

From: Leah Stein

To: Authors of *No Party for Women? Unequal Policy Responsiveness by Gender Persists Under Democratic and Republican Control*

This paper introduces an important question about how party control affects whether men and women are represented differently in Congress. The argument challenges conventional wisdom that the Democratic Party should be more responsive to women because there are more elected Democrats than Republicans in Congress. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the authors find that men are represented better than women regardless of which party has control of the federal government.

There are some areas that can be developed further for the paper to have a stronger impact:

- The authors state that the conventional wisdom is that Democrats should enact policies that better represent women's preference because Democrats have better descriptive representation by gender than Republicans. It would be helpful to have additional explanation and support from previous literature to understand why the conventional wisdom claims that descriptive representation leads to better policy representation.
- Further, why should we expect that women as a group would be represented better by one party or another? Women have a wide range of ideological preferences, even on some specific women's issues such as reproductive rights or the role of women in the workplace. Many women hold very conservative views that may be better represented by the Republican Party.
- More generally, why do men and women have different policy preferences? In what areas do men and women have policy preferences that are the same and where do they diverge? I see the data has information about the policy domain, so it would be helpful to have descriptive charts showing the differences in the policy area for policies that women and men have the same preferences or different preferences.
- What are the policies where women's preferences are not getting passed and men's are and vice versa? In Figure 3, it looks like there are substantial numbers of policy outcomes that are passed when the gender difference favors women and not passed when the gender difference favors men.
- Why is party control determined at the congressional and presidential level? How can you make an argument about how one party represents women better or worse under divided government? Also, should it not be worthwhile to focus more on Congress and which policies are proposed for consideration since the party in power determines the legislative agenda? It may be valuable to do your same analyses with party control only restricted to the congressional level.
- Would it be possible to show the descriptive charts as histograms instead of density plots? It's hard to understand what the scale on the y-axis means.
- How should we interpret the results from table 2?