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To cite this article: Danielle M. Thomsen (2019) Which women win? Partisan changes in victory patterns in US House Elections, *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7:2, 412-428, DOI: [10.1080/21565503.2019.1584749](https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2019.1584749)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2019.1584749>



Published online: 14 Mar 2019.



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DIALOGUE: STILL NOT THERE: CONTINUED CHALLENGES TO
WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION



Which women win? Partisan changes in victory patterns in US House Elections

Danielle M. Thomsen^{a,b}

^aDepartment of Political Science, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA, USA; ^bCenter for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA

ABSTRACT

A long line of research has shown that “when women run, they win,” but we know little about which women win. Based on a new dataset of US House candidates, this article examines partisan victory patterns among female candidates from 1980 to 2012. The relationship between party and election outcomes changes over time, yet Republican women face a much more difficult electoral environment than Democratic women. In addition, the electoral situation of Republican women has worsened in recent years, whereas that of Democratic women has improved. Democratic women candidates now dramatically outnumber Republican women candidates, and prospects for gender parity are further hindered by the dearth of Republican women who run. The partisan gap in women’s representation is likely to persist in light of the multiple ways in which Republican women are disadvantaged compared to Democratic women.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 24 March 2018



Accepted 29 November 2018

KEYWORDS

American politics;
congressional elections;
gender; party; victory
patterns

Women are dramatically underrepresented in American politics. At the national legislative level, the US is ranked 75th worldwide, with women comprising only 24 percent of the US Congress (IPU 2018). Political scientists have long sought to understand whether the electoral environment hinders the advancement of women in elected office, and the consensus that emerged out of research in the 1990s was that “when women run, they win” at equal rates as their male counterparts (i.e., Burrell 1994; Carroll 1994; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997). Female candidates received as many votes as similarly situated men, and the general conclusion was that “winning elections has nothing to do with candidate sex” (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997, 79). Most of the earliest studies were of general election outcomes, but those on primary victory rates looked at differences between men and women as well (Burrell 1994, 2014; King and Matland 2003; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Palmer and Simon 2012).

Less attention, however, has been devoted to variation across women candidates, and we know little about partisan differences in victory patterns among women. Scholars have recently begun to analyze the growing partisan gap among women in congressional office: why the percentage of Democratic women in Congress has increased steadily over

CONTACT Danielle M. Thomsen  dthomsen@uci.edu  Department of Political Science, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA, USA; Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, USA

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the past 30 years while the percentage of Republican women has instead stagnated (i.e., Cooperman and Oppenheimer 2001; Crowder-Meyer and Cooperman 2018; Crowder-Meyer and Lauderdale 2014; Elder 2008; Thomsen 2015; Thomsen and Swers 2017). However, there is a dearth of empirical analyses, particularly historical analyses, of partisan variation in primary and general election victory patterns among women candidates or of differences in the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women candidates. Understanding which women win has direct consequences for policy outcomes as well as contemporary patterns of women's representation.

Based on a new dataset of US House candidates from 1980 to 2012, this article examines primary and general election victory rates among female candidates over time. I find that Democratic women are more likely to win the primary than their Republican counterparts, but Republican women were actually more likely than Democratic women to win the primary in the 1980s and more likely to win the general election in the 1990s and 2000s. Yet in general, Republican women face a much more difficult electoral environment than Democratic women: they are less likely to be incumbents, they have more primary competition, and they run in less favorable partisan environments. Furthermore, the electoral situation of Republican women has worsened in recent years, whereas that of Democratic women has improved. Democratic women candidates now dramatically outnumber Republican women candidates, and prospects for gender parity are further hindered by the dearth of Republican women who run for Congress. The partisan gap in women's representation is likely to persist in light of the multiple ways in which Republican women are disadvantaged compared to Democratic women.

This article, along with others in this dialogue, highlights the continued challenges to gender parity in legislative institutions across contexts. The distinct trajectories of the two parties in the US are similar to partisan trends in some nations and different from others. Medeiros, Forest, and Erl (forthcoming) uncover partisan disparities in the nomination of women candidates in Canada and detail the significance of a variety of both supply and demand factors. By contrast, Wang and Muriaas (forthcoming) find that political parties in Zambia appear to informally collude and coordinate their decisions and tend to nominate the same number of women candidates. More broadly, this dialogue demonstrates how the national and historical context in which candidates are selected matters for the election of women to office. We may see a similar surge in female candidates that resembles Democratic women in 2018 in other parties and contexts where the groundwork has been laid for the success of women candidates. It is also likely that electoral waves or shocks will have a more dramatic impact on gains and losses in women's representation in countries where women are clustered in one party than in countries where women are more evenly distributed among the parties. We can compare and contrast the electoral and political building blocs across countries to gain additional insights about the comparative trajectories of women's representation across contexts and over time.

