

# Women Also Know Stuff

## Challenging the Gender Gap in Political Sophistication

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Stony Brook University

# Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)		
Obama (-)		
Romney (+)		
Romney (-)		

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Obama (+)	I think he is honest, has good intentions.	
Obama (-)	I don't feel he is up for the job, he doesn't really know how to get things accomplished from idea to actual reality.	
Romney (+)	He comes across as an honest person and I feel that financially he would be better for the country.	
Romney (-)	I am a moderate conservative and there are some things about anti-gay rights that I don't support.	

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# Who scores higher on political knowledge?

Both respondents scored equally on the conventional political knowledge measure in the 2012 ANES!

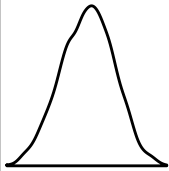

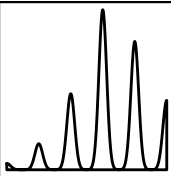

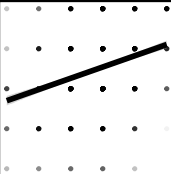
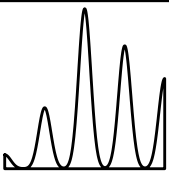
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# Validating the Measure I

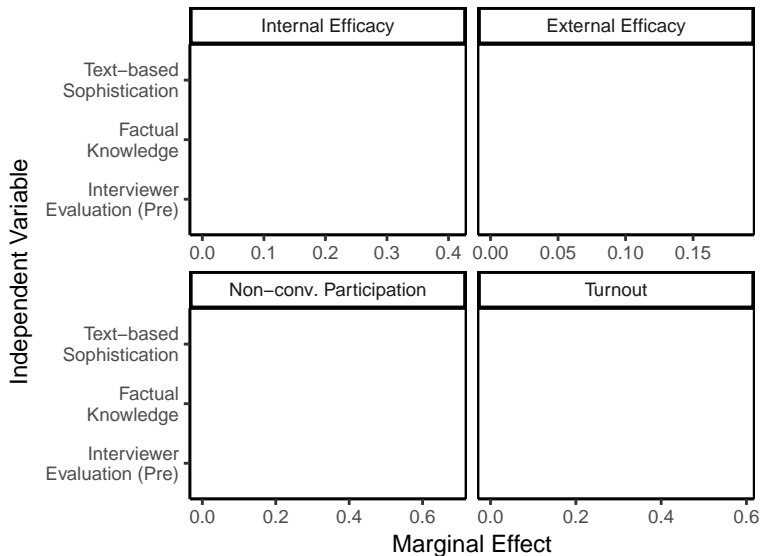
Text-based Sophistication	Factual Knowledge	Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)	
			Text-based Sophistication
			Factual Knowledge
			Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)

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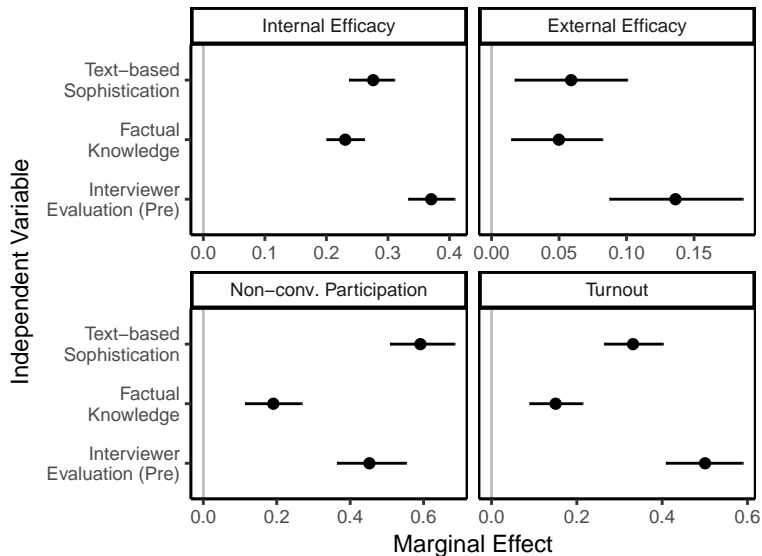
Text-based Sophistication	Factual Knowledge	Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)	
	Corr: 0.271	Corr: 0.437	Text-based Sophistication
		Corr: 0.314	Factual Knowledge
			Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)



