

**If It's Sunday, It's Meet the Men:
Examining Gender Differences in Appearances on the Sunday Morning Talk Shows**

Gail Baitinger

Shortly after President Obama's second inauguration in 2013, pundits began speculating about the presidential prospects for 2016. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is at the top of everyone's list. In 2008, Clinton proved to be a formidable presidential candidate, and her successes as the Secretary of State have only raised her profile and likeability. The fact that she is a woman is almost incidental to the conversation. Indeed, public support for Clinton and other female candidates corroborates this sentiment. Research shows that women are just as likely as men to win their elections, both at the state and federal level (Fox 2010; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Smith and Fox 2001; Cook 1998). And even though the number of women in powerful political positions still lags behind that of men, it is difficult to argue that the political landscape for women in American politics has not changed for the better.

The experiences women have maneuvering the political arena, though, also highlight the obstacles they continue to endure as actors in a male-dominated sphere. Women are more likely than men to face primary competition (Lawless and Pearson 2008). They often have to raise more money to perform on par with men at the polls (Fiber and Fox 2005). And, at least at the congressional level, female challengers are more likely to have electoral experience than their male counterparts, who do just as well (Pearson and McGhee 2013). Women members of Congress also deliver more funding for projects to their districts than male members, yet they fare only equally well at the polls (Anzia and Berry 2011).

The media's coverage of and interaction with female candidates serves as one more obstacle women must surmount. Consider Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin's experiences in the

2008 presidential election. Both candidates garnered the support of party elites and large voter coalitions, but they also encountered sexism and negative stereotyping – both from voters and the media – that made their experiences in politics more tumultuous than those of men. This is not to say that the “iron my shirt” type of comment that Clinton heard at a rally in New Hampshire dominated her experiences on the campaign trail. The media actually focused primarily on Clinton and Palin’s policy positions and political experiences. But news stories of both women – one a United States Senator and the other the governor of Alaska – also questioned their abilities to handle the duties of the offices they sought, with a lot of attention concerning whether Palin could handle the responsibilities of the office of the Vice President, as well as her duties as a mother to young children (Carlin and Winfrey 2009).¹ This is consistent with research by Heldman, Carroll, and Olson (2005), who find that Elizabeth Dole received less media coverage than her male opponents as she sought the Republican nomination for president in 2000, and that the coverage she did receive often focused on the novelty of a female candidate for president (see also Dunaway et al. 2013; Bode and Hennings 2012). Sexist media attention is not exclusive to candidates, however. Throughout the Supreme Court nomination processes, both Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan faced bias from journalists and pundits who made gender relevant in discussions of their qualifications.²

Gender stereotypes and sexism by voters and the media do not, at the aggregate level, prevent women from entering politics or winning elections. But these types of gender differences in treatment can create an extra burden women must overcome to succeed in politics.

Normatively, this poses a problem for democratic legitimacy and political representation.

¹Robin Abcarian, “Insiders see ‘new feminism,’” *Los Angeles Times*, September 4, 2008.

²Jeffrey Rosen, “The Case Against Sotomayor,” *The New Republic*, May 4, 2009; Rush Limbaugh, *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, June 17, 2009.; G. Gordon Liddy, *The G. Gordon Liddy Show*, May 28, 2009; Peter Beinart, “Put a Mom on the Court.,” *The Daily Beast*, April 25, 2010.

Scholars argue that when women serve as elected officials, they prioritize policy issues that affect women and families and generate positive role-model effects for women in the electorate.³

Women's numeric under-representation in politics means that the substantive and symbolic effects of having women in office are not realized.⁴

For these reasons, it is important for scholars to understand the environment that women face in the political arena. This dissertation attempts to examine systematically one potential hurdle for female candidates and elected officials: the media. Based on an original data set of nearly 4,600 appearance-level observations of approximately 1,000 individual elected officials and non-elected political actors on the Sunday morning news programs, and a unique approach to media coverage in politics, I shed new light on the gender dynamics that pervade the contemporary news environment. More specifically, I answer questions about women's numeric representation on the Sunday shows, gender differences in the issues guests discuss on these programs, the extent to which women and men's expertise is linked to their legislative priorities, and whether gender differences emerge in the use of positive or negative language – or tone – during the interviews and discussions. These are all unanswered questions in the extant literature, yet speak directly to the extent to which women are incorporated into the media environment that is so important for political success.

The Sunday morning political talk shows are an important venue through which political actors inform citizens' understanding of political events (Groeling and Baum 2009; Jamieson and

³For example, female public officials spend more time advocating for and sponsoring legislation pertaining to issues that disproportionately affect women, families, and children, and their legislative policy preferences typically align with gendered preferences in public opinion (see, e.g., Swers 2002; Carroll 2001; Kathleen 1995; 1994; Burrell 1994; Poole and Ziegler 1985; Diamond 1977). On the symbolic front, evidence suggests that when women run for office, and particularly when they win, women in the electorate express higher levels of political efficacy and interest (Campbell and Wolbrecht 2006; Dolan 2006; Atkeson 2003; Burns, Scholzman, and Verba 2001).