Gender, party, and candidate success

Gender differences in election outcomes have received ample attention from scholars of American politics. A host of studies from the United States showed that female candidates receive as much support from voters as their similarly situated male counterparts (Burrell 1994; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Palmer and Simon 2012). Due to the emphasis on

differences between men and women, less consideration has been given to differences among women. The partisan gap in women's representation in the US has sparked new interest in the barriers that Republican and Democratic women each face in their pursuit of political office (Crowder-Meyer and Cooperman 2018; Crowder-Meyer and Lauderdale 2014; Kitchens and Swers 2016; Thomsen 2015; Thomsen and Swers 2017). But the predominant empirical approach even in studies that consider both party and gender is to compare men and women (Burrell 1994, 2014; Kitchens and Swers 2016; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Pearson and McGhee 2013; Thomsen and Swers 2017; Thomsen 2019).

Scholars of comparative politics have paid more attention to partisan differences in women's representation, in part because of the variation in the use and enforcement of gender quotas across countries and parties (i.e., Baldez 2004; Caul 2001; Htun and Weldon 2010; Krook 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). An increasing number of parties have adopted quotas, and in fact, half of the countries of the world now use an electoral quota for their parliament (IDEA 2017). Leftist parties have higher percentages of women in office (Kittilson 2006), but most center-right and conservative parties cross-nationally have higher levels of female representation than the Republican Party in the US due to gender quotas. In many Western European countries, women constitute between one-fourth and one-third of the conservative and center-right parties (IDEA 2017), which is much higher than the seven percent of women in the congressional in the Republican Party in Congress.

Research in comparative politics has also examined the effects of parties as gatekeepers because of their influential role in candidate selection and nomination (i.e., Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Wang and Muriaas (forthcoming) show how leader-centered nomination processes in Zambia affect the gender makeup of candidates across parties. By comparison, campaigns in the US are candidate-centered, and candidates are responsible for organizing and running their campaigns. Candidates build their own fundraising networks, formulate their own strategy, and direct the day-to-day campaign operations. While party leaders play a role in encouraging and discouraging individuals to run (Crowder-Meyer 2013; Sanbonmatsu 2006), the candidate bears much of the personal and professional costs for making that decision (Herrnson 2004). The political and electoral environment is thus a key factor in the study of elections in the US, as it influences the candidates who choose to run, the resources and support they are able to obtain, and whether or not they are ultimately successful.

Although women win when they run, we have a limited understanding of the dynamic nature of the relationship between party and election outcomes for Democratic and Republican women candidates. There are a variety of reasons why women candidates may fare differently by party and over time. First, members of the broader Democratic coalition value diversity as a core principle of the party, whereas the Republican coalition rejects identity-based appeals for the expansion of women in office (Grossmann and Hopkins 2015). Freeman (1986) describes Democrats as having a pluralistic party culture that is responsive to group interests, while the Republican Party culture is more hierarchical and suspicious of group-oriented advocacy. In addition, the existing partisan donor pools are now much friendlier to the emergence of Democratic women than Republican women (Crowder-Meyer and Cooperman 2018; Thomsen and Swers 2017). While some Republican activists and party leaders have launched efforts to fund women

candidates, these organizations have not had the same level of success as EMILY's List, particularly in recent elections.

Furthermore, whereas women in state legislative office were more evenly split between the two parties in the 1980s, we have seen large partisan differences emerge in recent years. Women's representation in state legislative office is especially important for prospects of gender parity in the US Congress since many members begin their careers at the state level. While the Republican Party has made sizeable gains in state legislatures, the overwhelming majority of these gains have been made by Republican men. In fact, conservative Republican men in state legislative office outnumber conservative Republican women more than five to one. On the Democratic side, women have made steady gains in state legislative office, and they now comprise about 35 percent of Democratic state legislators (CAWP 2018). As a result, the pool of potential female Republican candidates is much smaller than the pool of potential female Democratic candidates and male Republican candidates (Thomsen 2017). The large partisan differences in the supply of potential congressional candidates have important consequences for the number of Democratic and Republican women who run.

More generally, while Democratic women may fare better than Republican women in the current context, we also know little about how electoral and structural factors like incumbency, primary competition, and district partisanship intersect with party in different ways for women candidates over time. Unlike much of the previous research on gender and elections, the concern here is not whether the electoral environment is gender neutral. Rather, the goal is to examine disparities in the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women who run for Congress and changes over time. The analyses below address three simple but important questions: First, of the women who run, are Democratic or Republican women more likely to win the primary and general election? Second, how have partisan victory patterns evolved over time? Third, how have changes in the electoral situations of Democratic and Republican women candidates contributed to the growing partisan gap among female officeholders?

Data

The analyses are based on primary and general election results for the US House of Representatives from 1980 to 2012. I draw on a new dataset of female candidates that includes 3036 primary candidates and 1742 general election candidates. Election results were obtained from the Federal Election Commission and the *America Votes* series (Scammon, McGillivray, and Cook 1990–2006). These data were merged with Bonica's (2014) dataset of candidates who ran for congressional office during this time. Candidate gender was obtained from the Bonica dataset and through additional online and newspaper searches. The analysis is restricted to women candidates as the main concern here is how the electoral situations of Democratic and Republican women compare to each other and how they have evolved over time. The unit of analysis is the congressional candidacy, so individual candidates can be in the dataset multiple times as the data span a 30-year period.

