue stances or other qualifications (Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart 2001; Devitt 2002; Iyengar 1994). Moreover, some studies show that women are given little media coverage, which may cause voters to consider their campaigns dismissively; even when the media gives women equal coverage, such coverage tends to be negative (e.g., Kahn 1992, 1994; Miller, Peake, and Boulton 2010). That being said, the effects of negative coverage may vary across different segments of the electorate. Lawrence and Rose (2009) found that negative media coverage of Hillary Clinton during the Democratic primary actually had a positive effect on her image with voters who felt she was unfairly scrutinized and negatively portrayed by the media.

We seek to extend this work by looking at the effect of gendered frames in communication on evaluations of Sarah Palin, a Republican female running for national executive office. Scholars have not yet explored the intersection between gendered frames in communication, partisanship, and candidate evaluations. Female Republican candidates may be able to counter gender stereotypes, but are they completely immune to voter stereotyping? Can gendered frames in communication either exacerbate or diminish the use of gender stereotypes in evaluating a Republican female candidate? Our goal is to explore how different frames about Sarah Palin affect trait evaluations and how these assessments affect overall evaluations.

When covering female candidates, the media can use several frames in communication that may enhance or diminish the use of gender stereotypes. Candidates can also use these frames in their communication with voters. Frames that highlight more stereotypically feminine traits and issues should cause voters to perceive a female candidate as possessing more feminine traits (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993b), thus reinforcing gender stereotypes. For example, if the media highlights the candidate as a mother, we expect that individuals will perceive her as having more feminine qualities than if the media focuses on her more masculine traits. A similar process should be at work for stereotypes related to issues. Highlighting a female candidate’s stance of support for increased spending for education may serve to reinforce the stereotype that women are more liberal, and cause voters to perceive her as possessing more feminine traits. Thus, our first hypothesis is as follows:

**Hypothesis 1**: Frames about Sarah Palin that highlight stereotypically feminine traits and issues should cause voters to perceive her as possessing higher levels of feminine traits.

On the flip side, presentations of a female candidate that highlight more stereotypically masculine traits should lead voters to perceive her as more masculine (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993b). For example, if a female candidate (or the media) presents herself (her) as tough and aggressive, then voters will likely associate her with more masculine traits. With respect to issues, learning that a female candidate supports military engagement abroad may counteract the stereotype of women as being...
liberal and cause voters to perceive her as having more masculine traits. In sum, our second hypothesis is as follows:

**Hypothesis 2**: Frames about Sarah Palin that highlight stereotypically masculine traits and issues should cause voters to perceive her as possessing higher levels of masculine traits.

As we noted in the Introduction, Sarah Palin often projected, and the media framed her candidacy using a combination of feminine and masculine traits and issue competencies. It is not entirely clear how this intersection would affect assessments of Palin’s feminine and masculine traits, since little academic work has been done in this area. It could be that a mixed frame would increase voters’ assessments of Palin’s masculine and feminine traits. An alternative hypothesis would be that the mixed presentation might lead to null effects if the presence of both cancels each other out. This alternative hypothesis is less likely because if campaigns are strategic, they should not be highlighting information that will work at cross-purposes. Our third hypothesis is as follows:

**Hypothesis 3**: Frames about Sarah Palin that highlight stereotypically masculine and feminine traits and issues will lead voters to perceive her as possessing higher levels of (a) feminine traits and (b) masculine traits.

Our study contributes to the existing literature by testing these hypotheses in a real-world setting, with an actual vice-presidential candidate. When assessing voter behavior in an experimental context, scholars have typically relied on hypothetical candidates running in hypothetical elections (e.g., Banwart 2010; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993a, 1993b; Sanbonmatsu 2002). Such a design is very valuable; researchers are able to manipulate many features about the candidates while holding other things constant. When assessing candidates in real elections, however, the effect of gender stereotypes may be weaker (Dolan 2011), and the individual may be more resistant to campaign information (Zaller 1992). Researchers have had limited opportunity to explore these issues with actual candidates because the necessary questions are not usually asked on surveys (exceptions include Dolan 2011; Koch 2000, 2003; Matland and King 2002). By combining our manipulation of different frames with Sarah Palin as a vice-presidential candidate, our design captures the advantages of both approaches by embedding an experiment in an actual election.

A limitation to our approach is inherent in looking solely at one electoral context. We are not able to compare our results with a Democratic female vice-presidential candidate; however, the benefit of examining a Republican female becomes clear when we consider voters’ normal gender and partisanship stereotypes. If we find that certain frames enhance gender stereotypes even for a female Republican candidate, then such effects would likely be as pronounced for a female Democratic candidate, since voters’ typical partisan perceptions would not counter gender stereotypes. In the next section, we specify our experimental design and our expectations for the different frames we use. After showing the effects of the treatments on trait assessments of Palin, we discuss how these trait assessments affect overall evaluations.

**Experimental Design and Expectations**

We implemented an online experimental study in October 2008, the month preceding the 2008 presidential elections with a sample of registered voters from Los Angeles County. Los Angeles is not a microcosm of the whole United States, but we selected it for practical reasons. The researchers conducting the study work in Southern California and obtained email addresses for registered voters from the registrar of Los Angeles county, information that is not available in all counties. Researchers recruited subjects via email. If they wanted to participate, they clicked on a link, which brought them to the main study page. After filling in their email address, subjects proceeded to a pretreatment survey, which contained a variety of demographic and dispositional indicators, including race/ethnicity, age, party identification and ideology, and whether they voted in the primary elections. Those in the treated groups then read a short newspaper segment about Sarah Palin, and all groups then completed a posttreatment survey that contained our key dependent variables. After completing the survey, participants read a debriefing statement, and research assistants sent follow-up emails to compensate them.