⁴Although, Frederick (2009) shows that, with increasing partisan polarization, women are more likely to be divided on ideological lines than those corresponding to sex.

Waldman 2002; Shepard 1995). And because of their format and eclectic group of guests, they present a unique opportunity to examine gender differences in television news. These shows are not media *coverage* in the traditional sense; they consist of appearances by political actors who participate in interview conversations and roundtable discussions about important policy issues. So, rather than examining journalists' coverage of political events or depictions of an elected official's policy stances through newspaper articles or television reporting, I examine women and men's appearances on mainstream news broadcasts. And these news appearances allow me to investigate gender dynamics created by the media – through the producers' selection of guests and the hosts' questioning of them – as well as those generated by the guests themselves during the discussions.

The large number and variety of guests on the Sunday shows also makes them useful for a study of gender differences in the news. A great deal of research speaks to female candidates' coverage in the print media, but few studies focus on men and women's representation as pundits and political activists on mainstream television news. And because much of this research was conducted when relatively few women ran for office, previous studies are also limited to analyzing the small number of female candidates. The extant literature also tends to examine the coverage of female candidates exclusively, and thus it lacks meaningful comparisons of women's media coverage to that of men. In this dissertation, I gather data on the appearances of all elected officials and candidates, as well as pundits, journalists, and administration officials, on the Sunday morning public affairs programs, which allow me to speak broadly about the media environment men and women in politics face today. These data allow me to expand upon previous research on women in the political media to identify gender differences in media appearances. I address unanswered questions about the manner in which women and men

navigate the political media environment, and shed new light on the extent to which women and men traverse similar electoral playing fields.

A Review of Women and the Political Media: The Origins and the Limitations of the Extant Literature

The first political scientists to study the media did not focus on gender, but rather, sought to determine whether the media could influence political behavior, such as vote choice and public opinion. Early research concluded that the media had, at most, minimal effects in persuading citizens to change their minds about candidates or policy preferences (Klapper 1960; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1948). Predispositions, on the other hand, were the driving force behind electoral decisions and opinions, and they were likely to be reinforced – not altered – by watching political news or campaign advertisements (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1948).

But changes in conceptions of media effects led to different conclusions about the impact of the news and renewed the importance of studying media coverage of politics. Contemporary scholarship suggests that the media do play an important role in politics, regardless of whether the news persuades voters. Through agenda setting, framing, and priming, the media can affect citizens' understanding of the political environment and the manner in which they process and digest political information (see, e.g., Druckman 2004; Druckman, Jacobs, and Ostermeier 2004; Petrocik 1996; McCombs 1993; Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder 1982; McCombs and Shaw's 1977; 1972; Cohen 1963). Thus, contemporary research tends to focus on media biases in the selection of issues to cover in the news, the extent to which journalists prime voters to assess political actors in certain ways, or frame issues in

different contexts. In other words, these studies tend to examine how the media exert their gatekeeping powers and the effects those decisions have on consumers.

As women have increased their presence in the political arena throughout the last 40 years, the importance of understanding the dynamics of the political news has also led a group of scholars to study media coverage of female candidates (Bystrom et al. 2004; Devitt 1999; Carroll and Schreiber 1997; Norris 1997a; 1997b; Braden 1996; Weir 1996; Kahn 1994; 1992; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). And these studies find, for the most part, that women in politics receive less overall coverage than men, and that the content of the coverage differs depending on the sex of the individual.⁵ For example, the media are likely to suggest that women are most adept at addressing issues that primarily affect women and families. On the other hand, men receive more coverage promoting their professional and political credentials. Since women have traditionally been outsiders in the political arena, media coverage that downplays their qualifications or highlights women's competence on only a subset of issues can work to the detriment of female candidates and slow their ascension into the political arena.

Studies of media coverage of female candidates then assume that biases in the media generate and/or reinforce the stereotypical assessments that voters hold toward women (Fowler and Lawless 2009; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008). Because most individuals do not interact directly with the political world, they receive most of their information regarding candidates, elected officials, and important policy issues from the media. Therefore, if the media present a

⁵There is an emerging debate in the literature, though, about the extent to which these findings still persist. For example, Hayes and Lawless (2013) find that female and male congressional candidates received equal media coverage during the 2010 campaign, and that the content of this coverage did not differ by sex (see also Hayes 2011). In addition, Fowler and Lawless (2009) show that contextual factors surrounding individual races may contribute more to the gender differences uncovered in studies of the media than does the sex of the candidate (see also Brooks 2013; Dolan 2013).

stereotypical picture of a woman seeking public office, then it must be through the news and campaign advertisements that voters attach gendered labels to female politicians.