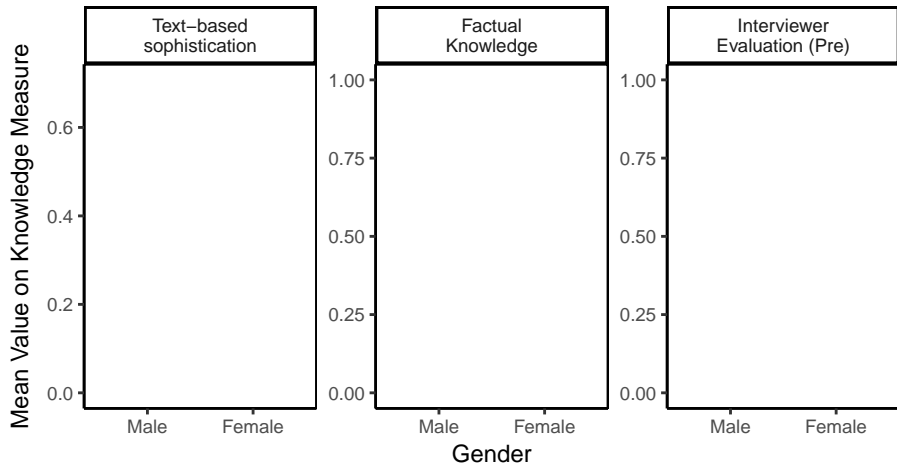
# Validating the Measure II



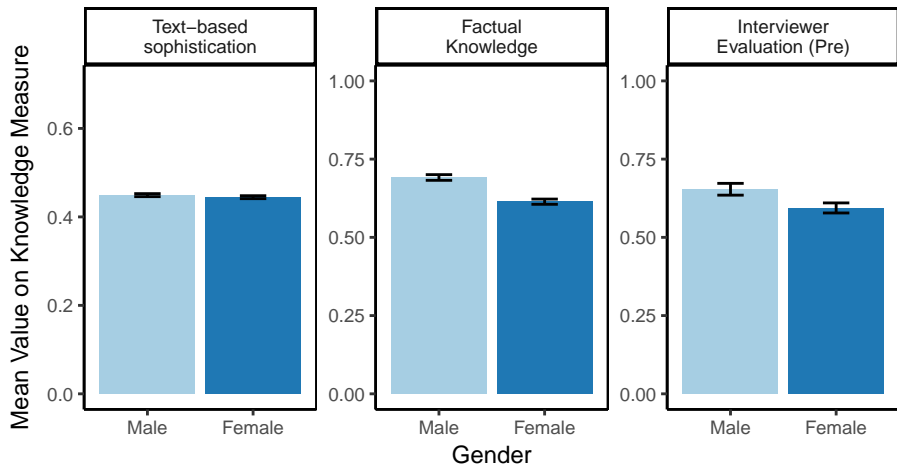
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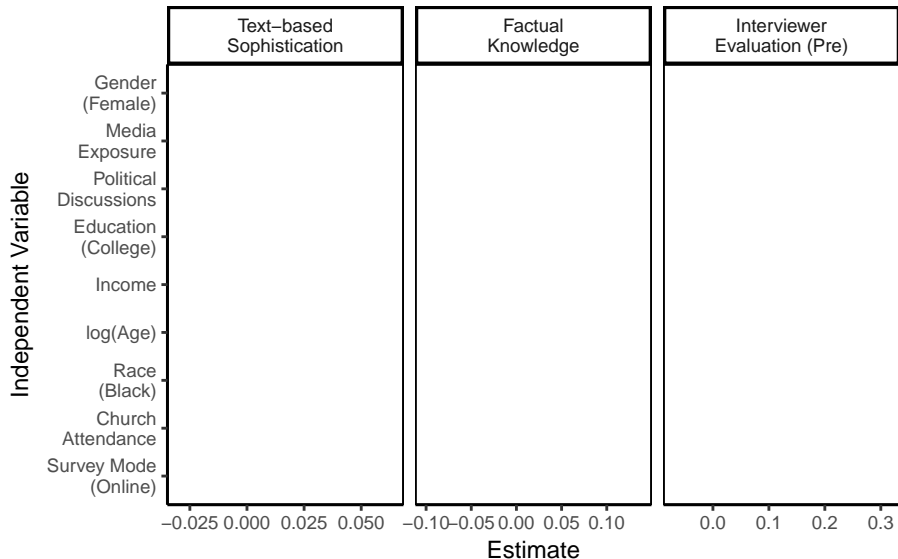
# Assessing the Gender Gap I