In our sample, the median age is thirty-seven years; 52 percent are female and 55 percent self-identify as White, 34 percent as Hispanic, 6 percent as Black, and 4 percent as Asian. Nearly half of the sample makes between $40,000 and $100,000/year. The sample differs in some important respects from the characteristics of the nation. The average age is slightly younger than the U.S. average, there are fewer white respondents, and income levels are slightly higher. However, income levels are comparable with those in Los Angeles County (see online appendix Table 1 [http://prq.sagepub.com/supplemental/] for details). In terms of party identification, 55.53 percent identify as Democrats, 17.61 percent as Republicans, 20.69 percent as Independents, 2.43 percent as members of another party, and 3.73 percent express no preference. Ideologically, the average participant describes herself as
a moderately leaning liberal. While we do not have comparable data from the census for party identification and ideology, our sample is more Democratic and left leaning than participants in the American National Election Studies (ANES). This can certainly affect the external validity of our results. However, since partisanship may moderate the effect of the treatments, we look at all of our results broken down by partisan group, which should indicate the extent to which the results generalize across different partisan groups.8

Our primary goal with the treatments is to see whether frames of Palin that reinforce or counter gender stereotypes affect voter evaluations of her feminine and masculine traits. The secondary goal is to see how these assessments influence overall candidate evaluations. Since we are interested primarily in framing effects, we highlight information that had already gained traction in the media during the 2008 election, which we elaborate on below.9

The program randomly assigned participants to one of four treatment groups, or to the control group. The distribution across the five experimental conditions is as follows: Palin as Mother (n = 451), Palin on Issues (n = 429), Palin as Executive (n = 454), Palin as Attacker (n = 437), or the control group (n = 468).10 The participants in all four treatments were presented with newspaper-style articles that varied in the extent to which they reinforced or countered gender stereotypes. The treatments were put together by the authors using clips from the official McCain/Palin website, various news sources, and Palin’s acceptance speech at the 2008 Republican National Convention (RNC), in St. Paul, Minnesota. The treatments therefore contain information endorsed by the Palin camp.11

We designed the first treatment, Palin as Mother, to portray Sarah Palin’s family background and highlight feminine qualities, thus reinforcing trait-based gender stereotypes of women. Thus, Palin as Mother emphasizes motherly traits and her competency in traditionally feminine activities. We mention Palin as a “hockey mom” prior to politics, and emphasize her history with her children’s sports teams and the PTA. Furthermore, in an attempt to highlight Palin’s compassionate qualities, this treatment focuses on her children, including her Down’s syndrome newborn son and pregnant daughter. This type of coverage comes primarily from her acceptance speech at the RNC, as well as from introductory pieces in major U.S. newspapers. Since the frame highlights stereotypically feminine traits, we hypothesize that evaluations of Palin’s feminine traits will be higher among subjects in this condition compared with those in the control group (Hypothesis 1).

The second treatment, Palin as Attacker, presents Palin as an aggressor: a trait that is generally considered masculine and should therefore counter typical trait-based stereotypes of female candidates. In this treatment, we describe Palin mocking Obama’s credentials, including his role as a “community organizer,” his memoirs, and his seemingly contradictory political messages. Palin portrayed herself this way during her RNC acceptance speech. Traditionally, advisers task the vice-presidential candidate with tearing down the ticket’s opponent, allowing the presidential nominee to distance himself from negative campaigning. In the 2008 election, they gave this typically aggressive task to a woman. The Palin as Attacker treatment presents Palin in this role, and may thus counteract trait stereotypes. We therefore hypothesize that evaluations of Palin’s masculine traits will be higher among subjects in this condition compared with those in the control group (Hypothesis 2a).

In addition to highlighting candidate traits, we explore how the candidate’s issue stances affect trait evaluations. The third treatment, Palin on Issues, lists in detail Palin’s policy stances including the teaching of creationism alongside evolution in the classroom, her anti-abortion position, and her fiscally conservative record as governor. The Palin on Issues treatment presents Palin as a conservative Republican, associating her with a party whose ideology voters perceive as more masculine (Hayes 2005; Koch 2000). The McCain/Palin website portrayed her this way, her acceptance speech highlighted these views, and the media also presented her this way. Since this information counteracts stereotypes of women, we expect that evaluations of Palin’s masculine traits will be higher among subjects in this condition compared with those in the control group (Hypothesis 2b).

While the previous treatments separately highlight masculine and feminine traits and issue stances, Palin as Executive highlights both. We mix masculine and feminine traits and issues in this treatment to test the interplay of both, especially since Palin chose to present herself to voters that way. With respect to more stereotypically masculine traits, this treatment shows her in her role as governor displaying strong leadership and experience. We do this by presenting Palin as a candidate who willingly “took on” the “good old boys” network of oil companies to begin construction of a gas pipeline in the state. This treatment also lists many of Palin’s policy successes, including her use of the veto power to end wasteful government spending, which is a more masculine stance. The treatment also highlights more stereotypically feminine issues and traits in discussing her overhaul of education funding and her development of a program to give social benefits to senior citizens, thus highlighting her empathy. Since the treatment contains presentations of Palin that are both masculine and feminine,12 we expect that evaluations of Palin’s feminine traits (Hypothesis 3a) and masculine traits (Hypothesis 3b) will be higher among individuals in this condition compared with the control
group. An alternative hypothesis is that the mixed messages may lead to null effects for both.

