

The Perfect Campaign: How Women Win

Mackenzie Carlson

Spring 2018

Thesis submitted in completion of Honors Senior Capstone requirements of DePaul

University Honors Program

Molly Andolina, Political Science Department

Martha Martinez-Firestone, Sociology Department

Introduction

Currently in the United States Congress, only 20% of members are women. Only 320 women have served in Congress since 1916 when the first woman was elected, but over 12,000 people have been in Congress since it first convened in 1789. Two states, Mississippi and Vermont, have never sent a woman to Congress. It is difficult to see how women are fully represented by politicians on the national level, judging by the amount of women who are in Congress. These statistics bring into question why are women not fully represented? Why do women not win elections? How can women do better at winning elections? Is there a relationship between what women talk about on the campaign trail and success?

What is missing from the current knowledge about women running for Congress is research based on the content of messages women are giving. The question regarding the relationship between the content of female candidates' messages and successful campaigns has not been fully explored. This study tries to discover the aspects of the relationship between success and the message of candidates. From the reactions of previous elections, this study indicates that women need to run on more than policy issues to humanize themselves and their policies during Congressional elections.

Why Women Matter

Scholars have examined why it is difficult for women to win elections (Aguilar; Hayes & Lawless). Answers to these questions are important because women need substantive representation. This type of representation advocates for the policy interests of certain groups. In this case, the elected politicians would be advocating for women. Women in Congress have been found to more likely advocate for women's rights because

they are women (Fox & Lawless 70). The policy saliences, otherwise known as policy priorities or top issues for politicians, between genders in the same party are why women are needed for substantive representation. Men in the same party may agree about policy issues, but their top priorities will not include women's issues. Because of these similarities in policy, this essay will try to show that women need more than just their policies to win a campaign; they must humanize their policies. For women, they are more likely to propose bills that support women and feminist ideas (Saint-Germain 965). These ideas include promoting women in the workforce, supporting women's health, and contributing to the overall advancement of women. When women do not run, there is no chance for them to get the representation they need.

Viewing women's issues differently stems from how different genders are treated historically. Throughout United States' history, women and men have been separated into different spheres at young ages, otherwise known as the separate spheres ideology. Young men were supposed to be better at mathematics and science, while young women were supposed to be better at language arts (Kerber 15). This gender gap continued through to careers and views on politicians. Today, remnants of this separate sphere ideology continue. In every indicator on political skills, for example knowledge of public policy, experience in political system, and public speaking skills, women candidates were less likely to self-report that they had these qualities compared to men (Fox & Lawless 64). As young women grow into political candidates, the differences between self-perceptions of men and women limit the political ambitions of women. Men are more likely to think about and want to become a politician (Fox & Lawless 65). Because women doubt themselves, they will not even try to run for Congress. Studies have shown

that the biggest factor in why women are not a larger part of Congress is due to not running (Aguilar 169). While the goal of this study is not to create political ambition, it is helpful to understand that women and men are treated differently as candidates and view themselves differently as candidates. Women have to convince voters they are a good person and knowledgeable on policy, but men only have to convince voters they are a good person because they are assumed to be knowledgeable on policy.

In addition, women can change how effective Congress is and how it runs because of their different leadership styles. They are more likely to put forward successful legislation, and they also help to create more legislation in diverse areas of policy (Saint-Germain 965). The leadership styles of women allow women to work together with different parties, creating a more productive Congress (Volden, Wiseman, & Wittmer 331). It is important for women to be a part of Congress for not only women, but for all genders, as women create more policies faster (Saint-Germain 965). While this is not a major priority of Congress to continuously make policies, it is important for Congress to run effectively. An effective Congress is able to push forward legislation faster than an ineffective legislature. With women in power, an effective Congress is possible.

When women run for Congress, they win approximately 45% of the time, in comparison to the approximately 55% of the time men win. For open seats, they win approximately 40% of the time. As incumbents, they win about 94% of the time, but as challengers, they only win only about 5% of the time (CAWP). The two party system creates a polarized ideology and policy between candidates based on party lines, not gender. The issues they focus upon are chosen by what is important to the country at that time. In this case study, the women focused on the economy because of the effects of the

economic downturn in 2008 on populations across the country. What the focus of this paper is find the connection between the content of messages in their campaign advertisements and debates and the success of their campaign.

Barriers to Success for Women

In order to discover what women need to win their campaigns, one must look at previous research done on women's campaigns. There is much agreement in this realm of study that women do not serve in larger numbers because not enough women run. This partially contributes to the small amount of women who have served in Congress. The key factors that create barriers to Congress for women are incumbency and political culture.

Incumbency

The definition of an incumbent is a person who is already in office running for the same seat again. Incumbency is a huge disadvantage to women (Aguilar 174). Since women were unable to hold office for so long, women have been unable to be incumbents and reap the benefits of being an incumbent. The statistical advantage of incumbency is apparent in all elections regardless of gender. Women as incumbents win a similar number of elections as men incumbents. As incumbents in the general election, women are just as likely as men to win, winning approximately 95% of the time (Palmer & Simon 39). What is difficult for women is becoming the incumbent. For the purposes of these arguments, incumbency advantage is the statistical improvements given to incumbents, not the explanation for winning. Although the explanation for winning as an incumbent may be partially because of the effects of being an incumbent on voters, this study uses incumbency advantage as a statistical phenomenon. In Congress, the

incumbency advantage can be seen in both chambers. Neither chamber has fallen below an 85% incumbency success rate since 1982 (Reelection). The same principles that create incumbency advantages in these elections can be applied to other lower level elections.

The principles that help an incumbent win are mostly due to voter attitudes toward the challenger. Voters can feel that incumbents already possess the knowledge to do the job because they have won a previous election, and they have been doing the job already (Palmer & Simon 35). Voters are also risk averse. This means that voters will be less likely to vote for a challenger if they feel the incumbent has not negatively impacted them. Voters do not want to risk what they have, no matter how small, by voting for a person who may make their lives worse (Palmer & Simon 35). The incumbency advantage facing challengers has become more important in elections as the amount of time a person serves in Congress rises. In 1992, almost one third of the members of Congress were serving more than six terms (Palmer & Simon 38). This means that for five election cycles the incumbent had won either as an uncontested candidate or against a challenger, showing the importance of incumbency in elections. In the last two centuries, seeking reelection has become more of trend in Congress. From the 1800s, a quarter of Congress did not seek reelection, but in the 1990s, only 11% of Congress did not seek reelection (Glasman & Wilhelm 5). This trend to seek reelection continues to create barriers for challengers, but specifically, a barrier for women because of the historic lack of access to Congress.

Although women can enjoy an incumbency advantage as the incumbent, they are more likely than men to be challenged by another member of their own party, and they are less likely to run uncontested from the other party (Palmer & Simon 40). Women

running as an incumbent will be more likely to have a challenger in their party's primary. Most likely, an incumbent woman will never run unopposed by the other party. Always having a competitor makes it difficult to have strong winning percentages. Splitting the vote in primaries may make it difficult for women to even win their party nomination as an incumbent. The incumbency advantage while enjoyed by some women still more positively affects men than it does women.

It is obvious that incumbency is an important factor in any election because of how it affects voters. In a perfect world, women would share the same incumbency advantages as men, but because they have been denied access to being elected they also denied these advantages. Thus, they are more likely to lose. Moreover, even as incumbents, women face more difficult challenges.

Political Culture

Although there is little evidence for voters having hostility toward women candidates, there still seems to be something about the political culture of an area that helps or hinders the election of women to Congress (Aguiar 171).

Regional Cultures

The political culture of a region is based on the opinions about society and politics of the area. Differences between regions include decision-making styles, educational levels, and demographics. As a result of political culture differences regionally, women in a significant part of the United States will most likely be unable to win. It has been found that political cultures which are "non-moralistic, high population-to-seat ratios, high median distances, low turnover rates, high salaries, and have Democratic control are

associated with few women house members” (Nechemias 127). Some examples of these states include Montana, Oregon, and Minnesota.

