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# Gender and Political Representation
## Session 8: Supply-Side Explanations

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# What we did last week...



Anyone can briefly summarize our last session?

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# Plan for today

This week, we'll have our final session on the causes of inequalities. We'll focus on women themselves and why they may not run for office.

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# Back to the first stage

In the last couple of weeks, we have approached the question of the female under-representation in politics already from step 2. Our assumption was:

- women want to get into politics
- there are various barriers preventing them from becoming elected
  1. institutions (like electoral systems)
  2. parties (and their selection mechanisms)
  3. voters (and their implicit biases)

What if this assumption is wrong?

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# Back to the first stage

FIGURE 1  Candidate Emergence from the Pool of Prospective Candidates
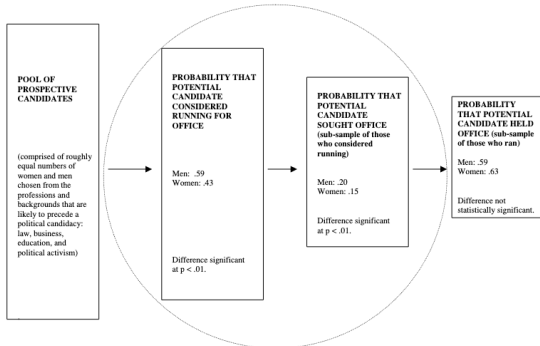


@Bennett and Celine?

# A candidate pool full with men

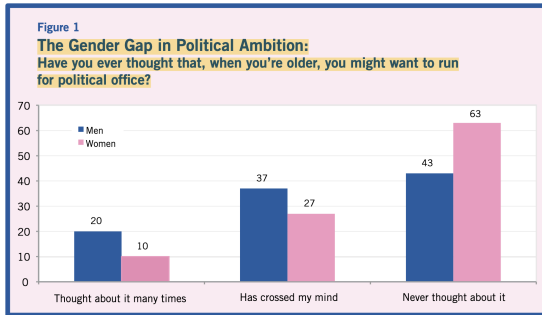| TABLE 1.   Rates of Entry and Number of Potential Candidates across Pools and By Party | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (1) | | (2) | | (3) |
| Sample: | State legislators | | Named in newspapers | | Lawyer-donors |
| Source: | Thomsen (2017) | | King (2017) | | Bonica and Sen (2017) |
| Office sought: | U.S. House | | U.S. Senate | | State or federal office |
| *All* | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Rate of entry (%) | 1.4 | 1.5 | 48.6** | 56.2 | 0.5** | 0.7 |
| **Raw number** | **7,099** | **23,883** | **432** | **2,558** | **83,819** | **295,719** |
| Total candidates | 101 | 349 | 210 | 1,437 | 392 | 2,109 |
| *Democrats* | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Rate of entry (%) | 1.2 | 1.1 | 50.2 | 55.2 | 0.4** | 0.6 |
| **Raw number** | **4,646** | **11,899** | **243** | **1,160** | **67,005** | **190,520** |
| Total candidates | 56 | 126 | 122 | 640 | 285 | 1,195 |
| *Republicans* | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Rate of entry (%) | 1.8 | 1.9 | 46.6** | 57.0 | 0.6** | 0.9 |
| **Raw number** | **2,453** | **11,984** | **189** | **1,398** | **16,814** | **105,199** |
| Total candidates | 45 | 223 | 88 | 797 | 107 | 914 |

Note: **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$.

Figure: A male pool of candidates (Thomsen and King 2020)

What could explain the differences in the candidate pool?

Introduction
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Candidates Choices
o●

Motherhood and Political Careers
oooooooo

Outlook
ooo

References

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# A candidate pool full with men



Figure: The gender gap in political ambition (Lawless and Fox 2013)

So, do women simply not want to be nominated for office?

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# A candidate pool full with men



Figure: The prior NZ Prime Minister on Motherhood and Politics text

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# A candidate pool full with men

"It's difficult to balance it all. We are fed that myth that you can have it all, as a "Wonder Woman." . . . I found that you can't be the best mom and the best congressperson. You try to strike a balance. But you can't do 100 percent. . . . You keep the balls in the air, and you hope for the best. There is great guilt and angst as to what is the proper way." (Lawless and Fox 2010, p. 72)

Women are still often faced with a double bind.

# A candidate pool full with men

FIGURE 5.   Testing for the Double Bind: Do Respondents Prefer Politicians with Greater Family Responsibilities?
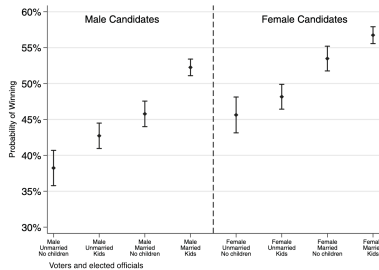


Figure: What voters want... (Teele, Kalla, and Rosenbluth 2018)

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# Survey on the reading

# To Emerge? Breadwinning, Motherhood, and Women's Decisions to Run for Office

Before we start, please form groups, go through the paper once again and try to complete our classification scheme. [10 minutes]

- **Research Question**:
- **Main Argument**:
- **Data and Method**:
- **Results**:
- **Implications**:

## Research Question

- **Research Question**: Do structural resources influence women's decision to run for office?
- **Main Argument**:
- **Data and Method**:
- **Results**:
- **Implications**:

# Argument

- **Research Question**: Do structural resources influence women's decision to run for office?