**Do Frames Influence Trait Assessments?**

To test the effects of the treatments on trait evaluations of Palin, the participants were given a list of words and phrases “that people may use to describe Sarah Palin” and were asked to rate the extent to which a given phrase described her on a four-point scale ranging from one (not at all) to four (extremely well). We use trait evaluations that are common on the ANES, as well as those more relevant to our particular treatments. The words or phrases meant to capture more stereotypically feminine traits include *Cares* (“She really cares about people like you”), *Mother* (“She is a good mother”), *Compromise* (“She is able to compromise”), and *Honest, Moral, and Compassionate* (“She is honest/moral/compassionate”). The words or phrases meant to capture masculine traits are as follows: *Leadership* (“She provides strong leadership”), *Handle Crisis* (“She is able to handle a crisis”), *Experienced, Aggressive, and Decisive* (“She is experienced/aggressive/decisive”).

We combine the feminine trait measures into one additive scale, and the masculine trait measures into another additive scale. The alpha score for these traits scales indicate a high internal consistency of 0.93 for the feminine trait scale and 0.84 for the masculine trait scale. The feminine trait measure ranges from 6 to 24, with a mean of 12.97, and the masculine trait measure ranges from 5 to 20 with a mean of 11.42. Overall, participants perceive Palin as slightly higher on feminine than masculine traits, but the difference is small. Our key question is whether we observe differences in these two measures across our experimental conditions.  

To evaluate this question, we first present the mean value on Palin’s feminine traits by experimental condition in Figure 1. We find strong support for our first hypothesis: participants in the mother condition see Palin as having more feminine traits ($M = 13.9$) compared with participants in the control group ($M = 12.7$), and this difference is statistically significant according to a *t*-test ($p = .001$).  

This is a fairly modest difference for a dependent variable that ranges from 6 to 24. However, one would not necessarily expect a huge shift in perceptions from such a short media presentation, especially considering that participants were coming to the study with exposure to the fall 2008 campaign. The other treatment for which we specifically expected a huge shift in perceptions from such a short media presentation, especially considering that participants were coming to the study with exposure to the fall 2008 campaign, is the executive treatment. In such treatment, which highlighted a mix of feminine and masculine traits and issues. We find that subjects in the executive treatment perceive her as more feminine ($M = 12.9$) than the control group; however, this difference is not statistically significant according to a *t*-test ($p = .65$). This finding is contrary to our expectation (Hypothesis 3a) that the mixed condition would lead participants to perceive her as holding more feminine traits compared with those in the control group. Finally, while we did not specify hypotheses for feminine traits for the issue or attack treatment, neither is statistically different from the control group.  

While the results of the *t*-tests confirm our general expectations for the effects of the mother treatment, we recognize that partisanship may moderate the effect of the treatment conditions and that we should take into account the demographic and dispositional factors that are unevenly distributed across conditions, namely, ideology, gender, and income. We therefore run a follow-up analysis in which we interact each of our four treatments with a dummy variable for Republicans and Democrats (with Independents serving as the baseline), and include as controls the seven-point ideological scale (scored 1–7, with higher values indicating a more conservative political ideology), a dummy variable for gender, and an interval scale for income levels. The results for feminine traits are displayed in the first data column of Table 1.

The results of the multivariate analysis for feminine traits mirror those presented in Figure 1 with one exception. If we look at the interactions between the partisanship dummy variables and the experimental conditions, partisanship only moderates the effect of the treatment in one case—the mother treatment among Democrats (it is the only one with a significant *p* value on the interaction term). When we separately calculate the slope and standard error for the treatment among Democrats, it is not statistically significant. The mother treatment is therefore only significant among Republicans and Independents, providing partial support to Hypothesis 1. The executive condition is not significant even after taking into account potential differences across partisan groups; thus, we receive no support for Hypothesis 3a.
We now turn to assessments of Palin’s masculine traits in Figure 2. As expected, mean evaluations of Palin’s masculine traits are higher in the attack condition (11.7), compared with the control group (11.03), and this difference is significant according to a t test ($p = .008$), which is supportive of Hypothesis 2a. Also as expected, participants in the issue treatment see Palin as more masculine ($M = 11.5$) compared with the control group, and this difference is also statistically significant according to a t test ($p = .07$), which is supportive of Hypothesis 2b. Thus, highlighting Palin’s conservative stances causes participants to view her as holding more masculine traits. Finally, participants in the executive treatment also view Palin as having more masculine traits ($M = 11.4$) compared with the control group, and this difference is marginally significant according to a t test ($p = .12$), which provides some support for Hypothesis 2. Therefore, the mixture of feminine and masculine traits in the treatment does not lead to null effects on perceptions of Palin’s masculine traits. Instead, Palin receives a boost on masculine traits when both qualities are highlighted. The fact that we get results for masculine traits and not feminine traits may reflect that there are slightly more masculine traits and issues present in the treatment than feminine traits and issues. While we do not have expectations for the effect of the mother treatment on evaluations of Palin’s masculine traits, the treatment boosts perceptions of her masculine qualities relative to the control group, which is surprising given that we designed the treatment to highlight more feminine traits. There is some content in the treatment that may have increased perceptions of her masculinity, such as references to the sport of hockey, as well as indirect references to her stances on social issues given discussion of her son with Down’s syndrome and her pregnant daughter. Scholarship has shown that conservative ideological stances can increase perceptions of masculine traits (Brians 2005; Hayes 2005; Huddy and Capelos 2002).