Although many political scientists have studied media coverage of women in politics, these studies are limited in their ability to describe the media environment political women face today. Much of the research was conducted during the 1980s and 1990s, when the public was less receptive to female candidates and fewer women threw their hats into the ring. Moreover, previous research focuses almost exclusively on print media coverage during political campaigns, so in addition to having a small number of women in their analyses, these studies cannot speak to gender dynamics in television coverage of elected officials who have already succeeded in a campaign. One exception is Carroll and Schreiber (1997), but they examine newspaper coverage of just 13 female members of Congress, and only include articles that explicitly mention the official's gender or the title "Congresswoman" in the article (see also Braden 1996).⁶ These studies also lack a comparison of women's coverage to media coverage of men, so these scholars can assess only the extent to which the media portray women in a negative light, but have no measure of potentially negative coverage of men. The extant literature also does not consider the role of political actors other than candidates and elected officials in the news, such as the female journalists who cover politics, female cabinet members, and political activists. And because many studies examine only a small number of news stories, or base their analyses on the limited number of congressional races that include female candidates, they present an incomplete picture of gender dynamics in the political media environment. Looking beyond candidates and elected officials presents an opportunity to more accurately examine the gender dynamics in the media.

⁶ Carroll and Schreiber (1997) perform Lexis Nexus searches of major news papers for the terms: "Congresswoman," "women in Congress," "women in the House of Representatives," and "women in the Senate." If an article appeared in the newspaper about the legislator, but these terms were not used, then the article does not appear in their dataset.

Because the discussions on these shows permeate media coverage elsewhere, the discussions by all women – both elected and non-elected – are politically relevant and scholarship should investigate the role of the journalists, experts, and pundits in setting the policy agenda.

The majority of research on women and the media is further limited by the fact that it rarely considers the importance of the source of the news, or the person who is asked by the news organization to discuss a policy issue or the political actor quoted as the elite source on a topic.⁷ Indeed, most content analyses of media coverage center on the frequency with which issues are linked to candidates and elected officials, but they do not emphasize the significance of the individuals discussing each topic. For example, these studies show that journalists are less likely to mention women's policy positions on "men's" issues, but they do not explain the importance of a woman's perspective in setting the agenda on these topics. Reese, Grant, and Danielian (1994) are an exception; they argue that the source of the news is a central component to studying the agenda setting, priming, and framing powers of the media. In other words, *who* sets the agenda matters as much as the language used in the process. In their study, they find that members of Congress and administration officials are the most common guests on a variety of mainstream political shows, and they suggest that the type of news to which consumers are exposed is directly affected by the monopoly that Washington insiders have on news programs.

These issues highlight the need for a more thorough analysis of the media environment women in politics face. I created a unique dataset that includes a large number of observations of the men and women who appeared on the Sunday morning talk shows – in all capacities – throughout a 36-month period. This provides an opportunity to examine gender differences in the media appearances of different political actors over a long period of time. I also take advantage of

⁷This applies to studies of the media more broadly, too.

newly developed software that allows scholars to investigate the tone of discussions in the news, and collect data from floor speeches made by members of Congress to compare their legislative activities to the media's depiction of their actions. Together, these essays provide a more nuanced understanding of the gender dynamics and patterns of under-representation that affect men and women in politics as they navigate the contemporary news environment.

The Sunday Morning Shows

Because previous research has often been limited by small datasets, narrow samples of women in politics, and other methodological constraints mentioned above, the Sunday morning political talk shows are an ideal source for an in-depth analysis of gender dynamics in the news. Every Sunday, for decades, these programs have presented viewers with analysis and discussion of the major political events of the week.⁸ NBC's *Meet the Press*, ABC's *This Week*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, CNN's *State of the Union*, and *Fox News Sunday* are political programs with a talk show format, and each show invites guests ranging from members of Congress to political scientists to journalists to appear as guests to discuss a variety of topics.

The political influence of these shows cannot be understated. In fact, Jamieson and Waldman (2002) argue that after the controversial 2000 presidential election, the discussions on the Sunday shows had a major impact on citizens' opinions about the appropriate solution to the conflict. Indeed, they find that the hosts and guests on the Sunday programs operated for weeks under the assumption that Governor Bush won the election, and they eventually settled into a dialogue that reinforced the idea that the recount in Florida was somehow unfair to the governor. The authors do not go so far as to suggest that this caused the eventual Supreme Court decision in

⁸CNN's *State of the Union* and *Fox News' Sunday Morning* have only been in existence since 2009 and 1996, respectively. But the major network shows have been on the air for decades.

Bush's favor, of course. But they do claim that the frame of the debate, on these shows in particular, implanted in the minds of viewers and other media outlets that Bush was the true winner of the election, thus swaying public opinion starkly to one side and making it unlikely that the final decision would be in Gore's favor.

Their role as important sources of political news makes these shows an excellent source of data for a detailed analysis of women, politics, and the media. Although the audience for these shows consists primarily of Washington elites, the discussions on the Sunday morning shows permeate news coverage in other media outlets, so the influence of their content is widespread in politics (Groeling and Baum 2009; Jamieson and Waldman 2002).⁹ In addition, public officials see these shows as valuable opportunities for publicity, and will take advantage of every opportunity to appear as guests (Harris 1998; Sinclair 1998). Pundits and journalists who work in Washington also welcome the chance to join the Sunday morning discussion. According to Ann Devroy, a former White House correspondent for the *Washington Post*, "Few Washington journalists would turn down a chance to be on 'Washington Week' or one of the prestigious Sunday morning talk shows; in fact, some reporters lobby to join the roster of pundits" (Shepard 1995). More recently, a report by the National Urban League (2005) stated the importance of the shows:

Sunday morning talk shows are more than a mere source of news; they are a crucial staple in the public discussion, understanding, and interpretation of politics and government and other issues in the United States. Each Sunday, these programs signal what is news and who are the newsmakers.