- **Main Argument**: Women may consider running but their socio-economic situation prevents them from competing.

- **Data and Method**:

- **Results**:

- **Implications**:

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# Argument

There are two types of political ambition

1. *nascent ambition*
2. *expressive ambition*

How do they differ? Which role do they play in the argument by
Bernhard, Shames, and Teele (2021)?

# Argument

- women may consider running but this *nascent ambition* does not translate into the actual behavior
- constraints are based on aspects of the household
    - lack of resources (e.g. gender pay gap)
    - too much responsibility in household (female breadwinner)
    - no one absorbing potential risks of income loss at household

# Argument

Bernhard, Shames, and Teele (2021) also argues that carework
might play a role. Which one? How can this be integrated into the
argument of female breadwinner?

# Data and Method

- **Research Question**: Do structural resources influence women's decision to run for office?
- **Main Argument**: Women may consider running but their socio-economic situation prevents them from competing.
- **Data and Method**: Mixed-methods study among alumni of Democratic Party's campaign training unit
- **Results**:
- **Implications**:

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# Data and Method

*What's the main challenge when studying who decides to run for*
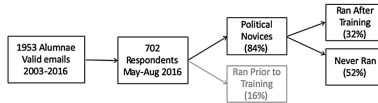*office?*

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# Data and Method

Often, we only have data on those people available who decided to run for office (remember Verge and Astudillo (2019))

- they rely on survey from alumni of 'Emerge America' (EA), a Democratic recruitment programme
- three types of data
  - intake data (n=2,083)
  - screening data
  - alumnae survey (n=702)
    - dependent variable: decision to run for office
    - independent variables: income, breadwinning and household composition

# Data and Method



FIGURE 1.    Study Group, Sample, and the Dependent Variable—the Decision to Run among Political Novices

1953 Alumnae Valid emails 2003-2016 → 702 Respondents May-Aug 2016 → Political Novices (84%) → Ran After Training (32%)

Ran Prior to Training (16%)

Political Novices (84%) → Never Ran (52%)

Note: The percentages listed refer to the share in each category of total respondents. Overall, the 32% of total respondents that ran after the training represents 39% of all novices.

Figure: Sample characteristics of EA

What are potential problems coming with this data source?
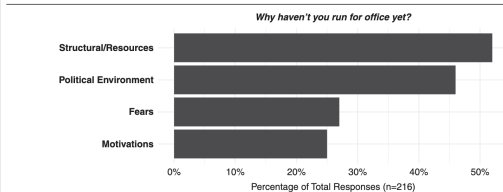
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# Data and Method

- only Democrats; motivations for Republicans may differ (think about last session)

- participants needed to pay a (substantial) fee of $1,000 $\rightarrow$ is participation in EA actually already expressive ambition?

- we are missing another interesting control group, which one?

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# Findings

- **Research Question**: Do structural resources influence women's decision to run for office?

- **Main Argument**: Women may consider running but their socio-economic situation prevents them from competing.

- **Data and Method**: Mixed-methods study among alumni of Democratic Party's campaign training unit.

- **Results**: Particularly breadwinning reduces women's likelihood to run for office.
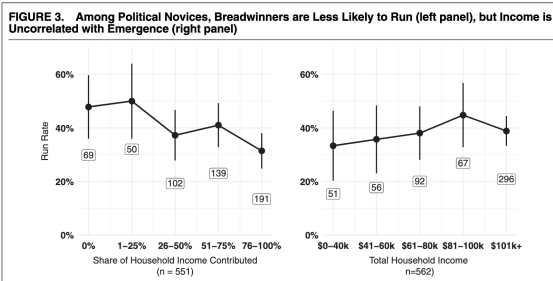
- **Implications**:

# Findings



FIGURE 2. Deterrent Factors in Candidate Emergence

Why haven't you run for office yet?

Structural/Resources
Political Environment
Fears
Motivations

0%    10%    20%    30%    40%    50%
Percentage of Total Responses (n=216)

Note: Coding is of open-ended data from political novices; answers could be coded into multiple categories.

What do Bernhard, Shames, and Teele (2021) ask their
respondents? What's the advantage of their approach?

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# Findings



FIGURE 3.  Among Political Novices, Breadwinners are Less Likely to Run (left panel), but Income is Uncorrelated with Emergence (right panel)

Which expectations are supported by their evidence?

