

TOLL OF TROLLS:

HOW GENDERED ONLINE HOSTILITY SHAPES

WOMEN'S POLITICAL AMBITION

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Why are women exiting politics?

“THESE TACTICS [OF TROLLING
WOMEN], WHICH ARE USED FOR MALICIOUS
INTENT, ARE MEANT TO SILENCE WOMEN
AND ULTIMATELY UNDERMINE OUR
DEMOCRACIES.”

- Letter to Facebook Inc. from 100 global women lawmakers

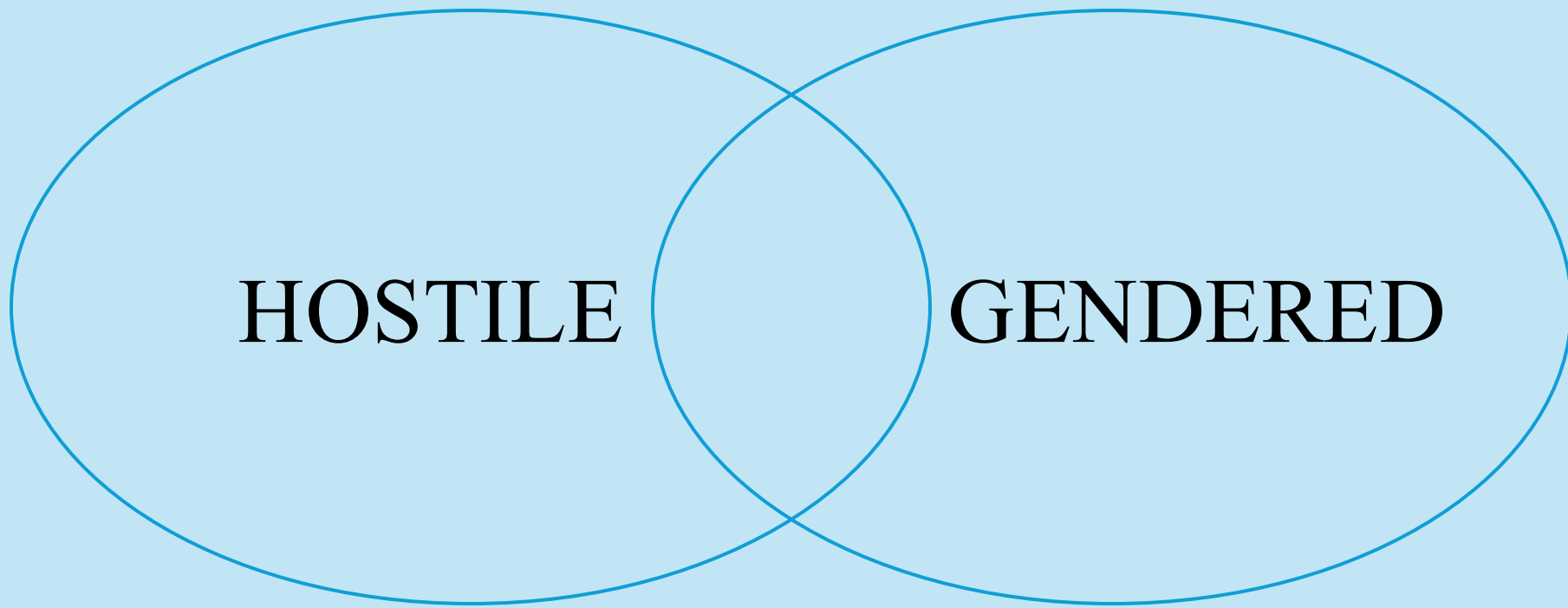
Panel Data (n=1,247 politicians)



Campaign decisions and outcomes



14 million public mentions on Twitter



- Hate speech
- Ad hominem attacks
- Vulgarities/threats/rudeness
- Calls for resignation

- Gender-marking
- Physical appearance
- Relationship/parental status
- Gendered slurs/stereotypes

Category	Example Tweet
Hostile & Not Gendered	@legislator Really have to be the stupidest person on Twitter don't you?
Hostile & Gendered	@legislator You are in way over your head little girl!!
Supportive & Gendered	women like @legislator put their most authentic selves into representing their constituents

Are Trolls Taking a Toll on Women's Ambition?