⁹Although there is some evidence that this is the case, I intend to perform a content analysis of articles in the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, and perhaps some of the evening network news shows, in order to show that the influence of the Sunday morning shows is, indeed, widespread.

The value placed on these shows by various political actors indicates that they are a significant source of news, thus they serve as a good venue through which to examine the political media environment.

The Sunday morning talk shows provide a unique opportunity to examine women's numeric and substantive representation in the media because of the format of the broadcasts. The shows consist entirely of discussions with guests and they range from half an hour to a full hour in length, so the producers have the time to invite multiple political actors to appear each week and are not restricted to choosing one representative from Congress or a single quote from an activist or member of the administration. And because these shows typically devote at least one segment to political analysis with non-elected guests, they have a great opportunity to provide more equal airtime to women by including guests from outside the halls of Congress, where women hold just 18 percent of the seats. These guests are generally journalists working in Washington or political strategists who appear frequently on one or more of the shows (Hayes and Guardino 2013). Moreover, the norm of roundtable discussions on Sunday morning allows for a variety of guests to discuss topics at the same time. For all of these reasons, the opportunity to find high levels of women's representation should be greater on these shows than those that rely primarily on an anchor whose broadcast is only supplemented by interviews with political guests. And the open dialogue nature of the Sunday programs makes them a particularly good venue for hearing a woman's perspective on the issues. By including a broad group of political roles in the analysis, I can account for the appearances of all women in the political media through a source where women should have ample opportunities to appear. In other words, I am not setting up a straw man; the Sunday programs should allow for women to be well represented, so any gender effects I uncover that work to women's detriment will be compelling evidence that

women face barriers when it comes to the amount or type of media attention they receive compared to men.

Despite their important role in providing information about current events and their unique structure for analysis, however, few studies have examined guests or issue dynamics on the Sunday morning shows (but see Groeling and Baum 2009; Reese, Grant, and Danielian 1994). The studies that do make use of data from these programs highlight the benefits of analyzing these shows because of their open discussion format or because they influence coverage in other news sources. Groeling and Baum (2009) suggest that the Sunday shows are a great resource for determining the reality of a political situation because the hosts facilitate a dialogue where guests are allowed to speak freely about the topic at hand. But the scholars who acknowledge their value still do not conduct large-scale content analyses of these shows, so they are limited in what they can say about the guests and issues discussed on the Sunday programs. In other words, we know very little about who appears on these shows and the content they present to viewers. A few studies show that women and ethnic minorities are infrequent guests on the Sunday morning talk shows (Klos 2013; Mitchell 2010). But these studies lack multivariate analyses, so they are unable to control for factors that predict whether an individual is likely to appear on the news at all.

By making use of a large dataset of news coverage, I will attempt to overcome some of the limitations in previous research by providing a thorough examination of media coverage of women in politics. And I make use of a unique and rich set of data that are not thoroughly examined in prior work. Using these data, I answer questions about how the media treat all women in politics, not only candidates, and I have data for a long enough period of time to capture the temporal dynamics in the media, including coverage during the campaign season,

major political events, and everyday political happenings. The three papers I propose make use of the Sunday shows to study three distinct ways in which women and men may navigate the same media environment, yet have very different opportunities and experiences.

Paper 1: An Examination of Women's Numeric Representation on the Sunday Morning Shows

Traditionally, female legislators tend to be less supportive of war and more supportive of welfare policy than their male counterparts (Poggione 2004; Delli Carpini and Fuchs 1993; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986), and scholarship shows that women in office may approach the same issues from a different perspective than men, leading them to advocate for alternative policy outcomes (Kathlene 1995). Although these dynamics have changed in an era of heightened partisan polarization (Frederick 2009), it is nonetheless meaningful for women to add their voices to important policy discussions on national television. Seeing female faces on the news can also signal to the public that women are welcome actors in the political world, which may, over time, result in more women deciding to embark on political careers. At the very least, it cannot hurt our democratic institutions to have more gender parity in the political media. The Sunday morning shows are one venue through which to assess women's numeric representation in the media, as well as the political party and occupational dynamics of these media appearances.

The first paper of my dissertation will examine women's numeric representation on the Sunday Morning political talk shows. I will focus on the frequency with which women appear on these national news programs to determine whether women are under-represented as guests, or whether the number of female guests accurately reflects the number of women in political

professions and in elective office. Because women have traditionally been outsiders in the political arena, it is important that they are given the opportunity to appear on shows discussing the major issues of the day. Not only does a high profile appearance on one of the Sunday shows allow women to display their political credentials to a wide audience, but it also provides citizens with exposure to a full range of political opinions, not only those of men.