Electoral System

In conjunction with this research, there has also been research done globally about the effects of the type of electoral system on women’s success. Systems that have a proportional representation, when parties gain seats based on percentage of votes won, are more likely to have more women in their legislatures (Thames & Williams 1576). For the purposes of the United States, the way in which state primaries happen may directly affect how women are elected. For example, California will be more likely to send women to Congress because of its proportional primary system. During the primary, all parties are together and voted upon. The top two candidates from the primary, from either party, are on the general election ballot. This allows more women to become involved in the process and in turn win.

Demographics of Constituency

Those who make up the constituency of a region will directly affect if a woman is elected. When asked, people have been increasingly more willing to accept a woman as president since originally asked in the late 1940s (Jones & Moore). Gallup polls have also found that younger generations are more willing to vote for a woman as president (Jones & Moore). These factors are important to the election of women to Congress because as the willingness to have a woman president increases there will likely be more people willing to vote a woman into Congress. This also means that those areas of the United States with high voter turnout in younger generations will more likely elect a woman.

Places like Kansas and Nebraska, who have relatively low median ages in their state will be likely to elect women.

Party Affiliation

The party in which the woman is running can also affect if she is elected. Women running in Democratic primaries have an advantage over Democratic men because they are viewed as more liberal (Lawless & Pearson 77). Those who vote in primaries are more liberal for Democrats and more conservative for Republicans. This means that the more liberal you are in the Democratic primary, the more likely you are to win. Therefore, women in a Democratic primary are more likely to win than men. From this, it can be concluded women running in Republican primaries may be at a disadvantage because they are viewed as more liberal than their male counterparts. To help equalize the effects of political culture on elections, this study uses case studies from women from across the country.

Methodology

To determine the impact of candidates' communication on their likelihood of success, the study collected data on campaign advertisements, debates, and victory speeches for different female candidates for Congress. The collection was done on four different women candidates, two from each party, and two from each chamber of Congress. Therefore, there is one Democratic senatorial candidate, one Republican senatorial candidate, one Republican representative, and one Democratic representative (Table 1). These candidates were chosen based on their differences. Each is running in a different type of race because they are running against different types of people. As well, these candidates campaigned during or after 2008 when the types of campaigning was

similar, unlike candidates before this time who did not use the Internet and social media as readily. These forms of campaigning were chosen because access to these videos is easily found. Campaign ads were found on social communication networks on the candidates' pages, while debates and victory speeches were mostly found on C-SPAN online.

Table 1

Candidate	State	Party	Chamber	Type of Race	Year
Joni Ernst	Iowa	Republican	Senate	Open	2014
Tammy Baldwin	Wisconsin	Democrat	Senate	Open	2012
Lynn Jenkins	Kansas	Republican	House of Representatives	Open	2008
Kyrsten Sinema	Arizona	Democrat	House of Representatives	Challenger	2012

This study uses a purposive sample. These women were “cherry picked” for the specific purpose of answering the research question. The women chosen to use as case studies were picked because of their personal histories. Each of them holds a unique biographical characteristic that makes them different. In theory, these unique characteristics are the basis for how a candidate should humanize themselves and their policies. In other words, these are the non-policy related items the candidates should mention. Joni Ernst was chosen because she was a woman who had experience as

military personnel. It was thought that she would talk about her experiences in the National Guard as a way to humanize herself. Because Tammy Baldwin was the first elected lesbian to Congress, she was picked. The theory was that Baldwin would speak about her sexuality as a way to humanize herself. As a CPA, Lynn Jenkins was chosen because of her business experience. Her experience in a field other than politics was thought to humanize Jenkins. Kyrsten Sinema was picked because of her personal history of being homeless. It was thought that Sinema would make her personality and history the key in her campaign.

A qualitative study has its basis in a grounded theory, which helps to conceptualize the data. This type of research design is meant to help build theories after the data has been collected, instead of the typical hypothesis-testing scenario (Hussin, Hirst, Salyers, & Osuji 2). In this design, the data collection and analysis happen congruently. By using this research design, it allows richness to the data that creates a thorough analysis of the phenomena being researched (Hussin, Hirst, Salyers, & Osuji 3). This type of study also allowed for a diverse variety of women to be included. What this study is missing is women who only ran on just policy or only nonpolicy related issues. It also does not give a historical analysis of how women have run throughout history. The in-depth analysis does help to achieve a well-rounded explanation, answering the research questions. As well, it gives the research a color and tone that is not included in quantitative research designs. This study is not proportionally representative of all women running for Congress, but it is meant to capture the breadth of women running.

Each campaign effort (campaign advertisements, debates, victory speeches, etc.) were coded for the specific words and phrases used. Every time a candidate used phrases

associated with a policy or aspect of their life, for example, “I am a mother,” a tally was taken. Certain phrases that were similar were grouped by topic. As an example, “I am going to increase border controls,” was taken to mean the same as, “Supporting increased funding for a border wall is important.” Then the topics were organized into seven different categories, which are immigration policy, foreign policy, money policy, social policy, opponent attacks, biography, and skills. For each woman a different number of speeches and campaign advertisements were analyzed. Different mediums of campaigning were analyzed to show the breadth of the campaigns’ content. In all, there were 36 campaign advertisements analyzed, seven debates, two victory speeches, one campaign announcement, and one campaign press release.

Campaign efforts were analyzed through videos online through campaign and congressional YouTube channels, C-SPAN, and congressional information pages. The data from all the forms of campaigns found were combined. After the data was collected, the topics were analyzed based on their congruence with policies of the candidate or against her opponent. Statistical analysis was conducted in order to compare the candidates to one another. Information regarding the biography of the candidate and their experience profile was found through their websites. This was not in an effort to fact-check information mentioned during the campaign, only to give reference to the political climate and the specific situations in which the candidate was campaigning.

Table 2

Candidate	Experience	Age	Marital Status	Sexual Orientation	Election Topics	Opponent	% Won
Joni Ernst	National Guard, county auditor, state senator	43	Married	Heterosexual	Jobs, economy	Bruce Braley	52.10%
Tammy Baldwin	State representative, state senator, U.S. Representative	50	Seperated	Homosexual	Jobs, economy	Tommy Thompson	51.41%
Lynn Jenkins	CPA, state representative, state senator, state treasurer	44	Divorced	Heterosexual	Taxes, the budget	Nancy Boyda	50.61%
Kyrsten Sinema	Social worker, state representative, state senator	35	Single	Bisexual	Social issues, jobs	Vernon Parker	48.73%

Case Studies

Republican Senator Joni Ernst

Biography

Running in the 2014 election for the first time, Senator Joni Ernst became the first Iowa woman to serve in Congress. The senator grew up in a typical Iowan town on a farm. Her roots helped her form what she now calls her “Iowa values.” These are responsibility, integrity, and hard work. These values inform her policymaking to this day. From there, she went to Iowa State University. At Iowa State, she joined the ROTC program. This program lead her to join the United States Army Reserves. While serving in the National Guard, she was a commander in Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Serving for 23 years in the Iowa Army National Guard, Senator Ernst was also the first combat veteran woman elected to Congress. As a politician Senator Ernst served her community as county auditor and Republican state senator. She is married and has three children.

While running in 2014, Joni Ernst faced Democrat Bruce Braley for an open United States Senate seat. Bruce Braley was a United States Representative for 8 years before entering the contest with Ernst. Braley spoke mostly about the conservative nature of Ernst’s policies, and Ernst tried to show that Braley was not a person who understood what Iowans were doing and feeling daily. The attacks from Braley focused on the conservative social stance of Ernst in an effort to show she would not support Iowans. Attacks from Ernst focused on the failure of Braley in Washington to produce effective legislation for Iowa. During this election cycle, issues about the jobs and the economy

were highly debated. The case study of Senator Ernst's campaign was analyzed through 11 campaign ads, a debate, and her victory speech.

Data

Within the campaign mediums analyzed, Senator Ernst made mention of six of the categories, mentioning each topic an average of 5.6 times. In total, 28.21% of Senator Ernst's issues mentioned were not policy related to either her or her opponent's policies (Figure 1). In the topic categorized, Ernst mentioned her biography, with 27 mentions, and skills, with 30 mentions, the most. Foreign policy was not mentioned at all, and the least mentioned categories were opponent attacks, with seven mentions, and immigration, with six mentions.