- Gendered differences in
 - Volume
 - Resilience
 - Content



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VOLUME

- Mechanism = If hostility affects all politicians equally, women will only exit more often if they receive more abuse.
- Literature = Mixed evidence, depends on method



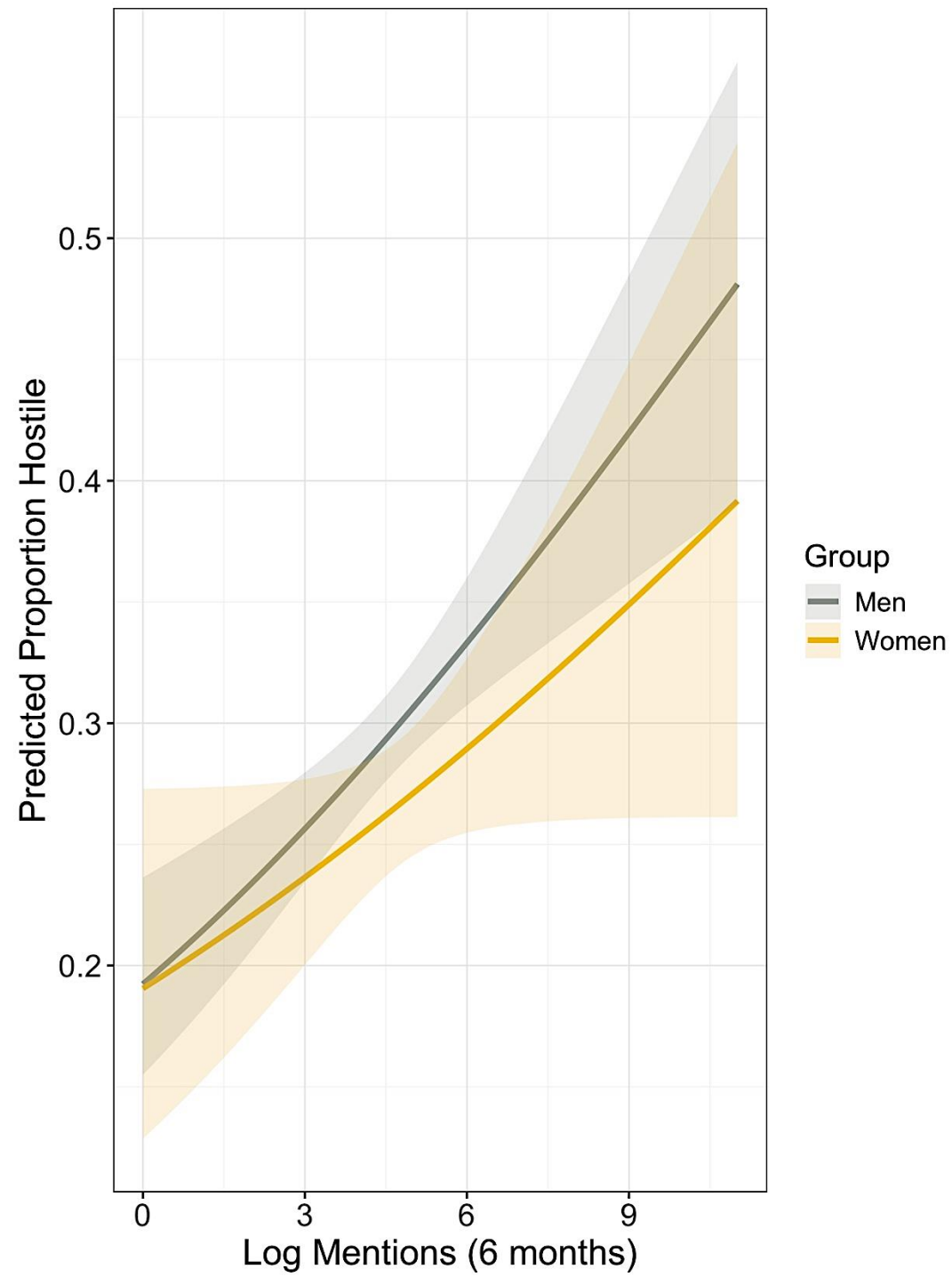
Mechanism 1:

VOLUME

Two-part hurdle model:

1. Likelihood of receiving hostility
2. Predicted proportion of mentions with
hostile content

Mechanism 1: VOLUME



Are Trolls Taking a Toll on Women's Ambition?