In this paper, I will broaden the conceptualization of women in politics beyond elected policymakers and candidates for office to include pundits, journalists, and appointed officials. This will allow me to provide a more comprehensive view of the treatment of women in the political media. After all, while studies that examine the media dynamics experienced by political candidates are important to our understanding of campaigns and a major aspect of the political environment women face when they choose to run for office, they do not tell us how these women appear in the media once they overcome the hurdle of winning an election. Nor can these studies explain how the media appearances of women compare to those of men outside of a campaign. Moreover, previous research cannot provide details about the gender dynamics in the political environment as a whole because they do not consider the important roles that non-elected actors play in politics. This paper attempts to fill these gaps in the literature.

Studies of the coverage of female candidates suggest that women receive less substantive media attention than their male counterparts (Heldman, Carroll, and Olson 2005; Smith 1997; Braden 1996; Kahn 1996). In light of this research, and due to the fact that there are fewer women than men serving in elective office, female elected officials will likely receive less airtime than their male counterparts on the Sunday talk shows. But because, as Fowler and Lawless (2009) show, gender differences in news coverage have a lot to do with candidate experience levels, an alternative hypothesis is that once men and women reach a certain level of experience within the

political world, the volume of coverage becomes equal. Thus, because female elected officials have arguably similar credentials as men who serve in office – accounting for seniority and committee assignments – they might be asked to appear as frequently as men, or at least at a ratio that reflects their 18.5 percent representation in Congress. The same logic regarding experience and political qualifications should also apply to women who have jobs in politics, whether as activists, administration officials, or journalists. I expect there to be more gender parity among these political actors in the news, and I plan to make use of the data to shed light on the number of women who appear from each of these occupations.¹⁰ Because there are more women in politics today – both in elective office and as Cabinet officials and pundits – than when many of the studies on women, politics, and the media were conducted, the shows have a greater supply of women from which to select guests, so we should see more gender equity on the shows than is found in previous research.

Two separate analyses comprise the first chapter of this dissertation. First, I will examine the overall numeric representation of women on the Sunday shows, including elected officials, journalists, political activists and experts, White House administration officials, former elected and administration officials, military sources, and foreign voices. This will provide an overview of the presence of women that viewers encounter when they tune in to one of these shows on a Sunday morning, and it will shed light on the frequency with which women are asked to appear.¹¹

¹⁰Unfortunately, I do not have baseline numbers for women in the non-elected political occupations, but I would expect the shows to be able to achieve near parity for political activists since women and men are found to be equally likely to participate in politics today (see e.g., Conway 2001). In addition, women currently make up approximately 38 percent of newspaper journalists (OpEd Project 2012), so I expect a similar proportion of women journalists on the Sunday shows. And women in the administration should appear in a proportion equal to their proportion as White House appointees.

¹¹Because of the evidence that few would turn down an opportunity to appear on the Sunday morning shows, I assume that the guests who appear are, for the most part, the individuals invited. That said, there are some individuals who are known to avoid appearances whenever possible. According to *Politico*, Former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and former National Security Advisor, Tom Donilon, both had a “standing refusal” to appear on these shows (Glenn Thrush, “Why Hillary Clinton didn’t do Sunday shows after Benghazi,” *Politico*, May 13, 2013.) I plan to contact the show’s producers in order to ask about the extent to which they encounter resistance from invited guests,

The richness of the data set will allow for such comparisons not only at the aggregate level, but also by profession, party, and segment on each show.

Second, I will home in on members of Congress to predict which members appear as guests. Although I can only make predictions about who appears on the Sunday shows from the pool of members of Congress – I cannot obtain data about every single journalist or political activist who could potentially appear on the programs – members of Congress comprise the greatest portion of the guests on these shows (Reese, Grant, and Danielian 1994).¹² Moreover, I can control for factors separate and apart from sex that are likely to predict whether a member of Congress appears on the news at all, such as seniority, leadership positions, whether the member serves on a prestigious committee, and whether committee memberships correspond to salient political topics of the week.¹³ This will allow me to account for the role of gender while considering other important factors in a way that previous studies have not.

The multivariate analysis is essentially a test of two competing hypotheses: 1) that female members of Congress are under-represented – in relation to the number of seats they hold – as guests on the Sunday political programs, which is consistent with previous research on women in the political media; and that 2) congressmen and congresswomen are represented in proportion to the number of seats they hold (either because they have political credentials that put them all on an even playing field, or because the shows' producers make a point of including women).

To collect the data for this paper, I read transcripts from all five Sunday shows from January of 2009 through December of 2011. For each show over the three-year period, I recorded

and to determine more about the process for choosing individuals each week. I can also look at differences between guests on the cable and network shows to determine if there are strategic choices in the shows that individuals choose for their appearances.

¹²I will also make this prediction with administration officials since I have the complete list of potential guests from the White House as well.