The results from the multivariate analysis for masculine traits are in the second data column of Table 1. We do not find that partisanship moderates the effect of any of the treatments for which we specified hypotheses. The effects of the attack, issue, and executive conditions on masculine traits hold across all partisan subgroups. All of these effects remain statistically different from the control group, with the issue condition being marginally significant ($p = .12$).

In sum, the treatment we thought would most clearly increase perceptions of Palin’s feminine qualities, the mother treatment, works as expected in the whole sample, though it does not have any effects among Democrats in the multivariate analysis, and thus we only have support for Hypothesis 1 among Republicans and Independents. Meanwhile, the treatments that we thought would boost perceptions of her masculine qualities, the attack treatment and issue treatment, work as expected in the whole sample as well as across all partisan groups, providing strong support for Hypotheses 2a and 2b. Finally, the mixed executive treatment only increases perceptions of Palin’s masculine qualities and does not affect perceptions of her feminine qualities, thus providing support for Hypothesis 3b, but not Hypothesis 3a. Thus, we receive mixed support for the third hypothesis. In the next section, we look at how these trait evaluations influence summary

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**Table 1. OLS Regressions on Feminine and Masculine Traits.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feminine Traits</th>
<th>Masculine Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coefficient</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coeff SE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coeff SE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>1.48*** (0.509)</td>
<td>0.92*** (0.381)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>-0.267 (0.523)</td>
<td>0.603 (0.393)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>0.289 (0.499)</td>
<td>0.628* (0.370)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>-0.777 (0.496)</td>
<td>0.717* (0.371)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>1.37*** (0.067)</td>
<td>0.695** (0.050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.034 (0.164)</td>
<td>-0.130 (0.124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-0.687 (0.445)</td>
<td>-0.586* (0.332)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>3.23*** (0.587)</td>
<td>2.76*** (0.441)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-0.059 (0.036)</td>
<td>0.007 (0.027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem X Mother</td>
<td>-1.15* (0.609)</td>
<td>-0.979*** (0.456)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem X Issue</td>
<td>-0.006 (0.622)</td>
<td>-0.484 (0.470)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem X Attack</td>
<td>-0.271 (0.602)</td>
<td>-0.622 (0.451)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem X Executive</td>
<td>-0.223 (0.599)</td>
<td>-0.252 (0.447)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep X Mother</td>
<td>-0.617 (0.787)</td>
<td>-0.652 (0.594)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep X Issue</td>
<td>0.706 (0.812)</td>
<td>-0.250 (0.614)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep X Attack</td>
<td>0.642 (0.779)</td>
<td>-0.287 (0.589)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep X Executive</td>
<td>0.196 (0.827)</td>
<td>-0.342 (0.621)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>8.60*** (0.488)</td>
<td>8.79*** (0.365)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R²</strong></td>
<td>.488</td>
<td>.395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OLS = ordinary least squares. *p < .10. **p < .05 (two-tailed).
evaluations of Sarah Palin and return to a fuller discussion of the implications of these findings in the “Discussion and Conclusion.”

Summary Candidate Evaluations

Scholarship has demonstrated that feminine and masculine trait evaluations are consequential for summary evaluations of female candidates; scholars do not agree, however, on the weight and direction of these effects, nor is there much scholarship on the interplay of trait evaluations. In this section, we therefore focus most of our discussion on the relationships between feminine traits, masculine traits, and summary candidate evaluations.

Turning first to masculine traits, in a hypothetical election experiment for a high stakes race, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993a) found that female candidates described as having more masculine traits and issue expertise received higher overall evaluations compared with those described as holding feminine traits. Several other studies have seen a similar boost in evaluations when women are presented as having the masculine traits associated with good leadership (e.g., Banwart 2010; Byström 2010; Duerst-Lahti 2008). Conversely, some studies have shown that appearing more masculine can negatively affect female leaders running for executive office since these traits run counter to voter expectations of females (Eagly and Karau 2002). The literature therefore leads to contrary predictions for the effect of masculine trait evaluations on summary evaluations of a female political figure.

Hypothesis 4: (a) One set of scholarship suggests that exhibiting masculine traits will positively effect summary evaluations of Sarah Palin, while (b) another set of scholarship suggests that such traits may have a negative effect on her evaluations.

With respect to feminine traits, the literature also produces mixed expectations. Some literature suggests that being perceived as highly feminine may help a female candidate running for executive office (Dolan 1998; Eagly and Carli 2007; Fox and Oxley 2003; Lawless 2004). For example, Dolan (1998) showed that women emphasizing feminine issues did better than women focusing on male issues among female voters. Moreover, appearing more feminine when feminine issues are salient can have a positive effect on female candidate evaluations (Lawless 2004). Furthermore, Fox and Oxley’s (2003) study about women being more likely to run for “feminine” offices and less likely to run for “masculine” offices suggests that feminine traits may help women running for more feminine executive office. However, at the national executive level, scholars are very clear: female candidates do not benefit from exhibiting the traits normally associated with women (Duerst-Lahti 2008; Eagly and Carli 2007; Eagly and Karau 2002; Koch 2000; Lawless 2004). It is unclear whether this holds at the vice-presidential level. Therefore, there is again mixed expectations generated from the literature. On one hand,

Hypothesis 5: (a) Sarah Palin’s overall evaluations may benefit when individuals perceive her as more feminine; however, (b) other literature suggests that being perceived as more feminine may lead to a negative effect on her evaluations, particularly since she is running for national executive office.