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 - ~~Volume~~: Women receive the same volume
 - Resilience
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RESILIENCE

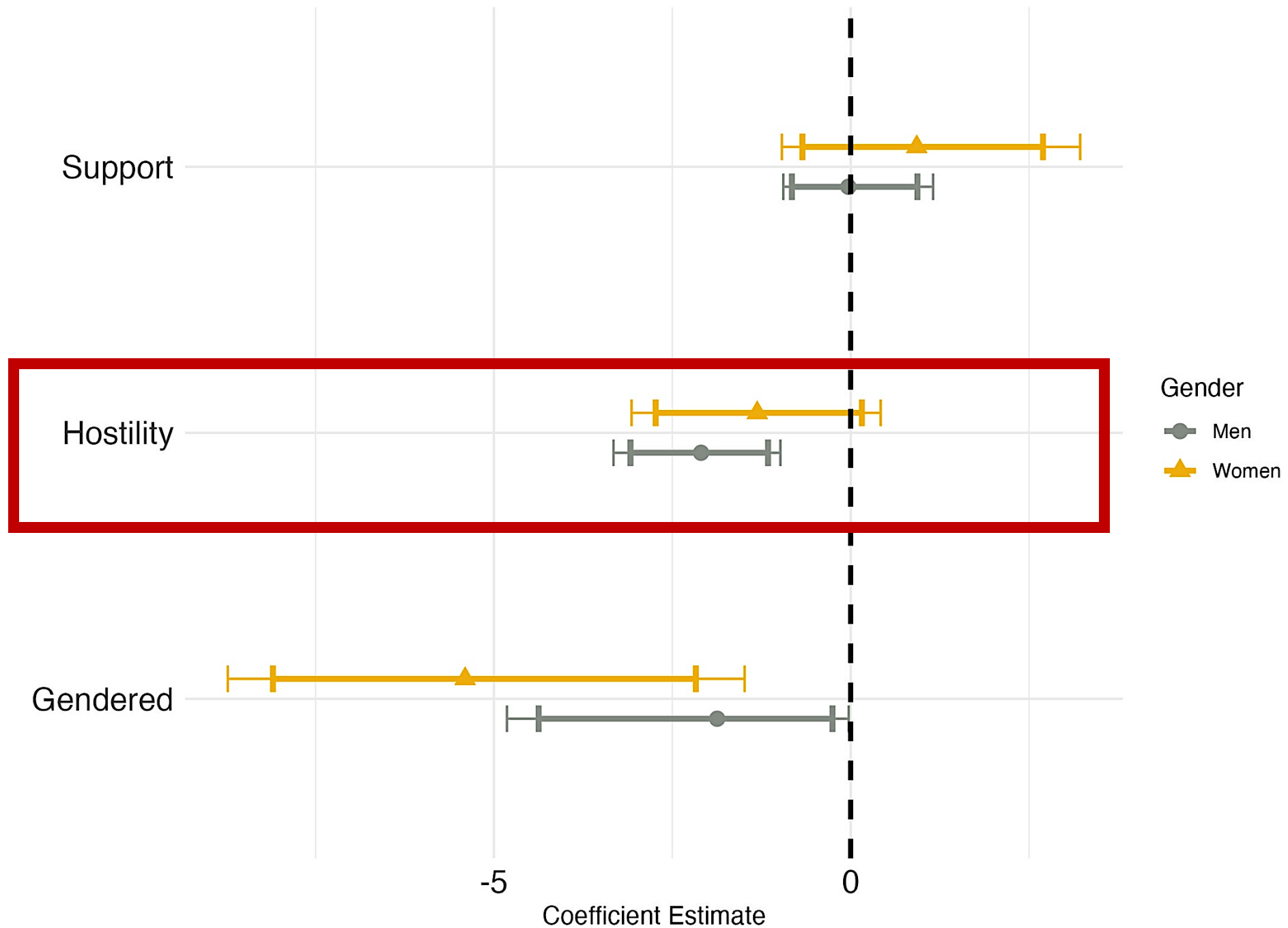
- Mechanism = If women are less resilient to hostility, exposure will deter them more than men.
- Literature = “thick skin” vs. report behavior changes



Mechanism 2: RESILIENCE

- Bias-reduced GLM
 - Bootstrapped standard errors, clustered at the individual
- DV = Did they campaign in a given election year?
- EV = proportion of hostility

Mechanism 2: RESILIENCE



Are Trolls Taking a Toll on Women's Ambition?