The unique characteristic held by Joni Ernst is her veteran status. She was able to speak about this topic during conversations about national security, military actions, and foreign policy. Joni Ernst mentioned her abilities as a soldier the most out of any topic she talked about. During this campaign, Senator Ernst was able to shape her time with the National Guard as experience in leadership and experience working with a diverse group of people similar to Congress. As well, she mentioned being a mother and wife almost as much as being a veteran. She used these biographical topics to frame her views on social policies and immigration. All together, these characteristics helped to humanize Senator Ernst for voters. Overall, Joni Ernst brought forward her unique characteristic very well, and this characteristic may have been one of the reasons she won.

Figure 1

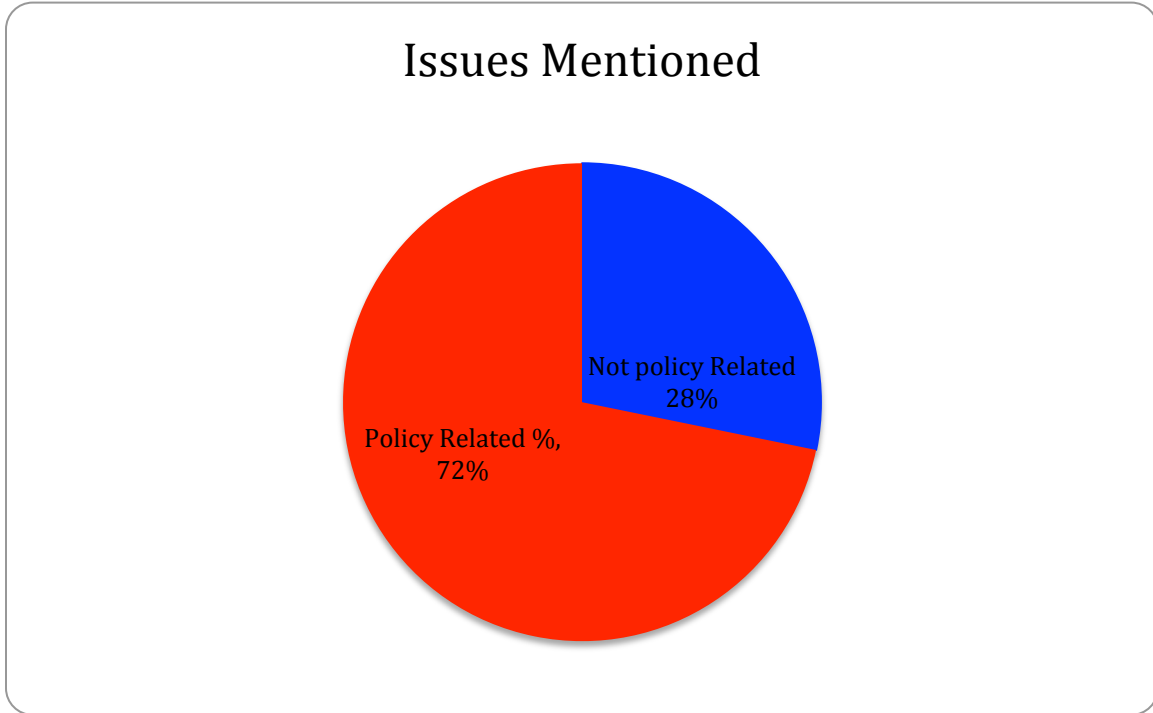
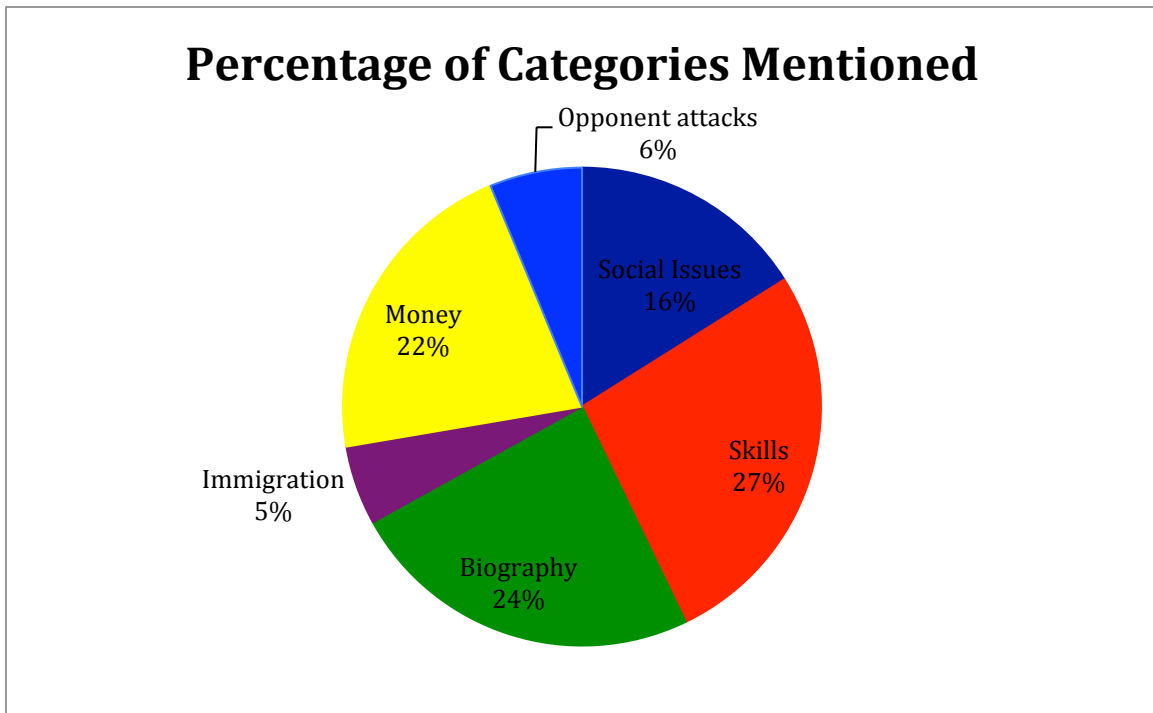


Figure 2



*Democrat Senator Tammy Baldwin***Biography**

Born and raised in Wisconsin, Tammy Baldwin was raised by her grandparents. Her childhood and relationship with her grandparents play important roles in her career and legislation. As a sick child, her grandparents struggled to pay for Senator Baldwin's health care because she was not a dependent on their insurance and later a pre-existing condition from her childhood illness. These events inform Senator Baldwin's health care and other social stances. After attending undergrad at Smith College in Massachusetts, Senator Baldwin returned to Wisconsin for law school. Her career in politics started in 1986, when she became an alderman for Madison. She continued her political career by serving as a Democratic state representative for six years for the Madison area. Tammy Baldwin then became Wisconsin's first woman elected to Congress in 1998, winning a United States Representative seat. At this time, she also became the first openly gay person in Congress. When she was elected to the Senate in 2012, she again became the first openly gay woman serving in the United States Senate.

In 2012, Tammy Baldwin was running in an open seat against Tommy Thompson. A former governor of Wisconsin, Tommy Thompson also served as United States Secretary of Health and Human Services in the George W. Bush Administration. Baldwin's attacks against Thompson were primarily about his time at a Washington lobbying firm. A phrase used commonly was, "He's not for you anymore." While at the same time, Thompson attacked Tammy's legacy in Congress for being liberal about social issues. These attacks included her support of Obama's policies and how these could be detrimental to Wisconsin. During this campaign, jobs and the economy were

some of the most important issues discussed. In the study of the 2012 election of Senator Tammy Baldwin, 14 campaign ads, three debates, and her victory speech were analyzed.

Data

The data about the campaign tactics analyzed revealed that Senator Baldwin mentioned six out of the seven categories. Each topic was mentioned approximately 3 times. In total, 17.54% of the topics mentioned were not policy related (Figure 3). Senator Baldwin did not mention any biographical information. This explains why the nonpolicy issues made up such a high percentage of the topics mentioned. Baldwin mentioned money issues and social policy issues the most with 64 and 36 mentions respectively. The least mentioned category for Senator Baldwin was immigration with only one topic mentioned (Figure 4).