I use a series of OLS regressions to examine the relationship between party and primary and general election outcomes among female candidates over time. The dependent variables are whether the female candidate won the primary or general election and the vote share she received.¹ The main independent variable is the candidate's party. I also

include several electoral factors that have long been shown to influence victory patterns and have been used extensively in studies of congressional election outcomes, including incumbency, the number of primary competitors, and district partisanship (i.e., Burrell 2014; Dolan 2014; Elder 2008; Hall and Snyder 2015; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Palmer and Simon 2012). State and year fixed effects are included in all of the models as well.

Descriptive trends in victory patterns

Figure 1 shows the percentage of Republican and Democratic women who won the primary and/or general election over three time periods: 1980–1990, 1992–2002, and 2004–2012. The top and bottom panels display primary and general election winners, respectively. Across this time period, Democratic women are more likely to win the primary than Republican women (61 and 57 percent, respectively; $p < .05$). However, Republican women had higher rates of primary victory than Democratic women in the 1980s (63 and 47 percent, respectively). These figures diverged in the 1990s, with the

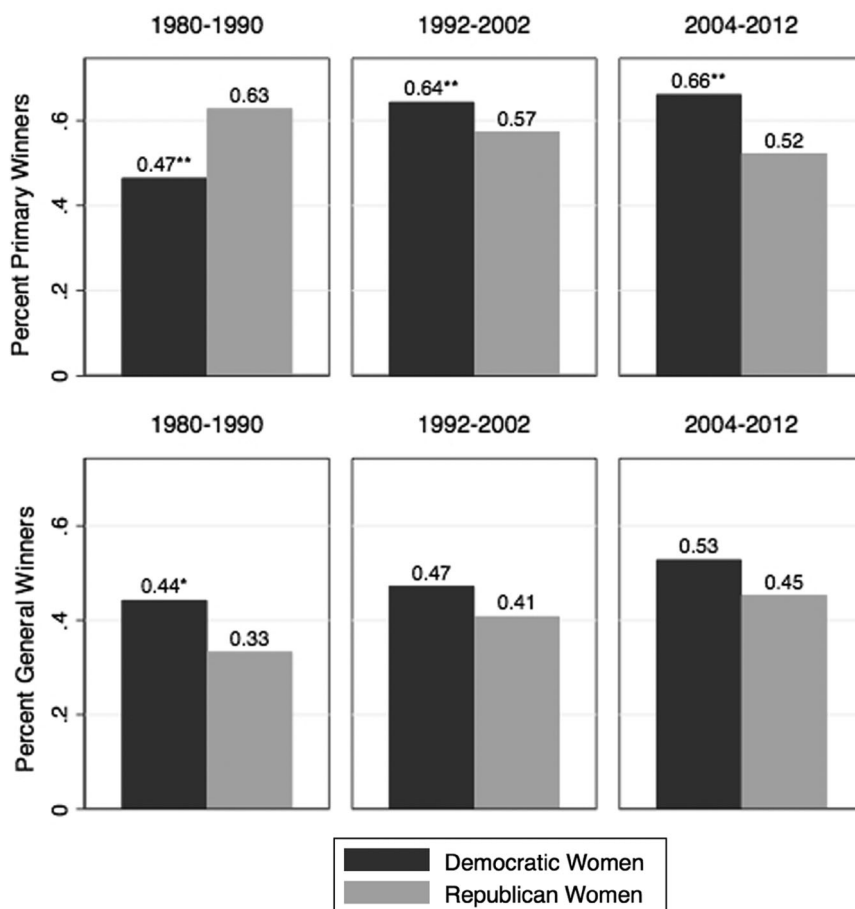


Figure 1. Female primary and general election winners over time and by party.

Note: Statistical significance denotes differences between Democratic and Republican women in each period. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

percentage of female Democratic winners surpassing the percentage of female Republican winners. Democratic women have remained successful in recent years, and between 2004 and 2012, 66 percent of Democratic women won in the primary compared to 52 percent of Republican women. These differences are significant in each period.

The general election patterns are slightly different. Democratic women had higher rates of general election victory than Republican women in the 1980s (44 and 33 percent, respectively; $p < .05$). The partisan gap in general election victory rates has persisted in recent years as well: between 2004 and 2012, 53 percent of Democratic women won in the general election compared to 45 percent of Republican women ($p < .10$). Democratic and Republican women have become more successful in the general election over time, but Democrats now fare better than Republican women in both the primary and general election. Yet we also want to examine partisan victory patterns in conjunction with traditional variables that have long been shown to matter for election outcomes, such as incumbency, the degree of electoral competition, and district partisanship. We are especially interested in how these electoral variables interact with party in different ways during this time period.