- Gendered differences in
 - ~~Volume~~: Women receive the same volume
 - ~~Resilience~~: Women are more resilient
- Content

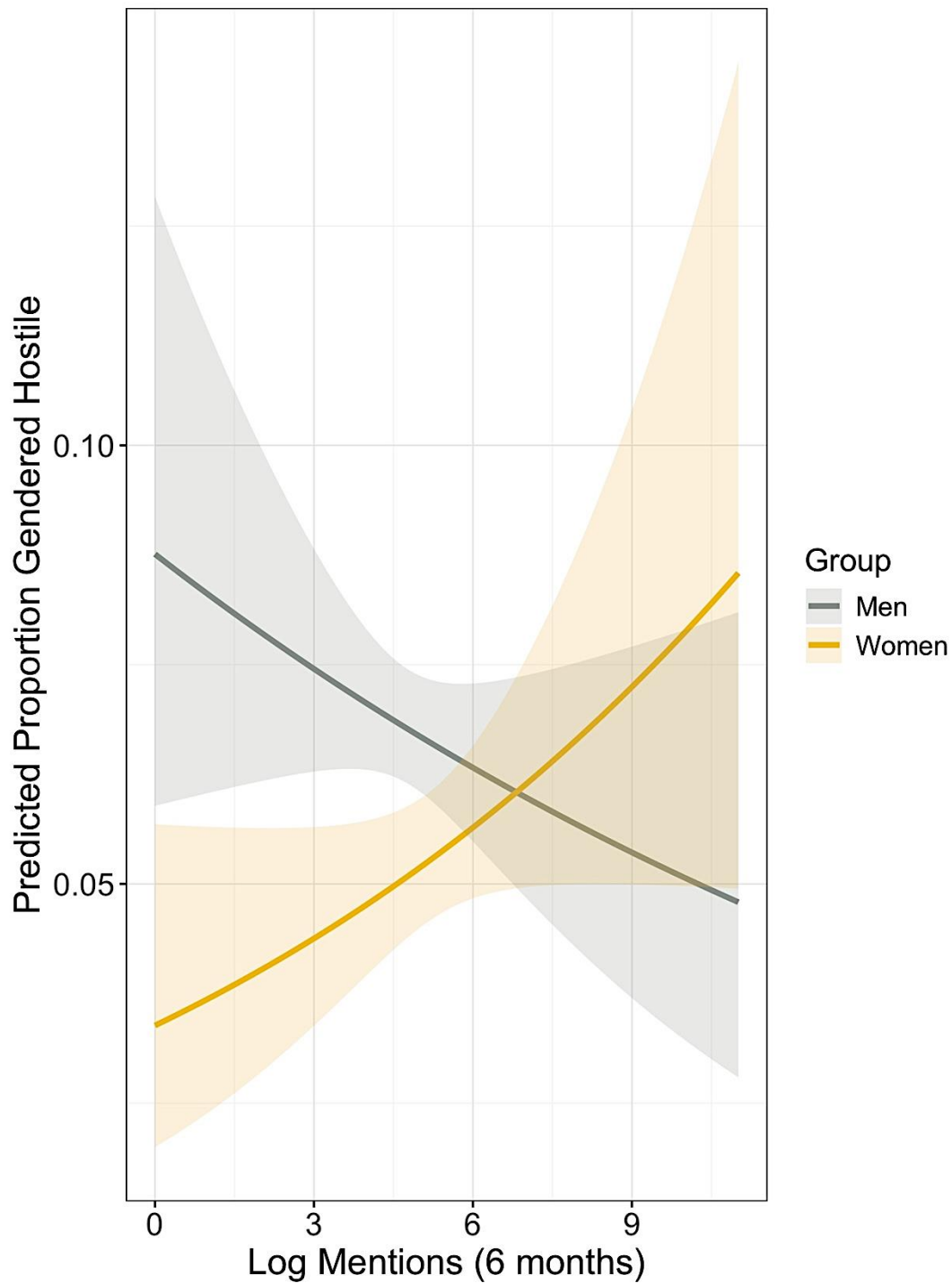


CONTENT

- Mechanism = If women receive more detrimental content than men, exposure will deter them more than it deters men.
- Women receive more **identity-based**, sexualized attacks: “always gender, always sexualized”
- Semiotic violence