The literature does not tell us whether the effect of masculine and feminine traits on candidate evaluations varies across partisan groups, nor how the intersection of feminine and masculine trait evaluations affect summary candidate evaluations. With respect to the latter, given that there is no literature to guide expectations, we discuss some potential relationships, and this section is more exploratory. We first test whether there is a moderating relationship between feminine and masculine traits. If we find evidence of a moderating relationship, we explore two potential relationships. First, female candidates may benefit the most by being perceived as high on both masculine and feminine traits. This would provide support for the Mama Grizzly approach that Sarah Palin used in appealing to voters. An alternative relationship would be that the traits work at cross-purposes such that it is either better to be high on masculine traits and low on feminine traits or high on feminine traits and low on masculine traits. Since we are dealing with national executive office, it would likely be better to be in the former situation than the latter.

Finally, if we look across partisan groups, literature on trait ownership for political parties suggests that Democrats and Republicans may value these feminine and masculine qualities differently in female leaders. Democratic voters perceive compassion and empathy as traits “owned” by the Democratic Party. For example, “share our values” is a central theme of the Obama campaign. Evangelical Republicans, on the other hand, may be more likely to use the traits “owned” by the Republican Party. For example, “strength and compassion” is a political slogan used by John McCain in the 2008 presidential election. Therefore, it is important to consider the intersection of traits in the evaluation of Sarah Palin as a vice-presidential candidate.
Mother argues that there is a moderating relationship between the feminine and masculine traits is significant, which indicates that they run from 0 to 2. We can think of each as low, medium, and high on the given trait assessment. We then rescaled each variable into thirds, such as low, medium, and high on the given trait assessment. We then need to do the same thing when looking at the effects of masculine traits. We illustrate these effects (or slopes) in Figure 3. Before discussing each effect, we note that all the slopes are statistically significant.

Turning first to the masculine traits, it is very clear that the warmer feelings they exhibit toward Palin, which is supportive of Hypothesis 4a. The interesting point is that the effects get even stronger among those who evaluate Palin’s feminine traits more highly. For example, among those who give Palin a low rating on feminine traits, the higher individuals evaluate Palin on masculine traits, the warmer feelings they exhibit toward Palin, which is not very substantial. However, among those who give Palin the highest rating on feminine traits, every unit change in masculine traits leads to a 1.04-unit increase in feelings toward her, which is not very substantial. However, among those who give Palin a low rating on feminine traits, every unit change in masculine traits leads to an 8.94-unit increase in feelings toward her.

Turning to the effect of feminine traits, we find a very similar effect, in which individuals who rate Palin as having low, medium, or high masculine traits. We then need to do the same thing when looking at the effects of masculine traits. We illustrate these effects (or slopes) in Figure 3. Before discussing each effect, we note that all the slopes are statistically significant.

Hypothesis 6: (a) The slope of feminine traits may be greater than the slope of masculine traits among Democrats, whereas (b) the slope of masculine traits may be greater than the slope of feminine traits among Republicans.

The literature does not suggest hypotheses for independents, so we let the results speak for themselves. As an indicator for evaluations, we asked the participants to rate their feelings toward Palin using a feeling thermometer, scaled from 0 to 100 degrees, with higher values indicating more warmth. As independent variables, we include each experimental condition (the control group serves as the baseline), Palin’s feminine trait evaluations, Palin’s masculine trait evaluations, the interaction between the two, dummy variables for Republicans and Democrats (Independents serve as the baseline), one’s ideological distance from Palin (the absolute value of the difference between their own ideological location and where they placed Palin), and controls for income and gender. Because we are interacting the two trait assessments, we rescaled each variable into thirds, such that they run from 0 to 2. We can think of each as low, medium, and high on the given trait assessment. We then run the same analysis broken down by partisanship. The results are presented in Table 2.

Among the whole sample, the interaction term between feminine and masculine traits is significant, which indicates that there is a moderating relationship between the two variables. The values on the interaction term are not directly interpretable: we need to calculate the slope of feminine traits at each level of masculine traits. That is, the effect of feminine traits on summary evaluations of Palin will be different depending on whether individuals rate Palin as having low, medium, or high masculine traits. We then need to do the same thing when looking at the effects of masculine traits. We illustrate these effects (or slopes) in Figure 3. Before discussing each effect, we note that all the slopes are statistically significant.

Turning first to the masculine traits, it is very clear that the higher individuals evaluate Palin on masculine traits, the warmer feelings they exhibit toward Palin, which is supportive of Hypothesis 4a. The interesting point is that the effects get even stronger among those who evaluate Palin’s feminine traits more highly. For example, among those who give Palin a low rating on feminine traits, every unit change in masculine traits leads to a 1.04-unit increase in feelings toward her, which is not very substantial. However, among those who give Palin the highest rating on feminine traits, every unit change in masculine traits leads to an 8.94-unit increase in feelings toward her.