Results

The primary and general election models are presented in [Tables 1](#) and [2](#). I examine the relationship between party and victory patterns for the full sample of women legislators

Table 1. Partisanship and primary election outcomes, 1980–2012.

	(1) All	(2) 1980–1990	(3) 1992–2002	(4) 2004–2012
DV: win primary				
Republican	−0.04* (0.02)	0.19** (0.03)	−0.13** (0.03)	−0.13** (0.03)
Incumbent	0.46** (0.02)	0.48** (0.04)	0.42** (0.03)	0.51** (0.03)
Number of primary candidates	−0.06** (0.01)	−0.06** (0.01)	−0.04** (0.01)	−0.06** (0.01)
Same party presidential vote	−0.06** (0.01)	−0.05** (0.01)	−0.08** (0.01)	−0.08** (0.01)
Constant	1.18** (0.10)	1.01** (0.14)	1.35** (0.13)	1.42** (0.14)
Number of observations	3036	688	1161	1187
R^2	0.36	0.43	0.40	0.42
DV: primary vote share				
Republican	−0.02* (0.01)	0.18** (0.02)	−0.10** (0.02)	−0.09** (0.02)
Incumbent	0.36** (0.02)	0.39** (0.03)	0.34** (0.03)	0.38** (0.02)
Number of primary candidates	−0.07** (0.01)	−0.07** (0.01)	−0.06** (0.02)	−0.07** (0.01)
Same party presidential vote	−0.04** (0.00)	−0.04** (0.01)	−0.05** (0.01)	−0.05** (0.01)
Constant	0.86** (0.05)	0.99** (0.11)	1.11** (0.06)	1.01** (0.08)
Number of observations	3036	688	1,161	1,187
R^2	0.58	0.60	0.61	0.66

Source: Election results are from the America Votes series and the Federal Election Commission.

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All models include state and year fixed effects. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 2. Partisanship and general election outcomes, 1980–2012.

	(1) All	(2) 1980–1990	(3) 1992–2002	(4) 2004–2012
DV: win general election				
Republican	0.03 (0.02)	−0.07* (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)	0.08** (0.03)
Incumbent	0.69** (0.02)	0.80** (0.04)	0.67** (0.04)	0.54** (0.05)
Number of primary candidates	0.05** (0.01)	0.05** (0.02)	0.05** (0.01)	0.05** (0.01)
Same party presidential vote	0.08** (0.01)	0.05** (0.01)	0.10** (0.01)	0.13** (0.01)
Constant	−0.24** (0.10)	−0.21** (0.07)	−0.35** (0.15)	−0.51** (0.13)
Number of observations	1748	360	684	704
R^2	0.72	0.83	0.71	0.73
DV: general election vote share				
Republican	−0.01* (0.00)	−0.09** (0.01)	0.06** (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)
Incumbent	0.20** (0.01)	0.27** (0.02)	0.18** (0.01)	0.13** (0.01)
Number of primary candidates	0.01** (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
Same party presidential vote	0.07** (0.00)	0.05** (0.00)	0.08** (0.00)	0.08** (0.00)
Constant	−0.03 (0.04)	0.20** (0.06)	−0.14** (0.04)	−0.10 (0.06)
Number of observations	1748	360	684	704
R^2	0.78	0.85	0.81	0.84

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All models include state and year fixed effects. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

and in three different time periods (1980–1990, 1992–2002, and 2004–2012). With respect to primary elections, across the entire period, Republican women are less likely to win than Democratic women, and the primary vote share is 2 percentage points lower, on average, for Republican women than for Democratic women. However, this result obscures important differences over time. As in the section above, Republican women were actually more likely than Democratic women to win the primary in the 1980s but less likely to do so in the 1990s and 2000s, even after accounting for incumbency, primary competition, and the partisan tilt of the district. The primary vote share of Republican women was 18 percentage points higher, on average, than that of Democratic women in the 1980s, but it was 10 and 9 points lower than that of Democratic women in the 1990s and 2000s, respectively. Despite the advantage that Republican women once had in primary elections, Democratic women have consistently outperformed their GOP counterparts over the last two decades.

In the general election models in Table 2, we can see that, across the entire time period, Republican women are slightly more likely to win the general election than Democratic women ($p < .10$), but their vote share is actually 1.2 percentage points lower, on average, than that of Democratic women. Yet this again masks key differences in the relationship over time. In fact, contrary to the primary results above, Republican women were less likely than Democratic women to win the general election in the 1980s but more likely to do so in the 1990s and 2000s after accounting for electoral and partisan factors. The general election vote share of Republican women was 9

percentage points lower than that of Democratic women in the 1980s; it was 6 points higher than that of Democratic women in the 1990s; and it was statistically indistinguishable from that of Democratic women in the 2000s.