Tammy Baldwin mentioned her unique characteristic the least out of any of the candidates in this study. The only time she mentioned her sexuality was in her victory speech. Reasons for not mentioning her sexuality may be because she felt that her unique characteristic was not her sexuality, but it was her previous experience. Senator Baldwin has the most congressional experience in her campaign in this study. Because Baldwin was unable to mention her biographical information, she did rely on her skills to humanize her policies. Although Tammy did not use her sexuality to humanize herself, she did use her skills and experiences to humanize her policies.

Figure 3

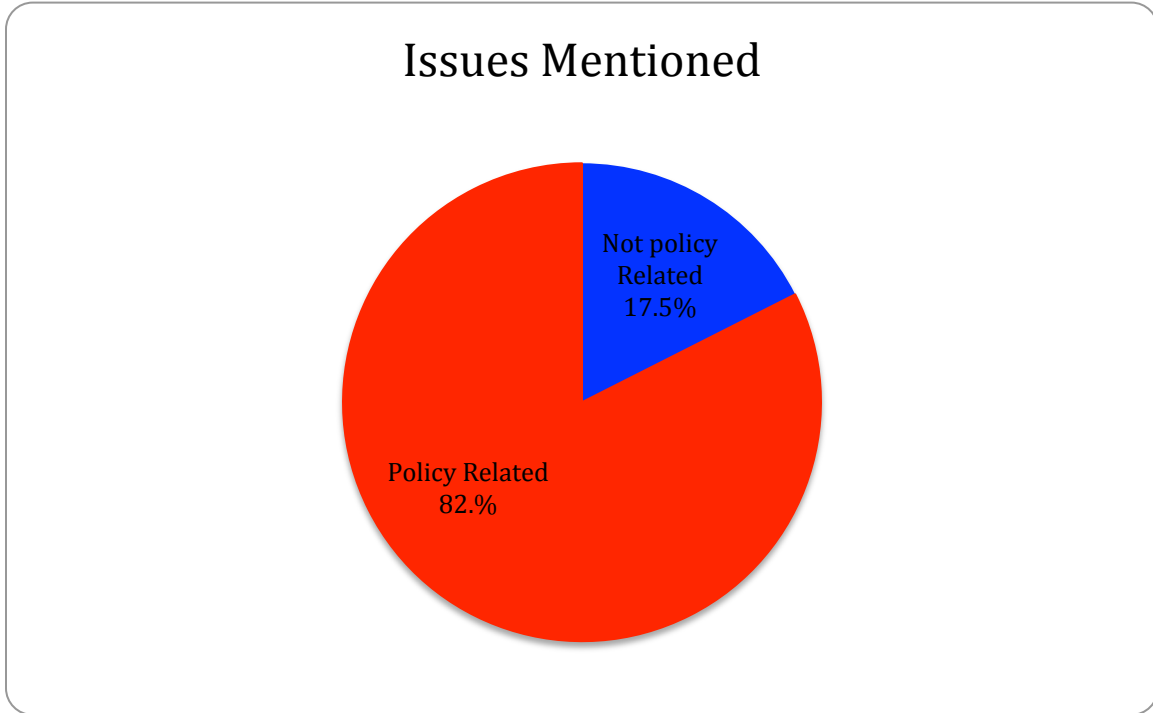
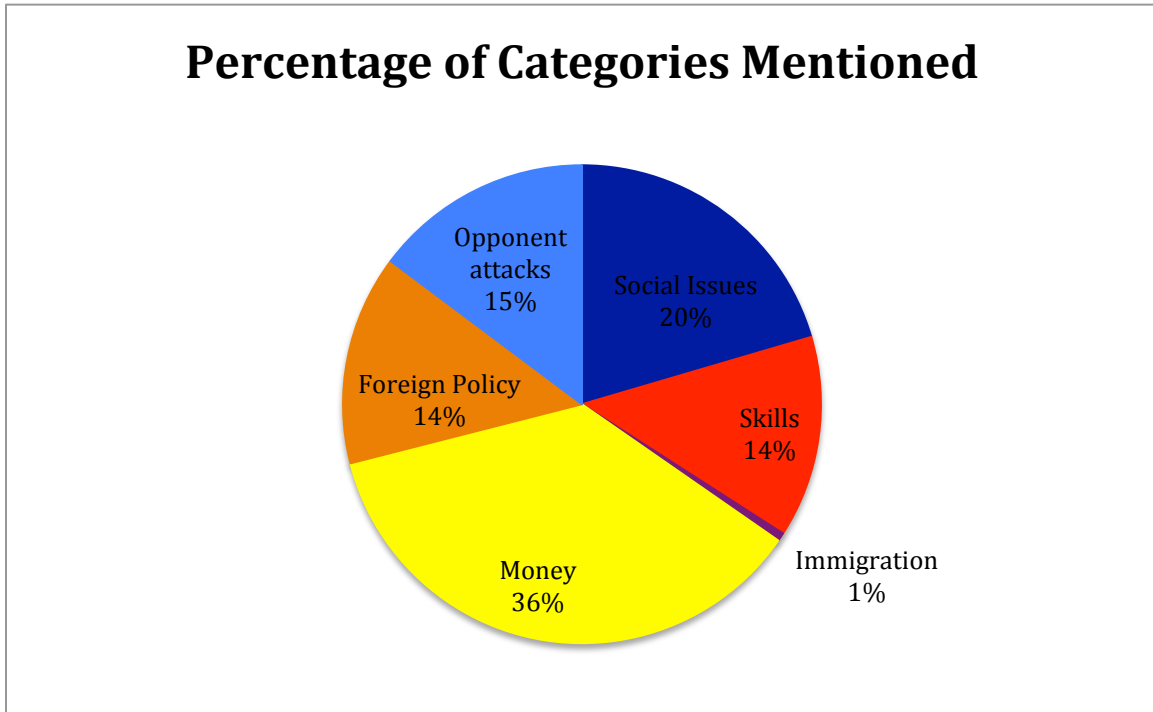


Figure 4



*Republican Representative Lynn Jenkins***Biography**

A certified public accountant (CPA), Lynn Jenkins grew up on a farm in Kansas. This experience gave her the determination and support she has needed throughout her career. For Representative Jenkins, her childhood is what gave her the values, like frugality, that helped her to become a CPA. After going to Kansas State University for her undergrad, Representative Jenkins went to Weber University for Accounting, later earning her CPA. Within the Kansas government, Representative Jenkins served in both the Kansas House of Representatives and Senate as a Republican. From there, she served as the 37th State Treasurer for Kansas. In 2010, she helped to found Maggie's List, an organization working to increase conservative women's representation in Congress. She is the mother of two children with her late husband. Unlike the other women in this study, Lynn Jenkins will not run for reelection in the 2018 campaign.

The election of Representative Jenkins in 2012 concerned keeping the budget balanced and taxes low. Her competitor was sitting Democratic Representative Nancy Boyda, who had been serving since 2007. Lynn Jenkins is the only woman in this study who competed in a race as a challenger. When Jenkins attacked Boyda, she framed her as the creator of all of Kansas' economic problems. Since Jenkins' campaign was based on lowering taxes and balancing the budget, Boyda was the scapegoat for raising taxes and creating too many "earmarks," or additional budget line items on omnibus bills. Boyda, in contrast, attacked Jenkins for her conservative social opinions and her hypocritical statements and voting record. In her election, this study analyzed seven campaign ads, two debates, and a press release about winning the election.

Data

The study of Representative Lynn Jenkins showed that topics were mentioned an average of 2.6 times. Only 21.15% of all the topics mentioned were not policy related (Figure 5). Lynn Jenkins mentioned the category of money the most out of any category with 55 mentions. She was able to mention all categories, but immigration was mentioned the least with only five mentions. To humanize her policies, Lynn Jenkins was more likely to talk about her skills and experience over her biographical information.