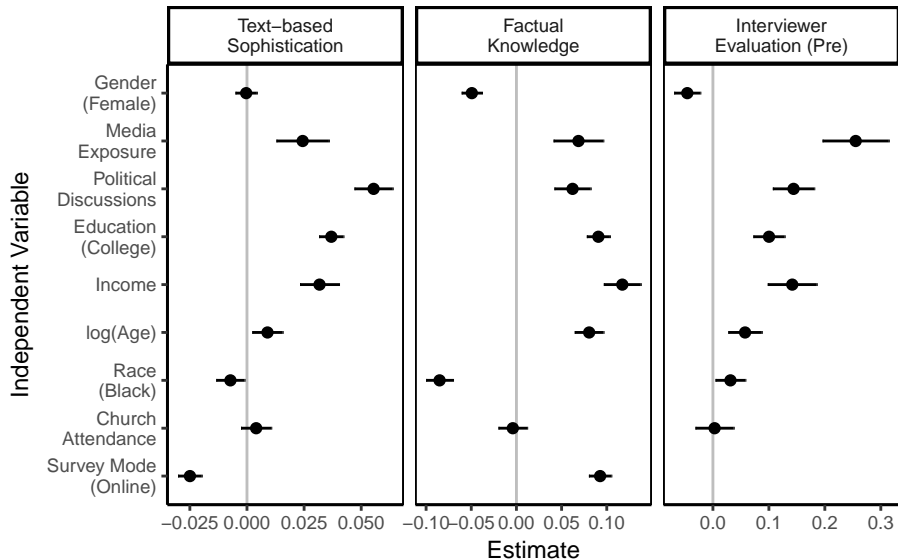
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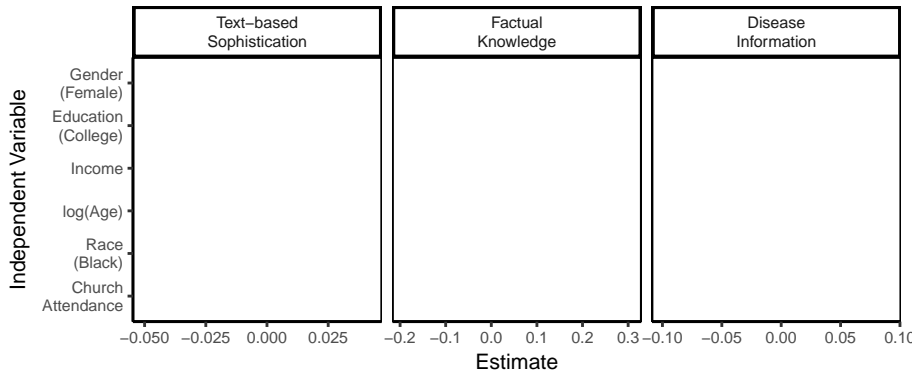
# Assessing the Gender Gap II



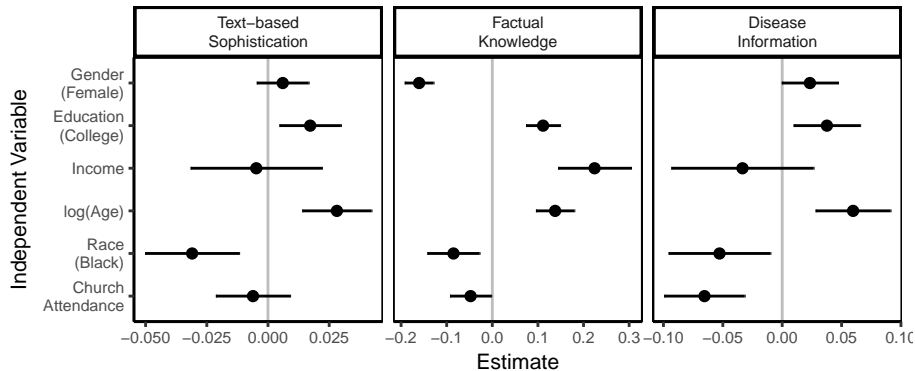
# Assessing the Gender Gap II



# Replication – YouGov 2015



# Assessing the Gender Gap II





# Conclusion

- ▶ Women might score lower than men on **factual knowledge** about political institutions, but there are no differences in the **sophistication** of expressed political attitudes.
- ▶ We observe **theoretically meaningful** variation in the **complexity** of verbatim open-ended responses.
- ▶ Text-based sophistication is conceptually closer to the **structure of belief systems** than conventional measures (e.g., Tetlock, 1983; Luskin, 1987).

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Thank you very much for your attention!

Manuscript and code available at:

<https://github.com/pwkraft/knowledge>

Comments, questions?

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# References

- Luskin, Robert C. 1987. "Measuring political sophistication." *American Journal of Political Science* 31 (4): 856–899.
- Tetlock, Philip E. 1983. "Cognitive style and political ideology." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 45 (1): 118.