The results show clear differences in the victory rates of Republican and Democratic women over time, but the magnitude of the relationship is smaller than that for some of the electoral variables. Unsurprisingly, incumbency has the largest effect on victory patterns. The probability of winning the primary is 46 percentage points higher for female incumbents than it is for non-incumbents (96 and 50 percent, respectively), and the probability of winning the general election is 69 percentage points higher for incumbents than non-incumbents (86 and 17 percent, respectively). Primary and general election vote share is expected to be 36 and 20 percentage points higher, respectively, for incumbents. The number of primary candidates also has a sizeable impact on election outcomes. A standard deviation increase in the number of primary candidates results in a 17 percentage point decrease in primary vote share and a 2 point increase in general election vote share. District partisanship is strongly associated with victory rates as well. A standard deviation increase in same party district partisanship leads to a 6 percentage point decrease in primary vote share and a 10 percentage point increase in general election vote share.

Electoral situations of Republicans and Democrats

Electoral factors also have a huge impact on election outcomes, and gender scholars have yet to fully explore how these factors intersect with candidate partisanship and whether they do so in different ways over time. [Figure 2](#) provides comparisons of the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women in the same periods as above. The top panels show the percentage of women who ran as incumbents in each period; the middle panels show the average number of primary competitors in the race in each period; and the bottom panels show the same party presidential vote share of the district in each period.

Several patterns emerge, all of which highlight the increased barriers that Republican women face in the current political environment. First, similar proportions of Republican and Democratic women ran as incumbents in the 1980s, but these figures have diverged in recent years, with Democratic women now significantly more likely than Republican women to run as incumbents. Between 2004 and 2012, 31 percent of female Democratic candidates were incumbents, compared to 22 percent of Republican women ($p < .01$). Similar differences were apparent in the 1990s as well, when 26 and 18 percent of Democratic and Republican women, respectively, ran as incumbents ($p < .01$). While the proportion of female Democratic incumbents has increased since the 1980s, the proportion of female Republican incumbents has stagnated.

Second, Republican women face more competitors, on average, than Democratic women. In the 1980s and even the 1990s, Republican women actually had fewer primary opponents than Democratic women, though these differences do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. However, in the most recent period, there are 3.27 candidates in primaries with Republican women, on average, compared to 2.64 candidates in primaries with Democratic women ($p < .01$).² This may be related both to the growing number of female incumbents but also the fact that EMILY's List has become an increasingly influential player in Democratic primaries during this period. The early