Forming the biggest themes around her experience, Lynn Jenkins talked extensively about her experience as a CPA. The topics that she focused upon were related to her time as a CPA and Treasurer. Her policy focuses were on topics related to her experience. Topics not related to budgeting and taxes were turned to budget line items for Representative Jenkins. For example, most of the foreign policy objectives laid out by Representative Jenkins were related to money spent on wars. Jenkins provided a solid example of how a candidate can take their experience and form a campaign around that experience. Representative Jenkins was also able to include topics related to her childhood experience like “Kansas Values” and living on a farm. These childhood experiences also helped Jenkins to become more humanized for voters.

Figure 5

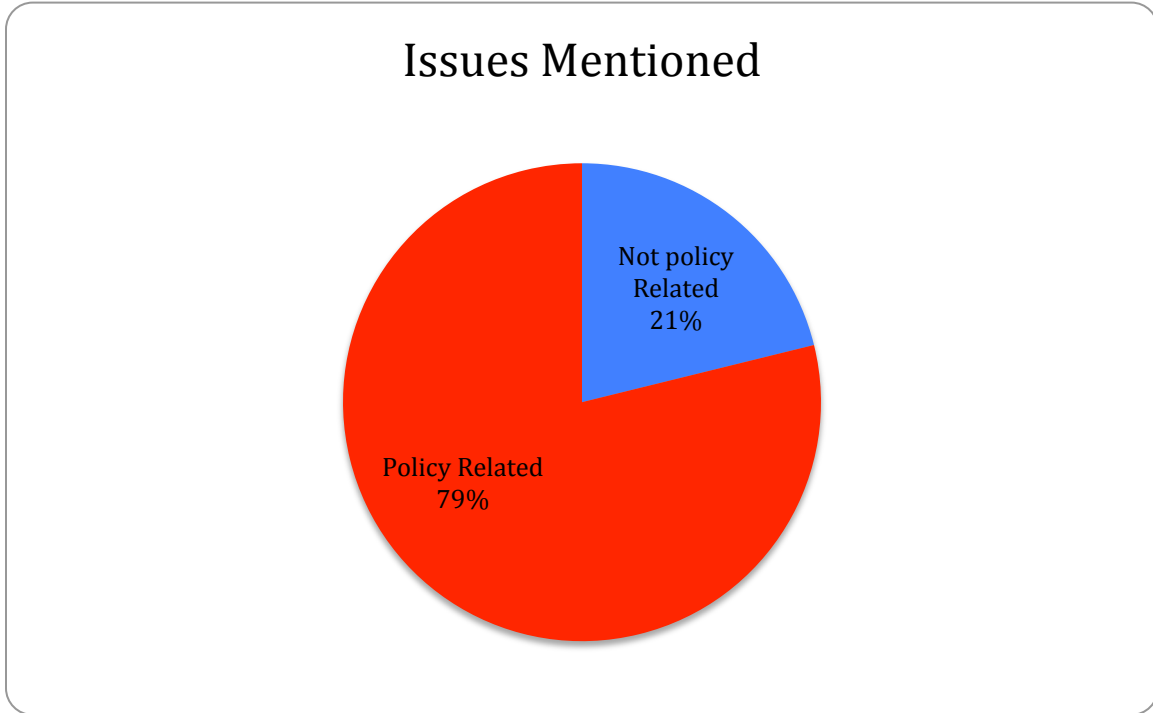
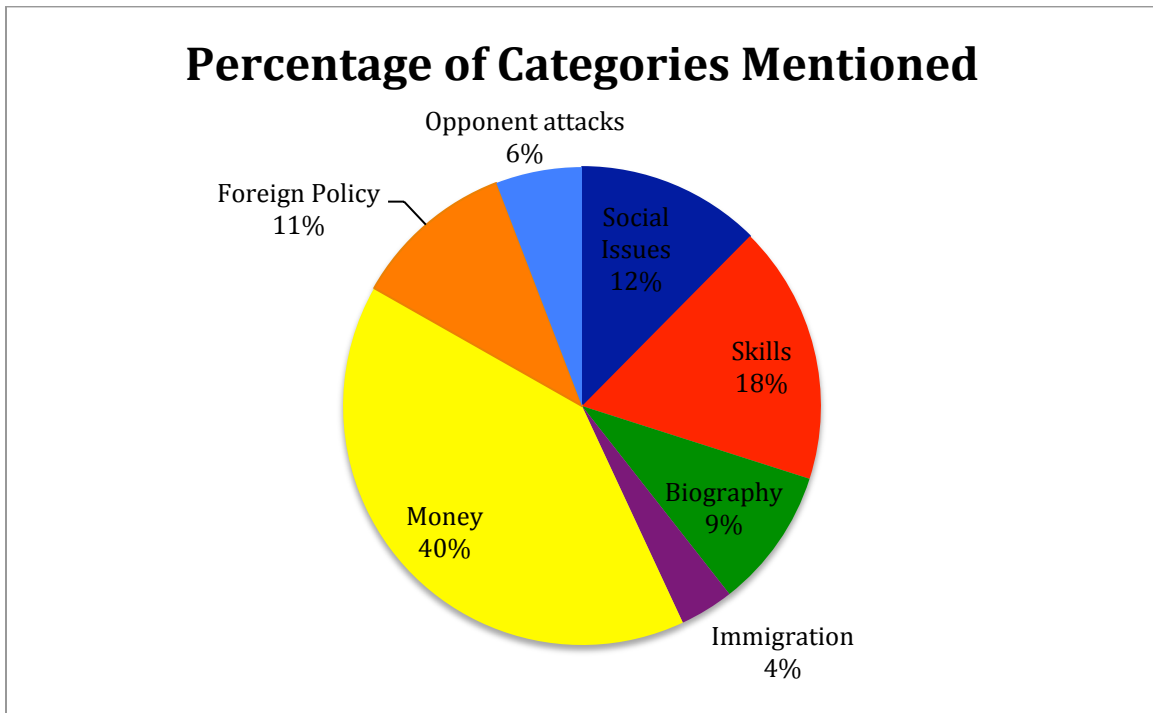


Figure 6



*Democrat Representative Kyrsten Sinema***Biography**

At times not having a home, Kyrsten Sinema grew up working hard to get what she needed in a small community in Arizona. During high school, Kyrsten was able to attend a community college. Graduating high school early, Representative Sinema graduated college in 1995 from Brigham Young University. She then attended Arizona State University to get a Master's in Social Work. As a social worker, she felt as if she was not doing as much as she could to help elevate the problems of poverty in the community. Her childhood and experience as a social worker help to shape her worldview and social policy opinions. After getting her law degree from Arizona State University, she started organizing the community against causes against poverty and violence. Her skills and network formed through organizing helped Sinema form the basis of a campaign for Arizona State Congress. Representative Sinema has served previously in both the Arizona House of Representatives and Senate. She is the first openly bisexual person in the United States Congress. Representative Sinema has decided to run in the race for senator of Arizona in 2018 instead of running for reelection. She is the only person in this study running for a different office.

In the 2012 election, Representative Sinema competed for an open seat against Republican Vernon Parker. Parker served in a different district as the first African-American Mayor of Paradise Valley, Arizona. This campaign is the only campaign analyzed with a person of color in the race. Both candidates posed unique past histories and polarized policies. The attacks against the other side for both candidates revolved around polarizing the issues. Sinema tried to make Parker more conservative, while

Parker tried to make Sinema more liberal. In the election, social issues and protecting jobs were important. This campaign was analyzed through four campaign advertisements, one debate, and her campaign announcement.

Data

Representative Sinema mentioned each topic an average of 2.22 times. Out of all the topics mentioned, 45.45% of the topics were not policy related (Figure 7). The top mentions for Kyrsten Sinema were social policy issues and her skills. Each of these had 26 mentions. Sinema did not mention either foreign policy or immigration categories. Her biographical information and attacks against her opponent tied for last in mentions with only five mentions each (Figure 8). Representative Sinema helped to humanize herself and her policies by mostly focusing on her skills and personality characteristics, and not her biographical characteristics and resume.