¹³During specific crises, I may also consider the role of individual committees in providing guests to the Sunday morning shows.

information about every guest on every show at both the appearance level (capturing each appearance over the three years in the dataset) and the individual guest level. This allows me to account for the fact that approximately 40 percent of the guests on the Sunday shows appear multiple times and often on several shows throughout the time period. It also allows me to investigate the extent to which media appearances are made by a wide variety of men and women, as opposed to many repeated appearances by the same guest. The coding scheme first accounts for each guest's political position: whether he/she is a current or former elected or appointed official, journalist, activist or pundit, foreign voice, or member of the military. Then, I record the individual's sex and political party affiliation (when applicable), and whether she or he appeared on the show as a guest or as part of a roundtable discussion. For members of Congress, I account for chamber, seniority, committee assignments, leadership positions, minority or majority chamber status, state, and district. Seniority is measured as the number of consecutive years the member served in the current chamber, and leadership is characterized by holding a party leadership position – such as Speaker of the House or Minority Leader – or serving as the chair or ranking member of a committee. I also record the legislator's time zone, in order to account for the role of time in predicting who appears on the shows since they air early in the morning on the east coast. Finally, I record the placement of each guest in the show's lineup to determine whether there are gender differences in the selection of the headlining guests.

The analyses I propose in this essay attempt to improve upon the current state of literature on women in the media and to assess – with a new data set of both traditional and non-traditional political actors – the extent to which gender differences are present in the political media. Not only will this paper provide a picture of what citizens see on Sunday mornings, but it will also speak broadly to the media as a whole since these shows present a good opportunity to find

gender parity. In other words, any gender differences I find here are likely to be present elsewhere in the media environment because the Sunday shows – due to their format and eclectic group of guests – set a high bar for finding said differences.

Paper 2: Differences in the Issue Content of Men and Women's Appearances on the Sunday Morning Talk Shows

After examining gender differences in numeric representation of guests on the Sunday morning talk shows, I will focus on the content of the interviews and discussions. That is, I will determine whether male and female guests brought to the studio are equally likely to discuss “men’s issues,” like the economy or foreign policy, or whether women are more likely to be asked about and cover traditional “women’s issues,” such as abortion rights or welfare (see e.g., Norris 1997a; 1997b; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). I will supplement this investigation with information about the content of the floor speeches these guests have given, so as to account for differences or similarities between their legislative activities and their media appearances. This essay, therefore, will speak directly to the agenda setting and priming powers of the media, and any gender dynamics therein. This is an unaddressed topic in the women and politics literature, and the findings will allow me to determine both the extent to which the media play a role in determining the issues for which women receive air time, as well as the tendency for women and men to focus on different issues when presented with the opportunity.

The essay will be divided into two parts. First, I will analyze the manner in which sex, partisanship, and occupational differences determine the issues guests are invited to discuss on the Sunday shows. For example, I will compare the content journalists discuss with the comments of elected officials and political activists, taking gender and party into account across these

analyses. I plan to supplement these data with information from interviews with the producers of the programs to shed light on the process by which guests are selected for the shows. This provides a systematic look at the issues men and women discuss on the Sunday shows, and the extent to which women are given the opportunity to be seen as knowledgeable about many important issues, or only certain political topics, thus limiting their contribution to the entirety of the policy dialogue.

The second part of the paper will analyze the issues discussed by members of Congress, in particular. Here, I will test a version of the indexing hypothesis by using data from the issues discussed by legislators on the Sunday shows and those mentioned in their floor speeches in the House or Senate. Indexing, a primary theory of the nature of media coverage of foreign policy debates, embodies the premise that news coverage of these events mirrors the opinions and policy perspectives expressed by political actors engaged in the dialogue (Bennett 2011; 1996; Bennett, Lawrence, and Livingston 2007; Zaller and Chiu 1996). In other words, the media are not gatekeepers who determine what news makes it on the air or to print based on personal preferences or journalistic norms; rather, the stories journalists cover reflect the reality of what is happening in the political arena.¹⁴

For my purposes, indexing can serve as a way to gauge whether the producers of the Sunday shows choose guests to discuss issues based on their legislative actions and expertise, or whether the media present a subjective picture of women's issue competence by linking them disproportionately to women's issues. Studies that suggest that the media associate female politicians with traditional women's issues more often than men tend not to measure the politicians' legislative priorities. Accordingly, it is impossible to know whether the media simply

¹⁴See Entman (2004) for an explanation of indexing that allows for journalists to adapt their coverage of political reality to a certain extent.

reflect what the women prioritize. And this lingering question carries normative implications.

Although women can succeed by talking about women's issues because these are the issues on which voters find them particularly competent (Herrnson, Stokes, and Lay 2003), they run the risk of being marginalized if the media associate them only with such issues. If it is the case, however, that women are more likely to speak about women's issues on the floor of the House or Senate, or that they speak for longer, or more passionately regarding these issues, then the media's attention to these topics is not, necessarily, an example of gendered coverage. Rather, the media are reflecting the priorities of female candidates, which happen to be different from the priorities of their male counterparts.¹⁵ Examining congruence between the content of floor speeches and Sunday morning appearances is a new way to gauge the legislative priorities of female elected officials and the extent to which these priorities are reflected in one key component of the media environment.¹⁶ In their examination of floor speeches in the House, Pearson and Dancey (2011) show that congresswomen give more floor speeches than their male counterparts. But they do not investigate, systematically, the content of those speeches.