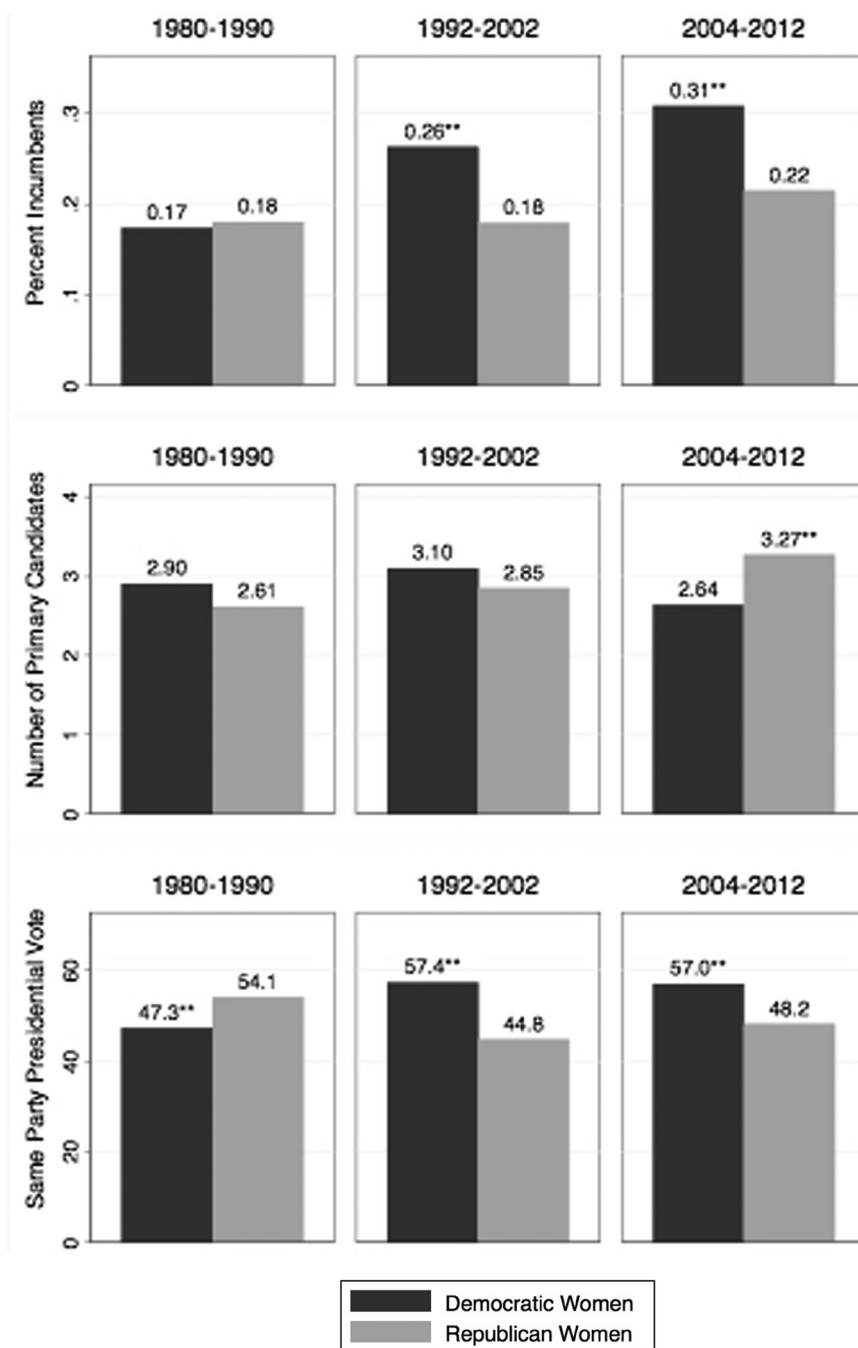


Figure 2. The electoral situations of women candidates over time and by party.

Note: Statistical significance denotes differences between Democratic and Republican women in each period. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

involvement of EMILY's List in candidate fundraising may discourage other Democratic candidates from entering the race.

Third, the partisan tilt of the districts in which Republican and Democratic women run has changed over time. The same party presidential vote share of the districts in which women run is shown in [Figure 2](#), and higher values correspond to safer districts for their party. Scholars have previously shown that Republican women represent more marginal districts (Evans 2005) so we might have expected Republican women candidates to have been more likely to run in these districts than Democratic women, but this pattern was not evident in the 1980s. In fact, between 1980 and 1990, the districts in which GOP women candidates ran were 7 percentage points more favorable for their party than those in which Democratic women ran ($p < .01$). These patterns reversed in the 1990s, and in the most recent period, the same party district partisanship in the districts where Democratic women ran was 9 percentage points higher than that for Republican women.

The general pattern is a worsening electoral situation for Republican women over time: similar proportions of Republican women run as incumbents today as in the 1980s, Republican women face more primary competitors today than they did in the 1980s, and Republican women run in less favorable partisan environments today than they did in the 1980s. These differences in the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women candidates are a key part of the growing partisan gap among women in Congress. The partisan changes in primary and general election victory patterns identified above have important implications for the election of women candidates over time, but the interaction between party and these key electoral variables are crucial as well. Scholars have paid less attention to how the electoral environment interacts with partisanship, and especially to historical changes in these patterns. However, the disparities presented here suggest that Republican women face a particularly uphill battle to equal political representation when compared to their Democratic counterparts.

What is not reflected in these aggregate percentages are the numerical differences in the number of Republican and Democratic primary and general election candidates over time. [Figure 3](#) shows the dramatic partisan changes in the number of women who launched congressional candidacies during this period. Democratic women outnumbered Republican women as primary candidates even in the 1980s, but relatively equal numbers of Democratic and Republican women ran in the general election in 1980s, in part due to the electoral advantages that GOP women had at that time. Since then, however, the partisan disparity in the candidate pool has widened significantly. In the 1990s and 2000s, there were 1.6 times as many female Democrats as female Republicans seeking the primary nomination. The gap has increased even more at the general election stage in recent years, and the number of Democratic women running in the general election now more than doubles that of Republican women.

The number of Republican women competing in primary and general elections has increased over time, although not by the same margin as their female Democratic counterparts. The number of Democratic women who ran in the general election in the 2004–2012 period was 2.6 times that in the 1980–1990 period (478 vs. 183), whereas the number of Republican women who ran in the general election in the 2004–2012 period was only 1.3 times that in the 1980–1990 period (226 vs. 178).³ The steady increase in the number of Democratic candidates reflects the improved electoral situation of Democratic women during this time, whereas the stagnation on the Republican side reflects the worsening