Turning to the effect of feminine traits, we find a very similar effect, in which individuals who rate Palin as higher on feminine traits have warmer feelings toward Palin, in support of Hypothesis 5a. Furthermore, the positive effect of feminine traits on feelings toward Palin increases if we compare across those with low (slope = 2.63), middle (slope = 6.58), and high (slope = 10.53)
perceptions of her masculine traits. The effect of feminine traits on summary evaluations of Palin is therefore highest among those who consider her to hold the highest level of masculine traits. These results are important in that they show that Palin benefits the most in overall evaluations when she is perceived as having more feminine and masculine traits. Furthermore, individuals weight her feminine and masculine traits similarly in cases when she is perceived at the middle or high level of the other trait, although feminine traits are weighted more heavily than masculine traits when she is perceived as low on the other trait. Finally, none of the treatments have a direct effect on feelings toward Palin, although the effects of the attack treatment are mediated through trait evaluations.

When we break down the results by partisanship, there are many similarities and a few notable differences. Among Republicans and Independents, the interaction between masculine and feminine traits is significant, and the effects are consistent with what we find for the whole sample in that being high on both trait assessments has the strongest effects on feelings toward Palin. It does not appear that Republicans weight masculine traits more heavily in their evaluations of Palin than feminine traits. In fact, they place more weight on feminine traits than masculine traits in a context when individuals perceive the other trait as being at the lowest level. Thus, we have no support for Hypothesis 6b. Among Democrats, we do not find a significant interaction between feminine and masculine traits ($p = .328$) and therefore estimate a model without the interaction term in the last data column of Table 2. Feminine and masculine traits are both statistically significant and increase feelings toward Palin. As expected according to Hypothesis 6a, the effect of feminine traits (slope = 2.94) on overall evaluations is stronger than the effect of masculine traits (slope = 0.954). The implication of these findings is that as female candidates think strategically about which types of traits to emphasize, they should take into account their voters. If they have a largely Democratic constituency, they may want to play up their feminine traits more, since they reap a bigger reward in overall evaluations. If they have a large Republican constituency, or need to appeal to Independents, emphasizing a mixture of traits may work to their benefit, since traits, unlike issues, generally appeal to all ideological groups in similar ways. In a Republican primary, they would potentially also want to emphasize their conservative policy stances, which would increase perceptions of masculine traits.

Finally, there are a few cases in which the treatments have direct effects on evaluations, and other cases in which they have indirect effects. The mother, executive, and attack treatments have negative direct effects on evaluations of Palin among Republicans. The findings for the first two seem surprising since the mother condition led to higher evaluations of Palin’s masculine and feminine traits, the executive condition led to higher evaluations of her masculine traits, and both traits had positive effects on overall feelings toward Palin. One possibility is that the treatments are also influencing other evaluations, which in turn negatively affect overall feeling toward Palin. Since both of these treatments discuss feminine traits, it may have caused subjects to perceive her as more liberal, which we find evidence of in analyses not shown here. The tone of the attack condition is decidedly more negative than the other conditions, which may have led Republicans to feel less warmth toward Palin. The mother treatment has a negative direct effect among Independents, which is surprising since that condition boosted both masculine and feminine trait evaluations among this group; however, in analyses not shown here, it also caused Independents to perceive her as more liberal, which may have harmed overall evaluations. The attack condition meanwhile is mediated through masculine traits among Independents and serves to boost evaluations. One surprising finding is that the attack treatment increases feelings toward Palin among Democrats, although the substantive significance is fairly small, only 3.46 degrees on the 101-point scale. While the other treatments are not statistically significant, the executive treatment is mediated through perceptions of masculine traits and works to increase overall evaluations of Palin.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Our study explored how gendered frames of Sarah Palin affect perceptions of her feminine and masculine traits, and how these in turn affect overall evaluations. Our results demonstrate that media frames influence the extent to which voters perceive Palin as possessing masculine or feminine characteristics. Furthermore, the interplay of these trait evaluations effect summary candidate evaluations of Palin in meaningful ways.

We began by looking at the influence of the experimental conditions on perceptions of Palin’s masculine traits.
and feminine characteristics and found that the mother treatment, which most clearly highlighted Palin’s stereotypically feminine qualities, caused Palin to be seen as more feminine, and partisanship only moderated the effect of the treatment among Democrats. Meanwhile, the attack and issue treatments, which were intended to boost perceptions of her masculine qualities, worked as expected and boosted perceptions of her masculine characteristics across all partisan subgroups. The mixed executive treatment increased perceptions of Palin’s masculine qualities, but had no effect on perceptions of her feminine qualities. These results suggest that the ways in which candidates and the media frame female candidates are consequential for gendered trait evaluations, and work in predictable ways when masculine and feminine characteristics of the candidate are highlighted separately. However, highlighting masculine and feminine traits simultaneously (as they were in the mixed executive treatment) does not necessarily boost both types of traits. This may not pose a problem for female candidates who only seek to boost perceptions of their masculine traits, but may be problematic for female candidates who also seek to increase perceptions of their feminine traits. However, the slightly higher emphasis on masculine traits/issues in the treatment may partially explain our results. Future research should explore different degrees of emphasis on feminine and masculine traits.

Having showed that media frames influence perceptions of Palin’s feminine and masculine traits, we looked at how these perceptions influenced overall favorability evaluations. We showed that there was an interaction between feminine and masculine traits such that being perceived as high on both types of traits leads to the most favorable evaluations of Palin, although this type of intersection only held for Republicans and Independents. Among Democrats, being perceived as highly masculine and feminine improves evaluations, but the influence of feminine traits is stronger than the effect of masculine traits. Democrats and Republicans therefore appear to value feminine and masculine traits differently in their evaluations of a Republican female, which suggests that female candidates have to take their base into consideration when deciding the extent to which they want to emphasize feminine or masculine traits.