Kyrsten Sinema mentioned heavily about her past experiences. She framed many of her policies through the perspective of a person who has benefited from government funding. Because she had benefited from government funding, she was able to show these policies in a humanized way. What was not mentioned was her sexuality. Sinema did not mention her personal relationships in any medium analyzed. While her personal life was not mentioned, her family life was mentioned in order to humanize herself. She often mentioned her family and how they affected her upbringing. Sinema was eager to point to her personality characteristics that would make her a good representative like her ability to bring people together. The unique characteristics of Kyrsten Sinema were most of the not policy related issues that she mentioned.

Figure 7

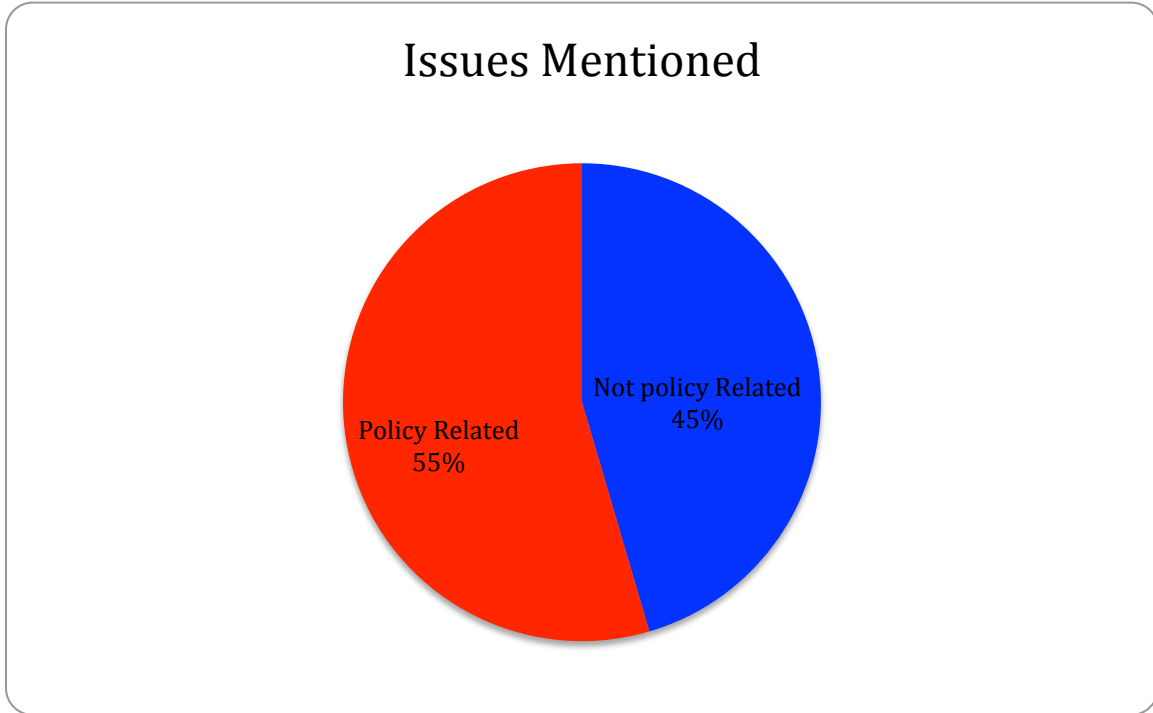
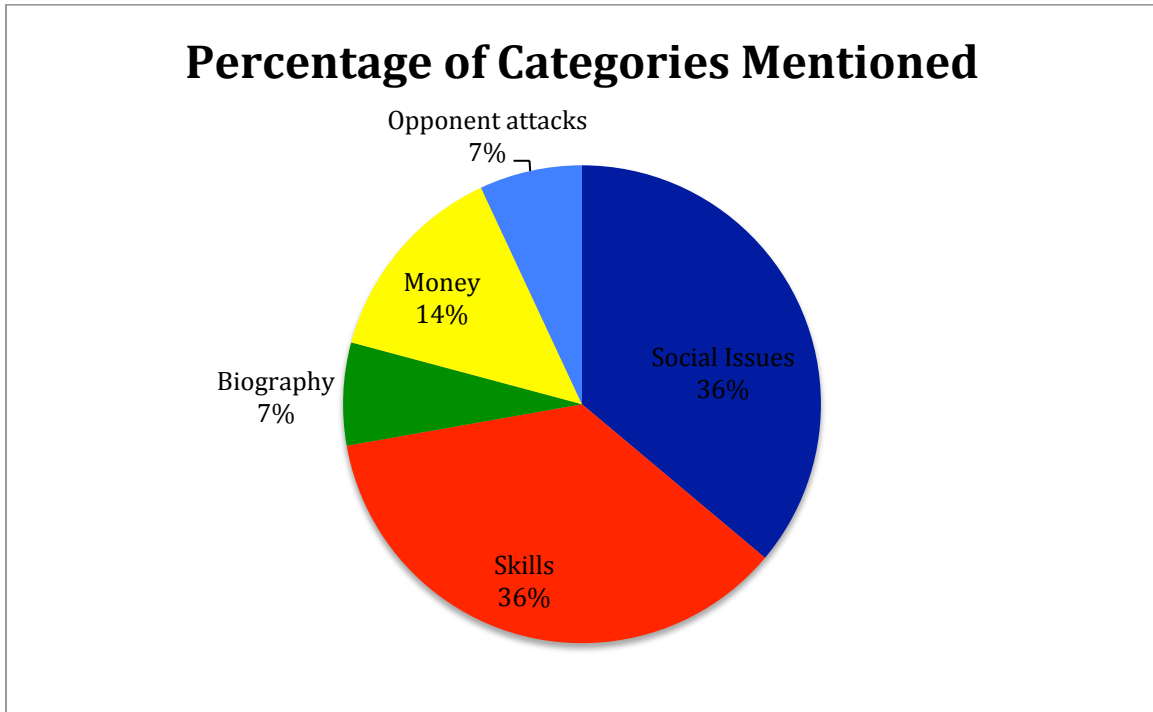


Figure 8



Results

From the four different candidates examined, they averaged talking about not policy related issues 28.09% of the time (Figure 9). Each woman was able to humanize their policies through their skills and biography in different ways. Overall, skill was the second most mentioned category with 104 mentions in total. Only Tammy Baldwin did not humanize her policies in the way that was theorized she would. Although Senator Baldwin did not humanize herself in the way that was originally hypothesized, all candidates were still able to show their experiences, biography, and skills to humanize their policies. The most mentioned category was money. Most likely, this can be explained because the elections had top issues related to the economy, jobs, or taxes. The least mentioned topic by all candidates was immigration with only 12 mentions in total (Figure 10). Joni Ernst and Lynn Jenkins were the only candidates who were able to mention all of the topic categories. The issues spoken about in advertisement campaigns, debates, or victory speeches did not have different results. The women continuously talked about similar things through all mediums