Mechanism 3: CONTENT




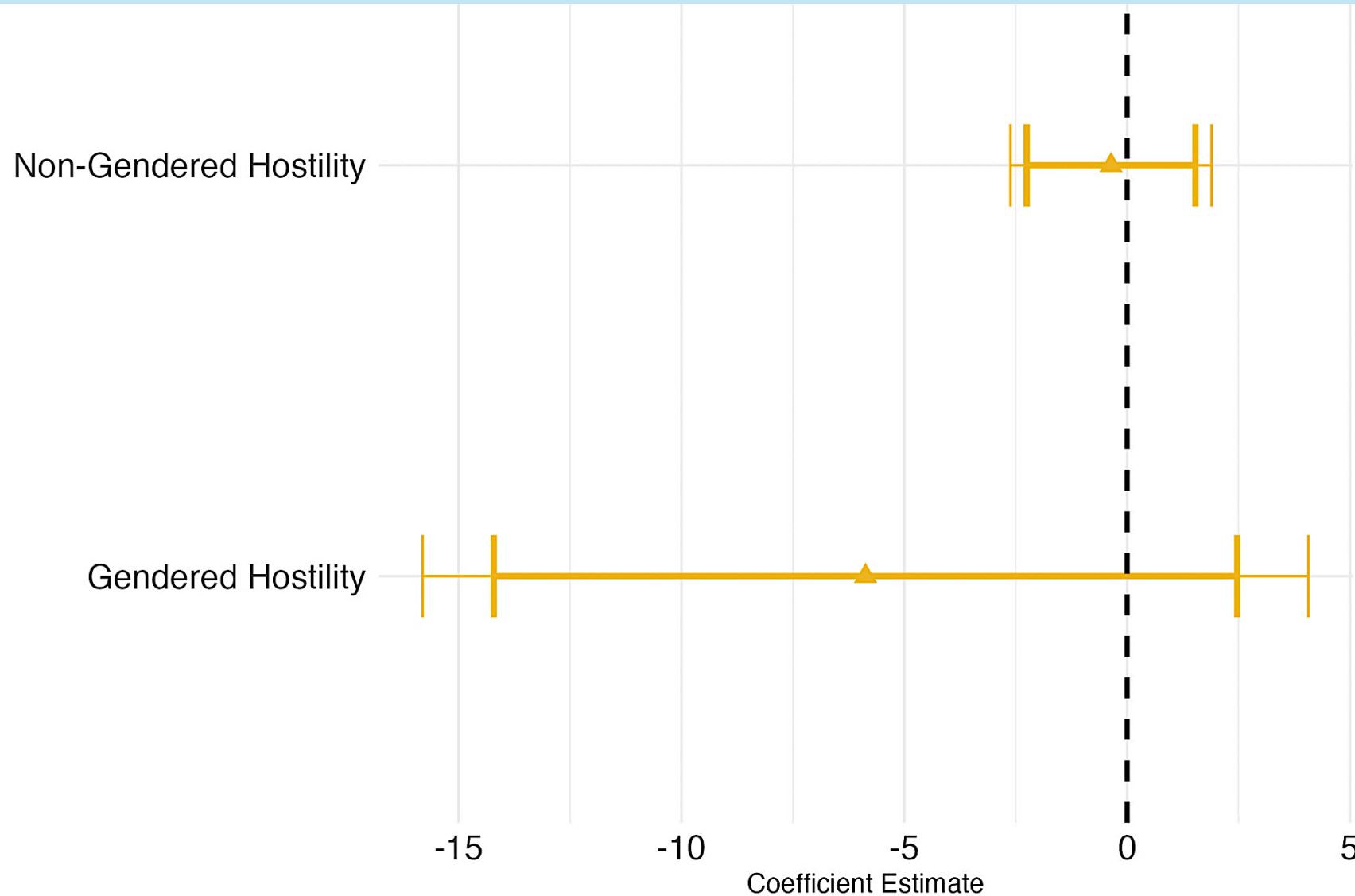
Mechanism 3:

CONTENT

- Bias-reduced GLM
 - Bootstrapped standard errors, clustered at the individual
- DV = Did they campaign in a given election year?
- EV = proportion of gendered hostility

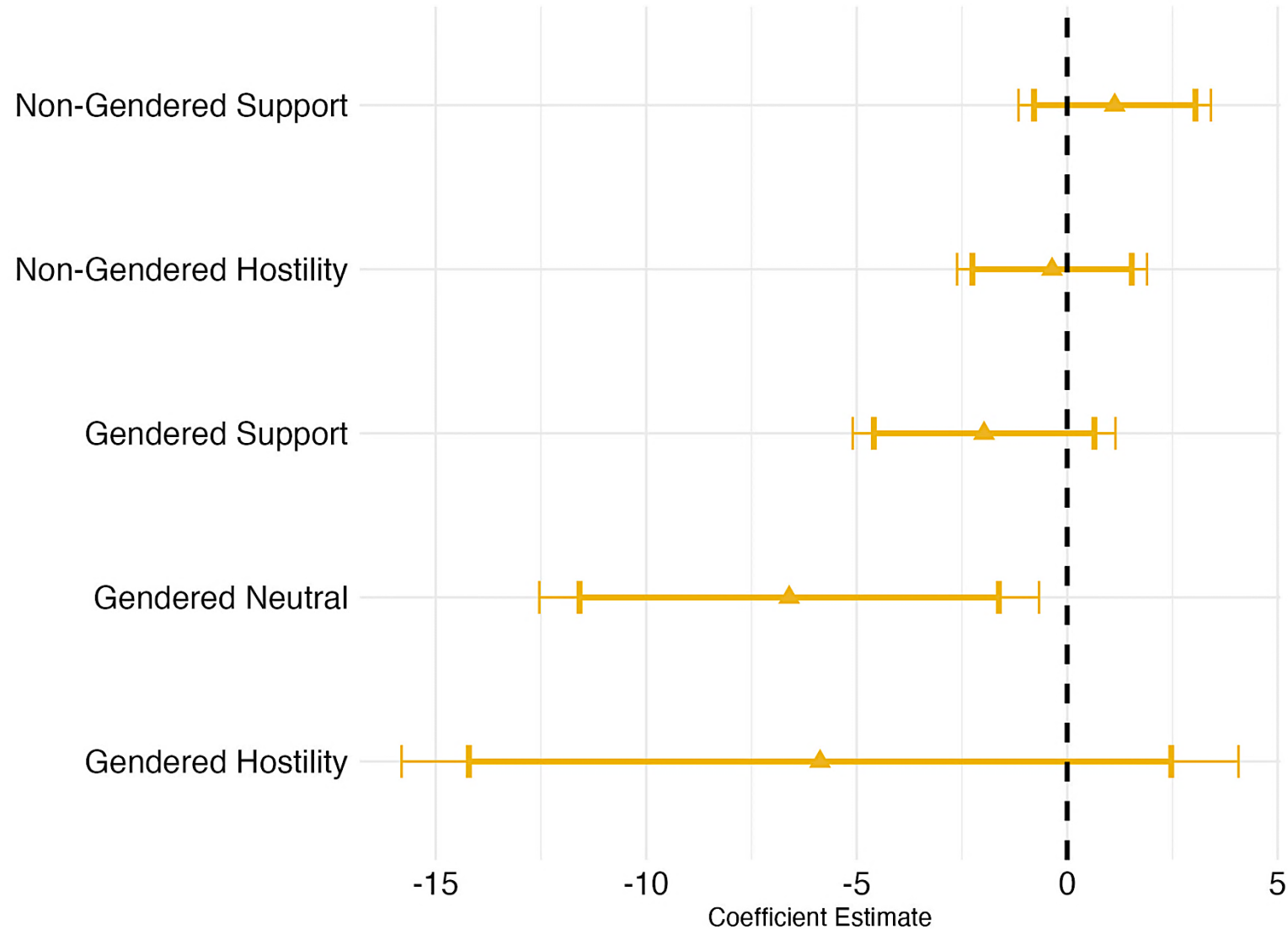
H1: Gendered hostility $>$ non-gendered hostility