Our findings for Palin show that female candidates do not face an either/or decision with respect to which types of traits to emphasize. Rather, they show that Palin’s “Mamma Grizzly” approach—meaning that she emphasized both her feminine and masculine traits—is the most effective strategy for increasing overall evaluations of her among Republicans and Independents. To appeal to Democrats, a candidate may want to emphasize feminine traits more than masculine traits since the former had stronger effects on summary evaluations, and we found no interactive effect between feminine and masculine traits for this partisan subgroup. However, a female candidate will not want to ignore masculine traits in appealing to Democrats, since being perceived as high on these traits also leads to positive evaluations. Since a Republican candidate is unlikely to focus her campaign around persuading Democrats, maintaining highly masculine and feminine traits is more likely to yield positive effects among her targeted constituency. Palin received the biggest boost in evaluations from feminine traits when she was considered high on masculine traits and from masculine traits when she was considered high on feminine traits among both Republicans and Independents. These findings dovetail nicely with research that argues that female candidates receive positive feedback from voters when they project a “tough but caring” image (Bystrom 2010; Hansen and Otero 2006). The results also add nuance to the literature, which suggests that Republicans prefer more masculine traits (Banwart 2010; Hayes 2005; Koch 2003). At least with respect to evaluations of a Republican female, our results show that the effect of masculine traits is intensified if she is perceived as highly feminine. It may be that women like Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann, whose campaigns have emphasized their feminine qualities, have opened the door of the Republican party to a greater mixture of gender traits. In the past, Republican voters have tended to perceive female candidates who displayed femininity less favorably (King and Matland 2003; Sanbonmatsu 2002).

We acknowledge that there are several limitations to our study. We only sampled voters from Los Angeles, and we only looked at one candidate. Further research would benefit from a national sample and more female candidates, especially candidates from both parties. As we explained in the text, we do not believe that these limitations detract from the significance of our findings. Overall, our research brings to light important issues for women running for office with respect to how they may want to project feminine and masculine qualities in appealing to different partisan groups when running for national executive office.

We have demonstrated that Republican female candidates seeking executive office do not have to divorce themselves from their femininity entirely. Our society has moved a long way from the time when women could not expect to achieve political success without denying one of the qualities that differentiates them from their male counterpart. Further studies could examine whether the “Mamma Grizzly” phenomenon represents a new female leadership “type.” Are women like Michelle Bachmann adopting a “Sarah Palin” style, and if so, will we continue to see women conforming to this type in the future? At this moment of economic instability and uncertainty about the future, Republicans and Tea Partiers may react
well to this particular type of leadership. Whether Democratic female candidates get the same benefit from this mixture is also an important and fruitful area for further research.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the principal investigators for letting them place this experiment on the broader study and for handling all of the study logistics, programming, and details. The authors also would like to thank Kathy Dolan, Mirya Holman, Leonie Huddy, Regina Lawrence, Melody Rose, and Kira Sanbonmatsu, and the anonymous reviewers for helpful feedback on the manuscript.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This study was made possible by internal grants from Claremont Graduate University, Northwestern University, and the University of Washington, and part of a broader study on campaign effects conducted by Matt Barreto, Victoria DeFrancesco Soto, Jennifer Merolla, and Ricardo Ramirez.

Notes

1. According to Fridkin and Kenney (2011), there are certain instances where female traits and female issues help candidates rather than harm them. This is especially true during legislative elections where voters perceive female candidates as more competent in addressing certain issues that have high salience during that election.

2. Eagly and Carli (2007) describe the path to power as a labyrinth rather than a glass ceiling by which they mean that women can achieve success but have more obstacles in their way.

3. Others have found that if partisanship does not completely override gender stereotypes, Republican women are not necessarily disadvantaged when facing a Democratic male, but may be perceived as more liberal and as having fewer masculine traits when facing a Republican male in a primary context (Koch 2000).

4. One important issue to consider is the distinction between framing and persuasion. As it is typically understood, framing leads the voter to weight characteristics differently by bringing certain pieces of information forward and causing others to recede into the background. However, it is possible that a voter may learn new information from a communication, which may change belief content (Chong and Druckman 2007). For example, if a person receives new information about Sarah Palin’s views on taxation, the new information may cause the voter to see her as more masculine. We understand this change to constitute a learning effect rather than a framing effect. Therefore, it is possible that what we discuss as framing effects, could in fact represent learning effects (Lenz 2009). Although it would be useful to distinguish whether the effects we observe are due to a changed weight given to existing considerations, a change in belief content, or some combination of the two, which Chong and Druckman (2007) argue is often the case with frames in communication, we are not able to empirically evaluate whether shifts in trait evaluations are from changes in weighting or changes in belief content since we do not have a pretreatment survey with our trait measures. We were only able to place our questions about Palin on a post-test.

5. We recognize that the extent to which frames influence trait evaluations may be moderated by partisanship. Partisanship serves as a perceptual screen through which individuals process information about the political world (see, for example, Campbell et al. 1960 and Lenz 2009, for more on this important point). We may therefore find that the effects of campaign information vary by partisanship. We explore this and report the findings in the text.

6. Such a frame may also cause voters to perceive Palin as more conservative. In the interest of space, we do not elaborate on this relationship in the manuscript.