Figure 9

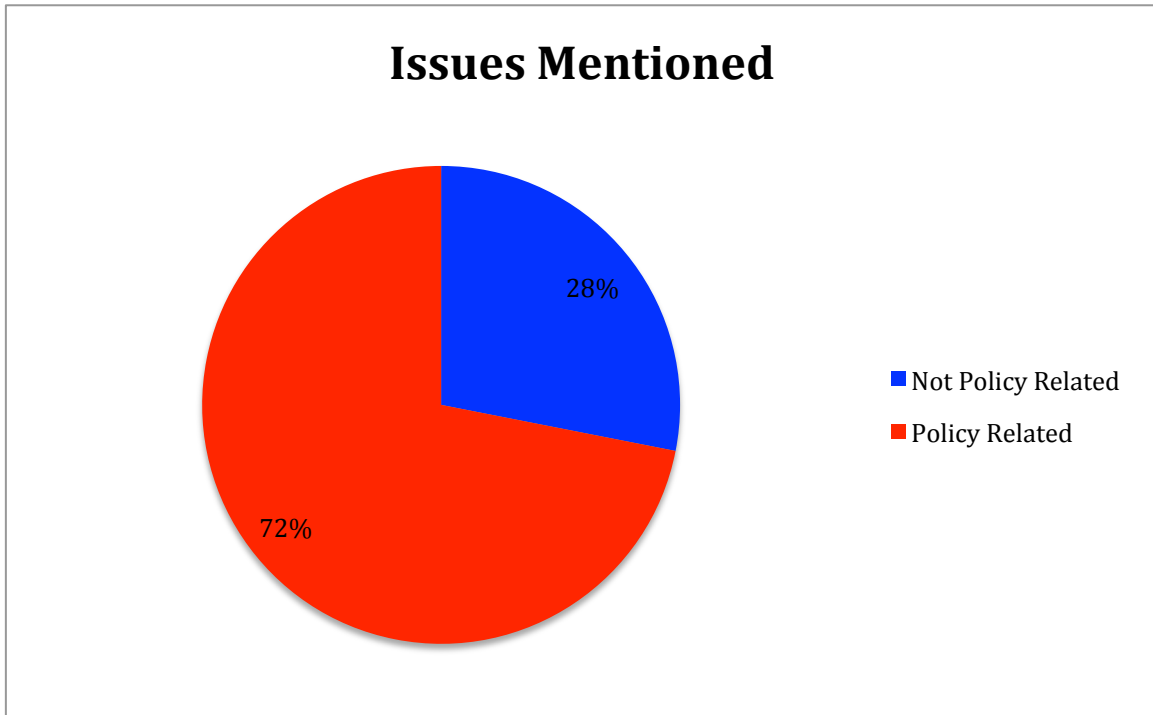
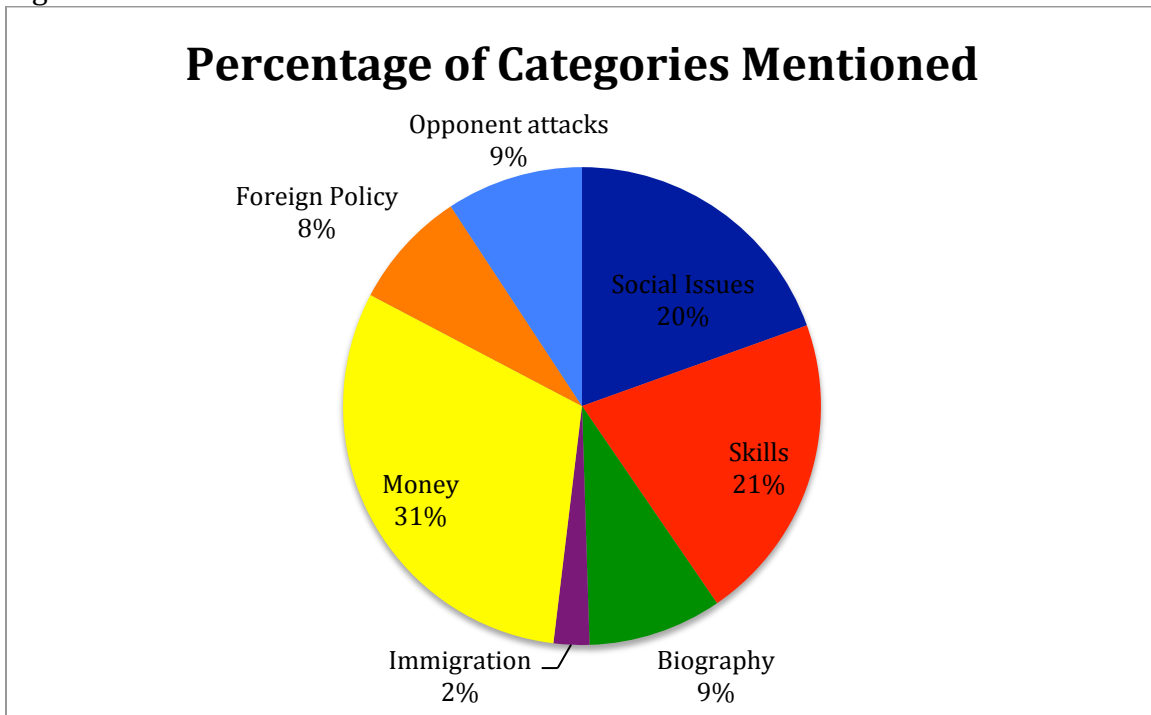


Figure 10



Discussion

These case studies help to support the theory that women must run on more than just policy in order to humanize themselves and their policies. Through the analysis of four different candidates, it can be shown that running on other things besides policy issues gives women an advantage. This can be seen because almost 30% of the time the women analyzed talked about not policy issues. During this time, the women talked about their biographical information and their skills. Talking about themselves helps women to humanize their policies. This is something that men do not need to do because it is assumed they are competent in policy, and they will only need to humanize themselves. Women do not need to change who they are or what they are in order to be an elected official. To get the best results, women need to humanize their policies by talking about the biographies and skills.

Because of problems with incumbency and political climate, it can be difficult for women to get into politics. Races that should be fully taken advantage of by women are open seats. Being a challenger is even more difficult for a woman because she is not seen as competent in politics and policy as male candidates. Open seats gives both people equal opportunity to win over constituents. There is no risk aversity because voters have had neither person in this position representing them. Even when the opposition has also been elected to statewide office, for example Tommy Thompson against Tammy Baldwin, women are still able to win by running a quality campaign. For women to continue to shorten the gender gap in Congress, women should run in areas of the United States with a political climate that is able to handle a female candidate. These places are areas that have primaries that are more proportional such as California. They also have a

history of women being in office and a culture that does not rely on morals in voting. This means that women should not run in places like Montana because their moralistic voting will negatively affect the woman candidate. In this study, an area that helps women win is the Midwest. All states in the Midwest have had women in Congress. Areas that women should continue to try to win in but are much difficult to win are places in the South and Mountain West because they are moralistic.

This study shows the importance of talking about issues not related to policy, but it also shows that women can talk about a variety of issues that are not usually “traditional” women’s issues. For example, the economy, a hot topic in all elections, was mentioned extensively. The women did not shy away from showing they understood the economy and proposed legislation that showed this knowledge. This continues to prove that the separate sphere ideology, women and men only being active in public or private life, is being dismantled. These women talking about “masculine” issues will help other women see themselves in politics. Women showing they have skills in the economy and national security prove that separate spheres ideology can no longer dominate politics. Those women who are thinking about running can take advantage of the examples set by the women in this study and others in Congress to run campaigns that do not only focus on their womanhood but also their experiences, capabilities, and policies.

This study also shows that women do not need to talk extensively about “masculine” issues in order to win elections. People, like Kyrsten Sinema, did not talk about foreign policy and are able to win even though her opponent did. Representative Sinema does not have a strong background or experiences in foreign policy. Because of this lack of experience, she ran on issues that did matter to her. She was able to shape the

conversation around the election and the issues by not trying to be someone she is not. A woman should be able to talk about issues that matter to her. If she is a strong supporter of free markets and balanced budgets, she should be able to voice these issues with the same authority as a male candidate. All in all, this study proves to women that they can win elections by being themselves and talking about issues that matter to them, even if the issues are not policy related.

While it is important to talk about issues that are not related to policy, a woman cannot only run on issues that are not policy related. Policies in Congress affect the lives of every person in the United States. Voters do not want to elect a person who will not support the policy issues that matter to them. The women studied show an important dynamic between policy and not policy related issues. Each of the women spent less than 50% of the time talking about issues not related to policy in total. The top issues discussed included both policies and not policy related issues. The challenge for women is to find the right balance between the two. If a woman is unable to discuss policy issues, she may not be able to win over the voters necessary to win. If a woman spends too much time talking about policy, she may seem impersonable. The balance for each election is different. Finding the balance between policy and humanization is not an issue for men because they are automatically assumed to be competent in policy. They do not need to prove themselves to the public. The issues that are playing important roles in the election will help to show what issues to talk about. Who the opponent of the candidate is will also give the candidate more opportunities to talk about different policies or to talk about issues related about their opponent. The balance between policy and not policy can make or break a campaign. Since a campaign is the first time to gain support for legislative

issues, it is important for candidates to talk about their policies initiatives during the campaign in order to have support later. This study does not directly explain what the best balance of policy and not policy is for women to find because it is not the same for every campaign.