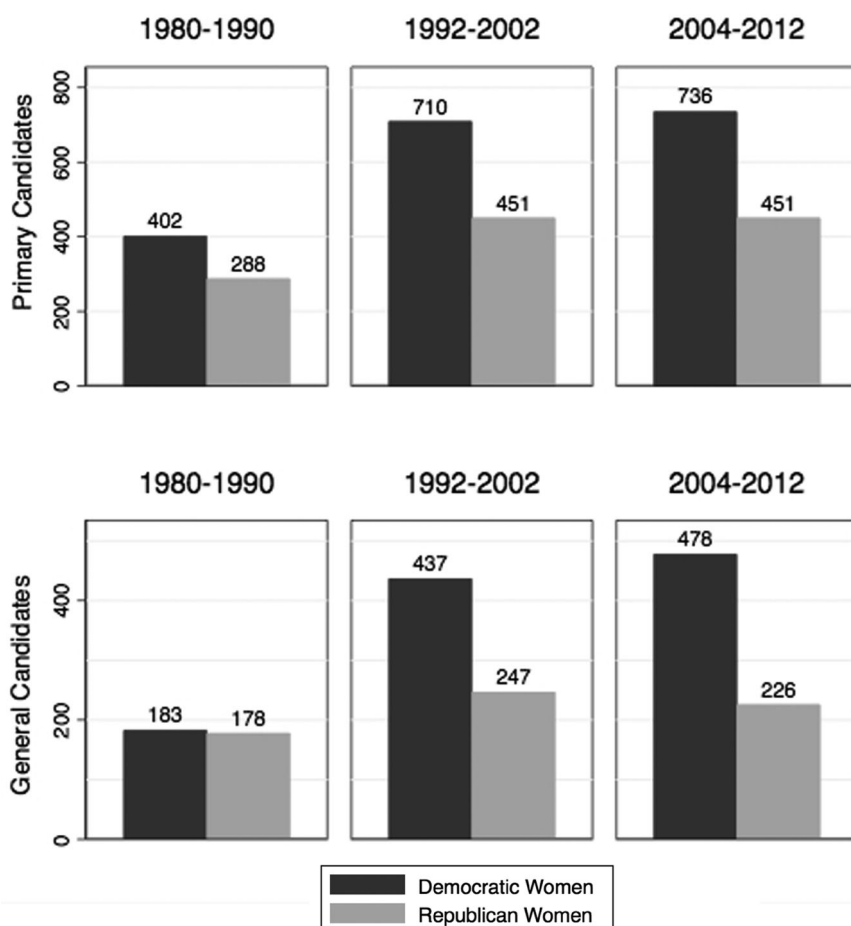


Figure 3. Number of female primary and general election candidates over time and by party.

electoral situation that Republican women face in the contemporary political context. Scholars have given less attention to the gender and partisan distribution of the pool of female congressional candidates (but see Crowder-Meyer and Lauderdale 2014), but the makeup of the candidate pool has at least as great of an impact on patterns of women's representation as gender or partisan differences in victory rates.

Conclusion

The analyses above extend our understanding of how candidate gender and party matter for congressional election outcomes in the contemporary political context. The relationship between party and primary and general election victory patterns has varied in significant ways over time for Republican and Democratic women candidates. Republican women were more likely than Democratic women to win the primary in the 1980s, but they were less likely to do so in the 1990s and 2000s. Conversely, Republican women were less likely than Democratic women to win the general election in the 1980s but

more likely to do so in the 1990s and 2000s. In addition, Republican women face a much more difficult electoral context than Democratic women: they are less likely to be incumbents, they have more primary competition, and they run in less favorable partisan environments. The electoral situation of Republican women has also worsened in recent years, whereas the electoral situation of Democratic women has improved. The Democratic women who run today are more likely to be incumbents, they face fewer primary challengers, and they run in more favorable partisan environments than did their Democratic women counterparts in the 1980s.

Prospects for gender parity in Congress are seriously hindered by these key differences in the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women. Gender scholars have largely focused on comparisons between male and female candidates, but as Schreiber (2012, 550) notes, “We know little about the differences among women who seek elective positions of power.” The findings suggest that Democratic and Republican women are on different tracks to equal political representation and they face a different set of barriers to getting elected. Scholars have given less attention to the partisan makeup of the pool of female candidates, but the growing partisan disparity in the number of women who run for Congress and in the electoral situations of Republican and Democratic women candidates has important consequences for women’s representation. If Republican women run in tougher partisan environments today than they did 30 years ago and face more candidates today than they did 30 years ago, this does not bode well for the election of Republican women to Congress. The partisan gap in women’s representation is unlikely to fade any time soon in light of the multiple ways in which Republican women are disadvantaged compared to Democratic women.

The findings can also shed light on prospects for gender parity in legislative institutions cross-nationally. As others in this dialogue have noted, similar partisan differences in women’s representation have emerged in other countries as well. It is likely that broader partisan and electoral forces that are either more or less explicitly tied to gender, such as the #MeToo movement or incumbent approval ratings, will have more dramatic consequences on the election of women to office in these national contexts. Wave elections also tend to help or hurt members of one party, and when women’s representation is concentrated in a single party rather than distributed more evenly across parties, women as a group are likely to experience greater gains as well as greater losses. Future comparisons may be drawn between the 2018 midterms in the US and elections in another context where the foundation has been laid for the emergence and success of women in leftist parties. Scholars can gain insights about the comparative trajectories of women’s representation by looking at similarities and differences in the electoral and political building blocs across countries. While country-specific variables are clearly important for the election of women to office, we can also reach beyond national lines to better understand the factors that matter for patterns of female representation globally.

Notes

1. Although primary and general election outcomes are binary, I use OLS regressions across models so the magnitude of the coefficients has more substantive meaning (see also Hall and Snyder 2015). However, the results are very similar with logistic regression models, and they are provided in Table A1.