7. Our study was an addition to another research project that tested advertisement effects on attitudes toward McCain and Obama among Latinos and non-Latinos. Because of the goals of that study, we oversampled individuals of Latino ancestry (based on last name). The principal investigators of that study obtained the email addresses for 597,700 registered voters who provided this information when they registered to vote, or 14.8 percent of the entire population of registered voters in Los Angeles County. From this list, they selected a random stratified sample of 75,000 Latino surnames and 75,000 non-Latino surnames to receive an email solicitation. While those who provided their email addresses closely resembled the full sample of registered voters on almost all dimensions, the study had slightly more people ages thirty and younger, so they stratified the sample to better approximate the age distribution of registered voters. All 150,000 individuals received an email solicitation in which we asked them to participate in a study on the 2008 Presidential election. The email solicitation, consent form, and debriefing statement are available in the online appendix (http://prq.sagepub.com/supplemental/).

8. External validity will still be compromised if Republicans, Independents, and Democrats in Los Angeles react differently from their counterparts in other parts of the country.

9. We expected therefore that most subjects were likely already exposed to the information we highlight. That being said, it is certainly possible that the information
would have been new to some voters, and therefore, some learning effects may be present, as we discussed in Note 4.

10. Tests of whether subjects were evenly distributed according to various indicators across experimental conditions indicated uneven distributions for income, gender, ideology, and party identification. We take these factors into account in our analyses.

11. To see the exact text of the treatments, please refer to the online appendix. In designing the treatments, the authors looked first at Palin’s acceptance speech, to see what aspects of Palin as a candidate the campaign wished to emphasize; then to the McCain/Palin campaign website for background information, issue statements, and policy records; and finally to the extensive media coverage that focused on Palin in the first weeks after her nomination. This information was then compiled into the treatments, with an eye toward highlighting different aspects of Palin’s candidacy that intersected with gender stereotypes.

12. Real-world campaign operatives and the media rarely present a candidate as only masculine or feminine, and instead try to tailor the presentation based on changing political contexts and issue stances. In her acceptance speech, Palin emphasized her feminine role as a busy and involved mother, but also played up her masculine qualities by reminding voters of her tough and aggressive stances as governor. The executive treatment gives four examples of Palin acting in a manner that conveys feminine traits or issues, and six examples of holding masculine traits or issues. In hindsight, it may have been better to present a perfect balance of masculine and feminine traits in the executive treatment, but we were attempting to reflect news coverage at the time of our study.

13. To ensure that there were in fact masculine and feminine dimensions to the eleven traits we tested, we also ran a principal components factor analysis. We found two factors: feminine traits loaded highly on one dimension and masculine traits loaded highly on the other dimension.

14. We found that mean perceptions of Palin were higher in the mother treatment compared with the control group for all of the measures that make up the feminine trait scale (p values reported for the difference in means tests): Moral (.01), Cares (.001), Honest (.01), Compassionate (.002), Compromise (.02), and Mother (.004). The findings therefore are not only being driven by the trait that is most similar to the content of the treatment.

15. According to Kam and Franzese Jr. (2007), the p value on the interaction term is a test of whether there is a conditioning relationship between the two variables.

16. The difference between the effect of the treatment for Republicans and Independents compared with Democrats may stem from a difference in expectations. The former two groups may not require as much emphasis on femininity to perceive a candidate as possessing feminine traits. Another possibility is that Democrats resisted the information (Zaller 1992).

17. The difference is significant with a one-tailed test (p = .06), which would be appropriate to use given the way the hypothesis is stated.

18. In the interest of space, we do not focus on the other variables in the models. However, one thing worth noting is that conservatives perceive Palin as higher on masculine and feminine traits than liberals. Since all of the traits we asked about are desirable traits, this result could reflect a propensity to view a candidate with a similar partisanship or ideological stance as more desirable in general.

19. We only find one case in which partisanship significantly moderates the effect of the treatment and again it is the mother treatment among Democrats, where it has no effect on evaluations. We did not however have expectations for this condition with respect to masculine traits.

20. One interesting question is why the effect of the mother condition, which was meant to boost feminine traits, shows a stronger association than the effects found for the experimental conditions designed to boost masculine traits (attack and issues). We do not have prior theoretical expectations to explain these differences. One possibility is that Independents and Republicans may have been inclined to perceive Palin as having more masculine qualities due to her policy positions and party affiliation. If that is the case, highlighting more feminine cues in the mother condition may have stood out more against such a baseline, causing the association to be stronger. Another possibility is that the type of information in the mother condition is more novel, particularly at the national executive level, and may have caused it to stand out more.

21. While it appears that the effect is slightly higher for feminine traits than masculine traits when she is at the middle and high value of the other trait, the confidence intervals overlap.

22. The attack condition has a significant negative effect on feminine trait assessments and a significant positive effect on masculine trait assessments. The condition also has a marginally significant negative effect on feeling toward Palin without these assessments in the model (p = .12). This negative effect makes sense in that the tone of the treatment is negative. As is evident in Table 2, the significance of the attack condition washes away once trait assessments are included.

23. The confidence intervals overlap when the other trait is at the middle or high value.

24. We ran a test for the equality of coefficients between masculine and feminine traits and the p value is .00, which indicates we can reject the null hypothesis that the coefficients are equal.

25. The attack condition is statistically significant in a model without the trait measures (p = .09), and the coefficient is 7.15.
26. The executive condition is statistically significant in a model without the trait measures (p = .008), and the coefficient is 5.113.

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