H1: Gendered hostility > non-gendered hostility 



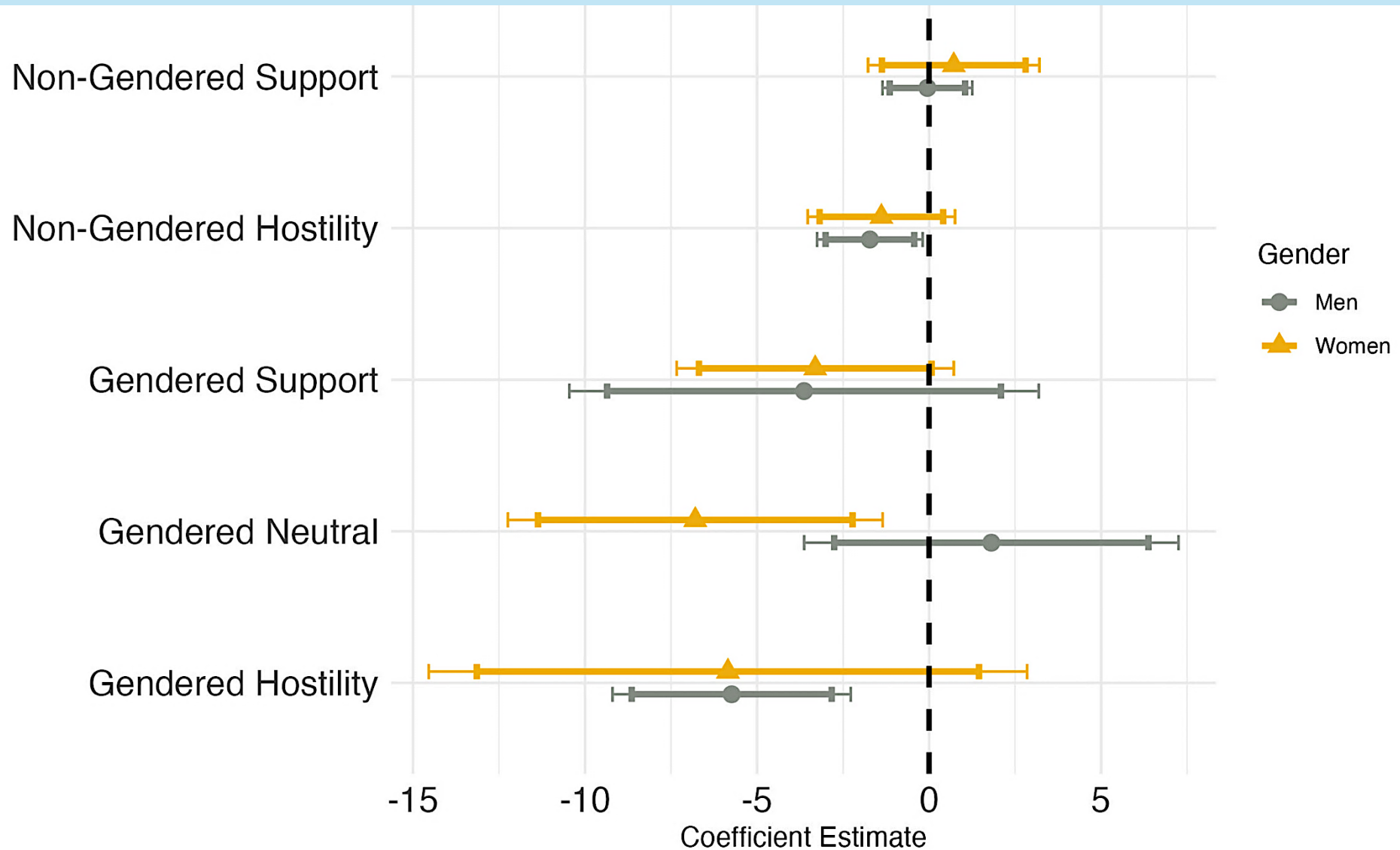
H2: Gendered content $>$ non-gendered content

H2: Gendered content > non-gendered content



H3: Gendered content affects women > men

H3: Gendered content affects women > men ✖



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