2. These figures are lower than those reported in Lawless and Pearson (2008) because the data include uncontested races. The main concern here is to examine partisan differences in victory patterns, and whether the race is contested or uncontested is less important. The results in Tables 1 and 2 are the same when uncontested races are excluded, but the sample size is significantly smaller (see Tables A2 and A3).
3. The most recent period includes five election cycles whereas the earlier periods include six cycles, but the point here is to highlight the difference between Republican and Democratic women.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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APPENDIX

Table A1: Partisanship and primary and general election outcomes, logistic regressions

DV: Win primary				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	−0.19*	0.96**	−0.74**	−0.63**
	(0.10)	(0.21)	(0.17)	(0.16)
Incumbent	4.31**	5.37**	4.24**	4.51**
	(0.34)	(1.05)	(0.57)	(0.49)
Number of primary	−0.50**	−0.76**	−0.44**	−0.41**
Candidates	(0.04)	(0.10)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Same party presidential	−0.32**	−0.31**	−0.44**	−0.44**
Vote	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Constant	3.11**	3.03**	3.81**	3.61**
	(0.25)	(0.46)	(0.41)	(0.41)
Number of observations	3036	688	1161	1187
Log-likelihood	−1334.23	−294.23	−501.16	−503.79

DV: Win General Election				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	0.09	−1.75*	1.78**	0.26
	(0.22)	(0.70)	(0.40)	(0.36)
Incumbent	4.65**	7.55**	4.68**	3.25**
	(0.26)	(1.06)	(0.45)	(0.38)
Number of primary	0.38**	0.44**	0.28**	0.25*
Candidates	(0.07)	(0.16)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Same party presidential	1.37**	1.14**	2.02**	2.02**
Vote	(0.11)	(0.30)	(0.24)	(0.27)
Constant	−9.56**	−8.16**	−13.85**	−12.32**
	(0.70)	(1.54)	(1.50)	(1.49)
Number of observations	1748	360	684	704
Log-likelihood	−386.43	−56.83	−138.49	−147.33

Source: Election results are from the America Votes series and the Federal Election Commission.

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All models include year fixed effects.

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

Table A2: Partisanship and primary election outcomes, 1980–2012 (excluding unopposed primary candidates)

DV: Win primary				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	−0.07** (0.02)	0.13** (0.04)	−0.12** (0.04)	−0.17** (0.03)
Incumbent	0.65** (0.02)	0.70** (0.04)	0.63** (0.04)	0.70** (0.04)
Number of primary Candidates	−0.02** (0.01)	−0.03** (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.02** (0.01)
Same party presidential Vote	−0.05** (0.01)	−0.04** (0.01)	−0.07** (0.02)	−0.07** (0.01)
Constant	1.08** (0.14)	0.35** (0.09)	1.29** (0.24)	1.24** (0.19)
Number of observations	2007	474	741	792
R ²	0.26	0.35	0.30	0.31
DV: Primary vote share				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	−0.04* (0.01)	0.11** (0.02)	−0.07** (0.02)	−0.09** (0.01)
Incumbent	0.43** (0.01)	0.49** (0.03)	0.43** (0.02)	0.43** (0.02)
Number of primary Candidates	−0.03** (0.00)	−0.03** (0.00)	−0.02** (0.01)	−0.03** (0.00)
Same party presidential Vote	−0.03** (0.00)	−0.03** (0.01)	−0.03** (0.01)	−0.04** (0.01)
Constant	0.61** (0.06)	0.41** (0.05)	0.72** (0.07)	0.74** (0.08)
Number of observations	2007	474	741	792
R ²	0.48	0.53	0.51	0.54

Source: Election results are from the America Votes series and the Federal Election Commission.

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All models include state and year fixed effects. ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Table A3: Partisanship and general election outcomes, 1980–2012 (excluding unopposed general election candidates)

DV: Win general election				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	0.03 (0.02)	−0.07* (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)	0.08** (0.03)
Incumbent	0.69** (0.02)	0.80** (0.04)	0.68** (0.04)	0.54** (0.05)
Number of primary Candidates	0.05** (0.01)	0.05** (0.02)	0.05** (0.01)	0.05** (0.01)
Same party presidential Vote	0.08** (0.01)	0.05** (0.01)	0.10** (0.01)	0.13** (0.01)
Constant	−0.24** (0.10)	−0.22** (0.07)	−0.35** (0.15)	−0.52** (0.13)
Number of observations	1706	353	660	693
R ²	0.71	0.82	0.70	0.72
DV: General election vote share				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All	1980–1990	1992–2002	2004–2012
Republican	−0.02** (0.00)	−0.08** (0.01)	0.05** (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)
Incumbent	0.19** (0.01)	0.26** (0.01)	0.16** (0.01)	0.12** (0.01)
Number of primary Candidates	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
Same party presidential Vote	0.06** (0.00)	0.05** (0.00)	0.08** (0.00)	0.08** (0.00)
Constant	0.01 (0.04)	0.21** (0.06)	−0.09* (0.04)	−0.08 (0.06)
Number of observations	1706	353	660	693
R ²	0.80	0.86	0.84	0.85

Source: Election results are from the America Votes series and the Federal Election Commission.

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All models include state and year fixed effects. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.