An important component brought to light by this study is the idea of bipartisanship. This is a non- policy related issue that all of the candidates mentioned. Bipartisanship is not directly related to a policy position. Instead, bipartisanship reflects on the personality and experience of the candidate. The candidates' opponents in this study did not mention the issue of bipartisanship as heavily as the women studied. Being mentioned by all of the women shows how important it is to the candidates. Bipartisanship is one of the reasons women are able to create a more effective Congress. Because they are able to work "across the aisle," they help in getting more things done in Congress. Mentioning bipartisanship shows that talking about not policy related issues could improve chances of winning the election. In two of the races, it was mentioned so much it was in the top ten issues mentioned. The candidate who mentioned bipartisanship least, Lynn Jenkins, was running against another woman. Because of whom Representative Jenkins was running against, she could not mention this quality because it did not differentiate her from her opponent. The other candidates were able to use bipartisanship as a way to differentiate themselves from their male opponents.

From this study, it can be assumed that women see themselves as being more bipartisan than men. Talking about this difference between their male opponent, women candidates may have a better chance of winning. It may even be an issue that when women do not mention bipartianship they do not become elected. Bipartisanship has a

different relationship with every constituency. More centrist regions may feel that bipartisanship is one of the most important issues because it gives them the best results for their problems. Regions that are too far to one side of the political spectrum may feel that bipartisanship will not accomplish anything because the other side does not agree with them. This does not mean that women are the only bipartisan candidates or congressional members. This study shows that women need to talk about their bipartisanship in order to be elected. Bipartisanship may play an important role in elections with women because it allows them to humanize themselves and talk about issues that are not policy related without being too far from politics.

Strengths of this study are that the women who are studied are a cross-sectional of sexual identities. Two of the four women are part of the LGBTQ community. While this does not represent the average demographics of women running for Congress, it does keep sexual orientation from playing a confounding role in the study. The study also gives a cross sectional of women of different marital statuses. One of the women is married, one woman is divorced, another woman has never been married, and the last one is separated. These cross-sectionals of demographics allow the study to cover a range of situations. As a result, one can assume that the results of this study can apply to women regardless of sexual orientation or marital status. Another strength of this study is the depth of knowledge gained through a case study. By only analyzing a few candidates, the candidates could be analyzed from different perspectives and their histories could also play a role in the data. While using case studies has drawbacks, it is important for this study to be an in-depth analysis of the candidates because the issues that were not policy related, usually had to do with a part of their history. This study is also able to eliminate

most of the incumbency advantage by having most of the studies in elections for an open seat. Accounting for the incumbency advantage is important because it makes sure that other issues are not the reason the woman was elected. The opponents of the case study analyzed were also all different types of people, two of the opponents were white men, one was a black man, and the other was a white woman. Using different opponents allows for a control about how opponents are campaigning influence the campaigns of women. Because parts of a campaign are a result of how the opponent is running, having different types of opponents gives the study credibility that the opponent should not matter.

This study poses a few problems with its methodology. The biggest issue is that there are only four candidates analyzed. This is a small sample size to make inferences. For future studies, there needs to be a larger sample size of candidates. As well, the small case studies do not come from the most diverse areas of the United States. Although all of the candidates come from different states, only one of the candidates comes from outside of the Midwest. While the political culture of all of the places is different, the geography of the states is very similar. Without studying all of the United States, this study cannot definitely state how a woman should run for Congress because not all political cultures have been analyzed. Future studies should make efforts to use women from a variety of different places including the South, East, and Mountain West states. None of the women studied are women of color or disabled. By not studying women with these identities, the study is limited in making inferences for all women because not all women are represented in the study. Further research should create a wider cross-sectional of women of color and women with different identities like being disabled.

Lastly, the amount of information analyzed was limited. The study did not analyze any campaign speeches or rallies. In order to fully understand everything a person said on the campaign trail, these things need to be coded along with campaign advertisements, debates, and victory speeches. New studies should try to analyze more information from the election. Further studies need to be done to compare these results with women who have lost as well as compare the results to men in Congress and men who have lost. This study does not show that men should campaign differently than women, but that women have to campaign on issues other than policy to humanize themselves and win. Not only should there be a comparison between men and women, but there needs to be a comparison between levels of government to see if this hypothesis is true for all levels.

The 2018 Election

In 2018, there is a lot to be said about women running at all forms of government. With a record number of women running, the true test of this hypothesis will be ensured (CWAP). As women run across the country in a variety of different demographics on both sides of the aisle, the country will truly see if policy matters or other factors matter. Women will also be campaigning differently throughout the country. The different campaign strategies employed by the women running in 2018 will help to form better strategies for women campaigning. Specifically, it will important to watch the race of Kyrsten Sinema for senate. If Sinema successfully wins the election with the same campaign tactics, the hypothesis that women need to run on other issues besides policy will be supported. If Sinema loses the election using the same campaign tactics, the hypothesis that women need to run on other issues besides policy will not be supported. Since it is for a different position, time period, and different issues matter in the current

political climate, Representative Sinema will most likely not run her campaign in the same fashion. Future research should be conducted on the 2018 election as women are trying new tactics for campaigning, the non issues may be the reason some of these women are elected. The 2018 midterm election will be an important election year no matter what the result.

Works Cited

- Aguiar, Gary G. "Women's Underrepresentation in Elective Office." *Campaigns and Elections: Issues, Concepts, Cases*. Edited by Robert P. Watson and Colton C. Campbell. L. Rienner Publishers, 2003, 169-182. Print.
- Center for American Women and Politics. "Summary of Women Candidates for Selected Offices." Fact Sheet. Eagleton Institute of Politics. New Brunswick, NJ. 2016. Web.
- Fox, Richard L. & Lawless, Jennifer L. "Gendered Perceptions and Political Candidacies: A Central Barrier to Women's Equality in Electoral Politics." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 55, no. 1, Midwest Political Science Association, January 2011, pp. 59-73.
- Hayes, Danny, Lawless, Jennifer L. & Baitinger, Gail. "Who Cares What They Wear? Media, Gender, and the Influence of Candidate Appearance." *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 95, no. 5, Southwestern Social Science Association, December 2014, pp. 1194-1212.
- Hussein, Mohamed E., Hirst, Sandra, Salyers, Vince, & Joseph, Osuji. "Using Grounded Theory as a Method of Inquiry: Advantages and Disadvantages." *The Qualitative Report*, vol. 19, no. 27, July 2014, pp. 1-15.
- Jones, Jeffery M. & Moore, David W. "Generational Differences in Support for a Woman President." *Gallup.com*, Gallup, 17 June 2003.
- Kerber, Linda K. "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." *The Journal of American History*, vol. 75, no. 1, 1988, pp. 9-39.
- Lawless, Jennifer L. & Pearson, Kathryn. "The Primary Reason for Women's Underrepresentation? Reevaluating the Conventional Wisdom." *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 70, no.1, 2008, pp. 67-82. Print.

- Nechemias, Carol. "Geographic Mobility and Women's Access to State Legislatures." *The Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 38, no.1, March 1985, pp. 119-131.
- Palmer, Barbara & Simon, Dennis. "Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling: Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Success of Women Candidates." *Thomas Jefferson Law Review*, vol. 31, no. 29, 2008, pp. 29-52.
- Saint-Germain, Michelle A. "Does Their Difference Make a Difference? the Impact of Women on Public Policy in the Arizona Legislature." *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 4, 1989.
- Thames, Frank C. & Williams, Margaret S. "Incentives for Personal Votes and Women's Representation in Legislatures." *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 43, no. 12, 2010, pp. 1575-1600.
- "Reelection Rates Over the Years." *OpenSecrets*, www.opensecrets.org/overview/reelect.php.
- Volen, Craig, Wiseman, Alan E., & Wittmer, Dana E. "When Are Women More Effective Lawmakers Than Men?." *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 57, no. 2, Midwest Political Science Association, April 2013, pp. 326-341.