This approach also allows me to account for the possibility that women and men will come on the shows to discuss issues owned by their respective political parties, not those traditionally owned by their sex (Petrocik 1996).¹⁷ During a period of heightened partisan polarization, partisanship likely exerts a greater influence over a legislator's priorities does his or

¹⁵Of course, it is possible that women are strategic in choosing the issues to make a part of their agenda, and they focus on traditional women's issues because they believe it to be a good way to get media attention. It is unlikely, however, to be the case with the Sunday shows because they tend to focus on the important issues of the week. Nevertheless, I will raise this subject with the shows' producers so as to delve more deeply into the potential strategic behavior by both men and women.

¹⁶Previous research, for example, shows that female elected officials are more likely than their male counterparts to emphasize "women's issue" on their congressional websites (Gerson 2008; Fridkin and Woodall 2005; Niven and Zilber 2001).

¹⁷Hayes (2011) finds that the stereotyping of men and women in the 2006 congressional elections was influenced much more by the candidate's party affiliation than by their sex. Indeed, he finds that voters were likely to perceive all Democrats – men and women – as more compassionate and empathetic than their Republican counterparts, rather than assigning these traits to women of both parties, as gendered stereotyping suggests.

her sex.

The Sunday morning dataset is ideal for studying issue coverage because the open dialogue allows guests not only to answer questions, but also affords them the discretion to raise topics on their own. To be sure, the hosts ask questions about issues, and have the ability to cut off the conversation or steer the guests in a different direction, but the unfiltered conversational style of these shows means that what the viewers see is a lot of what the guests choose to present to the audience (Baum and Groeling 2003). Hence, I can determine not only the gender differences in the array of issues that the hosts ask their guests, but also the issues with which women and men choose to associate themselves on television.

The data to answer these questions about issue coverage come from three sources. First, I rely extensively on the Sunday morning talk show dataset described above. In addition to the aforementioned variables about the guests themselves, I also performed a detailed content analysis of the issues discussed on the programs. I read the transcripts of each show and coded every issue a guest mentioned, from health care to immigration to education to political scandals to the “horse race.” I code each issue as a count of the number of sentences each guest speaks on that topic during the appearance on the show.¹⁸ This allows me to uncover gender differences in the discussion of issues themselves, as well as the amount of time men and women spend on each topic. Finally, I code the ideological direction of the guest’s comments.

The second component of data on which I rely to test the indexing hypothesis involves a content analysis of a sample of floor speeches made by members of Congress over the three-year time period that corresponds to the Sunday morning data.¹⁹ I code the transcripts of a random

¹⁸This will allow me to turn this variable into a binary as well, indicating whether an individual ever discusses and issue or not. Therefore, I plan to run Logit, as well as a count models in my analyses.

¹⁹I lag the coverage so that floor speeches pertain to coverage of the issues discussed on the Sunday shows the following weekend. Because it is also possible that guests will join the Sunday shows to discuss an upcoming vote or debate, I analyze the data this way, too.

sample of floor speeches in the House and Senate the same way as the issue data from the Sunday shows. That is, based on the transcripts of floor speeches, I code mentions of every issue and its ideological direction.²⁰

Third, I want to account for the most salient issues in the news in a given week, as they are the topics most likely to be discussed on the Sunday programs. Accordingly, I will examine the front pages of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* for several days of every week between January 2009 and December 2011 so as to determine the extent to which the producers deviate from these expectations and whether there are gender or occupational differences therein. In other words, I can compare the expected coverage with the actual Sunday broadcasts and determine whether women and men are equally likely to discuss the expected topics compared to traditional women's issues or other areas of issue expertise.²¹

Together, these new data position me to speak directly to concerns about the issues for which women receive media attention. By improving upon previous research – both in terms of the dataset and the research design – I am able to determine the issues for which producers choose female discussants, as well as the topics women choose to bring up on their own in an open dialogue. And by including a variety of political actors in the paper and measuring the congruence of their comments with those of their floor speeches, I also shed light on the extent to which women and men generate gender differences in the topics they discuss, or reflect differences as generated by the media.

²⁰ I will code a binary variable for the issues mentioned in legislative floor speeches as well as each unique mention of a topic. With both measures, I can examine the link between legislative actions and media coverage of those actions in a way that has not been applied to the women and politics literature in the past. I may also attempt to code for some level of the intensity of the comments, but others have experienced difficulties with such coding in the past, and used a more simplistic measure of whether the issue was mentioned and its ideological direction (Hayes and Guardino 2013).

²¹ I also plan to contact the producers of the Sunday shows and discuss the practice of asking guests to appear.

Paper 3: Setting the Tone: Gender Differences in Language on the Sunday Morning Talk**Shows**

Scholarship that focuses on the tone or sentiment of media content is relatively new to the media and politics subfield, but it is an important aspect of presentations of political news nonetheless. In fact, Young and Soroka (2012) argue that studies need to focus more on the tone of newspaper articles and television programs because the main media effects scholars analyze today deal with the language used to set the agenda, frame an issue, or prime an individual. Thus, they argue, it is important to understand the multiple ways that language can affect consumers of the media, and one such way is through tone. In my third essay, I extend this new area of inquiry into the women and politics subfield – once again using the Sunday morning data set as my source – which enables me to examine an as yet unstudied way that gender differences could emerge in the current media environment.