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## Findings
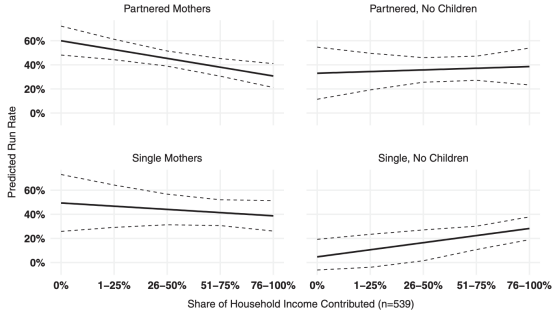


How do motherhood and breadwinning relate to each other?

## Implications and alternative explanations

**Question by Ákos**: Should political institutions consider economic compensation or family-friendly reforms for candidates?
**Question by Marina:** How would this study and the findings shift when confronted with different national contexts such as different social norms, welfare systems and political structures? Do the results conflict with the finding by Fox and Lawless (2004) that women lack political ambition to run for office?

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## Implications and alternative explanations

- **Research Question**: Do structural resources influence women's decision to run for office?

- **Main Argument**: Women may consider running but their socio-economic situation prevents them from competing.

- **Data and Method**: Mixed-methods study among alumni of Democratic Party's campaign training unit.

- **Results**: Particularly breadwinning reduces women's likelihood to run for office.

- **Implications**: Even if women are ambitious, socio-economic considerations may prevent them from running for office

## Other factors

Which other factors may prevent women from running for office?

# Other factors

One of the more powerful confounders in the study by Bernhard, Shames, and Teele (2021) was the 'political environment'

# Other factors

Yan and Bernhard (2024) ran a field experiment in which they texted people (liberal organizations' supporters) campaign messages – randomly varying whether the sender was female or male (by name)

**TABLE 1.  Sample Responses and Response Rates by Category**

| Category | Rates | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Offensive | Study 1 = 3.76% | "No. Your fat." |
| | Study 2 = 6.59% | "fuck off marching won't do shit except waste time." |
| | Overall = 4.35% | "my name is [NAME] you slut. what kind of stripper name is Jessica anyway." |
| Silencing | Study 1 = 2.22% | "bitch stfu" |
| | Study 2 = 12.86% | "STOP TEXTING" |
| | Overall = 4.44% | "Lose my number lady" |
| Withdrawals | Study 1 = 27.79% | "No thank you. Please, quit texting" |
| | Study 2 = 36.46% | "please remove me from these messages" |
| | Overall = 29.60% | "Stop" |

Figure: Example responses (Yan and Bernhard 2024)

In general, female volunteers were more often harassed and people withdrew more often from the mailing list

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## What we've learned today...

- how the candidate pool is highly skewed towards male candidates
- that there's a difference between 'nascent' and 'expressive' ambition
- that socio-economic differences in the household may held women back from running for office

# To prepare for next week…

- next week, we'll start with an evaluation of potential institutional fixes to improve women's representation in politics
- Main reading:
  - **Kim JH** (2019) Direct Democracy and Women's Political Engagement. *American Journal of Political Science* **63** (3), 594–610. ISSN: 1540-5907. DOI: 10.1111/ajps.12420
- Complementary readings
  - **Betz T, Fortunato D, and O'brien DZ** (2021) Women's Descriptive Representation and Gendered Import Tax Discrimination. *American Political Science Review* **115** (1), 307–315. ISSN: 0003-0554, 1537-5943. DOI: 10.1017/S0003055420000799

# To prepare for next week...

- **Clayton A** (2021) How Do Electoral Gender Quotas Affect Policy? *Annual Review of Political Science* **24** (1), 235–252. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102019

Thank you for your attention!
Any further questions?

# Literature

📄 **Bernhard R, Shames S, and Teele DL** (2021) To Emerge? Breadwinning, Motherhood, and Women's Decisions to Run for Office. *American Political Science Review* **115** (2), 379–394.

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📄 **Fox RL and Lawless JL** (2004) Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office. *American Journal of Political Science* **48** (2), 264–280.

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📄 **Lawless JL and Fox RL** (2010) *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office, Revised and Expanded Edition*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

📄 **Lawless JL and Fox RL** (2013) *Girl Just Wanna Not Run*. Tech. rep. Washington, DC: Women & Politics Institute, 2013.

📄 **Teele DL, Kalla J, and Rosenbluth F** (2018) The Ties That Double Bind: Social Roles and Women's Underrepresentation in Politics. *American Political Science Review* **112** (3), 525–541.

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📄 **Thomsen DM and King AS** (2020) Women's Representation and the Gendered Pipeline to Power. *American Political Science Review* **114** (4), 989–1000.

📄 **Verge T and Astudillo J** (2019) The Gender Politics of Executive Candidate Selection and Reselection. *European Journal of Political Research* **58** (2), 720–740.

📄 **Yan AN and Bernhard R** (2024) The Silenced Text: Field Experiments on Gendered Experiences of Political Participation. *American Political Science Review* **118** (1), 481–487.