Research on the tone of media coverage tends to look at presidents or political parties, the economic environment, or coverage of specific events or tragedies (Soroka 2012; Eshbaugh-Soha 2010; Farnsworth and Lichter 2010; Gentzkow and Shapiro 2010; Soroka, Bodet, Young, and Andrew 2009; Lowry 2008; Soroka 2006; Cho et al. 2003). This scholarship argues that the sentiment of the media influences both the understanding of its content and its effects on consumers of news. If the media are capable of subtly conveying issue frames or priming an elected official through their choice of language, the argument goes, then it stands to reason that they can do the same with the tone of the article.

Scholars of political communication have not yet studied gender differences in the tone of what viewers see on the news. But it may very well be the case that women's slow ascension into the political world means that the manner in which they navigate the media environment is still

different from that of men. The way in which it differs, though, could be through subtle variations in language, rather than conscious decisions by journalists to cover women in one way and men in another, or to ask women to discuss some issues more than others. On the other hand, it is possible that tone varies more by issue or subject matter than it does sex. If such is the case, then any gender segregation in the issues politicians discuss could carry implications related to tone. Some issues, after all, lend themselves to more negative language than others, such as war or a struggling economy. And because of political party issue ownership, it may be the case that, once again, media appearances vary predictably, but the differences can be explained along party lines, not by gender (Petrocik 1996).

In order to conduct the analysis, I will employ new software designed to assess tone from content analyses of media coverage. Lexicoder uses a computerized word-based approach content analysis that can measure the tone of an article or news segment using specific negative and positive words. For years, linguists have developed categories of words, and the Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD) specifies more than 6,000 words that have been categorized as either positive or negative. The tone of the media coverage is determined simply by subtracting the percentage of positive words in the news segment from the percentage of negative words. The software performs reliably, and human coders have been employed to check the validity of the program with consistent results (Soroka 2012; Young and Soroka 2012).

Because the Sunday morning talk shows cover a wide range of issues, they are an excellent source for disentangling the gender effects concerning tone from the fact that some issues are likely to be discussed using more negative words than others. I will use the Lexicoder software on the transcripts from the news programs from the data set (see description above) to

uncover any gender differences in tone.²² I can also assess the extent to which tone varies by guests' occupation, political party, and issue on the table, both in a bivariate and multivariate context.

This essay presents a completely new way of studying gender differences in the manner in which political actors appear in the media. The technology that allows for these analyses may be able to shed light on potentially subtle, yet until now elusive, gender differences in news coverage. In a political environment with more women involved in politics, as well as extreme party polarization, it is important for scholars to identify subtle, but important differences that women face in the political arena – differences that might be masked by blunt analyses. This paper is one unique way to undertake such a study.

Conclusion

This dissertation involves three in-depth studies of the media in order to speak to the ways in which gender differences affect the experiences that politicians and political actors have navigating the modern media environment. My new set of data from the Sunday morning political talk shows, which includes more than 4,600 media appearances by guests over a three-year period, is the most comprehensive to date. The fact that I supplement these data with content analyses of floor speeches and analyses from a new software program designed to measure subtle differences in media coverage adds depth and nuance to what is already a more finely-grained data set than those on which other scholars have relied.

Granted, my analyses focus on the Sunday morning talk shows, so I cannot speak to the gender dynamics in other sources of television news or print journalism. But the coding project I

²²This analysis will be difficult for roundtable guests since the conversation is generally a back and forth. Thus, I expect that this particular analysis will pertain only to guests who talk for longer, uninterrupted segments.

propose is so extensive that what I lack in breadth, I make up for in depth. The detailed nature of the data set alone provides an important new component to our understanding of how women in politics experience opportunities to interact with the media and the content of their interactions. Moreover, each of the three papers allows me to test specific mechanisms by which the media can present gender differences of women and men in politics. Together, the findings from these essays will contribute to a better understanding of the gender dynamics existing in the contemporary media and what they mean for broader issues of representation in our democratic institutions.

Much of the extant literature on political women in the media is constrained in what it can say about the nature of women's media appearances today by small datasets and methodological limitations. Thus, there is a void in the literature pertaining to the extent to which gender differences persist in the contemporary news environment. As some scholars find evidence that the gendered media effects uncovered in the past no longer endure today, it is important to shed light on the conflict in the literature and explain the extent to which we do still find differences between men and women's appearances in today's media. The analyses I put forward in this dissertation speak to this question and address the manner in which gender differences – even when subtle – manifest in the mainstream television news. The findings from these essays will provide details about the venues through which scholars can expect to find gender differences in other media, such as print journalism and other television news programs, and they will highlight the importance of including non-elected political actors in future examinations of the media atmosphere facing women in politics. The three essays I propose in this dissertation use the unique nature of guests' appearances on the Sunday morning talk shows to investigate three potential avenues for women and men to experience the same political media in different ways and the implications of these experiences for women's representation in politics. **Works Cited**

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